

**The Dynamics of Culture in an Urban Setting - A Study set in
Western Kenya.**

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DECLARATION.

I hereby declare that I solely undertook the original conception, execution and final synthesis of the work embodied in this thesis. No co-authors were involved in the writing of any part of this thesis. Certain persons acted as invaluable referees and they are thanked individually under the acknowledgements. If data collected by any other person was used in any part or form to help in the interpretation of my work, this was duly declared in the relevant section.

Crispino C. OCHIENG.

August, 1999.

DEDICATION.

The Research is jointly dedicated to my late parents *Joseph O. Obola, Gaudensia O. Atieno*, and to *Mr. Robert Sowers* FAIA, of Palm Beach California for everything that they have stood for in my life.

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ABSTRACT.

Research was undertaken in the region that the research refers to as Western Kenya. This region brings together three cultural groups. In spite of the diversity of the community groups, past research identified development within the region that brought about the culture being shredded between the communities.

The research undertaken set out to deal with two sets of issues. Firstly, the traditions that were manifest in the rural settlements in terms of kinship relations and patterns of behavior relating to important activities and rituals. There were also the cultural requirements that were jointly performed by kinsmen in the setting of the homestead and the related open outside areas. The second issue is the matter of the continuance of these traditions in the urban settlements

One of the basic assumptions underlying this research is the idea that any urban element of a regional town should be based on and influenced by the requirements of the surrounding culture. There are many reasons to support this idea. In most cases the majority of the residents of the regional town would be from the surrounding rural districts. In order that these people have a feeling of belonging in the urban setting, the respective urban elements should be responsive to their social and cultural needs.

Further, as an urban area grows and spreads, so it wraps round it and incorporates the surrounding rural areas. It is often the case that the urban elements that are on the edge or periphery of the expanding area are mostly those that are not formally planned. Often the building and planning regulations have not been enforced. Thus there is uncontrolled growth.

Past research in some towns has shown that the occupiers of the urban edge and other areas of uncontrolled growth still structure their life according to their cultural beliefs and also their individual and community obligations. The community would continue to hold on to those issues of culture that have been judged as necessary for identity and / or would provide security.

The research was structured to collect data from selected rural settlements as well as corresponding urban ones. The urban settlements selected were in the towns of *Kisumu* and *Kisii*. These two towns could be easily identified with a particular cultural group.

In *Kisumu* two neighborhoods were selected within the inner sector. In *Kisii* town, a settlement within the urban periphery, where urban and rural conditions met, was selected. All selected neighborhoods had been part of the urban landscape for over three decades. It was therefore assumed that the pattern of behaviors as well as adaptations made to the respective settings would have stabilized and it would be possible to evaluate the influence of traditional culture.

Research was also undertaken in the hinterland of these towns. Case studies were taken of a number of rural settlements. It was assumed that in the rural settlements the integrity of cultural behavior and the corresponding fit between community activities and their respective settings would provide a point of departure for comparison with the urban settlements.

This research has found that in both the urban and rural settings, the appropriate use of space is critical to certain important issues, to which far greater meaning is attached than normal daily exchanges. An example is the spatial relationship between the different levels of kinship, the context in which some of the themes for certain rites of passage should be held, and the general setting available for community activities.

The research has found that in the region of study particular meaning was attached to the spatial context where some of the cultural activities were enacted. Some celebrations for the rites of passage, forms of kinship relationships and events that involved the community required a specific setting.

The research found that some of the cultural events judged as being of social significance were scheduled to take place within the outside open setting. Spatial requirements and the required behaviour between some of the kinship members should be one of the primary reasons influencing the selection of an activity venue.

In the town, three forms of development were noticed. The first one is that within any of these towns, the expansion of the edge is an ongoing process. Those people residing in the traditional homesteads are absorbed in the urban territory with a consequent change of context. The second development is that with all the towns, the large size of unplanned neighbourhoods makes them important urban areas having a great social impact. The third is that with the increase of rental dwellers, there is a change from a simple traditional type of settlement to a more complex one, with a related impact on the enactment of traditional rituals and the corresponding usage of the related settings.

From the analysis of the data that was collected, this research has developed a recommendation in the form of policy guidelines. This should form part of the policy guidelines that may influence the structuring of some of the elements of a regional town. The types of urban elements provided should attempt to meet local cultural and social needs, and should be capable of providing settings that are congruent with those needs, and should be responsive to the customary usage of the open outside areas where some of the important regional cultures are performed. In this way the neighbourhoods would provide the preconditions for individual and group identity and social security for its dwellers by supporting them in their social and cultural activities and in the continuity of their traditional culture.

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CHAPTER ONE.

1.0 INTRODUCTION.

1.1 Introductory background.

In the developing world urbanization is engulfing the rural parts of the world turning them into urban territories. The rural residents have established their tradition, some of which is expressed in the structure of the built setting. It may be correct to suggest that these traditional settings are congruent with the culture around it. This research sets out with two missions. The first one is to identify the principle cultures and/ or traditions within a selected region in Kenya. The second one is to identify exactly where the cultural aspect is contained in the setting.

Recognizing the fact that human activities occur both inside and outside the dwellings, the research concentrates on those cultural events that take place within the latter. The setting has been referred to as the “open outside”. The issues are raised, identified and their characters defined through research.

In addressing the subject of tradition and the built environment, the report has been structured into eight parts. In the first chapter, the research as a whole is rationalized. Background information on the region researched is brought in to help explain the need for investigating congruency or lack of it between the built setting of the regional town and some of the traditions around it.

In the second chapter, precedents are identified. The chapter identifies culture as something that is identifiable with a community. Culture is collection of ideas for example traditions, taboos, beliefs, values and meanings and their attendant physical manifestation. Cultural landscape has been introduced to represent the contribution of the community to the character of the landscape. There are characteristics in common with all the communities so their similar philosophy influences the setting. This

chapter also aims at showing that there are two kinds of culture, both having an impact on the landscape.

In Chapter Three culture is stated and then analyzed. There is an overview on the different ways that culture has influenced the built setting. The approach that has been adopted identifies the presence of traditional cultural attributes in a setting. In the report this type of setting has been referred to as vernacular. This chapter makes suggestions about the issues of culture that should be considered during the research.

Chapter Four has been included to rationalize the whole research context as being one cultural region. There are shared values as a result of the historical developments between the communities that are found in the region.

The research method discussed in Chapter Five is the result of closely analyzing issues in the preceding chapters. Research recognizes that cultural issues are best investigated through a qualitative ethnographic research approach. Belief in this approach is because cultural issues are best understood by observing activities within a natural setting. In the field, research description and interpretation of the cultural activities was constructed.

Chapter Six discusses the cultural scenes that were identified within the built settings in the region. The approach to this has been to identify cultural activities under a common theme. The themes are traced from the rural into the urban setting. These themes are what the study has referred to as principles. They are the important aspects of the culture that a community continues to hold on to.

Chapter Seven discusses how the principles of tradition influence the built setting. Themes have been discussed separately under the traditional and urban context. Chapter Eight is the concluding one. It brings the research together in two ways. Firstly there are the summaries together with concluding remarks from the research findings that are discussed. Secondly it contains some recommendations that are the result of the analysis.

1.2 Problem statement.

1. In the traditional built settings there are specific layouts set out by the social groups themselves. The layout is influenced by their cultural needs. Layouts are structured to satisfy the need for activities that brings members of the kinship, spatial hierarchy and some of the rites of passage within one setting¹. These needs are demonstrated through the provision of convenient open places on the outside, principles of spatial dualism and appropriate settings within the settlement.
2. There is an increase of influx from the rural to urban. There is a growing need to preserve cultural practices, for example, marriage ceremonies, activities that bring within one setting the kin and rites of passage, many of which depend on the structural layout of the built environment. Therefore there is the need for those that are involved in the field of built environment to have a good understanding of these cultural practices in order to plan and design.
3. In the urban space it is the authorities rather than the social group themselves that decide on the attributes of the built environment, such as the layout type. Although officially recognized, these setting types lack the inherent capacity to respond to social meaning and thus lack the ability to engender positive appreciation by the eventual dwellers.

In order to address these issues, this study investigated the traditions of culture and the spatial requirements both within an urban settlement and in a corresponding rural one. In order for the same culture to be studied, there needs to be consistency in that the same people are studied within the two contexts of research.

¹ Ed. B. Faber, *Kinship and Family Organisation*, pp33-41. The term kinship is used throughout this research to represent a structure that establishes a certain pattern of social organisation. It is this structure that assists in classifying members of organisation through different means. Both biological kin and those that are acquired through marriage are members of a kinship. Evans-Pritchard, E. E. Descent and Kinship, in Ed., P. Bohannan, J. Middleton, *Kinship and Social Organisation*, pp 151-154.
White, L. A., Dilligham, B., *Basic Concepts in anthropology, The Concept of Culture*, p10-12.

It is in the rural context that traditions are first identified. In the urban context, the vernacular and cultural requirements are reconfirmed within the spaces of the urban setting. Cultural needs and corresponding spatial requirements are looked at from a developmental angle. This type of approach should assist the research with formulating recommendations for an urban setting that takes cognizance of the region's cultural values.

1.3 Justification of the Study.

There are three developments that have motivated this research. The first one is the estimated increase in the urban population of Kenya by the beginning of the 21st century². The second one is the increased expansion of the urban edge. Urban growth embraces contexts that were formerly rural where people still fulfil traditional cultural requirements. The third one is that in spite of residing in the town some people still practise their traditions within the new setting³.

Both the increase in urban population together with the expansion of the urban edge are ongoing features of the towns in the developing world. This research recognises other findings that have identified culture type as existing within a given territory of a town⁴. It is also recognised that tradition is still practised by the urban residents of the informal settlements⁵.

Studies have estimated that by the year 2000 the total urban population will be nine million out of the projected country's population of 35 million⁶. It is estimated that

² Ominde, S. H., *Population Trends and Health with Special Reference to Kenya*, in, Ed. E. S. Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and development to the Year 2000 AD*, pp105.

Obudho, R. A., *Urbanization and Development Planning in Kenya*, p13.

Ondiege, P. O., *Population Growth and Demand for Rural and Urban Housing*, in, Ed. S. H. Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, pp124-125

³ Ochieng, C.C., Yamada, O., *Society, Identity and Sense of Place among the Africans - The Luo Society of Western Kenya*, pp13-14, 36.

Ndeti, K., *Cultural Policy in Kenya*, *Studies and Documents on Cultural Policies*, pp52-53.

⁴ Rapoport, A., *Environmental Quality, Metropolitan Areas and Traditional Settlements*, pp41-42.

⁵ Alsayyad, N., *Dualities in the Study of Traditional Settlements: An Epilogue*, in, Ed. J-P Bourdier, N. Alsayyad, *Dwellings, Settlements and Tradition, Cross-Cultural Perspectives*, pp530-531.

⁶ Ominde, Op Cit., pp105.

the number of people will be unevenly spread across the different towns. At the time of the estimate, and within the foreseeable future, the towns were seen as lacking the necessary accommodation resources. Most of those that move into the town eventually live in the informal housing settlements⁷. Unless something is done, there are studies that indicate a worsening urban scenario, especially in housing⁸.

As a town expands it embraces the surrounding rural regions. Two problems are associated with this⁹. The first problem is that the community that is being absorbed already responds to cultural demands according to their tradition. Secondly, the nature of expansion is such that it physically encroaches on established rural territories imposing upon them new types of settlement, layout and thus new modes of behaviour. Spatial types that are introduced lack the inherent capacity to respond to social meaning and thus lack the ability to engender positive appreciation by the eventual dweller.

Past research shows that residents of *Nyalenda*, in the *Kisumu* town, still perform the cultural rites that tradition demands towards a funeral¹⁰. Apart from this being an event that involves the different kin, burial is still done within the homestead. Besides this particular attribute of culture, the structural layout of the setting has also been influenced by tradition¹¹. Kinsmen build in a certain way in order that they can relate to one another in a particular order. In the *Luo* community, the dominant dwelling taken from the entrance, should be for the family head. From the gate, there is an imaginary axis that runs from the mid-section of the entrance to the dominant dwelling. This is in spite of this particular neighbourhood being within close proximity to the central business district of Kenya's third largest town.

Ondiege, Op Cit., pp124-125, 128.

⁷ Ondiege, P. O., Obudho, R. A., Population Growth and Demand for Rural and Urban Housing, in, Ed. S.H Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, p123.

Obudho, Op Cit. pp21, 26.

⁸ Obudho, Ibid. p26.

⁹ Ondiege, Obudho, Op Cit, p123.

¹⁰ Ochieng, Yamada, Op Cit., p36.

¹¹ Ibid., pp30, 34.

Evidence from the past has pointed out that certain rites especially those that mark mourning, should not be performed within some of the urban settings¹². The character of these settlements is not congruent with the culture. As an example, during the protracted battle between a clan and widow over the burial of one Otieno in Nairobi, 1987, the latter produced evidence to support the fact that the deceased's homestead in Nairobi had not been influenced by the *Luo* community cultural requirements¹³.

For Otieno, when starting the settlements there were the rites that would have accompanied the ceremony and which the deceased had omitted¹⁴. After six months of hearing from different witnesses, Kenya's highest court was to rule that since the necessary cultural requirements had been omitted, the Otieno's Nairobi homestead should not be seen as a traditional homestead.

Compared to a rural person, the urban person in Kenya is more conscious of his ethnic identity¹⁵. This takes two forms¹⁶. There is the institution of kinship and/ or clan groupings that bring the people together. For example, an activity like a funeral or marriage will call for community participation. The second one is that to a large extent, ethnic considerations rather than urban planners influence where one settles in a town.

Two facts support the selection of the Western Kenya region for this focus. By 1989, Western Kenya was home to more than one third of the nation's population¹⁷. Firstly, when compared to the other regions, there is a high level of settlement. Due to the decreasing land size, people migrate to towns in search of "greener pastures¹⁸". Secondly, this province has one of the highest rates of urbanisation in Kenya.

¹² Cohen D.W., Atieno O.S., *Burying S.M.*, The politics of knowledge and the sociology of power in Africa pp25, 57-61, 114.

¹³ Ibid., pp41-42.

¹⁴ Ibid., p41

¹⁵ Ndeti, Op Cit., p53.

¹⁶ Ibid., pp53-54..

¹⁷ Odingo, R. S., Sustainable Agricultural Development in Kenya and Competing Needs for Agricultural Land to the Year 2000 AD, in, Ed. S. H. Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, pp78-79.

¹⁸ Obudho, Op Cit., p19.

1.4 Overview of Identification of cultural heritage in Kenya.

From the early 60's efforts have been put in place from different quarters to identify a culture that would represent the Kenyan people¹⁹. This has included both non-material and material culture. The first type included forms of dance, song and oral literature. In the second type there is the clothing, objects of arts and built artefacts. The different approaches to identify the Kenya national culture have been judged to have had minimal success²⁰. At the time, the country was seen as lacking any form of institution that would have supported the development of a cultural idea.

There are those that are of the opinion that some of the directions that had been taken to identify the Kenya national culture should not be dismissed completely²¹. Different achievements include introducing Swahili as a national language, getting people to be involved in traditional arts, and giving recognition to traditional songs and dances, among other things²².

Among the many different forms of non-material culture that seemed to have gained footing, was oral literature. This was to be expressed in one's mother tongue. Several views were expressed in support of the argument for the promotion of oral literature²³. First, was that a mother tongue gave one a sense of identity²⁴. By embracing other cultures, the Kenyan people were found to be losing theirs. The second view was that the local stories were best told in the language of their origin²⁵. This was more a

¹⁹ Maxon, R. M., *Social and Cultural Changes*, in, Ed. B. A. Ogot, W. R. Ochieng, *Decolonizing and Independent in Kenya 1940-93*, pp138-139.

Ogot, B. A., *The Construction of a National Culture*, in, B. A. Ogot, W. R. Ochieng, *Decolonizing and Independence in Kenya 1940-93*, pp216-217, 218.

Ndeti, *Op Cit.*, pp52-53.

²⁰Maxon., *Op Cit.*, pp141-142.

Ogot, *Op Cit.*, p261. Further reading on this see, Kipkorir, B. E., *Towards a Cultural Policy for Kenya: Some Views*, Institute of African Studies Seminar Paper No 13, January 29, 1980.

²¹*Ibid.*, pp216-217.

²²*Ibid.*, p217.

²³*Ibid.*, pp223, 231-232.

²⁴*Ibid.*, p223.

²⁵*Ibid.*, p223.

popular view that aimed at getting writings to the wider masses. The development of both ideas took the form of some of the authors writing texts in their mother tongue²⁶.

While supporting the argument for the development of regional languages and literature, Ogot views language as one of the elements of culture that should be relied upon to help in defining a regional culture²⁷. Being a multicultural society there are views that Kenya could not be represented by a single culture. Ogot and Acholla-Ayayo share this sentiment²⁸. It is the different regional cultures that would truly be representatives of the Kenyan national culture.

From another viewpoint, the national museum took up the role of preserving the material culture that was judged as representing the Kenyan cultural heritage²⁹ (diagram 1.1). Selected materials were restored to their original form. Efforts are being made to protect them from any further damage. Examples of cultural landscape and elements that have been selected for preservation include *Kipande* house, old provincial headquarters, all in Nairobi, old Town *Mombasa* town, Fort Jesus complex in *Mombasa*, and the *Gedi* ruins.

Critics of the idea of expressing culture in a displayed manner are concerned with it being shown as something that is static³⁰. Rather than this, culture should be seen as something that is living. Okot p'Bitek succinctly identifies the nature of culture by drawing a similarity between this and philosophy. Culture is in fact a philosophy and as such is lived and celebrated in society³¹. Rather than being concerned with the more recent cultural period, the museum was judged to be concerned with the human

²⁶Ibid., pp223-224.

²⁷Ibid., pp224-225.

²⁸Ibid. pp235.

Acholla-Ayayo, A. B. C., *Cultural Code and Population Change in Kenya*, in, *Op Cit.*, pp64.

²⁹ Ogot, *Op Cit.*, pp216.

Maxon, *Op Cit.* p140.

Ndeti, *Op Cit.* pp40-43.

³⁰ Ogot, *Op Cit.*, pp217, 234.

³¹Ibid., pp233-234. For further reading see, Okot p'Bitek, *Artist, The Ruler*, Nairobi, Heniemann Kenya Ltd, 1986, p13-14.

origins and the Stone Age³². Built themes that depicted recent historical happenings were missing in the representation.

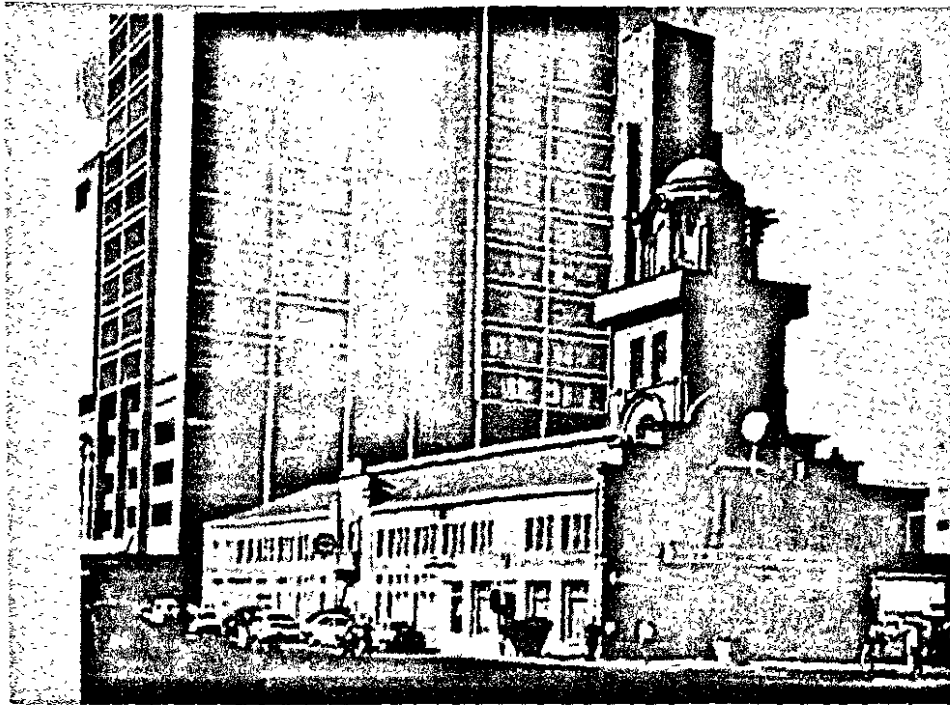


Diagram 1.1. Kipande House in Nairobi has been adopted by the Museum of Kenya as cultural material. It represents Kenya's historical period of the first half of this century.

