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Rough Time in Paradise: Claims, Blames and Memory Making Around Some Protected Areas in Kenya

Lotte Hughes

INTRODUCTION

IN A RECENT ISSUE of *Conservation and Society*, Rangarajan and Shahabuddin (2006) provide a biological and historical synthesis of issues relating to the displacement and relocation of people from protected areas. Rather than respond directly to the original article, this contribution is inspired by it and explores related issues from an East African perspective¹. I will draw upon my experience as an Africanist historian who has investigated colonial-era land alienation in the former protectorate of British East Africa (BEA, now Kenya)². With editorial permission, I will personalise part of this article by describing an exchange of views with a conservation biologist and others on my 2006 book. The case study I examined through oral testimony and archival research—major land losses and forced removals of Maasai communities by British administrators in the 1900s—provides an instructive African example of ‘older antecedents of widespread dislocation of resident peoples’ (Rangarajan & Shahabuddin 2006: 359), though not in this instance from areas reserved for parks—they came later³. As a former settler colony, this is a very different scenario from India, but there are also many parallels. European settler imaginings of landscape and wilderness as pristine and uninhabited—which continue to powerfully influence local, regional and international conservationist practice and discourses—bring a different element to the discus-

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sion (see Bunn 2007 for analysis of a South African example). Equally, African imaginings of the past, and of lost lands, should be factored into the analysis and subjected to scrutiny.

What is thus far missing from the debate, I suggest, is a discussion of social memory and its applications, particularly in the context of land restitution wrangles and contestation over natural resources. There also needs to be deeper historical analysis over the longer term; despite their title, the authors have tended to focus more on social science scholarship than history. The sub-heading 'A touch of history' (*op cit* 367) is rather a giveaway; with respect, more than a touch is required⁴.

To summarise, firstly, the historical relocation I will describe was an eviction, but it was *not* for conservation. Expulsion of indigenous communities for conservation purposes came much later, from areas set aside for national parks or reserves [e.g. Nairobi National Park, gazetted 1946; Amboseli, Chyulu Hills and Tsavo (1948). Amboseli and Chyulu Hills were later upgraded from reserves to parks]⁵. Maasai retained some access rights to reserves, so these dates do not mark when they were evicted. Amboseli, for instance, became a national park in 1974 and was vacated 3 years later; they allegedly did so willingly in return for benefits (Lindsay 1987: 156–158; Western 1994: 35). Also, despite some political leaders' rhetoric, and that of certain polemical writers, Maasai people were not the only African residents and resource users of areas that became protected; for instance, Kamba and Waliangulu (Waata) hunters were barred from Tsavo after gazette⁶. David Western, former director of the Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), has written extensively about Amboseli from a scientific viewpoint, drawing on 40 years' experience and rich empirical evidence, but to my knowledge no detailed studies have specifically examined human displacement from this or any other protected area in Kenya⁷. There is no Kenyan equivalent of Brockington's Mkomazi research (2002), and this is urgently needed—not least because Mkomazi has come to 'stand for' a regional model, in the absence of other studies. He and Igoe have rightly called for more, detailed case studies⁸. I cannot provide one here, supported by adequate data, but I will discuss the case of the Masai Mara Game Reserve to illustrate what happens when 'memory' (and its uses in political agitation) becomes confused with 'history'⁹. There was apparently little or no *forced* eviction from Mara in order to create a reserve, but because this and other protected areas were carved out of lands formerly used by Maasai (albeit shared with other groups), these losses have been elided in the collective memory. Hence some Maasai conjoin all their land and resource losses when calling for redress for both contemporary and historical injustices, and imply that forced displacement happened in all instances¹⁰. While wholly understandable from a human rights perspective, this can obscure the historical facts in specific cases.

Secondly, following on from the last point, there is a vital need when examining displacement and land alienation to factor in memory making, and con-

structions and deconstructions of the past, memory, ethnicity and cultural identity. These processes and products of social memory are inextricably linked to contemporary political consciousness and the discourses, which flow around reparations claims, locally and globally, and should not be omitted from accounts of past or present-day displacement from protected areas. In African studies, they feature most prominently in the southern African literature (e.g. Alexander et al. 2000; Brooks 2000; Bohlin 2007; James 2007 to some extent; Jannecke 2006 and other papers presented at a conference on land restitution in South Africa (see references); Ranger 1999; Walker 2000; McGregor 2003; Stolten 2007). Many of these link to the historiography of post-conflict social healing and reconciliation, which employs similar theoretical tools. Igoe has produced rich and stimulating work on constructions of indigeneity in Tanzania (2004, 2006), yet does not discuss the role of social memory in these processes. His focus, and that of Hodgson (2004), has been more on the evolution of indigenous social movements. Rangarajan and Shahabuddin (2006) fail to mention the word memory (apart from a passing reference to Schama 1995, *Landscape and Memory*). Brockington and Igoe use the same citation, when making the catch-all claim that 'protestors fight their symbolic obliteration from the landscape—their removal from its history, memory and representation' (2006: 425). Brockington mentions constructions of ethnic identity (e.g. 2002: 37), 'wildness' as a European cultural construct (2002: 47), and different groups' constructions of 'images of the environment and environmental change that work for them' (2002:81), but not memory itself as a construction¹¹. While raising important issues, he tends to emphasise European constructions of nature and their inherent dangers, paying less attention to African ones—though he suggests the possibility of 'rose-tinted views' (2002: 81, 87). Thirdly, I will query whether forced eviction is commonly a feature of displacement for parks; this is implied by Rangarajan and Shahabuddin (e.g. 2006: 359, 361, 369) and others¹². In my study area, although some Maasai now claim that communities were forced out of the Mara in order to make way for a game reserve, the fact is that this area was relatively unpopulated anyway (largely because of tsetse fly), and their own leaders relinquished it for conservation in 1961 (Mol 1980: 49)¹³. This appears to have been 'forgotten'.

To briefly answer Brockington and Igoe (2006), in no way have Maasai been obliterated from this landscape and promotion of it worldwide. Masai Mara is synonymous with Maasai people and culture, a fact which every Maasai living around the reserve capitalises on, if it is within their means to do so. (This learned behaviour vis-à-vis tourists bears out Igoe's earlier observations that 'the prominence of Maasai ethnicity in the European imagination is a symbolic currency that Maasai have deployed to their advantage at various points in history', and the enormous 'marketability of Maasainess' which NGOs exploit, 2004: 13, 16.)¹⁴ The forms this can take range from individuals demanding payment for tourist photographs, women selling 'tradi-

tional' beadwork at the roadside or in cultural *manyatas*¹⁵, wildlife associations in the dispersal area around Mara taking a percentage of tourists' game viewing fees (currently 40 US dollars a day per person), young men hiring themselves out as exotic dancers, cultural experts and guides at lodges and camps, to elite families (such as the Ntutus, the biggest land owners in the area) gaining wealth from rents received from luxury lodges built on their land¹⁶. Tourism revenues are not equitably shared, however, and women in particular do not get their fair share of the spoils. I do not wish to imply (a) that all Maasai and other communities living around parks benefit sufficiently from them; or (b) that there are no associated problems, such as human-wildlife conflict in the wildlife dispersal areas¹⁷. But, apart from the seasonal need to access important resources such as swamps in certain parks, notably Amboseli, it could be argued that dispersal areas are more important to local people than the actual parks, some of which are very small¹⁸.