Three characteristics emerged about culture. The first is that there are different ways that culture can be expressed. Included in this is the music, forms of dance, and artefacts³³. Second is that due to the many ethnic groups that are found within Kenya one can hardly refer to a universal culture. Rather than adopting the universal approach, culture should be seen in terms of the different regions and/ or different linguistic groups³⁴. Thirdly is for culture to be seen as living and should not be displayed as something that is static³⁵. In the next section, culture becomes part of life by influencing the spatial structure.

³²Ibid., p216.

Maxon., Op Cit., p140.

³³ Ogot, Op Cit., pp216-217.

³⁴Ibid., pp224-225.

³⁵Ibid., pp233-234.

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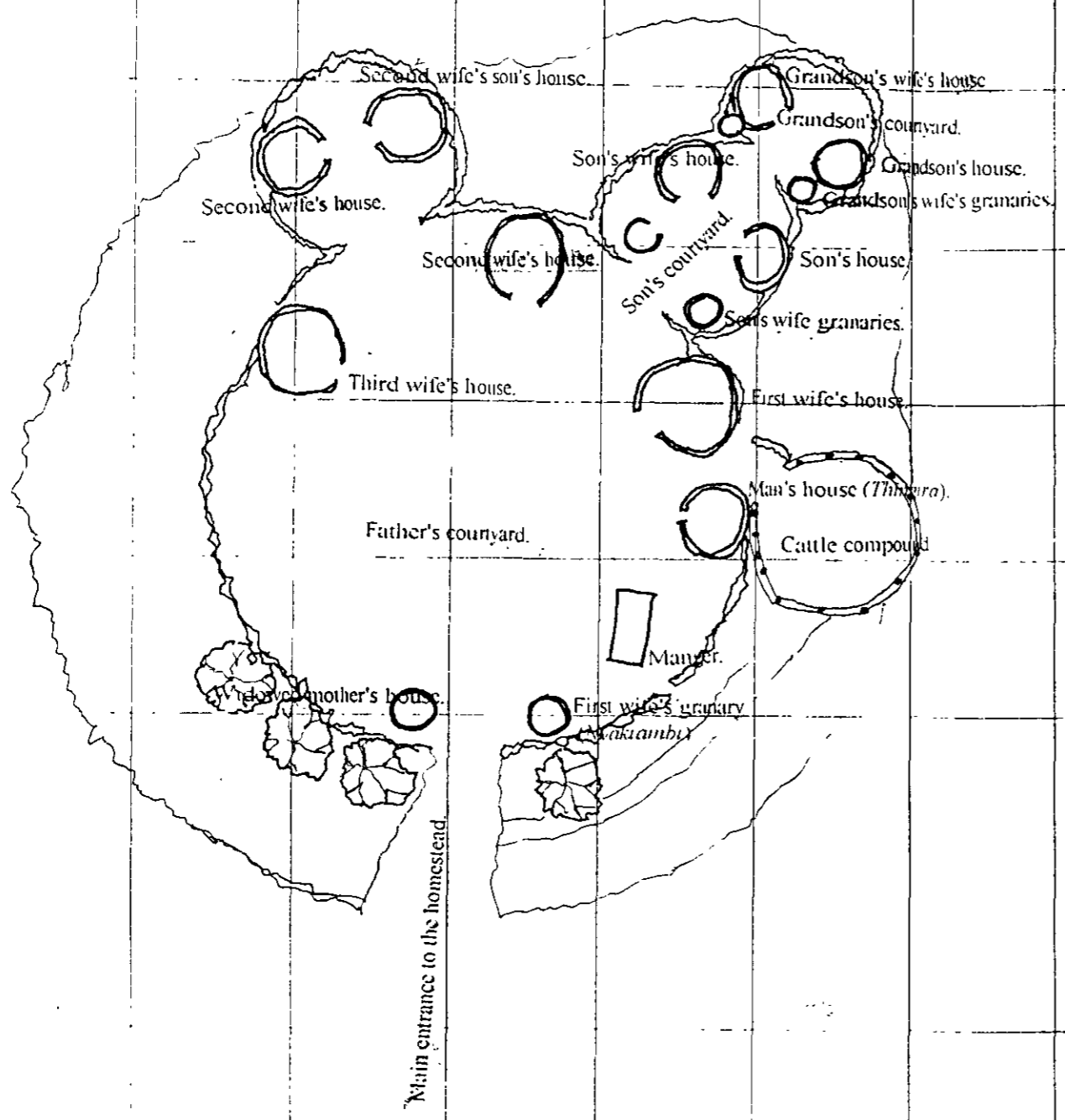


Diagram 1.2. Structural layout of a homestead in kinship - Kikuyu community of the Central Kenya region (sources: Anyamba and Adebayo).

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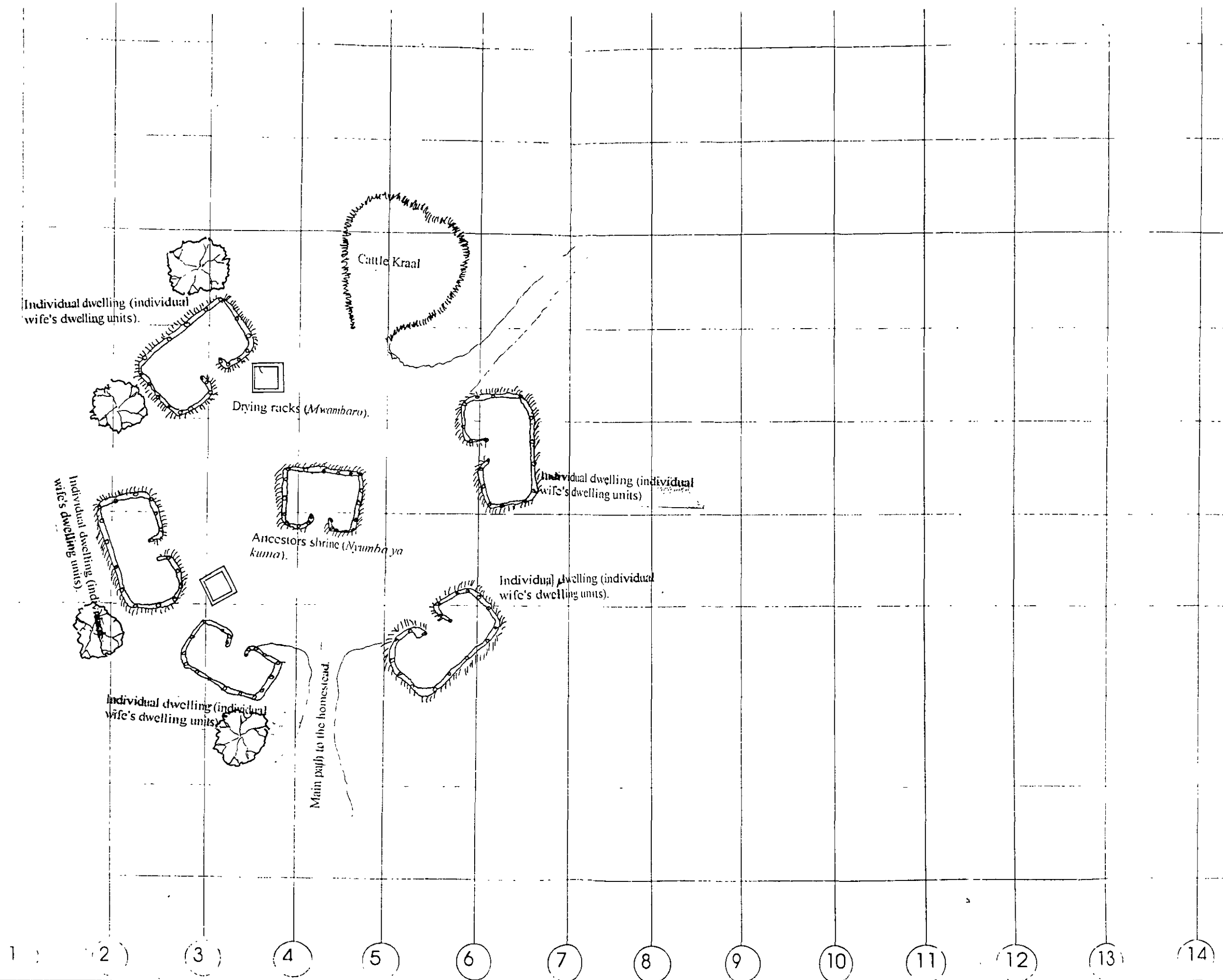


Diagram 1.3. Structural layout of a homestead among kinship - *Mijikenda* community of Coastal Kenya (sources, Anyamba and Adebayo).

1.5 Overview of Structuring Traditional Setting across Communities in Kenya.

1.5.1 Introduction.

There are two writings that have discussed the traditional built setting in Kenya. There is a difference in their approach. The first writing discusses selected building types without giving serious consideration to their context³⁶. The building is not viewed as part of the social system. With the second text, the built is approached as part of the environment and this should be understood before discussing the former³⁷. Some of the concerned issues are addressed by approaching the artefact as part of the traditional system by inquiring into the overall setting. For example, in the inquiry into the *Kikuyu* built setting the different elements within this are described from the aspect of the role that they have on the whole setting (diagram 1.2).

1.5.2 Social Constructs of Space.

Across Kenya, in most communities, there are certain aspects of spatial structuring that appear common. The open place in the centre as the place of focus, spatial hierarchy and marked element in the setting are themes that run through most groups³⁸. Settings are influenced by the cultural habits. It is worth noting that some cultural events will only be recognised when performed within a certain setting³⁹.

In a traditional set-up, the open outside setting is well planned and has intention. Some of the cultural needs are performed and get recognition in this specific place⁴⁰. Apart from holding activities that bring kin together, livestock are kept here as well. For example in the *Akamba* community there is a certain place that is defined within

³⁶ Andersen, K-B., *African Traditional Architecture, A Study of the Housing Patterns of Rural Kenya*.

³⁷ Anyamba, T. J, Adebayo, A. A., *Traditional Architecture, Settlements, Evolution and built Form*.

³⁸ Ibid., p38.

Andersen, Op Cit., pp116, 133.

³⁹ Anyamba, Adebayo, Op Cit., p67.

⁴⁰ Andersen, Op Cit., pp133, 172.

the open outside setting where the youths come together to be taught by the adults⁴¹. For these people, this is also the place where discussions that involve the kinsmen should be held. Places are provided for in the outside. The elements that are located within this, such as the tree growth, are viewed as similar in strength to the actual buildings⁴².

Hierarchical levels are introduced through two kinds of approach. The first way is when spaces are structured to introduce levels. For example, among the *Mijikenda* people of the Coastal region, there is a built cultural element that is located at the centre of the open outside area so that it is the only one whose presence dominates the setting⁴³. It represents the presence of ancestors within the homestead. The rest of the dwellings are arranged in a circle around this. The arrangement shows the link between the ancestors and each person in the kinship (diagram 1.3).

Another level of hierarchy involves body movement. There is a social constraint that members of a particular gender group should not access certain places. Among the *Akamba* people of the Eastern region, social issues are addressed within a marked place in the open outside area. Women are not allowed to be near where such seating is held⁴⁴. Kinship secrets are protected through this behaviour.

With the traditional space, it is not only the inside that is considered to be important among the communities that are in Kenya. There is the space is within the open outside area that provides a setting for some of the cultural events.

⁴¹ Anyamba, Adebayo, *Op Cit.*, p38.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p86. For further reading about this argument see, Denyer, S., *African Traditional Architecture, An Historical and Geographical perspective*, p21.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p85.

Andersen, *Op Cit.*, p188.

⁴⁴ Anyamba, Adebayo, *Op Cit.*, p38.

1.6 Aims and Objectives.

The goals of the research include:

- Identifying traditions of a community that are performed in a rural and in an urban setting.
- Identifying corresponding physical setting where those cultural needs that have been judged as necessary, are fulfilled. Cultural requirements that involve some level of activity of kinship members should be enacted within a particular setting.
- Making recommendations on urban elements that can contribute some possible direction for the residential fabric of regional towns to be an element of social identification.

1.7 Hypothesis.

1. The first hypothesis is that the absence of the vernacular in regional urban settlement constitutes a critical omission in modern urban development. Within the regional towns and urban centres, there should be a homologous relationship between the surrounding culture and the structure of the built environment. The growth processes of some of the regional towns seem to have failed to take cognisance of the vernacular tradition as being relevant to environmental development.
2. The second hypothesis is that both in the traditional and in the urban settings, many social and cultural relationships take place and are re-confirmed outdoors. Kinship members are drawn together in these outdoor settings.

The above arguments have been explored and tested by fieldwork. Selected urban settings in Kenya in the towns of *Kisumu* and *Kisii*, were viewed as possible case studies or paradigms for discussing the idea of the development of a regional town.

1.8 Scope of the Study.

The research will collect data from three sources. There will be the observation of ongoing social activities, discussion with the people referred to as key participants and reference to the existing writings both on the social history and also on the social and cultural anthropology of Western Kenya communities.

Research has focussed on identifying cultural activities that serve in bringing the different community members within one space. Activities will be limited to those that are reconfirmed within the space that will be referred to as the “open outside”. This would ordinarily have been referred to as a courtyard. The research creates a special connotation that will help in differentiating this from other spatial elements, such as the enclosed backyard. Although these elements are also on the outside, these latter ones are enclosed and are identified more with the dwelling to which they are attached. In this research, identifying the setting for cultural activities was necessary. Spatial elements support an activity by providing the relevant setting.

Key informants have been used to identify the important cultural events and also narrate them. Although the researcher was able to be present during two events of mourning, these and other kinds are not common activities. Due to the time factor, research has had to rely on the information that was supplied by the key informants. Because of the foreseen dilemma that would have arisen as a result of time, research proposed and went on to select people that are articulate in cultural matters.

Different sources of background information have been referred to. Basically information available for the research was on social and cultural aspects of anthropology as well as social history. Lack of literature material on Kenyan architecture brought some disadvantage to the research data in that there was hardly enough material for cross-comparison. This would have helped to verify some of the research findings.

Although there are three communities that are identified in Western Kenya, data was collected from only two of these, the *Luo* and *Abagusii*. Three issues necessitated this

decision. Firstly, the level of cultural influence between the *Luo* and the *Luhya* communities is such that when it comes to some issues, one group is able to represent the other⁴⁵. Secondly, both *Abagusii* and *Luhya* are members of the same Bantu linguistic group. The third has got to do with the time frame within which everything had to be completed.

Other reasons caused delays within any single setting. Depending on the case, it would have taken time to become part of the community. Engagement of key participants in other roles would also cause a break in the discussions. While waiting, we would observe events that would be taking place in the surroundings. There were also times when we would have to return to the setting to clarify some issues in the report. We can put claim to having developed information from an environment under normal conditions⁴⁶. People went on with their activities in a natural way while they were being noted. This is not absolute but was a natural form of observation.

The results of the research should be of use to those people that are concerned with addressing planning and designing issues within a regional town. This would also be useful to those that are planning sectors of a town⁴⁷. These would have their own distinctive culture. It is hoped that the study has contributed to the ongoing debate on the relationship between the vernacular and the modern in architecture and pattern of the built environment, and how these relate to the local culture.

⁴⁵ For justification of this assumption see Chapter Four, Section 4.3.2, 4.3.3.

⁴⁶ Burawoy, M., Et al., Op Cit, pp272-273.

⁴⁷ Rapoport, A., Environmental Quality, Metropolitan Areas and Traditional Settlements, pp41-42.

CHAPTER TWO.

2.0 CULTURAL LANDSCAPE.

2.1 Introductory Background.

The identification of the existence of a cultural landscape should be proof that tradition has an influence on the environment. This type of landscape is due to a community's interference with the landscape¹. It is suggested that establishing cultural landscapes requires the presence of both group and natural landscape². The presence of a community anywhere becomes a prerequisite for the establishment of character within the context.

Cultural landscape is the result of activities by several generations³. There is a combination of factors that bring about the character of cultural landscape⁴. Firstly there is the landscape with which that mankind would not interfere. Secondly are the places that have been intervened in to give way to human needs. Lastly there are the historical built artifacts and/ or the settlements.

This type of landscape is characterized by the presence of different kinds of materials⁵. In spite of the different generations, there will be the same common thread that helps to unify the materials in the landscape⁶. Materials of the landscape include

¹ Rapoport, Op Cit. p38.

Meinig, D. W., The Beholding Eye, Ten Versions of the same, in, Ed. D. W. Meinig, *The Interpretations of Ordinary Landscape*, Geographical Essays, pp42-43.

² Meinig, D.W., Introduction, in, Ed. D. W. Meinig, *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes*, Geographical Essays, pp2, 36-37.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp37-38.

Rapoport, A., Australian Aborigine and the Definition of Place, in, Ed., P. Oliver, *Shelter, Signs and Symbols*, p46. Through activities Aborigine people create difference between sacred and profane.

³ Meinig, Op Cit., pp44-45.

⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., p37.

⁵ Duncan, J. S., *The City as Text*, The politics of landscape interpretation in the Kandyan Kingdom, p20.

⁶ Rapoport, A., Vernacular architecture and the cultural determinant of form, in, Ed. A King, *Buildings and Society*, p288.

the built and other forms of artifacts. These are able to reveal the personalities, social relations and relations with the cosmic and/ or myth figures⁷.

The interpretation of cultural landscape depends on one's background⁸. Those members in the community have an emotional attachment to the landscape and will interpret the landscape in a way that is different from anyone else.

With modernity there have been changes in society that have altered the face of the landscape. Demographic changes together with demands from scientific developments have introduced spatial change⁹. The character of the landscape has been affected. For the developing world there are the new settlements to address, while the old cities have some traditional settings¹⁰. Irrespective of these, development is an issue that should not be ignored.

At this point it will be worth pointing out that while concentrating on other factors, minimal investigation has been carried out to gauge out the people in Africa's opinion on the landscape¹¹. Those few studies that have been attempted have used external values to investigate their feeling towards their environment. Because this was not seen from the people's perspective there could have been a misinterpretation of the values.

2.2 Recognizing the Cultural Landscape.

Representation of the landscape was at first recognized during the renaissance period¹². Paintings were then used to illustrate nature. The paintings focused on nature and failed to recognize important structures like dwellings, churches and other built

⁷ Duncan, Op Cit., p20.

⁸ Ibid., pp17-18.

⁹ Jackson, J. B., *Discovering The Vernacular landscape*, pp62-64.

¹⁰ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38-39,

¹¹ Chokor, B. A., *Research Policy and Review, 7, Development in Environment - Behaviour - Design - Research: a critical assessment in the context of geography and planning with special reference to third world*, pp6-7, 9. For further reading on this see, *Saarinen, T. F., Sell, J. S., Husband, E., Environmental perception: International Efforts*, s.l., Progress in Human Geography, s.d., 6, pp515-546.

¹² Jackson, Op Cit., p30. See, J. Ruskin, *Modern Painters*, Vol 3. The history of landscape is described. Rapoport, A., *On Cultural Landscapes, Traditional dwellings and Settlements Review*, A Journal of IASTE, p34.

forms¹³. The paintings showed the appealing aspects of the natural world (diagram 2.1). Another purpose of the painting was for this to be used as a medium of communication that could raise spiritual feelings.



Diagram 2.1. Natural landscape (sources, Jackson).

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, focus on the natural landscape was replaced by the introduction of the study of cultural landscape. In this, the cultural material, such as symbolic artifacts, signs, icons and specialized tropes in the landscape were used to assist in structuring the landscape, thus giving it the character of a cultural landscape¹⁴. These assist in the landscape being experienced, explored and in communicating the social system.

Cultural landscape is structured from social ideals¹⁵. The different elements of these link the group to mythologies, cosmology and social relations. These are ideal in the sense that an interpretation of cultural requirements is negotiable¹⁶. However, the basic cultural requirements are there in order that they can provide rules about how to

¹³ Rapoport, Ibid. p32.

¹⁴ Duncan, Op Cit., p20.

¹⁵ Rapoport, Op cit, p36.