The repercussions of the displacement I studied, and concomitant loss of resources, have been considerable in socio-economic, political, cultural and environmental terms; the ripple effects can be traced to the present day. They have been a factor in fatal clashes over access to land and natural resources which continue to rock Kenya (together with contestations in other parts of the country, such as the Mau Forests of south-western Kenya and around Mount Elgon in the western highlands)¹⁹. At the time, in 1913, a small group of Maasai mounted an unsuccessful legal challenge to the land grab, with the help of locally based British lawyers and sympathisers. In 2004, there were renewed demands for reparations, which brought the story full circle nearly 100 years later (Maasai Memorandum 2004; Kantai 2005). Claims for the return of land and compensation for injustices, which would entail revisiting the 1913 case, have yet to be heard in a court of law (Hughes 2005).

THE COLONIAL-ERA DISPLACEMENT

To summarise the historical events in this case, in 1904-1905 the British forcibly moved certain sections of this pastoralist community from its favourite grazing grounds in the central Rift Valley (the lush corridor between Naivasha and Nakuru) into two reserves in order to make way for white settlement²⁰. One reserve was on Laikipia in the northern highlands, the other in the south on the border with German East Africa (later Tanganyika and Tanzania) where other Maasai sections already resided. Under a 1904 Maasai Agreement or treaty, the Maasai were told they could keep these reserved areas for 'so long as the Masai as a race shall exist'. After 7 years, the British broke their promise and moved the 'northern' Maasai again, at gunpoint, from Laikipia to an extended Southern Maasai Reserve. Upwards of 20,000 people and at least 2.5 million livestock were moved between 1911 and 1913²¹. White settlement of the highlands was the primary reason for the second expulsion, too. Other motivations included a desire to concentrate the Maasai in

one reserve in order to facilitate the administration and taxation of nomadic people who were often officially regarded as wayward and deviant, and whose livestock was believed to pose a disease threat to imported settler stock.

The second move was sanctioned by a 1911 Agreement, which Maasai later claimed their leaders signed under heavy duress. (Today, Maasai refer to it in inverted commas as an 'Agreement' to indicate the coercion which led to Maasai representatives putting their thumbprints to it.) This effectively rendered the first Agreement void. As a result of these two moves, and others I will not go into, the Maasai of BEA lost at least 50 per cent of the land they had once utilised. It may have been as much as 70 per cent; it is difficult to arrive at an exact figure since land in Maasai use, as opposed to occupation, before 1904 was never surveyed and quantified²². Maasai activists have not stipulated total acreage or square kilometres in their current reparations demands, nor specified what exact territory was lost, which suggests the community is also unable to retrospectively quantify its losses²³.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF THE MOVES²⁴

It is widely accepted, despite the above remarks about inexact figures, that the Maasai's quantitative land losses to the British were considerable. More of their land was probably alienated than that of any other community in Kenya, though every ethnic group experienced losses of one sort or another. But their qualitative losses, in terms of the richness of their former northern habitat, the comparative inferiority of the Southern Reserve, and the migrants' vulnerability to disease there, were largely unknown before I attempted to document them, from oral and archival sources, in my doctoral dissertation and book. The oral testimony I gathered from elders emphasised the environmental and disease impacts²⁵. Nearly 90 years after the second move, elders in western Narok (who have all died since being interviewed between 1997 and 2000) still talked with passion about its effects on the health of humans and herds. They described the impact of the move in 'pathological' terms, believing that the British deliberately sent them 'to that land where *ol-tikana* is' in order that they might die there²⁶. They claimed that they and their herds succumbed to diseases in the Southern Reserve which were unknown or not prevalent in their northern territory, most specifically Laikipia, and that they had been blighted by sickness ever since. They insisted that the land they were moved to was not only grossly inferior to Entorror (the Maa word for the whole of their former northern territory) in terms of water supplies, grazing, and disease vectors, but that the new environment infected and killed them. In the collective oral mythology, Entorror was spoken about as an Eden, its sweetness constantly compared to the bitterness (*ol-odua*, which also means rinderpest) of the Southern Reserve.

Sindiga has described how 'colonial intervention in Maasailand led to the breakdown of traditional ecosystems', and attributed the subsequent severe

degradation and pressures on land in Kajiado and Narok Districts to a process begun in 1904 (Sindiga 1984: 27). Tignor has written: ‘The loss of the dry weather grazing forced the Maasai to overwork the more arid southern reserve, resulting in loss of vegetation, soil erosion and overall decline in grazing. In the twentieth century, the reserve became progressively less able to support its livestock’ (Tignor 1976: 8, 38). Rutten, in a study of factors that have led to land losses and undermined the livestock economy in Kajiado District, asserted: ‘Moreover, in terms of quality the loss (of alienated land before 1912) was even more severe as green pastures located in ecologically favourable areas had to be abandoned and were replaced with a less comfortable habitat, heavily infested by tsetse fly and mostly lacking sufficient water and all year round grazing’ (Rutten 1992: 8). Western and Manzollilo Nightingale (2004) have linked the early land alienation and Kajiado pastoralists’ increased vulnerability to drought. Other scholars have made similar remarks, briefly linking the early losses to later degradation, drought and other pressures (for example, Campbell 1984; Thompson & Homewood 2002). I set out to explore the qualitative ‘before’ and ‘after’ of the land alienation in more depth, doing so in some trepidation, because I am not a scientist—‘only’ a social scientist turned historian. I therefore sought assistance from scientists at the International Livestock Research Institute, Nairobi, and veterinary experts (including retired veterinary officers who had worked in Kenya) who commented on my drafts and provided invaluable information. Significantly, this broadly tended to support Maasai oral claims. None of these people could be described as blinkered fans of the Maasai or champions of indigenous rights; their corroboration was rooted in empirical science, not sentiment. Through triangulation, which included checking early veterinary records, I concluded that Maasai testimony on environmental issues was substantially reliable and the narratives largely consistent—except for a few wilder claims that there had been *no* diseases on Laikipia when the Maasai lived there²⁷.

In theory, the area of land to which the Maasai were moved, the 4.4 million-acre western extension added to the Southern Maasai Reserve in 1911, seems generous until one examines its quality. (The reserve as a whole was initially nearly 10 million acres, but one official admitted at the time ‘the majority of this is waterless’ (McClure n.d.). However, it is not simply a matter of the quality of land. Such is their dependency on livestock, and total identification with cattle—*en-kishu* means both cattle and Maasai as a people—that cattle disease is inextricably linked to human health and is spoken of almost interchangeably with that of humans. (This dependency is lessening today as their economy diversifies to include agriculture and wildlife tourism. But Maasai elites and wealthy incomers dominate these sectors, leading to a growing gap between rich and poor. It is not simply a case of generalised ‘impoverishment’ resulting from relocation) (Thompson & Homewood 2002). Furthermore, I claimed, the grievances of these migrants should be understood in the context of acclimatisation over time and space. Other Maasai were al-

ready living in this area when the ‘northerners’ arrived, so it could not be dismissed as an environment in which Maasai could not survive. The point was that the newcomers were unfamiliar with it, were non-resistant to certain infections, and in the interregnum between arrival and acclimatisation, when some resistance developed, both humans and stock suffered acutely. It was this suffering which coloured people’s memories of the move and what happened afterwards.

One could attempt to establish whether there is any scientific or bio-medical basis for Maasai claims that the Northern Reserve was effectively free of the fatal cattle disease East Coast fever (ECF), and of a deliberate ‘move to kill’ policy driven by administrators’ knowledge of the presence or absence of disease, particularly ECF, in the two environments. There is some compelling evidence to support the first of these claims, and some colonial officials certainly ‘subscribed to a Malthusian view of disease and drought as the natural regulators of the (African) stock population’ (Waller 2004: 46). But the search for scientific evidence is also an unsatisfactory exercise, in part because early scientific data simply does not exist, and because it involves comparing like with unlike: to put it crudely, a western scientific view of disease which is rooted in diagnostics and laboratory experiment, versus a more holistic indigenous view which regards ‘dis-ease’ as a natural part of life. Most importantly, I wrote, the subject is larger than scientific; it concerns disease as a metaphor for colonial encounters, and what these produced in social and other terms. In this case, I argued that ECF had come to represent — for the older generation of Purko Maasai at least — infection by colonialism, and it was their conceptualisation that interested me. Therefore I aimed to examine what scientific evidence there was in tandem with *perceptions* of disease and socio-environmental health, confining my focus largely to the Purko section who bore the brunt of the second move, and to ECF.

The published work of government entomologist Aneurin Lewis in the 1930s was a considerable aid; his detailed studies of ticks and tsetse in the Southern Reserve confirmed the enormity of the environmental challenges that faced the immigrants (Lewis 1934a, b). To summarise, I concluded the Southern Reserve was far inferior environmentally to Laikipia and Entorror as a whole; the incoming sections lost the wide range of habitat necessary for transhumant pastoralism; herders suffered an appalling lack of veterinary attention, and experienced huge losses to diseases that their stock lacked resistance to, during the move and in the decade following it. Much of this was documented in official records, notably George Sandford’s detailed administrative history of the Maasai (1919). But I also noted that ‘stories about disease (both stock and human) are partly a social metaphor, representing social fragmentation and Maasai loss of control over their physical environment, which were major end results of the moves and colonial intervention’ (Hughes 2006: 172).

A CRITICAL RESPONSE

When I launched my book in Nairobi, critics took issue (among other things) with what it said about Maasai perceptions of the environmental attributes of Laikipia. One of the more considered responses came from a conservation biologist, who shall remain nameless. He sought to use 'natural' science to disprove my research findings, implicitly questioning the veracity of Maasai oral history—in particular the picture my informants had painted of a territory that was environmentally superior to the one they were moved to. The exchange illustrated (albeit in a small and anecdotal way) the disjuncture between biological approaches and analyses and those that are historical. These and other disciplines should inform each other, I believe, in order to produce more nuanced analyses. To summarise his points, he could not understand why Maasai described Laikipia as so superior environmentally to the Southern Reserve (specifically what is now western Narok District). This was not in his view a result of climate. It partly depended on what area Laikipia was taken to encompass, but it lies in agro-climatological zone V (semi-arid), while western Narok is in zone IV (semi-humid to semi-arid) with a band of zone III (semi-humid) around the Siria Escarpment. Large areas of the former Southern Reserve support agriculture, while most of Laikipia is marginal; his neighbours on Laikipia had just lost their second wheat harvest in a row. Rainfall on Laikipia is more, not less, erratic than in western Narok, and water sources not as good as the Maasai claim. Many large ranches are now dependent on boreholes and dams. With regard to forests, he saw little difference in the availability of forests in the two areas (a reference to comparisons I had made). As for grazing, possibly that on Laikipia was much better in the early 1900s compared to the south today, and the Maasai were responsible for this (through burning of vegetation and relatively high stocking rates). Bush encroachment, or the reverse when elephant numbers rose, affected tsetse fly distribution. Today, the only really good cattle country on Laikipia is in the southern part; the north is only suitable for sheep. ECF is a major challenge for livestock farmers, probably exacerbated by the higher numbers of wildlife (compared to the 1900s) and ranchers' reluctance to burn.

The story of Laikipia being a garden of Eden seemed very surprising to him in view of the outbreaks of smallpox, rinderpest and pleuro-pneumonia in the 1890s. He concluded: 'It seems strange that Laikipia should have had such a strong role in people's memory given that the Purko and Kisongo (sections) may not have been there for much more than 40 years in total. No question that malaria is much more of a problem in the south ... Laikipia is high, dry and relatively cold, so not good mosquito country. Altogether it seems to me that the case for Laikipia being so much better environmentally than the Southern Reserve is not convincing, although it is likely that the move itself would have created problems for livestock, and the Maasai themselves have created good grazing'.

OTHER POINTS OF VIEW

These remarks are ahistorical, since there have been huge environmental and technological changes in these two areas since the 1900s²⁸. Overall, his perceptions as a European conservation biologist must be set against Maasai perceptions of environment; the two are fundamentally different. Moreover, transhumant pastoralists make use of environmental niches such as *o-supuko* (highland drought refuges), *ol-purkel* (lowland wet-season pasture) and wetlands in drylands (e.g. swamps). They move in and out of these niches according to seasonal need. After they were confined to reserves, and forced to share space with other Maasai sections already living in the western part of the Southern Reserve, such seasonal migrations were severely curtailed, exacerbating their inability to cope with disease challenges. (In the old days people would simply move their herds away from tick- and tsetse-infested areas.) Maasai stock-keepers were subsequently condemned by European officials for ‘over-stocking’ and ‘over-grazing’—yet these were a direct result of confinement in reserves, and rising stock numbers due in part to belated improvements in veterinary support. Aneurin Lewis pointed this out in 1934:

As a result of British administration the Masai were confined to reserves and their migrations were much restricted. The infestation of large tracts of their country by tsetse flies, the lack of water in other areas of the reserve, still further prohibited such movements as occurred prior to their limitation to reserves. Obviously this restriction prevented, to some extent, the old Masai custom of abandoning foul land and seeking clean pastures; it was accentuated when the stock increased and created a congestion of the reserve²⁹.