¹⁶ Duncan, Op Cit., pp16-18.

go about different roles¹⁷ (diagram 2.2). In any group, there are the principles of culture that help in guiding a community with the interpretation of the cultural needs¹⁸.



Diagram 2.2. Cultural landscape, (sources Meinig)

Elements that define the cultural landscape should be the result of input by several generations¹⁹. Each generation has its own spatial preference²⁰. Demographic changes and the development of the field of science themselves bring about changes. Although the elements are from different generations, some of the issues across the board will be addressed in a consistent manner that show a thread running through the different generations²¹.

¹⁷ Rapoport, Op cit., pp36.

Duncan, Op Cit., p17.

¹⁸ Duncan, Ibid., pp17-18.

Rapoport, Op cit., pp35-36.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p283-305.

¹⁹ Meinig, Op Cit., pp44-45.

²⁰ Jackson, Op Cit., p28.

²¹ Rapoport, Op Cit., p288.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38,

As a product of antiquity, cultural landscape is rich in cultural material²². It is a chronology of the events that have taken place. The presence of physical evidence in the landscape gives meaning to the different places. There are issues that are best explained from the historical perspective.

Looking at it on another level, cultural landscape can signify different meanings to different people depending on the background²³. There is the view of those from within and also of those people from without. To those within, landscape is part of their material cultural heritage²⁴. There are emotional qualities that should be attached to this. This view explain the role of material cultural as being part of the social system. Those from within readily accept issues, while outsiders are in a position of objectivity when looking at the material of the landscape²⁵. They are able to question the rationale of some issues. A better rationale on culture should be possible through the juxtaposition of the outsider and an insider's view²⁶.

For some people, there is something in the nature of urban artifacts that can only be grasped through the actual experience of them²⁷. Without being part of the experience, it is highly unlikely that one will easily comprehend the nature of place.

Others, like Yi-Fu Tuan and Meinig, suggest that actually learning informs one on the way that landscape should be interpreted²⁸. Past training has two influences. In the first instance it allows us to select the material object that we should focus upon. After this there is the suggestion of possible interpretations. Needless to say, the image we

²² Hoskin, W.G., *The Making of The English Landscape*, In the introductory pages the author claims that, ... *both archaeological unearthing of material and studies of antiquity are seen as important sources through which landscape can be understood.* pp11-12, 298-303.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp37-38.

²³ Duncan, Op Cit., pp18-19.

Meinig, Op Cit., pp33-47.

²⁴Ibid., pp33-37.

Duncan, Op Cit., pp17-18.

²⁵ Duncan, Ibid., p18.

²⁶Ibid., p18.

²⁷ Rossi, A., *The Architecture of the City*. P109.

²⁸ Tuan, Yi-Fu, *Thoughts and the Landscape, The Eye and the Mind's Eye*, in, Ed, D. W. Meinig, *The Interpretation of the Ordinary Landscapes*, Geographical Essays, pp93, 100.

Meinig, Op Cit., p34.

get only suggests the external qualities. Without proper knowledge, visual images offer a superficial view of the settlement²⁹.

One can be bound by a particular set of ideologies when interpreting the landscape. Ideologies can be as a result of one's background and/ or learning³⁰. In the text, *Discovering the Vernacular landscapes*, while discussing and appreciating one vernacular landscape, a similar vernacular elsewhere is condemned³¹. One settlement had a church, a powerful institution in the mind of a theologian. The other one had none of this. Due to his theological background, landscape was only recognized when it had an element that manifested ethical truth. The presence of the church showed the pious character of the landscape (diagram 2.3).



Diagram 2.3. Cultural landscape, (sources, Meining).

Cultural landscape is realized through the belief of the social ideals that are expressed both through the belief in the material and the non-material world³². The different

²⁹Tuan, Yi-Fu, Op Cit., p93.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp46-47.

³⁰ Jackson, Op Cit., p60.

³¹Ibid., pp60-61.

³² Rapoport.,Op Cit. p35.

Duncan, J. S., Op Cit., p20.

materials come together in the landscape to help define the social structure. Rather than being rigid, cultural requirements only provide rules upon which negotiations are held³³. As a result of the culture pool, landscape is identified with a certain group. In the next section, the changing nature of cultural landscape elements are identified.

2.3 Changing Cultural Landscape.

There are elements that are easily identified as having introduced a change in the character of the cultural landscape. Both scientific innovations and the change in human habits have introduced new perspectives to the built setting³⁴. Both the innovations and some of the new habits lack precedence in tradition. Modernity is there to stay and at the same time tradition is imbued with human qualities³⁵. These are two dualities that require an environment that compromises the needs of both. Urban development offers two opportunities for addressing issues that relate to these³⁶. Conservation and new development, are both opportunities for growth in a town, depending on its the age.

The constant improvement in knowledge brings about changes in technology, movement patterns and development of new resources. There are physical changes in the elements of the environment that also mark this³⁷. These bring change in that when social awareness is raised, a demand for unprecedented spatial requirements, and new groups are encountered. Although there are changes in the landscape, principles inherent in the tradition towards a specific requirement are upheld by community members³⁸. Lessons can be learnt from this.

In the majority of regions, scientific advancements have introduced elements that have been seen as destroying the vernacular landscape³⁹. Some of the new elements include bridges, forts, harbors and roads. New landscapes have been formed in place

³³ Rapoport, Op Cit., p288.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp35-36.

Duncan, Op Cit., pp16, 17-18.

³⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., p35.

Jackson, Op Cit., pp60-64.

³⁵Ibid., p64.

³⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38-39.

³⁷Ibid., p35.

³⁸Ibid., p39.

³⁹ Jackson, Op cit., p61.

of the old. Unlike the cultural landscape, the new landscape has not considered human needs⁴⁰.

As a first measure in addressing modernity the development of science can not be totally ignored. Landscape that has dual properties should suffice⁴¹. The character of the old and elements of modernity are both important for social development.

The second approach to addressing modernity is through conservation. Settings should have character that link with the past⁴². This does not mean maintaining the old *in toto*. Rather than retaining the old, the principles of that cultural landscape that should be identified. The past has got human qualities that should enrich the new.

This first approach to conservation is the idea of it being supported by the presence of historical settlements in the old towns⁴³. These kinds of landscapes were influenced by traditional needs. They link the context to history, thus making it part of the heritage.

Looking at towns from another perspective, the concept of a single city is a myth⁴⁴. Travel, migrations and the rate of urbanization have caused a dispersal of the population. For every landscape, there are the underlying factors that assist with the identification of each setting⁴⁵. In an example taken from Tokyo, Japan, in 1971 the city had 7000 identifiable communities⁴⁶. Each of these was a cultural landscape. This meant that particular forms of social behavior could be identified within each of these.

⁴⁰ Jackson, Op Cit, pp61-62.

⁴¹ Ibid, p64.

⁴² Rapoport, Op Cit., p38-39.

Janet Abu-Lughod, *Disappearing Dichotomies: First World - Third World; Traditional - Modern*, p11.

⁴³ Al-Kodmany, K., *Cultural change and Residential Privacy: The Case of Women in Damascus*, pp61-65. The research is able to identify two types of dwellings. In Damascus there are those that when built were informed by the traditions, and the recent ones that are basically being referred to as the modern.

⁴⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp41, 50.

Rapoport., Op Cit., p36.

⁴⁵ Rossi, Op Cit., p63.

⁴⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., p41. For further reading see, Canter and Canter, in, Ed. Rapoport, A., *Human Aspects of Urban Form*, Oxford, Pergamon Press, 1977.

Rossi's idea of studying the city through what he referred to as "area study" lends support to this⁴⁷. In his view, the city is made up of urban parts that can be defined together. There is the marked characteristic within each of the parts. Elements that are found within a defined area of the town are of a homogeneous nature. This is mainly applicable to the old towns that Rossi was dealing with.

There are two types of urban landscape. The first urban type is the traditional one. Character in these has been acquired as a direct result of their being influenced by tradition. With tradition, human needs are given priority. There is the second urban landscape that has been influenced by modern needs. Having no connection to tradition, this type of landscape does not become a repository of social history. In spite of the talk about the ills of modernity, this development can not be ignored⁴⁸. A landscape where hypothetically the two situations are allowed to meet midway should be developed. The next section sees how groups have used elements of cultural landscape both for social and symbolic purposes.

2.4. Features of Cultural Landscape Elements.

2.4.1 Material Culture.

Elements found within a particular region with their presence limited to a particular time frame are what can be referred to as material culture⁴⁹. These are identified within a particular group (diagram 2.4). Depending on the group, there are different types of material culture⁵⁰. Material culture includes the dwelling types, clothing, sacred shrines among others. The meanings of the different materials to the group are discovered from the social ideals of the group.

⁴⁷ Rossi, Op Cit., p63.

⁴⁸ Jackson, Op Cit., p64.

⁴⁹ Jansem, M., Public Spaces in the Urban settlements of the Harappa Culture, in, Ed. J. Pieper, *aarp*, Art and Archaeology research papers, p11.

⁵⁰ Duncan, Op Cit., p20.

Malaquais, D., You are what you build: Architecture as Identity among the Bamileke of West Cameroon, pp21-35. Among the *Bamileke*, motifs of arts on building and some forms of dressing such as *duop* is used as symbol. They indicate status quo.

Aranha, J. L., A Comparison of Traditional Settlements in Nepal and Bali, pp 42-46.

Toffin, G., Ecology and Anthropology of Traditional Dwellings, pp18-19.

The first example of the dwelling as a material culture can be understood from the way that the *Bamileke* of West Cameroon relate to house types. There are particular motifs that are used to decorate both the body and some of the dwelling types. There is also particular clothing with symbolic meanings⁵¹. These three elements are used to embody the owner⁵². Different social levels exist in the group. Adding on to and/ or acquiring aspects of these material cultures gets someone to the next social hierarchy⁵³. Social hierarchies are displayed externally. They are the group's way of showing one's social ambitions and with it one's status (refer to diagram 2.4).

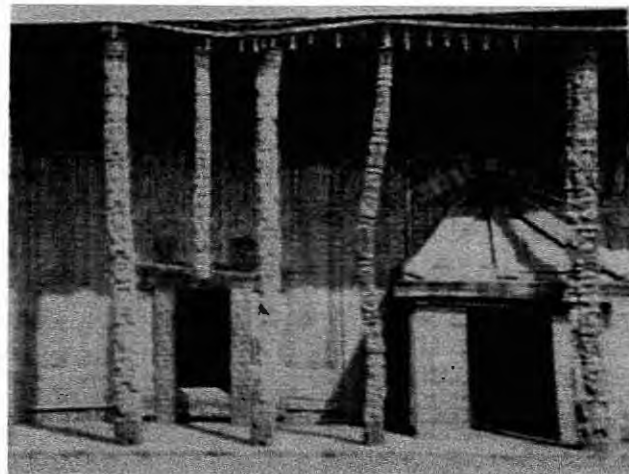


Diagram 2.4. Dwelling as material culture in the Bamileke community of Cameroon.

⁵¹ Malaquais, Op Cit., pp25-31.

⁵² Ibid., pp22, 23-25.

⁵³ Ibid., p28.

In the second case there are the *Nepalese* and the *Bali* community that both strongly relate their setting to the selected gods⁵⁴. Hindu, the dominant religion in these two regions has different gods, each having a role⁵⁵. Some of these gods are selected to influence setting type. Setting is also influenced by the social needs. The caste system requires that groups occupy certain positions within a setting, for example *Brahmies* who are considered to be the closest to the god *Brahma* reside in the immediate locality of the temple⁵⁶. The characters that are dominant in the Hindu setting are to do with proper orientation, symbolism and meaning⁵⁷. Both the elements of culture and the built setting in the *Nepalese* and the *Bali* community are taken to embody the cosmos and the social organization as well⁵⁸.

The influence of modernity on the people's attitude to material culture has been ephemeral. For example, among the *Minangkabau* people of Indonesia, the traditional family dwelling is important for the holding of rituals and gatherings that brings together the members of the kinship group⁵⁹. In the early '60's after travels and encountering new dwelling types, people partially abandoned the maintenance of these⁶⁰. However, due to social prestige that is attached to this type of housing, even those people who are on sojourn to distance lands, maintain the traditional family dwelling.

The second example looks at the survival of material culture in a modern context. At *Eressos* and *Epidauros*, both towns in Greece, it has been the tradition to have a special corner, *iconostassi*, inside the dwelling. Rites are performed there⁶¹. It is here where things considered sacred are stored. Rather than structure a dwelling to house the *iconostassi*, the element is nowadays placed on a table or at a window whose shutters are permanently closed⁶². The tradition of locating this element within the

⁵⁴ Aranha, Op Cit., pp36-37.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp36, 46.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p40.

⁵⁷ Ibid., pp36-44.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p36.

⁵⁹ Waterson, R., Migration Tradition and Change in Some Vernacular Architecture of Indonesia, in, Ed. J-P, Bourdier and N. Alsayyad, *Dwellings, Settlements and Tradition, Cross-Cultural perspective*, pp494-495.

⁶⁰ Ibid., pp493-494.

⁶¹ Jana E. Hesser, Pavlides, E., The Sacred Space, Rituals and the Traditional Greek House, in, Ed., J-P, Bourdier, N. Alsayyad, *Dwellings, Settlements and Tradition, A Cross-Cultural perspective*, p283.

⁶² Ibid., pp284, 287.

east wall has been maintained, for it is this that acts as "umbilicus" connecting the village house to the village church.

Different kinds of materials of culture are at times articulated within a setting to give meanings. An example that can explain this concept is the Asian town of *Kandyan*⁶³. Urban setting in *Kandyan* is structured so that the setting embodies the cosmic bodies. The character of urban setting is the result of articulation of different kinds of material including symbols, signs, icons and specialized tropes in the landscape to represent different themes. People in *Kandyan* have been inculcated to equate these materials with the heavenly bodies⁶⁴. For example the King is thought of as "The Great Gate"⁶⁵. The meaning of this becomes important in that the gate to the palace has then become the representation of a cosmic mountain at the center of the earth. The palace represents the city of god.

It can generally be suggested that material culture is an important part of tradition. It assists in articulating some of the social ideals⁶⁶. Dwelling becomes one of the importance kinds of material culture. It is symbolic in the sense that it is used as an element of social identification. It also identifies persons with another entity⁶⁷. Whereas some aspects of culture can be seen, there are also those cultural attributes that are also important, but they exist in the mind. The next section identifies the world that is in the mind or the non-material culture.

2.4.2 Non-Material culture.

Non-material aspects of culture are issues such as religion, social practices, and organizations, or forms of life that can be witnessed within a region⁶⁸. There are groups that structure their setting by referring to the ideals that exist in the mind⁶⁹.

⁶³ Duncan, Op Cit., p20.

⁶⁴ Ibid., pp21, 48-58.

⁶⁵ Ibid., pp20-21.

⁶⁶ Ibid., pp17-19.

⁶⁷ Aranha, Op Cit., pp42-46.

Malaquais, Op Cit. pp21-35.

⁶⁸ Jansen, Op Cit., p11.

⁶⁹ Marcel, G., Dieterlen, D., [Translated], The Dogon of the French Sudan, in, Ed., D. Forde, *African Worlds*, Studies in the Cosmological Ideas and Social Values of African Peoples, pp83-102.

Lagopoululos, A-P., Semiological Urbanism, : An Analysis of the Traditional Western Sudanese Settlement, in, Ed. P. Oliver, *Shelter, sign and symbol*, pp207-210

Guidoni, E., *Primitive Architecture*, pp270-295.

Non-material culture explains the homology between a group and certain other entities such as mythological and/ or cosmogony entities, and thus it brings the two closer together⁷⁰. This relationship points to the desire to communicate from the beginning of time, a point that is considered to be sacred.

One group that strongly believes in non-material culture is the Dogon of Mali⁷¹. There is the Dogon cosmogonic myth that explains how creation took place⁷². Several mythical figures are identified in the story. The group is also influenced by dualism, which is used in the pairing up of the farming fields and built setting on different scales⁷³.

The Dogon beliefs give the setting character in two ways. Firstly, is the reference to the mythical tradition that influences the structure of the setting⁷⁴. In order to represent these, there is the ideal plan of the dwelling, homestead and village that is based on abstract human nature⁷⁵. These are disposed of in such a way as to link social reality with the myth of origin. The built forms are also filled with decorative details, painted walls and masks that reflect an interpretation of physical reality which was a 'copy' of the diverse aspects of mythical reality. Secondly, in the Dogon myth, it is only when things are paired that the creation is complete⁷⁶.

In another example, for the Australian Aborigines, it is the world that is in the mind that is of importance⁷⁷. This Aboriginal world is based on cosmology ideals. The Aboriginal group believes that the first ancestors turned themselves into some of the features that can be witnessed in the natural landscape⁷⁸. Periodically, there is the

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38-55.

⁷⁰ Eliade, M., *The Sacred and The Profane, The Nature of Religion*, pp168-170, 172-173.

⁷¹ Guidoni, Ibid., pp270-295.

Griaule, Dieterlen, [Translated], Op Cit., pp83-98.

⁷² Ibid., pp84-87.

⁷³ Ibid., pp96-97.

Lagopoulos, Op Cit., pp209.

⁷⁴ Marcel Dieterlan, Op Cit., pp94-98.

Guidoni, Op Cit., p274.

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp284, 288, 294, 347.

⁷⁶ Marcel Dieterlan, Op Cit., p93.

⁷⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp45-46.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p44.

Guidoni, Op Cit., p48.

ritual movement around the land to remember this⁷⁹. While moving in a group, they stop at the places that embody the ancestors and enact rites.

As a concluding remark, non-material culture plays a crucial part in linking a group to the mythical, cosmological and other kinds of forces. The ideals provide channels for people to enter into the past⁸⁰. By being part of the sacred origin, people feel secure. This is achieved through a belief in principles of contradicting dualism, such as making the sacred past be part of the present landscape.

⁷⁹ Rapoport, A., *Development, Culture Change and Supportive Design*, p255. This has been identified as among the cultures that Aborigine people see as being capable of helping to identifying them. They continue to hold on to this cultural need. This has been discussed in Chapter 3.

Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp46-47.

Guidoni, *Op Cit.*, p49.

⁸⁰ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, p46.

Guidoni, *Op Cit.*, p49.

Marcel Dieterlan, *Op Cit.*, pp89-90, 94-96.

CHAPTER THREE.

3.0 CULTURE IN THE BUILT SETTING.

3.1 Culture, Setting and Society.

3.1.1 Introductory Background.

In the words of Eliade, no person can claim to be entirely devoid of culture and not be influenced by history¹. The action of modern non-religious persons, celebrating the Christmas season for example, shows their obsession with myths. Some of the activities that a modern person gets involved in, such as those that are enacted while taking up residence in a new place, marking a new birth, and celebrating a marriage are themselves acts of culture². Although man may appear not to be paying any form of attention to cultural needs, one is an inheritor of some kind of behavior that can not be easily shaken off.

However, like any other social idea, attributes of culture are susceptible to change³. While there are those values that will be completely discarded, there are those that a community will continue to hold on to⁴.

With time, activities that are repeatedly enacted by members of a group become cast into the system⁵. These will then need supportive institutions and places where they can be enacted. Events that involve members of the kinship and social relationships,

¹ Eliade, Op Cit., pp204-205.

² Ibid. p205.

³ Rapoport, A., On the Attributes of "Tradition,' In, J-P, Bourdier, N. Nezar, *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition*, Cross-Cultural Perspective, pp84.

Duncan, Op Cit., p15.

⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp255.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p84.

⁵ Lartey G., w., *The Fourth Dimension*, The Argument Against the Theory of Evolution Stages of Social Development, pp9, 50, 56.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp286-287.

Parkin, D., *The Cultural Definition of Political Response*, Lineal Destiny among the Luo, p11.

as well as different types of rites of passage, need physical support⁶. In this tradition, the built setting becomes the direct response to the cultural need⁷.

The general consensus is that the built environment is a repository of the people's history⁸. Approaching some aspects without looking at the issues of culture as a whole is like seeing setting as a collection of empty developed shells⁹. New directions in the development of the built environment should be learnt from the way that people have addressed that before.

Modern context has built setting with characters that can be described as coming from tradition¹⁰. Certain forms of behaviors that can be witnessed have direct links with tradition. There are also situations where the building character can be traced to tradition.