The forests and streams my critic claimed were available to Maasai were either off limits to residents of the reserve, and/or were controlled by European landowners (notably Lord Delamere and farmer Edward Powys Cobb on the Mau Escarpment). This is a good example of how biology and history can complement each other; if one is unaware of the fact that settlers controlled the headwaters of vital streams that rose on their land, one cannot argue that these migrants got a fair deal³⁰.

I had also wondered during fieldwork why Purko Maasai should express such feelings of attachment to Laikipia when they had not lived there for very long. (The Kisongo section only came north to raid other Maasai sections.) But a lifetime is surely long enough, and on Laikipia the Purko (who benefited in many ways from an early British-Maasai military alliance) were enjoying a heyday (Waller 1976). Also, this brings us back to social memory: don't people everywhere feel nostalgic, in the troublesome modern world, for a time and place when life seemed better and less complicated? Furthermore,

Purko leader Parsaloi Ole Gilisho—a folk hero who tried to oppose the move from Laikipia and initiated the 1913 lawsuit—was born Laikipiak (a member of the section that once dominated the Laikipia plateau). In remembering and eulogising Ole Gilisho today, people also eulogise the territory he attempted to regain. It is no surprise that it has acquired the status of a lost Eden in the collective memory. Laikipia has become a key site of memory, in part imagined by modern day Maasai, many of whom have never been there—and who would not dream of giving up western Narok, and the Mara milk cow, in order to return north. Equally, for very different reasons, it represents a lost Eden in European settler thinking, epitomised by the writings of Italian settler/conservationist Kuki Gallman (1991), which are infused with an imagined sense of entitlement to and identification with her adopted land³¹.

I invited private comments, from a colleague in Kenya, on the views expressed by the conservation biologist. She brought professional scientific insights, as well as anthropological ones. She felt, generally speaking, that he was ‘missing the point’. For example: ‘Agro-ecological zones don’t mean anything to the Maasai, or any nomadic pastoralist. They move to get out of them, depending on whether it is the dry or wet season, or if there are droughts or not. Agro-ecological zones mean something if you are staying in one place, but they did not’. Production goals, and the kind of food people want for their cattle, should also be factored in. It made no sense, in her view, to compare the production goals of a modern wheat farmer with those of long-ago pastoralists on Laikipia. The latter had more sense than to grow crops there; it was brilliant cattle country, as was the central Rift Valley around Naivasha, but it was not the right place for wheat. As for rainfall, ‘the Maasai don’t care about erratic rainfall. Their entire production system is based on coping with that. As long as they can go where it *does* rain, it doesn’t matter at all’. Maasai cattle (indigenous humped *Bos indicus*) cannot be compared with European breeds (*Bos taurus*); they can tolerate much greater variation in food and conditions, and are much less susceptible than European breeds to diseases such as trypanosomiasis³². Also Maasai will vary their herd composition, and acquire more small stock (sheep and goats) when necessary. This allows them to take advantage of environmental and forage conditions; shoats’ disease and drought tolerance are also important factors³³.

Another Kenyan commented: ‘As usual with Kenya, people’s investments and motivations lie too close to the surface for them not to be seen and questioned. It is interesting that (the conservation biologist) chooses not to confront, with all his knowledge of place, the reasons why (white) settlers were so intent on moving there’. It was heavily promoted as a fecund and healthy place for European settlement ever since Scottish explorer Joseph Thomson and British administrator Sir Harry Johnston (among others) visited the plateau in the late nineteenth century (Thomson 1885).

BACK TO THE ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Perceptions, both scholarly and non-scholarly, are obviously shaped by socio-political situations—in this case, the charged issue of who has the right to own and control land and resources in Kenya's former 'white highlands'. My critic was basically saying: 'African oral evidence is flawed; romanticised claims conceal a biological *reality*'. However, he was assessing this relocation from the standpoint of one of scores of European ranchers who over time moved into the area vacated by the Maasai. Equally, I suggest social scientists and historians should guard against seeing 'conservation processes' (displacement from parks) purely in terms of 'equity and justice' for the dispossessed and vanquished (Rangarajan & Shahabuddin 2006: 360). We need to disaggregate historical/geographical/anthropological arguments from reparations discourses; it is all too easy to be seduced by the latter, and claims are often more complex than they appear at first sight. These authors acknowledge this elsewhere (Rangarajan 2005; Shahabuddin et al. 2007), conceding that relocation from protected areas is sometimes necessary in exceptional circumstances, so long as it is carried out equitably, transparently, and in a participatory manner.

It goes without saying that communities are not homogeneous entities that speak with one voice or represent everyone. Also, although there are strong historical arguments to support a restitution claim in the Maasai case, it is ironic that activists are using a British construction, 'Maasailand' (as it appeared on early maps of the region), to pursue their demands for the return of territory. In fact, Maasai did not customarily own land before the British (and post-independence governments) introduced individualised tenure, and the 'Kenyan' part of this territory (which stretched south into Tanganyika/Tanzania) was historically shared with other peoples including Kikuyu, Ogiek, Mukogodo, Yaaku, Il Chamus, Nandi and Tugen, as is evident from numerous descriptions of nineteenth-century trade, peace agreements, inter-marriage, cultural borrowing and other practices³⁴. But of course, it does not fit contemporary claims rhetoric to say: 'We want the land back, and our old neighbours and in-laws should have a slice, too'.