Setting should be congruent with the dweller's cultural needs¹¹. There are built environments that are either underused or completely neglected by those that they are meant for¹². In most cases, if the cultural needs had been taken into consideration this would not have happened. People put value on an environment that they can feel some kind of identity with. This section sets about exploring the influence of culture in the built setting both within the past and in the present.

⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., p38.

Duncan, Op Cit., pp15-16.

⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p287.

⁸ Pavlides, Jana E. Hesser, Vernacular Architecture as an Expression of its Context in Eressos, Greece, in Ed. M. L. Seta, E. Chambers, *Housing, Culture and Design, A Comparative Study*, pp362-363.

Through the evident that is provided by the built setting this particular research is able to identify three periods in the life of this society. There has been change in the ideas about the built settings.

Duncan, Op Cit., pp15-16.

Toffin, G., *Ecology and Anthropology of Traditional Dwellings*, pp15-16.

Janet Abu-Lughod, Op Cit., p9.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p39.

⁹ Abu-Ghazze, T. M., Vernacular Architecture Education in the Islamic Society of Saudi Arabia: Towards the Development of an Authentic Contemporary Built Environment, p232.

¹⁰ Kostof, S., *Junctions of Town and Country*, in, Ed. J-P Bourdier, N. Al-Sayyad, *Dwellings, Settlements and Tradition, Cross-Cultural Perspective*, pp117-118.

¹¹ Alsayyad, N., *Dualities in the Study of Traditional settlement: an Epilogue*, in, Ed. J-P Bourdier, N. Alsayyad, *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition, Cross-Cultural Perspective*, p531.

Derek J. and Vivienne Japha, *Two Missions: Case studies in the Meaning of Tradition in Contemporary Development in South Africa*, pp11-12, 13-15.

¹² Pavlides, Jana E., Hesser, Op Cit., p357.

3.1.2 Culture and Change of Social Ideas.

Culture is viewed as a typical lifestyle that is identifiable with a particular group of people and that has been passed down from generation to generation¹³. At the social level any activity that is repeated frequently becomes cast into a pattern. Culture also brings about order in the group¹⁴.

Culture is an adaptation to the external forces¹⁵. The outside forces are addressed in such a manner that the inner stability is reconciled with the external. There are institutions that are developed by society to support this.

When there are new forces, cultural dimensions undergo change. In any society, two types of culture can be identified¹⁶. The first type includes cultural values that have been judged by the group to be important for their survival. These help in identifying the group from the rest of society. The second type includes those cultural values that are of less significance to the group but are still part of the culture.

These can be witnessed within the different elements of culture. When there is a force of change, cultural needs that have been judged to be of little significance are discarded. The rest of the needs identified to be of social significance are kept and the principles of the culture are retained.¹⁷. Although the way of enacting the role may change, the goal still remains the same.

An example of cultural change where the principle is still being upheld is with the Australian Aborigines and the concept of 'going walkabout'¹⁸. This is one of those cultural needs that the group has continued to hold on to. Traditionally, members

¹³ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp286-287.

Parkin, Op Cit., p11.

White L. A., Gilligham, B., Basic Concepts in Anthropology, *The Concepts of Culture in Anthropology*, p20-21.

Lartey, Op Cit., pp9, 56

¹⁴ Duncan, Op Cit., pp15-16.

¹⁵ Lartey, Op Cit., p50.

¹⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp255-256.

¹⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p284.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p260.

Rapoport, A., On the Attributes of "Tradition", in, Ed., J-P, Bourdier, and N, Alsayyad, *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition*, Cross-Cultural Perspectives, p84.

¹⁸ Rapoport, Op Cit., p255.

walked through the land while experiencing different themes of culture. Of late, rather than moving around on foot, the ritual movement is undertaken by going round in a truck. Both the new and old have been integrated and a new way of enacting the rite introduced.

Culture has three different forms¹⁹. Activities, concepts and lexicons are all possible forms of culture²⁰. These do not necessarily mirror each other. There are times when material objects and symbols are relied on to represent the message of culture²¹. A built setting that is congruent with a particular group's behavior should be an example of cultural material. The characters of the setting would have been influenced by the culture of the community²².

Although culture has different attributes, it is a system that has to be approached as a whole. This is explained more fully by the suggestion of the existence of a cultural landscape²³. Within a certain context the built elements as an example of culture can only be understood by seeing them in relation to the surrounding. One can not understand the Acropolis outside the context of contemporary Athens²⁴. Some activities, for example, the reason why a community engages in war is not possible without an understanding of their cultural beliefs.

How cultures travel can be shown from the example of development in the building types in the *Himalaya mountain valley*²⁵. Members of groups of different cultural backgrounds reside within the valley. In spite of each community's settlements being isolated from each other, there are some cultural attributes in the build setting that are

¹⁹ Parkin, Op Cit., p21.

White, Dillingham, Op Cit., p9

²⁰ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp286-287.

Parkin, Op Cit., p21.

²¹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp286-287.

Parkin, Op Cit., p11.

²² Rapoport, Op Cit., p289.

²³ Ed. Meining., Op Cit., pp18-19.

White, Dillingham, Op Cit., pp40-41.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38-39, 42.

Lartey, Op Cit., p9.

²⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., p42.

²⁵ Toffin, Op Cit., pp15-16.

commonly found in the different groups²⁶. These settlement types are susceptible to external influence.

One of the setbacks to change in culture is the fear that people have of what may happen. The view of culture is of something that is secularized and should not be tampered with²⁷. Cultural change represents the unknown. For example, along the shores of Lake Victoria in Kenya there are four communities that live next to one another. These comprise hundreds of thousands of people. Each person here considers the other one to be a brother or sister. Due to exogamous rules and incest taboo, people here can not marry one another²⁸. No one from there is willing to question this.

A side effect of change in culture is stress²⁹. There can be change in an individual and within the community. It is highly likely that cultural change can end in the displacement of family and social structures³⁰. These are what provide identification both for an individual and also for the society. They are also the materials for social security. At the same time places are identified by the type of cultural activities that they represent.

In summary culture can be seen to be dynamic. Change does take place within any of the attributes of culture³¹. There are several attributes. When there is change, an individual and the society might go through a stress period³². With change there is the fear of the unknown. In order to allay the fear, some of the groups, such as the Australian Aborigine, have integrated aspects of modernity into their cultural activities. This is a form of psychosocial therapy.

²⁶ Ibid., p15.

²⁷ Acholla-Ayayo, *Cultural Codes and Population Change in Kenya*, in Ed., S.H. Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD.*, p63.

²⁸ Ibid., p63.

²⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp254.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p40.

Derek, Vivienne Japha, Op Cit., pp7-8.

Acholla-Ayayo, Op Cit., pp63-64.

³⁰ Derek, Vivienne Japha, Op Cit., pp7-8.

Acholla-Ayayo, Op Cit., p63.

³¹ Rapoport, A., *On the Attributes of "Tradition,"* in, Ed. J-P. Bourdier, N. Alsayyad, *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition*, Cross-Cultural Perspective, pp83, 87-88.

³² Rapoport, Op Cit., pp254-255.

3.1.3 Culture in the Structuring of Urban Setting.

In the town, there are different types of settlements that exhibit characteristics of cultural tradition. There are the old towns that were structured to accommodate society's cultural activities³³. There are some urban neighborhoods where recent interventions have been such that the principles of the tradition have been integrated into the structure of the new context³⁴. Another level of settlement in the town that has been described as having vernacular characteristics is the spontaneous settlement and other kinds of informal settlements³⁵.

Discrete cultures exist within the so-called urban agglomerations³⁶. There is no such thing as a universal culture that is spread throughout the urban fabric. In most cases, residents confine their activities and also the knowledge of the environment to particular territories, such as around their residential neighborhoods.

Evolving a place that one may refer to as urban means a coordinated effort that ties into a system of several urban elements. For a place to appear as having some level of coherence circulation, residential quarters, commercial centers and many more functional activities are integrated to act as a system³⁷.

When moving through the ancient Indian town of *Suchindram*, one recognizes space both through aspects of movement, spatial character and at times the ongoing activities³⁸. The town was originally influenced by the need to enact the *Hindu* cosmic rites. Religious festivals in the form of movement take place throughout the town. Urban elements have been designed to appeal to different senses of perception such as memory, body image, and orientation among others.

³³ Pieper, J., *The Spatial Structure of Suchindram*, in, Ed. J. Pieper, *arp*, Art and Archaeology Research Papers, pp65, 69.

Saleh, M. A. E., *Al-Alkhalaf: The Urban History of a Traditional Settlement in Southwestern Saudi Arabia*, p35

³⁴ *Ibid.*, pp35.

Abu-Ghazze, *Op Cit.*, pp239-244.

Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp38, 43.

³⁵ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp85-87.

Kostof, *Op Cit.*, pp117-118, 126.

Alsayyad, *Op Cit.*, pp530-531.

³⁶ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp40-41, 45

³⁷ *Ibid.*, p42.

Saleh, *Op Cit.*, p33.

Most times when the setting has not taken cognizance of the culture, inhabitants begin to feel the place as being harsh³⁹. The context is incapable of accommodating their activities. In some societies and on some occasions there is the urban spatial experience that can only be possible through body movement (diagram 3.1).



Diagram 3.1. Religious procession along the street of the traditional city of Suchindram, South India. (Sources, Piepers).

Vernacular includes planning institutions that should be incorporated to help in guiding the development of urban fabric as it relates to modern planning⁴⁰. Such an organ takes cognizance of the historical nature of elements with a view to including the principles and/ or the organs themselves into the new.

³⁸ Pieper, Op Cit., p69.

³⁹ Ibid., pp65-69.

⁴⁰ Saleh, Op Cit., pp33-37.

Problems can be faced in incorporating some of the demands of modernity, such as the rise in population, into the traditional setting. There are the basic cultural issues such as the need for privacy that should be considered, and the principles of these incorporated into the new⁴¹. When bringing the two periods together, value should be placed on those that will sustain the development towards a new system of spatial conversion and urban element types.

The planning that was followed in *Al-Alkhalaf*, a settlement that is located in the Southwestern part of Saudi Arabia, exemplifies the integration of tradition into the contemporary. The original structure of this was influenced by the Islamic religion's spatial requirements⁴². In this society the key elements that should influence the rest of the setting include the water points, worshipping places and burial grounds.

Before intervention by the authorities of *Al-Alkhalaf*, a team was formed from among those that were articulate in the culture⁴³. This body was to advise the necessary steps that were to be followed so that the settlement could retain its original character. Tradition was being called upon to be part of the modern character. The layout incorporated elements such as the court, that would appeal to people's cultural conscience and to the environment⁴⁴. Vernacular has the potential to make it acceptable in an urban setting.

With the contemporary towns there are attributes in the spontaneous settlement that make this the nearest example of vernacular⁴⁵. Some of the features of the unplanned settlements and also the structure are congruent with the dwellers' needs. There are also of behaviors of the dwellers in the urban context that are characteristics of what was found in the rural tradition. Settings in the rural areas are characterized by social needs. In a manner that is similar to the rural a squatter settlement has a layout pattern

⁴¹ Rowe, *Dual Aspects of Tradition in Saudi Arabian Urban Housing Development*, in, Ed., S.M. Low, E. Chambers, *Housing, Culture and Design, A Comparative Perspective*, p315, 319, 328.

⁴² Saleh, *Op Cit.*, pp47-48.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp35.

⁴⁴ Abu-Ghazze, *Op Cit.*, pp243-245.

⁴⁵ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp85-87.

Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, p298.

Alsayyad, *Op Cit.*, pp530-531.

Kostof, *Op Cit.* pp117-118, 126.

that is structured around community life⁴⁶. Dwellings are organized around a social activity place, which in most cases is a court.

The presence of different environment types within slum and/ or squatter settlement fabric depict a choice of alternatives while clearly demonstrating the existence of sub-cultures⁴⁷. Each group creates an appropriate and supportive environment⁴⁸. Whether an environment is supportive or not is directly related to the social structure such as the kinship, marriage institution and other needs of the group in question.

From the case study of an informal setting in Colombia, Rapoport has been able to report that this type of built environment has a salient character of the traditional vernacular⁴⁹. In the built setting there is a hierarchy of space. Some of the places can only be accessed by permission.

In Alsayyad's view informal settlements are vibrant with different kinds of activities⁵⁰. There is a similarity between some of these and what is found in traditional vernacular. Modes of existence, lifestyle and trading are based on tradition.

Inner city slums also exhibit characteristics of vernacular. In the inner part of Ankara, Rapoport has been able to identify qualities of the tradition within the built character⁵¹. There is the character of the place that is a result of several traditional parameters. These include relationship of the defined neighborhoods to the center, which is an element that represents the social locus.

In some of the non-western countries with written tradition, one can hardly draw a sharp line between urban architecture and a domestic agrarian one⁵². This is more so in the district towns. Over the years the continuous contact and exchange between the city and countryside has been a great agent of cultural spread.

⁴⁶Ibid. pp125-126.

⁴⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp49-50.

⁴⁸ Rapoport, Op Cit., p256.

⁴⁹Ibid., p298.

⁵⁰ Alsayyad, Op Cit., pp530-532.

⁵¹ Rapoport, Op Cit, p50.

As an example of the rural-urban continuum, there is an inability to distinguish between the rural and urban edge in some urban settings in Nepal. Here the reputed educated urban population and the highland rural population share generally similar concepts of dwelling based on cosmic order⁵³.

Rarely if ever is tradition completely abandoned. In a settlement at *Eressos* in Greece over the years there are some attributes that the built setting has retained. During reconstruction of the setting, traditional principles still influenced some decisions⁵⁴. Spatial divisions were still being influenced by the traditional use of rooms⁵⁵. Also the role of the building as a material culture both for the status quo and to be used in attracting a possible suitor for their daughter was retained. In this society, the parental house is given as dowry payment to whoever marries the daughter.

The characteristic difference between the modern and tradition can be seen in the urban development of a residential fabric in Damascus⁵⁶. The original structure of the town and nature of built setting took cognizance of the social needs for women's privacy. This had been properly catered for in the urban built setting. Compared to those of their counterparts in the traditional settings, women in the modern housing complained of a reduced degree of spatial privacy⁵⁷. Traditional homes have fewer and smaller openings. On the other hand, some of the modern residential buildings have high fences around the ground floor which limit the vision of passers-by⁵⁸.

Two separate studies that were undertaken by Hardie and Larsson identified tradition in the modern context. The study was conducted in the *Tswana* urban settings. Although Hardie was able to verify the existence of *Lohwapa*, in a research that was conducted later, Larsson claims of the artifact as having disappeared⁵⁹ (diagram 3.2).

⁵² Toffin, Op Cit., pp17.

⁵³ Ibid., p17.

⁵⁴ Pavlides, Jana E. Hasser, Op Cit., pp362-369.

⁵⁵ Ibid., pp364-366, 367-368.

⁵⁶ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., pp61-63.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p62.

⁵⁸ Ibid., p64.

⁵⁹ Larsson, A., Traditional Versus Modern Housing in Botswana - An Analysis from the User's Perspective, in, Ed. J-P, Bourdier and N, Alsayyad, *Dwellings Settlements and tradition*, Cross-Cultural Perspectives, p514, 523. For further reading on this, G. J., Hardie, *Tswana Design of House and Settlement*, Continuity and Change in Expressive Space, Dissertation, Boston University Graduate School, 1980.

In the first study, it concluded that in spite of the modern culture, the layout of the setting was still being influenced by the *Tswana* traditional culture⁶⁰.

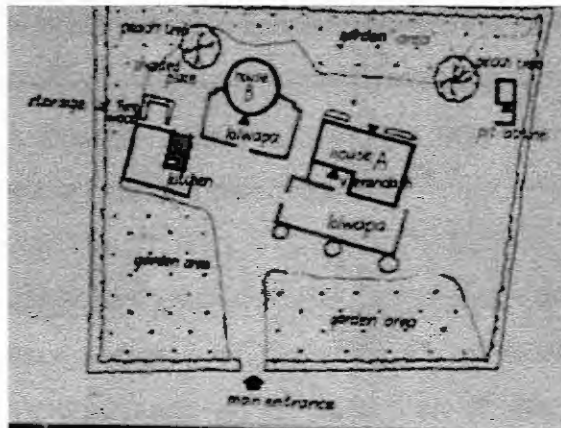


Diagram 3.2. *Tswana dwelling incorporating Lolwapa a traditional semi-private setting (sources, Larsson).*

In Hardie's study the internal court *Lolwapa* was still an important feature for social events⁶¹. Visitors would be received in this place and a fire lit there. Ten years after the first study, this primary space had disappeared⁶². Instead, people socialized inside the house. Speculation is that the change could have been the result of the focus by other groups in the development of the town.

⁶⁰ Recently, June 1999, in a personal conversation with Graeme Hardie research was able to verify that having re-visited some of the *Tswana* dwellings after this second study, he was able to attest that *Lolwapa* is still an important feature in the structure of dwellings of this people. Later on, Gwen Lesetedi, a sociologist from the University of Botswana who is currently involved in a research of this nature was able to confirm Hardie's claim.

⁶¹ Hardie, *Ibid*.

⁶² Larsson, *Op Cit*.p514.

When compared to their modern counterparts, traditional fabrics have inherent qualities that are relevant to social needs⁶³. Both in design and planning all round care is taken of the necessary spatial requirements. Traditional ways indicate how climatic comfort, light quality, aesthetic consideration, sensory richness, spatial hierarchy, congruence with lifestyle and cultural patterns have been addressed in an excellent way compared to their modern counterparts⁶⁴.

Traditional concepts are directly related to peoples' ideals⁶⁵. The structure of the traditionally related setting is influenced by the community's cultural belief. In the final analysis, tradition has to be considered with the idea of dynamism in mind. The old has got to be capable of accommodating the emerging demands.

3.1.4 Cultural influence on the Built Environment.

The relationship between culture and traditional built setting is that the underlying issues in one are present in the other. Built settings have a cultural base⁶⁶. Built settings are developed in order that they can support some of the fundamental social structures. Needs to be supported include rituals, relationships between the kin and the social activities.

There are several issues that should be identified when discussing culture and built setting. The first should be that the issues addressed in terms of cultural requirements are specific to a group of people⁶⁷. This factor of context means that such issues can only be comprehended within their own setting. The second dimension is with the congruent relationship between culture and setting⁶⁸. Thirdly, culture can also be used

⁶³ Rapoport, Op Cit., p44.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp85-86.

⁶⁴ Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., pp232-233.

⁶⁵ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., pp61-63.

⁶⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., p38.

Rapoport, A., Foundations of Cultural Geography Series, *House Form and Culture*, p46-47.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p256.

Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., pp231, 232, 238, 240-241.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., pp63-65.

⁶⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp299-301.

Toffin, Op Cit., p10.

Waterson, Op Cit., pp488-489.

⁶⁸ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp289-290.

to establish social identity⁶⁹. And last the settings that have been influenced by cultural principles have the ability themselves to influence⁷⁰. The community members themselves understand the expected behavior within the setting.

Built environment provides a framework that helps remind people of the contextual, the situation and hence of the expected, and culturally appropriate behavior⁷¹. There is an appropriate character within each setting and which makes easy recognition of this. Setting should provide the information about the spatial, temporal, social and other forms of ordering in society.

Culture can only gain meaning within certain contexts. An example of one such group that stresses the rationale between ceremony and context is the *Toraja* ethnic group in Indonesia⁷². For these people, culture rites only gain meaning when enacted in the motherland. When they are required to perform a rite, *Toraja* people return to their rural homes. Because of the tie to the ancestral place, the traditional dwelling unit is maintained as symbolic material and provides a reference point for social activity. When one's culture is located outside the context it lacks meaning⁷³.

Traditional settings have characteristics that are congruent with the behaviors and beliefs of the people that are part of it⁷⁴. The development of a traditional settlement is influenced by the need for a place to enact some of the obligations.

Congruency suggests that selected elements of culture can be studied through observing and documenting of behaviors within a vernacular environment⁷⁵. Built

Janet Abu-Lughod, Op Cit., p11.

Alsayyad, Op Cit., p531

Abu-Ghazzeah., Op Cit., pp231, 237-240.

Hadjri, K., Vernacular Housing Forms in North Algeria, p66.

Derek, Vivienne Japha, Op Cit., pp11-12, 13-15, 18.

⁶⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp57-58.

⁷⁰ Ibid., pp299-301.

Pieper, Op Cit., pp72-80.

⁷¹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp 299-301.

⁷² Waterson, Op Cit., pp488-489.

⁷³ Toffin, Op Cit., p10.

⁷⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp289-290.

Janet Abu-Lughod, Op Cit., p11.

⁷⁵ Abu-Ghazzeah, Op Cit., pp231.

environment frames culture so that people are always reminded of the required behaviors.

An example of congruency between the place and its community that we can learn from is found in the design and planning of some of the parts of towns in Saudi Arabia. Traditions have been incorporated in the modern planning⁷⁶. Characteristics of the setting include the desert fort-like feeling, the open space of different hierarchical levels and the feel of being near a revered place. Rather than copying, it is the principles of the old that have been incorporated into the new⁷⁷.

A context where demographic change introduced lack of congruency between dwellers and the setting was in the Algerian urban houses. Hadjri suggests that when ethnic Algerians moved into the formerly European dwellings their cultural requirements were interfered with both outside and inside⁷⁸. A required level of privacy was introduced. Islamic culture influenced the spatial requirements. With lack of congruency between people and built settings those from the surrounding regions will find problems being comfortable within the setting.

On the issue of built setting as cultural material for social identity the structural layout of a Hindu settlement can be used as an example⁷⁹. Hindu people have different caste systems. In a typical settlement in the district of South India where two members of the caste system have settled, there is a distinct building type and also a cluster unit for the *Brahma* people and a separate one for the *Newar*⁸⁰. The former is the priestly caste and the latter is the laborer's one. For each of the cluster there is a temple.

A similar theme of built setting that is influenced by the belief of culture is found on the slopes of the *Himalaya Mountain*. The decision about the dwelling type is pre-

⁷⁶Ibid., pp239-240.

⁷⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp251-252.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p39.

Abu-Ghazzel, Op Cit., pp239-240.

⁷⁸ Hadjri, Op Cit. p66. For further reading on this see, J. Gottmann, *Locale and Architecture*, in, *Landscape*, Vol. VII No. 1, Autumn 1957, p20.

⁷⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit., p58.

According to the *Collins English Dictionary and Thesaurus*, p169, the word *Caste* is used to describe the four hereditary classes into which Hindu society is divided.

⁸⁰ Rapoport, Ibid., p58.

determined by one's caste system⁸¹. Irrespective of the resources and other contextual forces, it is one's caste system that is a decisive factor on the type of dwelling used.

Built setting becomes permanent when the people from the region have an identity with it. With the quest for identity, it is necessary to be able to recognize some of the local cultural characteristics. In two studies of early missionary settlements in South Africa, Derek and Vivienne Japha are able to show the setting of one study as lacking an identity while the other one has been readily accepted⁸².

From the start, the settlement at *Genadendal* was influenced by missionary ideals. The surrounding culture was completely ignored⁸³. Due to the demographic changes the people who now reside in this settlement do not relate to any of the features that are embedded within the structure of the settlement. Setting has since been judged to lack identity⁸⁴.

Unlike *Genadendal*, the setting at *Healdtown* was a result of a collaboration of ideas between the culture of the missionaries and that of the *Xhosa* people who had hailed from the surroundings⁸⁵. People could easily relate their memories to the structure of their setting⁸⁶. The built language that was developed when *Healdtown* was being started has since become a feature of the landscape in the region.

An example of how space can influence activity is evident during the ongoing religious ceremonies in the small Indian town of *Suchindram*⁸⁷. The structural layout of this town has been influenced by cosmic ideals⁸⁸. The urban structure of *Suchindram* is an architectural transposition of basic rules of spatial perception, which is not restricted to vision alone, but applies rather to a whole body experience. Memories of culture trigger off the behavior in the people who are taking part in the processional worship.

⁸¹ Toffin, Op Cit., p12.

⁸² Derek, Vivienne Japha, Op Cit., pp11-12, 13-15., 18.

⁸³ Ibid., p11.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p11.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p13

⁸⁶ Ibid., pp13-14, 18.

⁸⁷ Pieper, Op Cit., pp72-80.

⁸⁸ Ibid., pp72-80.

There is the nature of activity that vernacular space should characterize⁸⁹. When this happens, then those who understand can easily behave in the expected manner. The various systems are therefore congruent.

During the procession, worshippers stop at different places where they engage in religious rites⁹⁰. Depending on the place, there can be movement towards, around, away and beside the center of urban life (diagram 3.3). Each movement has a meaning attached to it.

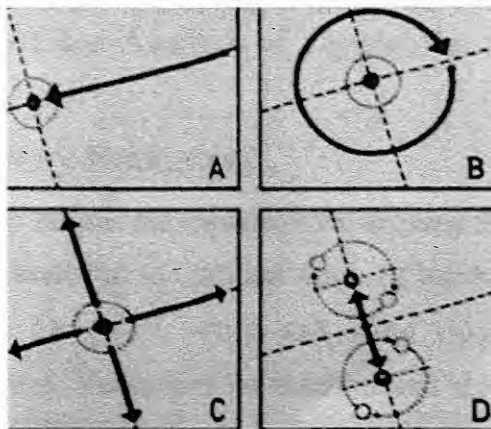


Diagram 3.3. In the religious city of Suchindram, South India, during the festival, the structure of the street influences the behavior – depending on the setting worshippers will behave to the spatial entity in a manner that reflects movement towards (A), around (B), away from (C) and besides (sources, Pieper).

Traditionally, the choice over what kind of place to develop and the nature of this is reliant on cultural prescripts⁹¹. Evidence from the way that the different groups develop a place show that the built world is not only considered to be a matter of shapes, volumes, tools and know-how, but also have sociological and symbolic content⁹². There are also some cultural forces for modifying the characteristics of the

Rapoport, Op cit., p50.

⁸⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit., p294.

⁹⁰ Pieper, Op Cit., p73.

⁹¹ Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., p231.

Rapoport, A., Op Cit., pp47, 48.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p256.

⁹² Toffin, Op Cit., p10.

Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., pp231, 235.

building⁹³. Compared to the culture core that is the key for the survival of the community, the roles that are played are secondary in nature.

In order to achieve appropriate design alternatives that respect the group culture, and other factors within a particular context, there is the need to find ways of using the underlying principles of the design of vernacular buildings in the design of a large number of different building types⁹⁴. There are deep reasons why people continue to hold on to some of the needs. According to Alsayyad, tradition does not die⁹⁵. It is possible that what is held onto may present itself in a different form.

3.2 Framework for Analysis of Vernacular Setting

3.2.1 Introductory Background.

This section will define the vernacular by arguing that the character of it in a built setting can be identified by different kinds of attributes⁹⁶. Cultural attributes are of different kinds. Behaviors, beliefs and some types of material elements are all attributes of culture. Vernacular has been defined in terms of the built setting that has been influenced by the cultural forces⁹⁷. Other forces, such as climate and technology that are present in the context, play modifying roles.

The direction that a dwelling should face in China can be used as an example of how the requirements of culture can be placed above everything else. There are the two forces that influence this. For maximum comfort, principles of *Feng Shui* are used to inform the orientation⁹⁸. At the same time there is a cosmic influence on the dwelling's orientation. When there is a conflict between the two values, religion takes an upper hand.

⁹³ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp47, 58-60.

⁹⁴ Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., pp242-243, 245.

⁹⁵ Alsayyad, Op Cit., p531.

⁹⁶ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp78, 83.

⁹⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p47.

Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., p231.

⁹⁸ Rapoport, Op Cit., p51.

Vernacular setting is driven by, among other points, the need to provide for the institution of kinship and social activity, dualism in space, and the built material as an element of social identity⁹⁹. Depending on the group, the built setting will be of a particular kind. A supportive environment has been achieved by including in the setting an open-space; spatial hierarchy and location of the selected material culture in space¹⁰⁰. These are the social needs that run across the different groups. In this section the essence of some of the attributes of tradition are explored. The values that are selected are assumed to be those that are also found in different groups.

3.2.2 Rationalizing the Vernacular Setting.

The first way of seeing the vernacular is that of a setting that is congruent with a particular group of people's beliefs, behaviors and their lifestyle. In spite of different forces within a context it is possible to claim that the structuring of vernacular setting is basically reliant on the cultural prescripts¹⁰¹. Some of the traditions that are within a context are what influence it. These are both the behaviors and beliefs of the people.

Universally, there is no single tradition that can be identified as a representation of the vernacular¹⁰². Cultural parameters are context specific.

The second way of seeing the vernacular is as an approach that is involved in the development of the built setting¹⁰³. It is a process that best describes steps that are taken by those that are involved in the development of the built environment¹⁰⁴. When

⁹⁹Ibid., p61.

Chokor, B. A., Research policy and review 7. Developments in environment - behaviour - design research: a critical assessment in the context of geography and planning with special reference to the Third World, p8.

Hadjri, Op Cit., p66.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., pp62-65.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p61.

¹⁰⁰ Eliade, Op Cit, pp25-26, 27-29.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp42, 44.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp293-294.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp288-289.

Abu-Lughod, Op Cit., p10.

¹⁰² Rapoport, Op Cit., pp80, 92.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp38-39.

¹⁰³ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp285-286.

Janet Abu-Lughod, Op Cit. pp10-11.

¹⁰⁴ Upton, The Tradition of Change, 10.

Janet Abu-Lughard, Op Cit., pp10-11.

residents take charge of their environment, they are able to develop spatial equivalents for those activities that are part of their social needs (diagram 3.4). Space thus becomes congruent with the residents' needs.

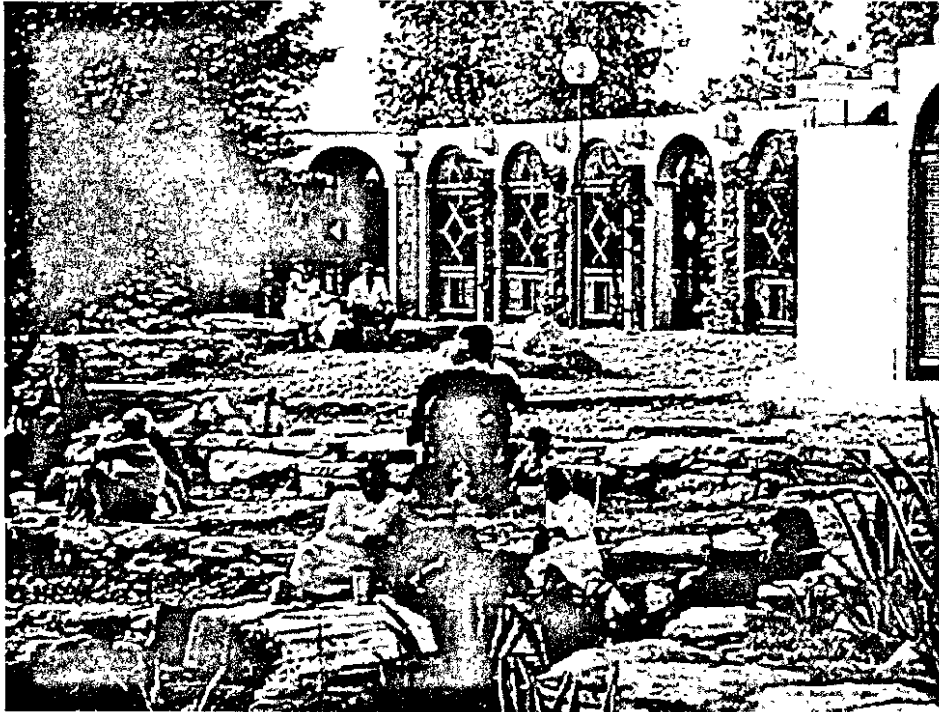


Diagram 3.4. In this neighborhood of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, landscape has been influenced by the social needs (sources Steele).

When an approach material is described as being traditional or vernacular, there is the connection between the maker and the consumer¹⁰⁵. There is the character of the setting that should have some emotional appeal to those people who understand the background. Attributes of this type would have been derived from some shared sense of meaning.

How cultural belief can be used to set up a context can be explained by the structural concept of the settlement in the Samoa archipelago. Between these people, social role is far more important than any other requirement. This spirit is demonstrated by organizing the built elements within each settlement with relation to a single open

Ed. Steele, J., *Architecture for Islamic Societies Today*, p90.

¹⁰⁵ Rapoport, Op Cit., p285.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p80.

place¹⁰⁶. This center represents the social locus. The center serves two purposes. All community events are held here. The second is that dwellings can only get their social meaning from the manner in which they are related to the central open place. Studies that were held fifty years apart identify the persistence of this concept¹⁰⁷.

Setting can also qualify as vernacular when cultural needs have been relied on to influence the structure of the built environment. In Saudi Arabia at King Saud University, culture has influenced the setting in a slightly different way. It is the Islamic culture spatial requirement that has influenced the structure¹⁰⁸. Privacy has been introduced by developing spatial hierarchy. There is spatial hierarchy where guests are controlled by the structure of space as well as the space set out solely for women. Specific places have been created where people can come together to meet with one another (diagram 3.5).

Another way that the built environment can qualify to be vernacular is with the building approach that is employed. The building process that is common among the residents of *Al-Alkhalaf*, an urban neighborhood in Saudi Arabia, has been identified as an attribute of the tradition. The user plans the building with the contractor only being brought in at the last minute¹⁰⁹. This approach assures that space is created as per the user's spatial needs.

A vernacular is dynamic and if this dimension is not properly noted the built setting may not easily appeal to the people. Rejection of dwellings that were designed by the late Egyptian architect *Hassan Fathy* at *Luxor* in Egypt should be an example of the possible result when a setting fails to take cognizance of the *time*. In *Fathy's* project, he was involved with the duplication of the old built types¹¹⁰. Everything else had been considered in the project save for the *meaning*. In spite of holding on to tradition, people want to relate to the image of modernity.

¹⁰⁶ Allen, A. E. G., *Architecture as Social Expression in Western Samoa: Axioms and Models*, pp35-36.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p36.

¹⁰⁸ Abu-Ghazze, *Op Cit.*, pp240-241.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, p244.

In order to prevent rejection of a setting by the people, the designer is advised to distinguish between needs and wants so that the former are fully taken care of before anything else¹¹¹. Wants are important in the sense that they are likely to develop into needs. An example of how wants can be displayed is demonstrated in the way that some of the Bedouin people have a chandelier hung in their tent, irrespective of electricity not being available¹¹². Meanings are attached to this.



Diagram 3.5. The street has been structured to accommodate the culture. Coming together is an important culture of Islam, a strong culture among the dwellers of this neighborhood of Jeddah Al Qademah (sources Abu-Ghazzeah).

The resulting vernacular can be the result of two different kinds of interference with an environment. The first instance is the behavior and beliefs influencing the setting¹¹³. Built environment thus becomes congruent with the group's behaviors and beliefs.

The next kind of vernacular development is the dwellers become part of those involved in the initial ideas of design¹¹⁴. It is anticipated that such participation

¹¹⁰ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, p253. For further reading on this refer to, H. Fathy, *Architecture for the Poor, An Experiment in Rural Egypt*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1973 Ed.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp253-254.

¹¹² Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, p253.

¹¹³ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp288-289.

Allen, *Op Cit.*, pp35-36.

Abu-Ghazzeah, *Op Cit.*, pp240-241, 244.

¹¹⁴ Rapoport, *Op Cit.*, pp285-286.

provide an opportunity for socio-spatial requirements to be incorporated into the design idea¹¹⁵. It is imperative that in order for the vernacular setting to successfully deal with the time aspect, the principles of culture should be considered¹¹⁶. With time, cultural attributes can be addressed in a slightly different format provided the intrinsic feature is being recognized.

3.2.3 Elements of Threshold.

Within a vernacular setting there are certain places where those with the knowledge of culture undergo a change in spatial experience¹¹⁷. These are thresholds. Within these places, social memory is recalled and one is thus forced to behave in a particular manner¹¹⁸. Different modes of representation are relied on to notify people of the threshold. A simple boundary line, like a doorway, may exist between the two worlds¹¹⁹. The entrance may signify a change of hierarchy.

In some communities elements that are viewed to be of social significance are treated as thresholds¹²⁰. These are what provide the social locus within the space. Before starting the settlement, locations of these are first marked out.

When Piper's looks at the role of the urban elements during the religious festivals in the South Indian town of *Suchindram*, his argument supports Eliade's¹²¹. The different urban elements are thresholds. Environmental characteristics should be the direct result of the nature of the threshold. For those with an idea, they are able to offer

Janet Abu-Lughod, Op Cit., pp10-11.

Upton, Op Cit., p10.

¹¹⁵ Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit., p244.

¹¹⁶ Allen, Op Cit., pp35-36

Rapoport, Op Cit., p148.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p253.

Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit., p24.

Saleh, Op Cit., p33.

Pavrides, Jana E. Hesser., Op Cit., pp362-369.

¹¹⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p80.

¹¹⁸ Pieper, Op Cit., p70-72.

¹¹⁹ Eliad, Op Cit., pp25-26.

¹²⁰ Saleh, Op Cit., pp35, 43-44.

Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit., p51.

Allen, Op Cit p36.

¹²¹ Pieper, Op Cit., p72.

points of reference in space, time and history¹²². These elements have the characteristic that assist the mind in social memory and hence spatial mediation.

According to Eliade, it is not only the point of change that should be viewed in terms of threshold but at times rather the whole element which is located¹²³. An example can be found with the believers in a religion, such as Muslims. Rather than the entrance to the Mosque, it is the place of worship as a whole that constitutes communication with god.

Structural layout of a traditional Samoan homestead can be used as an example that will show how thresholds can assist as material for spatial identification. Each village has an open place that is viewed as the social locus; for social activities, like receiving visitors in the open center (diagram 3.6). Dwellings present a system with a single focal point. Although the author has not referred to the open space as a threshold, he uses the term locus when describing it.

An initial period in the founding of an Islamic settlement is the second case of how threshold elements are used for social focus. For the Muslims, before anything else the locations of the mosque, water points, market and the burial places are first identified¹²⁴. According to the canonical laws some of the places where people can come together are of first importance. These will be located in a strategic location that is accessible to everyone. These form the structural framework. When focusing on these as the center, society's interest is being put before anything¹²⁵. Rather than the individual, Islam puts the community first.

A third example of where elements of threshold have been used to structure the town by introducing different kinds of experience to someone who is moving across a settlement is in the religious town of *Suchindram* in South India¹²⁶ (refer diagram 3.3). In *Suchindram* four of the urban elements that are recognized as being able to

¹²²Ibid., pp70-71.

¹²³ Eliade, Op Cit., p26.

¹²⁴ Saleh, Op Cit., pp35, 43-44.

Abu-Ghazzel, Op Cit., p51.

¹²⁵Ibid., p51.

¹²⁶ Pieper, Op Cit., pp70-71.

order behavior are the four temples, the two-umland streets and the aquatic systems. During the religious festival the manner in which the worshippers behave when they are in front of each of the marked urban elements identifies each as a threshold¹²⁷. At each of these urban elements, the worshippers go through different experiences.



Diagram 3.6. The open outside setting in the structure of every Samoan homestead is the cultural material that represents social locus (sources, Allen).

Threshold is necessary so that an end is put to a homogeneous world¹²⁸. Behaviors need to change. In an expanse of space people and/ or worshippers get disoriented. The presence of places of orientation in space alters the uniform character of this space continuum.

With some groups it is seen as proper to emphasise the built materials that are culturally significant to the societies¹²⁹. This is a statement that society takes precedence over anything else. Two developments can be witnessed with the

¹²⁷ Pieper, Op Cit., p72.

¹²⁸ Eliade, Op Cit., pp27-29.

¹²⁹ Pieper, Op Cit. pp70, 72.

Allen, Op Cit., p36.

Abu-Ghazzeah, Op Cit., p51.

threshold materials when used in this way. Firstly, they are present in marked places. Secondly, they are relied on to bring together the whole setting and thereby symbolically manifest the social unity¹³⁰.

3.2.4 Tradition of the Open outside.

The open place in the vernacular is viewed as a primary element¹³¹. Depending on the context, open space can be used to perform different roles¹³². Different kinds of society's cultural events take place within these. Also this can be the interface between the public outside and the private inside. In some cases, the open space becomes the social locus¹³³. Apart from being the place where social events are held, everything else in the setting can only be identified with respect to this center.

In the town, open space has different implications. According to observation by Rapoport of a settlement in Turkey, vibrant life involving several people does take place in some of the open places without compromising the properties of the individual private interior¹³⁴. By relying on these as elements of space organization, different levels of complexities are achieved in the towns.