Insistence on bounded, ethnic distinctiveness is itself a colonial legacy of the concretisation of 'tribe' (see for example Lynch 2007). I have pointed out elsewhere (Hughes 2005) that contemporary Maasai obsession with boundaries and the expressed need to repel 'aliens' or 'immigrants' (that is, Kikuyu and Kipsigis people) from western Narok (this is what politicians *really* mean when they talk of population pressure and land rights) is a direct result of British reservation policies (also see Waller 1993; Waller & Sobania 1994; Igoe 2004: 9–10). As I write, more news is breaking of violence between different groups in Trans-Mara. Up the road in Narok town, William Ole Ntimama (MP for Narok North) is denouncing 'importation of voters' as 'electoral fraud', demanding that the Electoral Commission of Kenya 'inves-

tigate why in some areas there have been large numbers of immigrants registered as voters ... My constituency is not a dumping site where every Tom, Dick and Harry has a say on who should lead. It cannot happen under my watch'. He is quoted as saying he wants to bar 'immigrants' from voting or standing for election in Narok District³⁵. All this (and a lot more besides, if one had the space to discuss it) suggests that the big story in Kenya today is not primarily displacement for conservation, driven by western 'neo-liberal' agendas, but displacement by Africans of other Africans in order to grab dwindling resources, make money from land speculation, and consolidate votes and power bases ahead of general elections in December 2007. Can we broaden the discussion, please? We should not be fooled by the environmentalist spin put on some of these displacements, e.g. from the Mau Forests, about which Ntimama has also been vocal³⁶. (This article was written long before the results of the election were known and contested, triggering conflict. This is politically inspired, but with unfortunate undertones of the inter-ethnic rivalries mentioned here).

Elsewhere Carruthers, writing comparatively about national parks in South Africa and Australia, has noted that they 'are currently favoured spaces for reclaiming, *perhaps even reinventing*, the cultures of formerly disadvantaged peoples' (my emphasis). She warns of the dangers of communities using parks to 'spearhead campaigns for native title' and as shrines to ethnic nationalism (Carruthers 2003: 255, 265). As mentioned, Brockington highlights how 'human rights attention to land loss at Mkomazi now focuses on Maasai pastoralists to the exclusion of other groups' who lost just as much, if not more. A 'multi-ethnic account' of the shared occupancy of Mkomazi has given way to a Maasai hegemonic one. He cites Igoe, who 'found that, in Simanjiro, attention to the plight of "marginalised Maasai" acts to the detriment of the poor within multi-ethnic communities, with Maasai elites using donor support to expropriate resources from more marginal, non-Maasai villagers' (Brockington 2002: 115). Ole Kimpei and Galaty have rightly pointed a finger at corruption and hypocrisy in the Kenyan Maasai leadership, at the local and national level, which 'is seriously compromised by its conflict of interest over the land question since it is most likely to benefit from land alienation and sale' (Kimpei & Galaty 1999: 70). In this scenario, there is no simple binary opposition between western capitalism and African peasantry; some 'peasants' have become capitalists, who fleece their brethren³⁷.

MASAI MARA: LOSS OR GAIN?

Mara is a good example of the need to look beyond claims rhetoric to the historical facts. In contrast to Laikipia, fount and focus of rich social memory, memories of Mara do not appear to feature in the collective meta-narrative—but it is beginning to inspire manufactured claims, which are something else altogether. I have not found any evidence that more than a few Maasai were

moved from this 1510 km² area to make way for the Masai Mara Game Reserve. (More research would be required to establish this; I make no pretence of having done more than a cursory desk study.) My local informants say no one lived in this area all year round, because of tsetse and ticks. About thirty families used it seasonally for 2–3 months each year, and then withdrew. When the reserve was created they moved a short distance away, and now live on the neighbouring Koiyaki-Lemek group ranches³⁸. But one would not know this from the numerous public statements and debates on historical and contemporary injustices in Kenyan Maasailand, many of them online. Maasai anthropologist Naomi Kipury (n.d.) refers correctly to the alienation of ‘the best Maasai grazing areas by the colonial government and a continuation of the same policy by subsequent administration’, but includes Mara among ‘the better endowed pastoral grazing areas;’ this was true of the central Rift, but not Mara³⁹. Mukhisa Kituyi states that the creation of Mara deprived ‘pastoralists of some of their most important land’⁴⁰. Meitemei Olol-Dapash, a self-appointed Maasai ‘cultural ambassador’ living in the US, told an interviewer from the indigenous rights organisation Cultural Survival: ‘Before (Mara) was a national park (sic), this area was very important for grazing’⁴¹. The same source, a curriculum which used information from US-based Maasai contacts, states as fact: ‘The Maasai have been excluded from their best traditional grazing lands, which are now the Masai Mara National Reserve, Amboseli National Park, and various protected forests’⁴². This does not say exclusion from Mara was by force, but it implies as much, and fails to mention Maasai control of the reserves via the county councils, or the massive tourism revenues accruing to these Maasai-controlled bodies⁴³.

The area *that became a reserve* (Mara is loosely used to describe a much larger zone around the Mara River) has long been known as tsetse infested. Stock-keepers avoided it. Tsetse spread steadily north-east from 1900; before then, its presence does not appear to have interfered with human occupation of the area. Various reports between 1908 and 1914, commissioned by British administrators, indicated heavy infestation along the Lower Mara and its tributaries. By the early 1930s, tsetse had forced Maasai to abandon ‘most of the best-watered grazing areas’ in western Narok (Waller 1990: 88, citing Lewis 1934b). Lewis described how ‘the whole region of Osero (between the Loita plains and the Tanganyika border) is uninhabited, for one reason, because of its infestation with the tsetse flies *Glossina synnertonii* and *Glossina pallidipes*’, repeating a few pages later: ‘The Osero country stretching from the Mara River ... to the Tanganyika border is *totally devoid of stock and of native villages*’ (Lewis 1934a: 7, 24; my emphasis). This is unequivocal eye witness evidence. ‘By 1940, tsetse fly had made some 900 square miles (c. 2300 km²) of grazing land unusable—in effect creating the Masai Mara National Reserve’⁴⁵. We cannot be certain about earlier population figures, but a useful pointer is Sandford’s map of trade centres in the Southern Reserve up to 1918. There are only two marked near what is now the Game Reserve, but

outside its boundary, at Angata Pusi (east bank of the Lower Mara River), and Sianna (now spelled Siana, about 12 km north-east of the reserve boundary). None are marked in the area later alienated for conservation. This compares to clusters in environmentally superior areas, e.g. around the Loita Hills and plains, and at Mara Bridge, which suggests higher population (Sandford 1919: 95–98, and map facing 98).

Ntimama, a leading champion of Maasai ethnic nationalism in Kenya, is fond of making sweeping statements that ignite his constituents' imaginations while obscuring the facts. 'Look at the Mara', he told a meeting in Nairobi in early 2006 to discuss the Maasai land claim. 'Most of the parks in this country have been carved out of the Maa community land unit: Mara, Tarangire, Amboseli, Manyara, Serengeti ... these areas are all denied to the Maasai for grazing'⁴⁶. (Tarangire, Manyara and Serengeti are all in Tanzania.) He did not mention his lucrative stake in the two Governors tourist camps in Mara, on land he reportedly owns. Force was certainly used to expel people from Serengeti, Ngorongoro, Mkomazi and other Tanzanian protected areas for conservation. But with Mara, as mentioned above, local oral testimony reveals a different story. Maasai living near the reserve have previously told other researchers: 'We donated this place to the government for the animals'⁴⁷. Furthermore, recent press coverage of Ntimama's opposition to a constituency sub-division (which will force arch rivals to share revenue from Mara) quoted councillors in Narok North who 'pointed out that the reserve was set aside by Purko Maasai clan elders for the benefit of the community'⁴⁸.

Frans Mol, who lived for years at the mission in nearby Lemek, and gathered oral testimony in the Mara area, described how the game reserve came about:

*To come to some tighter control of the area (to prevent poaching and 'encroachment' by domestic livestock) the Mara National Reserve was officially gazetted in November 1948. It comprised the area generally known as the Mara Triangle ... In 1957 stricter laws controlling the shooting of animals were introduced. The Mara National Reserve was abolished in 1961. The then Kenya Government showed faith in the Maasai park proposal by offering the Maasai an annual subsidy in return for retaining the status quo in the Mara, **a region, which owing to the prevalence of tsetse fly, the Maasai could not use for their cattle.** It was the intention that the park or game reserve should be Maasai-owned. The idea was for African participation and to serve tribal interests by conserving wild life for the material improvement of the Maasai (Mol 1980: 49; my emphasis).*

This again suggests that few Maasai were living there. Waller confirms this hypothesis: 'I would certainly agree that parks didn't always cause massive displacement—and I would say that Mara was a case in point'. To his knowl-

edge, there were no very important natural resources within the game reserve boundaries to which herders no longer had access once it was gazetted. Tsetse fly would have made the grazing unattractive, though it is difficult to assess and periodise how much fly was present along the banks of the Mara. 'The only (Maasai) group with a long-term stake in the area of the reserve itself were probably Laitaiok—but they were out of the picture before 1900'⁴⁹. In the 1890s, when rinderpest, bovine pleuro-pneumonia, smallpox and famine swept through East Africa, large parts of Maasailand were temporarily abandoned. At the turn of the century the numbers of people remaining here would have been negligible. By 1902, 'most of the western plains were now empty and the Anglo-German Boundary Commission of 1904 found even the area immediately south of the Loita Hills depopulated by war and disease'. This led to bush encroachment, and with it more tsetse (Lamprey & Waller 1990: 20–28). Archaeologists could probably produce definitive evidence of past settlement, or its absence.

Today the Masai Mara Game Reserve is controlled by the Maasai-dominated Narok County Council, not the central government, while the adjoining protected area of Trans-Mara is run jointly by a private conservancy and Maasai council⁵⁰. Revenues from wildlife tourism go to these bodies; for Narok, they were reportedly more than one million Kenya shillings a day in the high season (£7,581, Rs. 6,15,374), before the latest tourism boom. Kenya made \$750 million from Mara in 2006⁵¹. But this success story does not fit with revisionist and restorationist rhetoric—Mara was among the areas lost, people were forcibly displaced, therefore paradise must be regained. Activists are now planning a claim to Mara; the grounds are unspecified, though earlier planning documents state that claims against the Kenyan government for greater benefit sharing from protected areas are 'grounded on the fact that the conversion of parts of (Maasai) land into protected areas was never discussed with the community'⁵². Fair enough; like the Maasai 'Agreements' and myriad other pacts between the powerful and the powerless, the degree of informed consent in this case is highly questionable. As for the broader narrative, McGregor notes in relation to Zimbabwe that they are at one level 'a means by which marginalised minorities have tried to redefine who they are and create a place for themselves—both physical and cultural—within a nation from which they feel politically and economically excluded' (2003: 105).

CONCLUSION

'Masai rights are a very real thing', wrote British colonial administrator Charles Hobley in 1904⁵³. (He was referring to their rights to the central Rift Valley, which his government grabbed soon afterwards.) Maasai land losses are very real, too, as are their socio-economic, environmental and political repercussions. On a psychological level, the long-term impacts have also been severe, as they are for any minority or indigenous community that has experi-

enced historical injustices; one cannot underestimate this bruising postcolonial legacy.

But we should also beware of the role played by both settler and indigenous African imaginings of landscape and loss. We cannot assume all displacement from protected areas was coerced, just because politicians and pundits say so, or that forced removals took place at all in order to create certain parks. What scholars of social memory (especially in post-conflict situations) call ‘purposeful forgetting’ may be a factor on both sides of the fence—settler and indigene. It contributes to a master narrative of dislocation and loss, especially strong in post-apartheid South Africa where it was institutionalised through Truth and Reconciliation (TRC) processes, and informed that country’s restitution project. But some now regard this as too simple a script, whose usefulness has waned. ‘As political fable the master narrative works very well, but as a basis for a programme of government the simple story of forced removals is increasingly problematic’. Walker describes how ‘the simple story of restitution is a founding myth in our new democracy’—but isn’t much help when it comes to resolving complex claims and determining the future (Walker 2000: 7, 14).

Kenya lacks TRC and restitution processes, and does not even have a land policy. But there are parallels with, and lessons to be learned from, South Africa. The very notion of territorial homelands to which people are urged to return is feeding constructions of identity, exclusivity, history, heritage and ethnic essentialism, which in turn shape land claims and the discourses around them, and manifest in racism and xenophobia. This is very evident in western Narok, in attitudes routinely displayed towards non-Maasai, which are themselves partly a product of British reservation policy and promises to Maasai that ‘aliens’ would be excluded from their reserve. Such constructions also produce ‘virtualisms’, every bit as powerful and alarming as conservationist virtualisms, and equally ripe for unpicking⁵⁴. In the Mara case, revisionist histories are not *erasing* people from pristine environments (as the worst kind of conservationists are accused of doing), but conversely seek to *re-insert* people into places where they never lived⁵⁵.

Shirley Brooks, writing about game reserves in South Africa, has noted ‘the peculiar ease with which it is possible to conceive of natural spaces as existing outside of history, or alternatively as carriers of a romanticised history’. Hopefully, we can all agree on this. I endorse her plea to place these spaces ‘back in history ... located in their political and historical context’, as part of an inter-disciplinary approach to the thorough data collection exercise which Brockington and Igoe (2006) call for (Brooks 2000: 63–64).

Notes

1. The first part of this title is lifted with thanks from Parselelo Kantai (pers. comm.). It was his response to remarks by European ranchers that imply Laikipia is an environmentally

poor place to live. Equally, it could also be applied to Maasai elites who cynically complain about the supposed loss of the Masai Mara, while simultaneously capitalising on wildlife tourism there. Maasai is the correct spelling for the community, speakers of the Maa language, but Masai will be used when citing colonial records, and also when referring to the Masai Mara Game Reserve.