The first identity of an open space is as a social place. It is where social events take place. As an example of this, in a town like Jeddah Al-Qademah, the urban elements have been structured with relation to open spaces around buildings with a view to socialization¹³⁵. The town was influenced in its development by an Islamic culture that encourages the people to be part of the whole. The relationship of the open space to the dwellings encourages people to move out and be with others (diagram 3.7). The

Saleh, Op Cit., p35.

¹³⁰ Rowe, Op Cit., p307.

¹³¹ Rapoport, Op Cit., p42.

¹³² Ibid., p42.

Abu-Ghazzel, Op Cit., pp235, 238.

Saleh, Op Cit., pp38, 40.

Larsson, A., Traditional Versus Modern Housing in Botswana - An Analysis from the User's Perspective, in, Ed. Bourdier, J-P., and Alsayyad, N., *Dwellings Settlements and Tradition*, Cross Cultural Perspective, p506.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit. p63.

Pieper, Op Cit., p68.

Allen, Op Cit. p36.

¹³³ Allen, Ibid., p36.

¹³⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp44.

¹³⁵ Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit. pp235, 238.

open space appears to draw the surrounding territories into main frame by approaching this open space through the different axis.

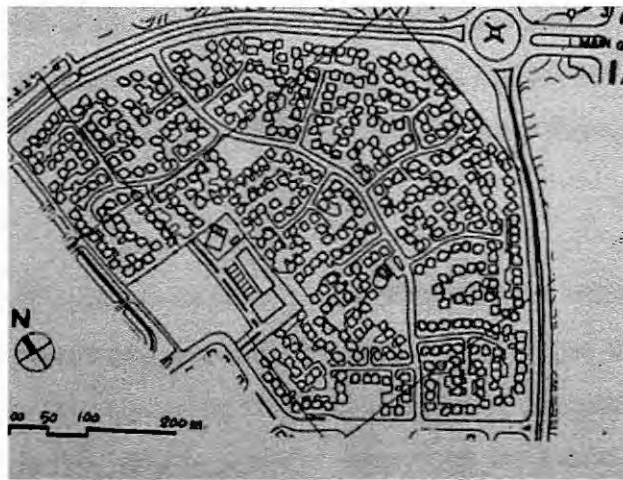


Diagram 3.7. Dwellings layout in this modern housing project at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia provides for a relationship that draws the dwellers out into the open outside area (sources, Abu-Ghazze).

The second example of an urban setting where the open space is an element that brings society members together is in Samoa¹³⁶. Homesteads are organized around a single open space. The single open place in each of the homesteads serves as a place where social roles are fulfilled. The identity of an element within a setting can only be established by discovering the relationship of this with the abstract center. This is the

¹³⁶ Refer footnote 106

social locus. It is an element that radiates meaning into the rest of the bodies in space¹³⁷.

In a third example of the open space as a place of social activity we can look at the religious town of *Suchindram* in South India. Two squares are identified in the town setting¹³⁸. During the festival, worshippers in these enact choreographed dances to the gods.

The next role of open space is as a mediating element between the public world outside and the private one that is the dwelling inside¹³⁹. From this place one is able to enter either side. When playing an intermediary role, the open space will be dual in character. Within this, one is likely to experience the public realm of life without properly outside. In an interview that was conducted in Damascus, women preferred dwellings that could offer privacy when one was within the open courtyard in front of the building¹⁴⁰. They were critical of their dwellings as being incapable of providing the required level of privacy.

At *Eressos*, a settlement within Greece, the open outside area is a salient feature of the dwelling, neighborhood and the settlement. To provide for space, the units of differing scales have been structured around an open space. Social roles are fulfilled within the open outside area¹⁴¹. Levels of socialization that take place here include members of the kinship coming together, members of the same gender group, some of the marriage events that bring the community together and other kinds of social events. As per the living tradition, for men the inside is merely a place where one moves in to eat, wash, change clothes, sleep and receive company¹⁴².

In the second example the structure of the Tswana of Botswana's homestead should also be used to explain the open outside setting as an interface. Larsson recommends

¹³⁷ Saleh, Op Cit., p40.

¹³⁸ Pieper, Op Cit., p68.

¹³⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit. p42

Abu-Ghazzeah, Op Cit. p237.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

Saleh., Op Cit. p38.

¹⁴⁰ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

¹⁴¹ Pavlides, Jana E. Hesser, Op Cit., pp358-359.

that when analyzing a vernacular setting the environment should be addressed as an entity¹⁴³ (diagram 3.8). In the *Tswana* homestead, before the enclosed inside, there is a series of yards. The most important of these is the internal court that is locally known as *Lolwapa*. This is the social center of the setting in that different activities take place here. It is here where visitors are received and made to sit, family members sit to have their meals and a fire is lit when it is cold.

As an interface the open outside setting can play a slightly different role. With *Al-Alkhalaf* a settlement within Saudi Arabia, attack was expected from the enemy outside. The open space was then located to provide a setting where battles could be fought without women and children getting involved¹⁴⁴. This element was removed from the dwellings (refer diagram 3.7).

The last representation of an open space is in terms of the abstract ideas that it is capable of presenting to the mind. After observing the arrangement of the residential fabric of *Al-Alkhalaf* in Southwestern Saudi Arabia, Saleh was able to suggest a phenomenon of the built environment¹⁴⁵. The solid idea appears to radiate physically into the open space so that through such affiliation the open space gains the inherent character of the former.

With the traditional setting, space is viewed as an entity. Both the inside and the structured open outside are important settings. Meanings of the open space can be found in it being the setting for the staging of social events¹⁴⁶. Those activities that are community oriented are held here. It signifies social unity. The second meaning of the open place is in its being an interface¹⁴⁷. It is where the private inside and the public outside come together.

¹⁴²Ibid., p358.

¹⁴³ Larsson, Op Cit. p506.

¹⁴⁴ Saleh, Op Cit., p38.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p40.

¹⁴⁶ Pavlides, Jana E. Hesser, Op Cit., pp358-359.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp42, 44.

Abu-Ghazze, Op Cit., pp235, 238.

Pieper, Op Cit., p68.

¹⁴⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p42.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., pp63-64.

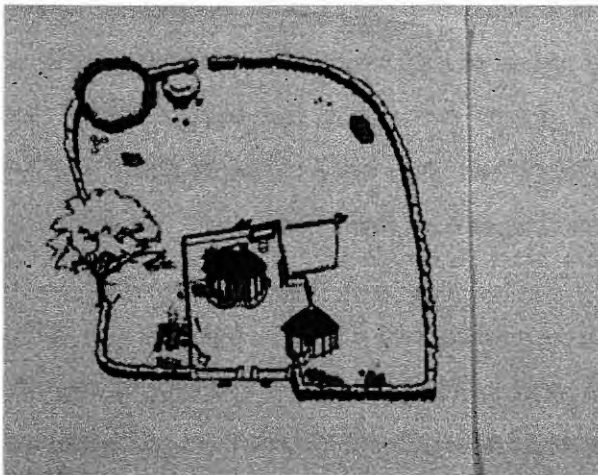
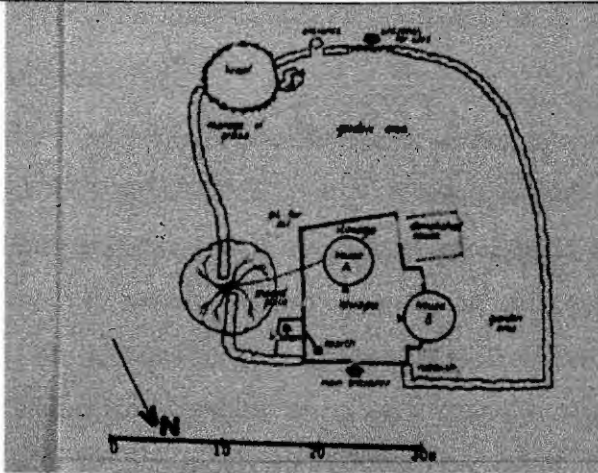


Diagram 3.8. Understanding a Tswana homestead and/ or dwelling is only possible when this is approached as an entity (sources, Larsson).

3.2.5 Spatial Hierarchy.

Spatial hierarchy is an arrangement that assists setting in two ways. At one level, it is used as a means for territorial definition¹⁴⁸. In some societies there are places that are associated with a particular social group. At another level, spatial hierarchy is a tool that is relied upon to help in enhancing levels of communication within the same space, and between spaces that have different characteristics¹⁴⁹. Spatial hierarchy is a quality of the setting that can still be traced within the organization of some of the urban structures¹⁵⁰. Privacy needs are still viewed as being of importance.

Spatial hierarchy is developed through the articulation of space and is meant to introduce levels of communication between people and people, place and place and people in place¹⁵¹. Both fixed and semi-fixed means are employed to control communication¹⁵². In the first instance there are the walls, colors, texture materials, landscaping and furnishing. These are located permanently in space.

Other elements that can be used to control communication are the clothing, kinds of body movements and behaviors of the people¹⁵³. Most of the time, the aim of controlling communication is to identify the division between public, private and the semi-public.

¹⁴⁸ Rapoport, Op cit., pp65-69.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp296-299.

Hadjri, Op Cit., pp68-69.

Saleh, Op Cit. p35.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

Abu-Ghazzeah, T. M., Built Form and Religion: Underlying Structures of Jeddah Al- Qademah, pp54, 56.

Pieper, Op Cit., p70.

¹⁴⁹ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit, p63.

Allen, Op Cit., pp34, 36.

Pieper, Op Cit., p65.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp296-298.

¹⁵⁰ Rowe, Cit., pp309-311.

¹⁵¹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp293-294.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p297.

Allen, Op Cit. p36.

¹⁵² Rapoport, Op Cit. pp293-294, 298.

Pieper, Op Cit. p65.

¹⁵³ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit. p58.

Rapoport, Op Cit. p297-298.

The first level of spatial hierarchy is the one that controls the level of communication between people and people. In the first example, the spatial organization of a settlement at *Eressos* in Greece illustrates the concept of hierarchy for the different groups. The cultural requirement here discourages the social generics from freely mixing, such as genders¹⁵⁴. The neighborhood here is recognized as being on three different levels. After the overall neighborhood level there are the different clusters and then the dwelling blocks.

The units are each organized around an open space. From the public open space at the neighborhood level, there is the semi-public space for a cluster then the semi-private open space for the dwelling blocks. The last two spaces are for the women, children, visitors and the elderly. At the highest level the single space is strictly for male activities and community events. Open space at the highest level symbolizes the social locus, an important dimension of culture within the community¹⁵⁵. As late as 1978 when a research was carried out in this village, it was noticed that women could only enter this center with permission¹⁵⁶.

In the second example, the hierarchy between social groups is also illustrated with an example from the Islamic settlement. The Islamic spatial requirements influence the organization¹⁵⁷. Space is controlled by the principle of dualism. Spatial planning is thus guided by this principle. This is the existence of the extremes in any one context. Levels in spatial change range from very private, through controlled semi-private, to public¹⁵⁸. Places are structured to enclose and protect the next one.

At the first level of communication there is the control between the dwellings and their surroundings. Setting is structured to reflect the inner private with a decrease in

¹⁵⁴ Pavlides, Jana E. Hesser., Op Cit., pp358-359.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., pp358-359.

¹⁵⁶ The research that documented this was undertaken jointly by Pavlides and Jana Hesser between October 1977 and August 1978 at the settlement of *Eressos* in Greece. For further reading see, Pavlides, E, Jana E. Hasser, Op Cit. p361.

¹⁵⁷ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit. p58.

Hadjri, Op Cit., p68.

Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit., pp237-238.

Rowe, Op Cit., p308.

¹⁵⁸ Rowe, Ibid., pp307, 309.

privacy to the outer public. From outside one moves through transitional spaces¹⁵⁹ (diagram 3.9). When allowed inside the dwelling, visitors are entertained in the court that is the semi-private domain¹⁶⁰. Beyond the court is the inner private that is made up of the sleeping areas

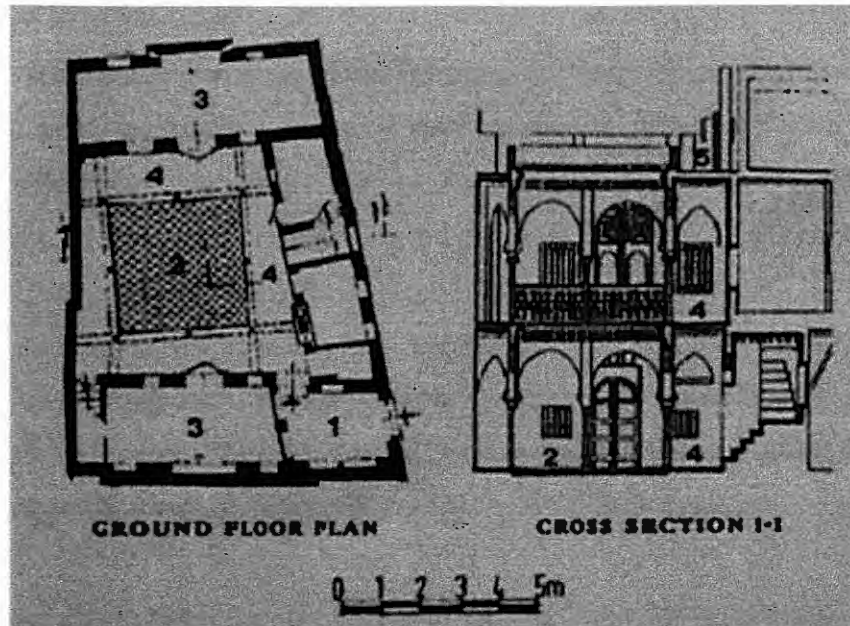


Diagram 3.9. Spatial hierarchy – from outside public (photo), through semi-private patio, into the semi-private open outside setting into the private interiors (sources, Hadjri). Key – 1. Veranda 2. West-ed-Dar 3. Room 4. Covered gallery. 5. Terrace.

The second level of spatial articulation enhances the level of communication between the different gender groups. There will be the male and also the independent female places¹⁶¹. The court is viewed to be the women's place¹⁶². They move out here to be with one another and to carry out the domestic chores.

¹⁵⁹ Hadjri, Op Cit., pp67-68.

Abu-Ghazzech, Op Cit., p56.

Rapoport, Op Cit., p298.

¹⁶⁰ Hadjri, Op Cit. p69.

¹⁶¹ Rowe, Op Cit., pp311-312.

¹⁶² Rapoport, Op Cit., p65.

Hadjri, Op Cit., p69.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

Abu-Ghazzech, Op Cit. p238.

In an interview that was conducted within a neighborhood in Damascus, Al-Kodmany identified spatial privacy as a cultural need that is still held in high esteem¹⁶³. Women residents of a modern housing scheme preferred traditional dwelling types that incorporate aspects of spatial hierarchy. In their view, the front-yard had become the place where men got together, and as such women longed for their own yard¹⁶⁴.

The third type of hierarchy should be that which is set by the principle of dualism in space. Two extremes, like inside and outside, center and edge, private and public are paired¹⁶⁵. A condition for dualism is that space has got to have continuity so that it flows. An example of setting that obeys this principle is the Samoan homestead.

In Samoa, the elements of the homestead are organized with relationships to a single open center¹⁶⁶ (refer diagram 3.6). Space elements draw their identity from their relationship with this center. The social significance of the built element is dependent on the distance from the symbolic center¹⁶⁷. Setting has a cultural meaning.

In a fourth example dualism has been used to structure the town of Jeddah Al-Qademah¹⁶⁸. The place of worship and some of the social facilities has been located at the urban center. Different axes are then articulated to move from here to the other places¹⁶⁹. There is the increase in privacy from the public center that is represented by the public institutions towards the edge that is the private dwellings. The spatial hierarchy introduces privacy that the religion, a dominant cultural institution here, requires.

In another example, the concept of dualism in space has been used to organize both the structure and movement during festivals in the South India religious town of *Suchindram*. The temple symbolizes the urban center¹⁷⁰. The three ceremonial paths,

¹⁶³ Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., p63.

¹⁶⁵ Allen, Op Cit., p34. The author refers to the term dualism as used by the anthropologist Claude Levi Strauss, for further reading see, C. Levi Strauss, *Structural Anthropology*, New York, Basic Books, 1963 and Ibid., *Structural Anthropology*, Vol., 2, New York., Basic Books, 1976.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., pp34, 36

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., p36.

¹⁶⁸ Abu-Ghazzeh, Op Cit., pp53-54.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., p53.

¹⁷⁰ Pieper, Op Cit, p66.

with the fourth one, the aquatic duct are the elements that are socially regarded to be of less significance in relation to the temple. This center is very important and movement away from this lessens the importance of the place and/ or event. With movement away, the space becomes less important. It is the opposite of this as one approaches the center or temple.

At a somewhat more abstract level, Pieper proposes a hierarchy that is based on metaphor. This is the relationship between the human body and some of the bodies that are in space¹⁷¹. Through the construct of the mind, selected urban elements are seen in terms of the body image. Two elements, one inside the human body, the other in the space outside, represent the same thing. What is inside the body represents the private world. It is only the individual that can reach the private. The corresponding body in the outside represents the public world. The temple is perceived as the heartplace¹⁷² (diagram 3.10). Happenings in the temple are viewed in terms of the different heart rhythm.

In the urban and within the settlement, spatial hierarchy is a necessary dimension that assists in breaking the monotony of space¹⁷³. It introduces two forms of control within a space. On the first level it controls behaviors by the different social members. In some groups cultural taboo limits the level of contact between the different social groups¹⁷⁴. Spatial hierarchy exists between the public outside and the private inside world. When this is the case, the inside private is approached with care.

Elements can also be strategically introduced in space to control the body movements. These would be capable of influencing the behavior of those people with the knowledge of the cultural requirements¹⁷⁵. Through this presence of material culture, places acquire meaning.

¹⁷¹ Pieper, Op Cit., pp70-71.

¹⁷² Ibid. pp73, 79.

¹⁷³ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp65-69.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp296-299.

Saleh, Op Cit., p35.

¹⁷⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., p65.

Al-Kodmany, Op Cit., p63.

Pavrides, Jana E. Hasser, Op Cit., pp358-359.



Diagram 3.10. Structure of the religious city of Suchindram in South India as a metaphor of human heart (sources, Pieper).

CHAPTER FOUR.

4 LOCATION AND CULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY REGION.

4.1 Regional Location.

Western Kenya includes lowlands and highlands around the Lake Victoria region. It is bordered by Uganda to the west while to the east are the Western rift valley plains.

The region is roughly divided by the equator, and is between the 34 and 36 degree longitudinal lines. The area that is covered is roughly forty thousand square kilometers. The 1989 statistics indicate that more than one third of the nation's population comes from this region¹. Most of the people are settled in the rural areas. With most of the people in the rural area there is bound to be pressure on land.

4.2 Regional Towns.

Some of the major Kenyan towns like *Kisumu* and *Kakamega* are located within the geographic region that can be referred to as Western Kenya. Apart from these big towns there are the smaller towns like *Kisii*, *Busia*, and *Bungoma*. Towns have been recognized as settlements having more than 2000 people². The jurisdiction of such towns is more than 50 square kilometers.

A town like *Kisumu* was started as a transit point at the beginning of this century (diagram 4.1). Until now *Kisumu* remains the major transit point to other east and central African countries. Apart from being the third largest town in Kenya, *Kisumu* is the largest regional town. Towns like *Kakamega*, *Kisii*, *Busia* and *Bungoma* among others started as administrative towns. These towns, too, have continued to experience

¹ Odingo, R. S., Sustainable Agricultural Development in Kenya and Competing Needs for Agricultural Land to the Year 2000 AD, in, Ed. S. H., Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, pp78-79.

² Ondiege, P. O., Obudho., R. A., Population Growth and Demand for Rural and Urban Housing, in, Ed. S. H. Ominde., *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, p123.

expansion. Urban growth is mainly caused by the rural-urban and urban-urban migrations³.

Towns in the region can be identified with societies that border them⁴. These happen to be the communities that form the backbone of both the settled population and those in transit⁵. About 60 percent of the urban population in Western Kenya are members of the regional ethnic groups.

Residents of the urban town experience housing problems. Due to lack of resources, informal settlements are an important feature of regional towns in Kenya⁶. The majority of informal housing is located within the urban edge. Most previously rural areas have been re-classified as urban.

Some of the settlements have been in existence for a long period of time. For example in *Kisumu*, both *Manyatta* and *Nyalenda* have been in existence since the 1920's while in *Kisii*, *Daraja Mbili* has also been there from 1934⁷.

The informal settlements both in *Kisumu* and *Kisii* are located within the urban edge. The present settlements were started in the first period when local people were moving in to settle in the then newly found towns⁸. Although they have become part of the major urban fabric, the settlements remained informal. The structural layouts of the settlement, together with behavioral trends, are influenced by tradition. These are traditional urban villages.

³ Obudho, R. A., Urbanisation and Development Planning in Kenya, a key paper read at the *Second All-Africa Seminar on Green Architecture and Environmentally Sensitive*, pp18-20.

Oucho, J. O., Spatial Population Change in Kenya: A District Level Analysis, in, Ed. S. H. Ominde, *Kenya's Population Growth and Development to the Year 2000 AD*, p131.

⁴ Obudho Ibid., p12.

⁵ Oucho,, Op Cit, pp133-134.

⁶ Ondiege, Obudho, Op Cit., p123.

Obudho, Op Cit., p28.

⁷ Ochieng, C. C., Yamada, O., *Society, Identity and Sense of Place in an African Community*, The Luo of Western Kenya, p5.

⁸ Ibid., pp5-7.



Diagram 4.1. Map of Kenya showing study region (hatched). (sources Ojany).

4.3 Dominant Cultures in Western Kenya Region.

4.3.1 Introductory Background.

Three community groups are found in Western Kenya. Each of these, the *Luo*, *Luhya* and *Abagusii* have their own patrimonial land (refer diagram 4.1). In spite of the earlier separation there have been historical developments that have brought the groups closer together⁹. There has been inter-cultural assimilation. Through migrations, movements, inter- community marriages, socialization and trading, the different groups have come closer. Cultural ideas have been exchanged.

There are two major linguistic groups that are found in Western Kenya. The *Luhya* and *Abagusii* are members of the people that are considered the Bantu speakers¹⁰. Most of the Kenyan groups are of Bantu origin. On the other hand, the *Luo* people belong to the group that is commonly known as the *Nilotes*¹¹. These people seem to have arrived where they are by travelling along the River Nile. The *Luo* people share the dialect with the communities that are found in North Sudan, Western Uganda, parts of Tanzania, Western Ethiopia and some parts to the East of the Democratic Republic of Congo¹².

The *Abagusii* people are considered a breakaway of the Bantu group¹³. Their territory is squeezed between that of the *Nilotic Luo* people on the one side and the *Nilo-Hamitic Kipsigis* on the other. This is unlike the *Luhya* territories that link up with that of other Bantu groups especially those that are found across the border in Uganda.

⁹ Olunga, T. Ayot, *A History of the Luo of Western Kenya, 1590-1930.*, pp18-19, 95-95, 103-114.
Were, G. S., *Western Kenya, Historical Texts*, pp12, 13, 50, 147.

Ogot, B. A., *People of East Africa, History of the Southern Luo*, Vol. 1, Migration and Settlement 1500-1900, pp127-128, 141-142, 228-230, 236-237.

Barbara B. Le Vine, Le Vine, R. A., *Nyansongo: A Gusii Community in Kenya*, Six Cultures Series, Vol. ii, p3.

¹⁰ Ogot, *Op Cit.*, p203.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp40-41, 127.

¹² *Ibid.*, pp31-39.

Olunga, T. Ayot, *Op Cit.*, p50.

¹³ *Ibid.*, pp203-204

4.3.2 Cultural Assimilation between the Luo and the Luhya communities.

Both Ogot and Were agree that the different *Luhya* sub-groups settled in the region first¹⁴. There were several encounters that mark the period of the migrating *Luo* community members to their present land¹⁵. On the way they passed through the territories that were already occupied by the different *Luhya* clan members.

The coming together of the *Luo* and the *Luhya* people caused cultural change through three different activities. Firstly, wars broke out between the two groups¹⁶. As the *Luo* people were moving three forms of development would be witnessed. There would be the case where they waged a war against the already settled people. In this way they chase them away and occupied their land¹⁷. These kinds of activities have since stopped. The second case is where some of the *Luo* people were left behind and ended up settling in the midst of the people and settlements through which they passed¹⁸. In the third case, some of the people already settled joined the moving band of *Luo* people and travelled along with them.

Secondly, some of the incoming people decided to settle among the already settled *Luhya* people¹⁹. There were several cultural developments that marked the coming together of the *Luo* people and the several *Luhya* community members. Firstly, after defeating the *Luhya* people and settling, their language became the *Lingua Franca* that was spoken²⁰. This happened in *Sakwa* and *Gem*. The original inhabitants of these districts were people from the *Luhya* background²¹. Some were forcefully assimilated into the *Luo* culture while others were driven out²².

¹⁴ Were, Op Cit., pp12, 73, 150.

Ogot, Op cit., pp73, 137-139.

¹⁵ Sindiga, I, Migrations and Emergence of Societies, in, Ed. W. R. Ochieng, Themes in *Kenyan History*, p5.

¹⁶ Olunga, T. Ayot, Op Cit., pp50-52.

Were, Op Cit., pp47.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp11 and 47.

Olunga T. Ayot, Op Cit., p51.

¹⁸ Ogot, Op Cit., pp161, 168.

¹⁹ Ibid., p161.

²⁰ Ibid., pp154-155, 162, 221-223.

²¹ Were, Op Cit., pp75-78

²² Ibid., pp11, 47, 63.

A second group was the *Luo* people who decided to remain behind²³. The people that were left behind assumedly were assimilated into the culture of their new community. As an example, there are several people who were originally of *Luo* background who have since become *Luhya* people. Some of these people are found in the present day *Samia* district and in Port Victoria.

On the other hand there were members of the *Luhya* community who would joined the newcomers on their journey²⁴. The last form where one became assimilated into the other one's culture affected members of the already settled communities who decided to join the moving band of *Luo* migrants²⁵. These people have since settled and become part of the *Luo* culture.

Later on there were other kinds of activities that brought the members of these two communities together. Acts of marriage and other forms of activities have necessitated the subsequent levels of cultural exchange between members of the two communities. Both groups are exogamous and at the same time patrilineal in type. The sexual relationship between blood relatives is taboo. At the same time, lineage is traced through paternal descent. The meaning of this is that clan people should seek wives from outside.

The marriage institution has introduced a situation of cultural compromise towards some of the cultures. A situation has developed where each group assimilates and compromises his culture²⁶.

Understanding between members of the two communities can also be witnessed in the towns where they reside alongside one another. In a study that was conducted in a neighborhood of Nairobi, *circa* 1978, Parkin was able to identify strong relationships between youths of the two groups²⁷. Although the neighborhood had four major cultural groups, it was discovered that as the youths grew up two developments took

²³ Ogot, Op Cit, p161.

Sindiga, Op Cit., p5.

²⁴ Ibid., p164.

²⁵ Ibid., p164.

²⁶ Ibid, pp127-128.

²⁷ Parkin, Op Cit., pp75-76.

place. Firstly there was the alignment through which the *Luo* and *Luhya* youths joined into one group. Secondly, at the same time, the use of *Swahili* language diminished slightly at the expense of the *Luo*. According to Parkin, linguistic adoption made one assume the related structural ideas²⁸. Only by gaining knowledge of the language can one truly understand the person's culture.

4.3.3 Cultural Assimilation between the *Luo* and *Abagusii* Communities.

In the Western Kenya region, only the *Luo* territory borders the one occupied by the *Abagusii*. There were earlier hostilities between these two communities, but since then a cordial relationship has developed²⁹. Apart from the early assimilation by people from both sides of one another's culture, both the institutions of marriage and of the exchange of goods have continued to bring members of these communities together³⁰.

In both communities there are those clans that can trace their ancestral roots across to the other group. According to Olunga, the arrival of *Luo* people greatly benefited the region. Many people adopted their language, their customs and values³¹. For a whole generation there is a community of *Abagusii* that was subjugated by some sections of the *Luo* group³². There have been instances where people were completely assimilated into the other culture.

These two communities are exogamous and patrilineal. Firstly this means that they have to seek marriage partners from outside the clan³³. Secondly, the children follow the father's heritage. Through marriage there has been cultural understanding. Ideologies are compromised. There has been the opportunity of extending kinship from one community to the other.

²⁸Ibid., pp75-76.

²⁹Ogot, Op Cit., pp128, 210-211.

Sindiga, Op Cit., pp5-6.

³⁰Olunga T Ayot, Op Cit., pp105-106, 113.

Ibid., p209-210.

³¹Ibid., p105.

³²Ogot, Op Cit., pp209, 210.

Olunga T. Ayot, Op Cit., p100.

³³Ibid., p113.

Forms of cultural understanding have also been developed by the exchange of goods between the two communities. This has resulted in trading activities between the people at the border³⁴.

³⁴ibid., p110.

CHAPTER FIVE.

5 RESEARCH APPROACH.

5.1 Selection of Research Method.

5.1.1 Ethnographic Qualitative Research.

The ethnographic research approach aims at describing the relationship between culture and behavior¹. Unlike the olden days when anthropologists studied culture in remote settings, Patton talks of the ethnographic method as having been developed to help in the study of contemporary society². It is realized that even in towns, people are best understood by first getting to know their culture. Rather than talking about urban culture, one should identify cultural behaviors within a particular sector of the town³. People within sectors have their own form of culture.

This research is qualitative in that it selects for study only those people who have been judged as being knowledgeable enough of their culture. The people are the type referred to as key informants⁴. They are able to articulate and so could explain events in a clear manner.

Purposely selected informants for the discussion were those people who were selected from the field for two major reasons⁵. Firstly, they had been judged as being capable of filling in and properly articulating some of the information that may not be readily available to the researcher. Secondly they could be viewed as being paradigmatic examples. In this way, accusations that examples were not global representations were

¹ Leedy, P.D., *Practical Research, Planning and Design*, p159.

² Patton, M. O., *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* [2nd.Ed.], pp67-68.

³ Leedy, Op Cit., p159.

Rapoport, Op Cit., pp41-43, 45-46.

⁴ Patton, Op Cit., pp263-264, 273.

⁵ Ibid, pp263-264.

Leedy, Op Cit., p159.

reduced⁶. The selected number of key informants, that is 15 in total, was seen as being sufficient for providing a true global representation.

The selection of the key informants was influenced by the fact that no single character represents a certain type⁷. There is only a given range of values that has to be addressed in order for a culture type to be recognized. The participants thus all need to state the same issue. People from different backgrounds that were selected included both present and retired leaders, a traditional healer, a religious person and some of the ordinary people who are held in high esteem by their people.

Other qualities that are inherent in the method include affording opportunity for human beings to be studied within their natural settings; and bringing into the study observable facts⁸. To enable the research to note the different information, a combined method was adopted⁹. Observations, interviews with informants, taking of photographs and at times joining in some activities were the methods that were used. Combined methods ensured that information could be easily cross-checked.

Another reason for selecting a combined method stemmed from the fact that anthropologists hold a strong belief that events do not just occur in isolation¹⁰. Happenings that are witnessed within a society are as a result of other needs and/ or forces that are being exerted from within and/ or without. Identifying some of these may require employing different methods. In researching a built-up setting the combined method is recommended since it is capable of bringing attention to any hidden features¹¹.

⁶ Burawoy, M., The Extended Case Method, in Ed. Burawoy, et al, *Ethnography Unbound*, Power and Resistance in the Modern Metropolis, pp271-272.

Rapoport, A., Graeme, H., Cultural change analysis, Core concept of housing for the Tswana, in, Ed. A. G. Tipple, K. Willis., *Housing the Poor in the Developing World*, p42.

⁷ Rapoport, Op Cit., p80

⁸ Leedy, Op Cit., p159.

Zeisel, J., *Inquiry by Design*, Tools for Environment-Behaviour Research, pp68-69.

⁹ Patton, Op Cit., pp187-188, 193-194.

Ibid., p159.

¹⁰ Burawoy, Op Cit., pp278-279.

Ibid., pp215-216.

¹¹ Zeisel, Op Cit., pp65-66.

Leedy, Op Cit., pp159-160.

Ethnographic research offers an opportunity to identify the culture of the people, the functions of the culture and the spatial needs for the cultural requirements¹². Also, through combined ethnographic research the past, the development and present cultural trends could be identified. By conducting discussion especially into the cultural past, this research would hope to avoid being ahistorical¹³. Cognizance is taken therefore of cultural development.

5.1.2 Preparing Questionnaire.

The questionnaire that was taken to the field was a semi-structured one (refer appendix 1). Rather than a strict questionnaire, guidelines were developed. This was in two stages. There was the initial questionnaire that was influenced by the existing anthropological and historical literatures from Western Kenya. The questionnaire was initially tested by two of the key informants. After the testing, the guidelines were then revised with some issues being added and others being removed. It was the second questionnaire that provided the initial guideline to the issues that the research raised in the field. Rather than questions, guidelines were decided upon, due to the following:

- The session was structured in that there were social matters and/ or pronouncements from the informant that guided the discussion. The researcher was able to retain the power that enables one to control and direct the interview.
- The format was such that it was used both for face-to-face individual discussion and with the focus groups.
- The manner in which the inquiry was conducted was relaxed to enable free discussion.

Research was intuitive in itself. In the course of the fieldwork, some of the subsequent results were relied upon to influence the course of events. The checklist included the already noted cultural issues both from literary sources and also observations. One

¹² Patton, pp88, 153.

Leedy, Op Cit., p158-159, 166

¹³ Burawoy, Op Cit., pp 272-273.

Rapoport, Graeme, Op Cit., pp44-45.

noted dimension to culture was that the modern period has introduced imminent changes to the traditional cultural attributes.

5.2 Methods of Data Collection.

5.2.1 Units of Reference.

In order that data could be collected in an orderly manner that would enhance comparison, there were two units of data collection. The single vernacular homestead and/ or settings in the rural were taken to represent the traditional settlement and for the town, the defined urban block was selected. The research proposes and agrees with Rapoport's suggestion that a clear understanding of cultural issues is best understood from the smallest unit within a settlement¹⁴. Both in the urban and in the rural, dwellers define places that are meant for use by immediate members of the kinship both ordinarily, during celebrations, and at times that they come together such as during meetings.

In the traditional setting, kinship was seen in terms of a common paternal background and also those kin that were acquired through marriage. It is usual for those people of the same kinship background to have social obligations towards each other. There is the principle of "co-aptation" that serves to link people of the same community¹⁵. Social bonds are developed from the position of members being able to compromise their needs in order to achieve a state of harmony within the group. Views exist about social cohesiveness being a direct product of the need for reciprocity¹⁶. Within any group, there is the potential for different kinds of exchange.

Aspects of social cohesiveness can be witnessed only in the rural setting through observation. Evidence of this is likewise shown up in the fabric of a town. The size, together with the complex nature of the urban fabric, obliges residents to form a close

¹⁴ Rapoport, Op Cit., p257.

¹⁵ Kuper, A., *Anthropology and Anthropologists*, The Modern British School, The Anthropologist Redcliffe-Brown was the first person to use the term "co-aptation" to refer to the standardisation of beliefs and sentiments within particular social system. p 55.

¹⁶ Jenkins, A., *The Social Theory of Claude Levi-Strauss*, p45.

knit group. What assists in bringing people together appears to be the feeling of belonging to the same kinship and/ or being part of the same urban fabric.

In moving across settlements between the scale of vernacular unit and the town, a changing hierarchy of space and nature of events exist. Settlements in the towns appear to be complex in their physical layout. With the concentration of people in towns, there is a dense fabric of buildings, streets, squares, and other types of urban elements. For a clear representation of settings and the community's response to needs, the field was looked at from three levels:

1 Analytical level.

- Identifying the nature of life.
- Types of rituals that one needs to develop.
- Co-relating hierarchy of rituals with hierarchy of space.
- Understanding rituals as influencing the character of space and vice versa.

2 Understanding actual space.

- Focusing on the actual space. From the loosely organized space at the vernacular level to the highest level of the rigidly applied urban space.
- Identifying the group's cultural forces that influenced the spaces.
- Documenting space location and the types.

3 Analyzing the changing space system.

- What was collected from the fieldwork is at first treated as raw material¹⁷. The first step after the field-work is to present a holistic description of the setting¹⁸. Later on it is analyzed so as to validate the information.

¹⁷ Mafeje, A., Anthropologist's view of Historiography, A Key note address to the Conference, *Problematising History and Agency*, From Nationalism to Sublaternity, University of Cape Town. The speaker suggests that the information from the fieldwork have a high chance of being edited by the participant before it is supplied.

¹⁸ Leedy, Op Cit, p160.

5.2.2 Detailed Study.

i. Field work in the Vernacular homestead.

In the vernacular setting of a traditional village the study included:

- Recording, codification and description of cultural activities that:
 - Can most typically be seen as being among the culture core.
 - Require participation of the kin.
 - Are performed within the open outside areas.
 - Directly contribute to the "making of the place"

These have been presented and analysed in chapter six of this research.

- Identification of hierarchy in the built environment that is associated with traditional lifestyle and belief.
- Identification of spatial patterns of a kinship built settlement.
- Identification and documentation of the open areas and the elements that are considered in terms of the threshold.
- Recording the congruence between the characteristics of the vernacular built environment and the traditional culture.

These have been discussed and analysed in chapter seven of this research.

ii. Field work in a section of a large town.

In the urban area, the study included the following steps:

- Recording, codification and description of cultural activities that:
 - Require participation of the kin.
 - Are performed within the open outside areas.
 - Can be traced in the traditional.
 - Directly contribute to the "making of the place".

These have been presented and analysed in chapter six of this research.

- Identification of hierarchy in the built environment that is associated with traditional lifestyle and belief.
- Identification of spatial patterns of kinship built settlement.

- Identification and documentation of the open areas and elements that are considered in terms of threshold.
- Recording the congruence between the characteristics of the vernacular built environment and the traditional culture.
- Distinguishing changes between settlement types and/ or spatial patterns of use in the urban setting, in relation to the ones in the vernacular built environment.

These have been presented and analysed in chapter seven of this research.

5.2.3 Methods of Recording.

Before discussing the methods used, it would be necessary for one to get an idea of the conditions that were faced in the field. The different means of recording the information complemented one another which assisted saving time and as an alternative means for the storing of the data.

For each of the case studies, a detailed discussion was carried out with each of the participants. At times some of the kin joined in. A session that started with an individual could end up by being a focused group. Some of the discussions lasted three days. The delay was due to the participant being engaged in some other activity and so interrupting the discussion. When this happened, the researcher would carry on with other methods of collecting the information, such as sketching, that did not require the direct participation of the participant.

At times, the researcher would have to return to re-confirm some of the data that had been recorded. In some of the rural cases, participants were accompanied as they went about fulfilling their roles outside the major setting. For example in the rural areas, there were those who would go out to check on the livestock while they were grazing in the field.

In most cases, meal times would find the researcher in the settlement. During the initial periods, research had taken note of this being the time when most people were present in the settlement. During such a period, it was possible to observe the way that kinship members of different social generations and or genders behaved towards each other. Most times the research team members were invited to join in the meals. Earlier

on in the study, research had realised that most of the people took offence when their invitation to join them during meals was turned down. The researcher therefore learned to accept all the invitations.

For the data, combined methods were used to record. This included occasionally taking notes while the discussion was in progress, photography, sketching the settlement layout and using the audio-tape to record the ongoing discussion.

As the events unfolded notebooks were used to record some of the information. There were also the features within the setting that appeared to be of social importance. Basically, notebook recording was reserved for the vignette in the discussion that could be recalled later on during the transcribing of audio tapes.

To ensure that everything that was being discussed was captured, the audio-tape was left to run throughout the course of discussion. Later on this would assist us in validating information. Research relied heavily on this for two reasons. Firstly, it did away with unnecessary breaks that we would have experienced had we relied on some other means to record the discussion. Secondly, use of this afforded room for smooth flow in the discussion and other events.

Another means of capturing information was through sketching the settlement layout. With this the whole settlement was measured and places that appeared to be of importance were mapped. Locations of ongoing events were similarly located in the site map and the activity summarised.

5.3 Methods of Data Analysis.

The data that was collected represented the traditional setting on the one hand and the urban one on the other. In order that cultural needs could be clearly articulated in writing, two groups were formed. The traditional cases were put within one group and their urban counterparts in the other one. Several hierarchical steps were employed in analysing the data.