2. British East Africa became Kenya colony in 1920 Hughes (2002, 2006).
3. Before the advent of parks, a Northern and a Southern Game Reserve were created in British East Africa between 1899 and 1900; the Southern one was re-gazetted in 1906. They partially overlapped with the Maasai Reserves (first established in 1904), since British administrators regarded the community as co-existing happily with wildlife. Maasai do not, generally speaking, eat or hunt game. Exceptions include famine situations, the killing of predators that threaten livestock, and periodic protest killings in or near parks, in order to make a political statement about exclusion and related issues.
4. Equally, I take issue with Brockington and Igoe's emphasis on the need for more *anthropology* in order to increase our knowledge of displacement (article under review). Granted, this is aimed at an anthropological readership, but let us hear it for history and related disciplines, too.
5. Campbell (1984: 40-41), I briefly discuss the history of Amboseli in Beinart and Hughes (2007, Ch. 16). National parks fall under the remit of the governmental Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), while reserves are the responsibility of county councils.
6. KWS mentions the latter on its website, www.kws.org; follow links to Tsavo. Kenya's largest park, Tsavo was divided into West and East for ease of administration. See Steinhart (2006, particularly Chapter 10), for a description of Waata and Kamba hunting in Tsavo. About 2000 Waata lived on the eastern margins of the original park, while Kitui Akamba people inhabited the western and northern portions of Tsavo East, no population numbers given (n21, 194). For other writers, see for example Kituyi (1998) who states Tsavo was 'established on ... Maasai land' (1998: 31). Brockington discusses parallels at Mkomazi, where a colonial administrative focus on Maa-speakers—which ignored the presence of Kamba, Sambaa and Pare pastoralists—has similarly 'coloured developments ever since' (2002: 37).
7. Publications include Western (1982, 1994). Brockington claims (2002: 139-140) that 'detailed political accounts' have been written about Maasai eviction from Amboseli, citing Lindsay (1987) and Western (1994). With respect, these accounts are not the equivalent of deep historical/ethnographic field studies detailing people's experiences over time and space, which would require gathering substantial oral testimony. Neither author claims to have carried out detailed research on this specific subject.
8. Brockington and Igoe (forthcoming) note the absence of good data on evictions generally—'there are few studies of actual physical displacement and exclusion ... and fewer still of the accounts of physical exclusion are based on good scholarship'. Although the following study will not directly remedy this lack, anthropologist David Turton (2002) is embarking (with others at the University of Oxford) on a major research project that will provide rare historical evidence on the history of the Omo National Park, Ethiopia, one of the most biologically and culturally diverse areas in Africa. This will include examining the impact of human use and occupation, but it will not primarily be a study of the impact of protected area policy on local people. My thanks to David Turton for sharing this information.
9. Lonsdale warns: 'The tension between history ... and narrative memories of what might have been is particularly acute in the case of Kenya' (2003: 46).
10. The danger is that this inference is then picked up by popular writers, media, scholars, NGOs et al., and disseminated more widely without being challenged or scrutinised. Myth replicates rapidly on the internet, where it is often presented as fact.
11. I have not checked the entire book, but memory and remembering is not listed in the index or adequately discussed as a subject category in the obvious places, e.g. Chapters 3 and 5, Histories, People.

12. Forced removals that took place in South Africa under apartheid laws are a different matter. Fabricius and De Wet suggest these had more to do with administration and control of rural areas than conservation concerns (2002: 145).
13. The diseases trypanosomiasis and human sleeping sickness are caused by protozoan parasites, trypanosomes, transmitted by tsetse flies (*Glossina spp.*) Trypanosomiasis affects cattle, sheep, goats, many game animals and camels.
14. Maasai NGOs and activists display an ambivalence about this marketability, protesting about outsider exploitation of Maasai culture and identity while simultaneously capitalising upon it (pers. comms. and observations).
15. Settlements to which tourists are bussed in from local lodges, for a fee, to see traditional dancing and buy curios. The word *manyata* means a warrior encampment, but it is often used incorrectly to refer to Maasai villages or homesteads.
16. The late 'Paramount Chief' Lerionka Ole Ntutu of Olchororua, western Narok, was among my doctoral informants, and I lodged with a daughter in Lemek during fieldwork in 1999-2000. He and his family enjoyed considerable political patronage under successive regimes, and the then president Daniel arap Moi attended his funeral at Olchororua, Mara, in April 2000. His son Stephen Ole Ntutu is at the time of writing MP for Narok South; deeply unpopular, he is expected to lose his seat in the December 2007 elections.
17. Emerton 2001, Box 14.2 on Mara: 'Distribution of wildlife tourism revenues to communities in Kenya': 212. The UN's Special Rapporteur states 19 per cent of the revenue from Mara 'is said to be invested in favour of local Maasai communities', but local people told him they did not see the benefits (Stavenhagen 2007: 15). More than 70 per cent of Kenyan wildlife is reportedly to be found outside protected areas (Chiemelu 2003, and others).
18. Thompson and Homewood (2002: 124-125) note the increasing importance of tourism to group ranches adjacent to the Mara, not simply revenue deriving from enterprises inside the reserve. My community contacts there only express a desire to control, via Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM), wildlife and wildlife tourism in these group ranch lands, and to receive their fair share of revenue from the reserve and game viewing in the dispersal area. Apart from periodic attempts by some local people during severe drought to take domestic stock into the reserve, e.g. in 2006 when offenders were fined and jailed, by predominantly Maasai authorities, I have not heard anyone at this level (as opposed to political/activist circles) say that they want to live in the reserve, or lament the loss of its resources. As for size: Masai Mara is 1510 km²; Amboseli 392 km²; Hell's Gate NP 68.25 km²; Nairobi NP 117 km²; Nakuru NP 188 km², but Tsavo West 7065 km². Source for all but Mara: www.kws.org. Norton-Griffiths 1995 discusses the Mara area and surrounding 4566 km² group ranches (this was their size in 1989).
19. For information on evictions of people from the Mau Forests, ostensibly for environmental protection, see Amnesty International Briefing Paper (2007). For Mount Elgon, where 116,200 people had been displaced by 2 August 2007, see reports by the Red Cross and Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN) at www.reliefweb.int/rw/rwb, www.irinnews.org; also the Kenyan press, e.g., www.eastandard.net. Lynch (2007: 55-57) gives some background to this conflict.
20. The Maasai of Kenya and Tanzania are divided into socio-territorial sections called *il-oshon*. The Purko—who bore the brunt of the second forced move (1911-1913)—is one of the largest.
21. Estimates from Sandford. He does not give a definitive total. Other sources on European settlement, the Maasai moves and opposition to them include Leys (1924), McGregor Ross (1927), Cashmore (1965), Mungeam (1966), Sorrenson (1968), Tignor (1976) and Wylie (1997).
22. Others have tried to quantify the size of pre-colonial Maasailand. Rutten gives a useful list of estimates culled from other sources (1992: 7, n8). He gives the total area of the two Maasai Reserves as about 24,000 km² compared to a pre-colonial Kenya Maasai territory of

- 55,000 km²—‘a reduction of almost 60 per cent’, 177. But both reserves had areas added and excised over time.
23. Olol-Dapash (2001) claims ‘an estimated six million hectares’ was alienated, but does not substantiate this. The figure comes across as a wild guess.
 24. This section is lifted from Chapter 5 of my book (2006), with some updating.
 25. These testimonies have been deposited on CD in the public library at National Museums of Kenya, Nairobi. They may also be deposited at the British Empire and Commonwealth Museum, Bristol.
 26. This Maa word means both human malaria and East Coast fever (ECF) in cows. ECF is a disease of cattle caused by the protozoan parasite *Theileria parva*, carried by the brown ear tick *Rhipicephalus appendiculatus*.
 27. Most elders were interviewed individually, often many miles apart, and (outside my immediate fieldwork area of Lemek/Mara) were often visited ‘cold’, which reduced the likelihood of informants producing prepared, collectivised testimony. Details of informants in Appendix I, Hughes (2006).
 28. Waller concurs with this assessment and much of what follows; in his view the biologist’s remarks are ‘completely ahistorical’ (pers. comm.). My thanks go to him for commenting on the article as a whole.
 29. Lewis (1934a: 53).
 30. Waller disagrees with me on this point, saying Cobb did not interfere with streams in this area (pers. comm.). However, I am inclined to believe Leys was right to question these settlers’ control of the headwaters (1925 edition: 107).
 31. Also see her website www.gallmankenya.org.
 32. My thanks to veterinary expert Dr Glyn Davies for clarification.
 33. My thanks to Deborah Manzolillo Nightingale for making these points. For an example of disease tolerance, shoats survive better than cattle under medium tsetse challenge (Griffin & Allonby 1979), and can therefore graze areas that are unsuitable for cattle.
 34. Galaty (1993) describes the history and current reality of ‘ethnic shifting’ in Maasailand, Waller and Sobania (1994) the complexity of social interactions over time.
 35. Kipchumba Kemei, ‘MP warns over importation of voters’, *The Standard*, Nairobi, 7 July 2007.
 36. Kenyan journalists Parselelo Kantai and Billy Kahora have recently investigated the multiple contestations in and around the Mau Forests which involve Maasai, Ogiek and other communities. A book is forthcoming.
 37. Igoe refers to ‘strategies of extraversion’, 2004: 10-11. Spear (1993: 14) notes the trend towards private accumulation by politicians who simultaneously proclaim their support for ‘traditional’ communalist values.
 38. Personal communication with contacts. The families include those of Ole Nampaso, Ole Muli, Ole Kipetu, Ole Naurori, Ole Tompoi, Ole Sengeny and Ole Tinka. They reportedly moved voluntarily to the dispersal area from Musiara, an area on the Lower Mara River which means tsetse fly in Maa (not found in Mol (1996), who gives *ol-torrobani*, pl. *il-torobo*: 393). My contacts say the species found there is most dangerous for humans, not stock, which indicates the presence of *T. brucei rhodesiense* or *T. b. gambiense*, the protozoan parasites that cause human sleeping sickness. Local Maasai use the word musiara in a curse: ‘May you be killed by tsetse’ (*Mikitang’oro musiara*).
 39. Article viewed online at www.whoseland.com.
 40. He rolls Mara together with the Samburu and Marsabit ‘game sanctuaries;’ the statement may well be true of the latter, but not, I suggest, of Mara. Kituyi (1998: 31).
 41. Interview by Megan Epter Wood for Cultural Survival Curriculum Resource (2003): 39; seen online. This came from a longer article in Issue 23.2 of *Cultural Survival Quarterly*, 31 July 1999. Olol-Dapash is described as executive director of the NGO Maasai Environmental Resource Coalition (MERC).

42. Interview by Megan Epter Wood for Cultural Survival Curriculum Resource (2003): 13. Ledama Olekina, a Kenyan Maasai now living in the USA, who was previously closely associated with Cultural Survival, was one source of information. My thanks to Lisa Matthews of Cultural Survival, who coordinated the research on which this was based, for clarification.
43. In a recent report on Kenya, the UN's Special Rapporteur states (quoting p. 81 of the 2004 Ndungu Report, commissioned by the Kenya government to investigate illegal public land transactions): 'Most of the abuses after independence took place in Trust Lands, including former native reserves. The Constitution vests the administration of these lands in the County Councils, which acted "in total breach of trust as custodians of land on behalf of local residents" through the irregular adjudication of vast areas in favour of powerful individuals and settlers from other communities, and the establishment of protected areas' Stavenhagen (2007: 10).
44. Species found in the area where the Game Reserve now lies were largely *G. swynnertoni* and *pallipedes*. He, and the earlier report writers, relied heavily on Maasai informants. In the 1930s, these game-rich areas of Osero and the 'Mara valley' were already popular with foreign hunting parties, who provided 'a useful source of revenue': 448.
45. This is not the current size of the Mara reserve, Lamprey and Waller (1990: 25) (n18). The historical incidence of tsetse in western Narok is described in Waller (1990), who maps its progression from 1914-1946: 86. This work, drawing on Lewis, clearly shows tsetse belts in the area that is now reserved.
46. Meeting attended by the author.
47. Oral testimony gathered by Parselelo Kantai during research in western Narok in 2006. My thanks to him for permission to quote.
48. Kipchumba Kemei, 'Row over Masai Mara after creation of new district', *The Standard*, Nairobi, 24 February 2007.
49. Personal communication. Many thanks to Richard Waller for sharing these insights. For Laitaiok Maasai historical patterns of occupation and movement, see Waller (1990) and Lamprey and Waller (1990: 20, 22, 23).
50. Kantai (2003) investigated alleged malpractice within this conservancy.
51. Karl Lyimo, 'Serengeti projects will kill off the golden goose', *The East African*, July 30-5 August 2007, p. 13.
52. 'Towards the Effective Redress' (2004: 6). Other information from personal communications with activists.
53. Hobley to Lord Lansdowne (Secretary of State for the Colonies), 13 July 1904, FO2/838, National Archives, London.
54. Brockington and Igoe (forthcoming). The term virtualisms is taken from Carrier and Miller (1998). 'Virtualisms imagine an appearance or order to the world, and then transform reality to match their image', Brockington and Igoe (*op cit.*, p. 3) of earlier undated draft.
55. At least, by all accounts they never lived there all year round. The reference to erasure is from West and Carrier (2004), cited in Brockington and Igoe (*op cit.*).

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