First, each individual case was transcribed separately as raw data. This meant documenting the information in the order that it was captured both with the audio-tape and the notebook (refer appendix 2a, 2b and 2c) In this way, it became possible to identify trends in the cultural requirements. For example, rites would require similar settings. Also, those cultural issues that at first appeared unimportant during the discussion could turn out otherwise. The research could not afford to ignore any of the developments in the field.

In the second stage, the guideline that had been prepared and was used in directing the course of the discussion was brought in to assist in identifying the information that the research needed. Each case study was separately analysed and each cultural activity noted down (refer appendix 3). The activities could then be grouped into three broad groups of cultural dimensions. These included behavioural patterns, rites of passage and what would generally be referred to as behaviour between members of different social generic groups (refer appendix 4).

Each cultural need, such as avoidance relationship, has a characteristic that is similar in kind to the different cultural value that has been brought together under it¹⁹. The characteristic of the parts is inherent in the whole and vice versa. The next step was the identification of the spatial requirements for the community's cultural behaviours (refer appendix 5). What then follows in the report is the discussion of these different sub-themes by identifying where they occur across the board. Research identified the approximate type of and/ or similarity among cultural themes in the communities.

¹⁹ Burawoy, *Op Cit.*, pp276-278.

CHAPTER SIX.

6.0 CASE STUDIES - CULTURAL DIMENSIONS.

Prologue.

This study was completed in Western Kenya. Two cultural groups were selected for the study. Some cases were selected from two urban contexts. The rest were selected within the rural places within the urban hinterland. They were judged to be the extension of the urban context that was under study. Rural homes were taken to be the places where the research found that the paternal parents or the urban dwellers themselves originally hailed from.

Both in the rural and in towns, the settings selected for the data collection are those that belong to individuals who are the actual owners and also have rental dwellers within. This means that such people have the opportunity to structure their setting according to their social values. At the same time, they have accommodated the needs of the rental dwellers.

The study has documented the cases by referring to each by the letter R after which the case number is added. Urban cases include R1, R3, R6, R8, R9 and R10. Rural examples are R2, R4, R5, R7, R11, R12, R13, R14 and R15. In this report reference has been made to these codes when describing the context and/ or the persons within.

The approach has discussed both rural and urban examples under the same themes. This has been necessary for two reasons. Firstly, from the existing literature, vernacular setting has roots in tradition. Discussing the two together gives room for an understanding of the gradual development of the vernacular. Secondly, when the two are jointly presented, there is room for critical comparison. The following sections will discuss those cultural issues that were identified as being essential to the groups in the region. In spite of modernization, there are needs that the groups have held on to. The issues were identified across the board with different communities.

6.1 Introductory background.

A dominant theme in most social cultural practices appears to be that of upholding the group's identity. This chapter sets out to discuss those behaviors and rites that are identifiable with the social groups in Western Kenya. These are illustrated in the results of interviews conducted. For cultural needs that are viewed as being of social importance, prescriptive guidance exists fulfilling their requirements. Particular ways of enacting a rite are viewed as being sacrosanct to the society. Certain behaviors are highly regarded. People are proud of belonging to a particular group by being able to relate to some cultural value that is associated with this group members.

Community groups can be formed out of kinship. This involves strictly blood relationships. The next type of grouping is the clan. This brings together those people that are related through blood and those that are developed relations through marriages. By being part of a group, it is as if there is social commitment that requires one to fulfill some of the roles in a given order. Setting demands directly relate to the resident's cultural needs.

Examples used to explain this concept of cultural commitment include forms of behavioral patterns; rites of passage; and the concept of community. It is around these that the characteristics of societies in Western Kenya will be discussed. Behavioral patterns and rites involved in the discussion are avoidance relationships; relationships between genders; relationships between the social generic groups; the concept of mourning; the celebration of new life in the community; the concept of home; and the elders court and being within a community. Social generic is a term that members of a kinship would refer and identify one another for example elders, parents, youths, grandparents, grandchildren, males and females. These cultural requirements are witnessed within a built environment by watching the body movements of some of the people in space; and some of the ways that some kinship members relate to one another.

Usually people try to explain their beliefs and behavior by appealing to their social group affiliations. Having been brought up in town, a participant in R9 has since

migrated with his family to start life in a rural setting. For the participant, town fabric lacked proper setting to meet his traditional cultural needs, "I would like my son-in-law to enact *Luo* cultural requirements when they attend my mourning," he said.

Among the *Abagusii* people, an important reason for going through the initiation rite is to establish communal identity. There is often a tendency among people to explain some of their behavior and habits by claiming this to be the way their particular culture decrees it.

There is the way that participants in R1, R2, R3, R4, R6, R7 and R8 would relate to their grown-up children and that would illustrate the level of mixing between these two generations. Some groups are required by culture to maintain a formal relationship between them.

According to participants in R1 and 2, the *Abagusii* are not supposed to freely enter into the private places of those that they socially refer to their children for example nephews. Likewise, as explained by several people, social cultural requirements, on the level of spatial privacy, between parent and children are something that *Luo* group members hold in high esteem. At this point behavior seems to be emotional rather than rational and based on their cultural background.

The level of socialization between the parent and child is so reserved that one group considers the material objects that belong to the other group as being private. There is the respect between the people to the extent that one becomes "afraid" of witnessing some of the material culture that is related to the other party. Certain materials in the possession of one, like the sleeping place, are considered sacred. This may embarrass those who observe taboo with one another. Both participants in R1 and R6 express the traditional view that one receives the grown-up children next to the doorway and at times in the semi-private setting within the open outside setting. Seats would be moved out, to be placed besides the entrance threshold.

The requirement for socialization between the social generic groups has been addressed in the urban town through the provision of an alternative place. The

verandah and beneath the tree growth are considered by participants in R3, R6 and R10 to be semi-private places and thus suitable as places where both the parents and the grown-up children can be free with one another. Most would take refuge here in the evening (diagram 6.1). There are times when parents and their grown-up children move into the yard. The reason for this is to offer the children a free environment for discussion.

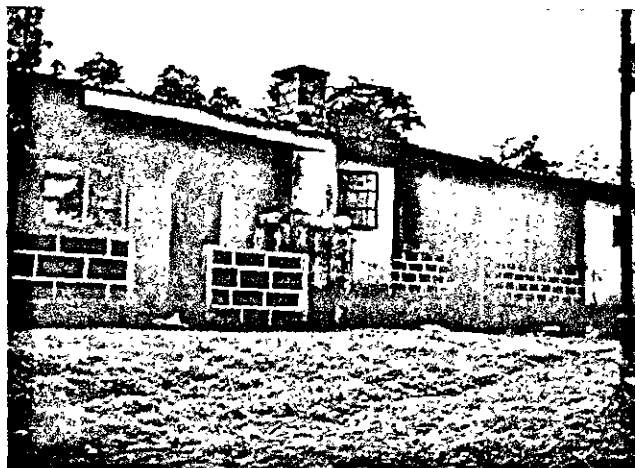
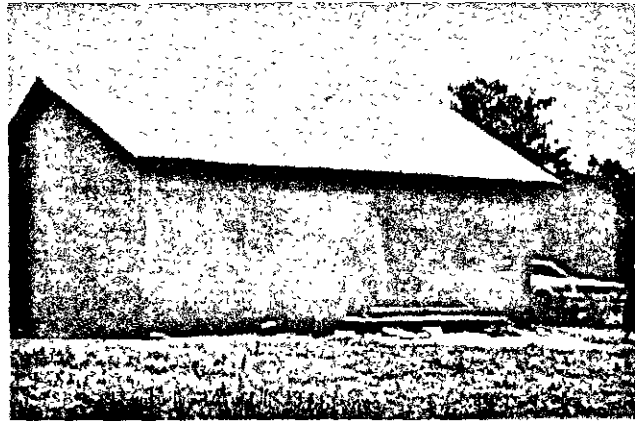


Diagram 6.1.veranda as a semi-private setting where at times some persons are received (top is traditional dwelling in a rural setting in R7, and bottom is dwelling block within an urban settlement in R3).

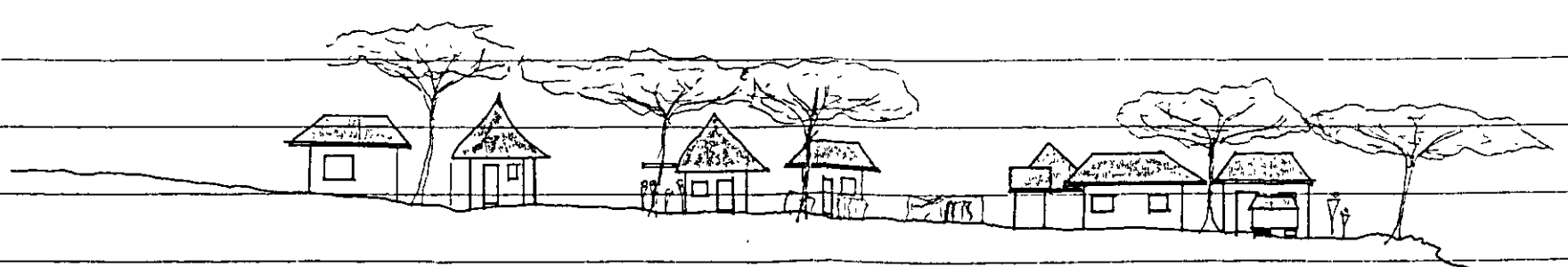
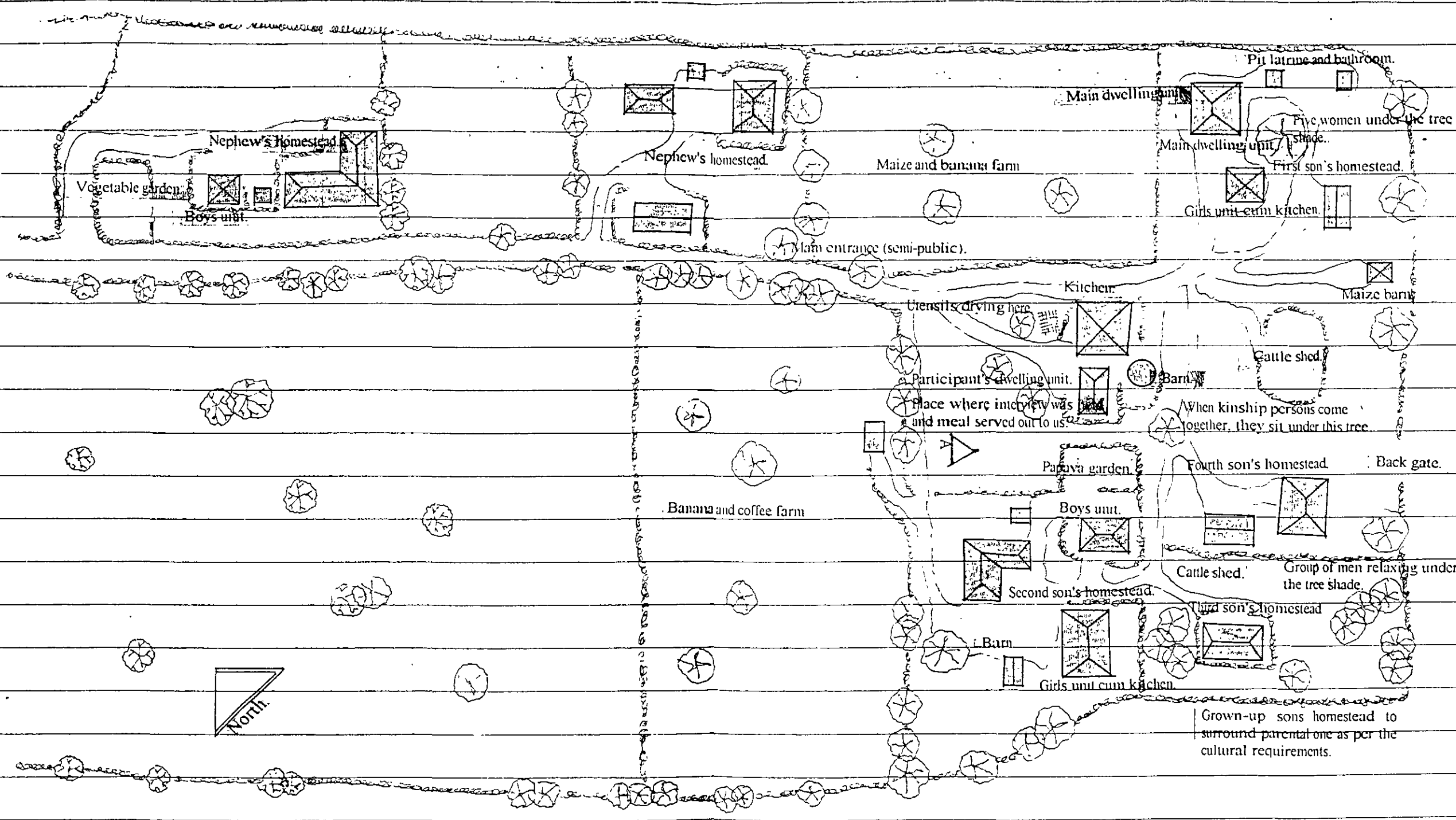
For participants in R9 and R10, there is the feeling by the community that the internal place is orientated around female activity whereas the external one is viewed as male territory. After returning from work and also during the weekends, the participant in R9 has noticed men's habit of spending more time in the external spaces.

In a traditional setting there are two occasions when an elder will invite his peers to celebrate an event and to ask for advice. It is during this time that the participant in R15 suggests that traditional beer should be served. As some of the issues that might be raised during such sessions may be embarrassing in front of the youth, participants in, R4, R11 and R15 suggested that such assemblies are restricted to elders.

An example of an elders' peer meeting was witnessed when I went to meet with participant in R15. He was having drinks with his kinsmen. As disclosed by one of the persons there, participant in R15 had invited the peers to discuss an issue and in the process traditional beer was served. With the former, eating, and singing together with dancing, helped to mark the occasion. They pointed out that the whole activity was limited to the place that they were in. Youth also hold events that, according to participants in R4 and R11, are confined to their territorial grounds.

Most traditional homes have a structure that easily controls the different social generic group activities. Dwelling units for the parents and their children are physically removed from each other (diagram 6.2). This is an attempt at increasing the level of privacy between the parents and their progeny. Also with most homesteads that I went to, residents had developed shelter around their dwelling units by planting trees immediately outside their doorways (diagram 6.3). Both participants in R2 and R4 view these as likely places where one has the chance of being with one's peers.

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Elevation A, Scale 1:500.

Diagram 6.2. In a typical *Abagusii* homestead, the son's move out and build around the parental homestead, *Gesonso*, West *Mugirango*, *Kisii* district - Case Study R2, layout plan, Scale 1:500.

Relationships between parents and children are twofold. Sometimes it is strict and reserved. At other times it is relaxed and free. In the daily life of a community there are regular contacts between parents and their children. When we visited the participant in R7 we found him engaged in discussion with some of the youths. They were on the verandah. We later came to learn that these were his children and his nephew. Several father-heads like participants in R7, R12 and R13 are in the habit of having meals together with their male children. Seating for meals is next to the main household doorway, a setting that is considered as semi-private.

Avoidance form of relationships, present between parents and their children are extended to their in-laws. Participants in R11 talk of parents visiting their daughter's matrimonial home as having two optional places to enter. Apart from the built setting that belongs to the peers who are the in-law's parents, there is the open yard. Respect between the parents and the daughter's spouse helps in guiding the former to refrain from entering. There is the anticipation of witnessing an embarrassing scene.



Diagram 6.3. Alternative semi-private outside where at times the kansmen is received.

The participant in R13 was able to state that the relationships between grandparents and their grandchildren were not formal. Apart from sharing jokes, they relate in a free manner while in the other one's built setting. Dwelling units are within proximity of one another, and as participant in R13 reckons, "they play and call one another names with my wives." According to participant in R10, in the case of a grandchild encountering marital problems, grandparents will intervene and advise.

Since culture describes the grandparent and grandchildren as equal, the participant R10 talked about his grandchildren someday residing in his urban house. The built setting is not abandoned. With decreasing land size, this new behavior assists with the problem of settlement. There had been the tradition that required the male children to settle outside the parental homestead but, due to the link between these two social generic groups, society seems to have created a way for the youth to be heard. The grandparents represent the grandchild in front of the elders.

With discussions with those people that reside in town, it is apparent that culture has a strong influence over their lifestyle. An example is offered by participants in R2 and R3, about the period when they hosted kinship members within the setting during the initiation ceremony of their children. Events were held in the open yard and marked with eating and drinking. While the men were in the yard with the peers, women would be involved with food preparation, and the youth were inside the dwelling unit with the initiates. Women also sang praise songs to the new initiates. This last ceremony was held outside the built setting where the initiates were being accommodated.

After initiation, as recognition of their children's social responsibility, participants in R1, R3 and R8 got the now "adult boy" to reside in an independent dwelling unit within the homestead. One of the requirements was for this to be at a slight distance from the one occupied by the parents. People followed the *Abagusii* people's culture that restricts one from freely entering the children's dwelling places. Most interactions between these parents and their children were spent next to the entrance door. The dilemma of where to relate freely with their grown-up children freely was solved by both participants in R6 and R10 incorporating an outside verandah to the main house.

Regular clan meetings are part of the social life of those people that reside in the urban town. Different generic groups are required to attend. Since both participants in R6 and R10 are among the elders their clans, respective meetings are held in their homesteads. The two were able to identify outside places where meetings are held. In both cases, these places were under the trees that were within the yard. For the participant in R6 the yard was located at the back of the main built setting, while for R10 it was at the front of this built type. The selection of venue is determined by the composition of those people who attend the kinship meeting. Some of these are the discussant's nephews and can not relate freely to some of the places inside their dwelling units.

In the urban settlement, participants in R1 and R3 identified a situation that they refer to as promiscuous. The settings that were there, and that were mostly for entertainment, brought together the different social generic groups. They freely mixed with one another and also engaged in immoral behaviors.

Both with the urban dwellers as well as their rural counterparts culture seems to influence the behavior between the kinship of the different social generic groups. The influence could be identified during the performance of rite, in the daily life, during the periods when they are together and in the planning structure of the setting.

6.2.2 Relationship between genders.

Through both the observation of different events in the built settings together with several narrations and interviews, it was noted how members of the opposite gender groups relate to one another and to their individual space. Most of the people interviewed were of the view that there is a limited amount of socialization between members of the opposite gender. Reasons that are offered include the need to maintain the social status quo; gender stereo type, division of roles; and lack of social precedence for bringing together the two genders freely.

Both in the traditional context and likewise in the town, certain events take place that require members of the kinship to attend. In cases where both gender group members

are required to attend, women occupy positions on the ground. According to statements of participants R4 and R7, it is the elderly women only who are allowed at such meetings.



Diagram 6.4. During period when members of the kinship gather within a traditional homestead, tradition requires the different gender groups to occupy positions apart from each other.

During the discussion, it is customary for men to play the leading role whilst the elderly women assume an advisory one. Both participants in R7 and R11 view the advisory role that is played by women as important. It seems that women are considered as having long memories of cultural matters, and are, at the same time, able to clearly articulate these.

Also, in the traditional setting, as was stated by participants in R11 and R12, customary seating arrangements require the different gender groups to sit across from each other (diagram 6.4). This is because of social reservations, which call for the seating positions to be separate for different gender groups. Lack of allowed mixing between the different gender members helped to reinforce this idea of separation. It used to be that women sat on the ground while men sat on stools. Recently, the pattern has changed with women being allowed to bring mats that they then spread on the ground.

In the urban setting, according to participants in R3, R9 and R11, clan meetings that involve different genders take place as well. A new development involves meeting of women alone. A unique aspect of the women's meeting is that they observe the cultural requirement of holding the meeting outside.

In the urban town cases of participants in R9 and R10 use of the yard outside by the women is notable. In each case, this is a forum that brings the kinship women together with their friends. Because of the taboo that controls some of the ladies' movements inside the house, the group resolved that unless it rains, such meetings were to be held in the open yard that is behind the house.

In a built setting, groups from specific genders occupy certain places within the compound. Important qualities that help in distinguishing some of the preferred settings, appear as rooted in either culture and are determined by a specific gender being in a particular setting; or from social habits of members of a group relating more to the primary activities that are part of the place. In both traditional and urban settings this was expressed in different discussions.

In the urban place, during the evening, as women move to the inside of the dwelling place, men move outside to be in the yard. From information supplied by participants in R6, R9 and R10. Both participants in R1 and R9 identified activities inside the dwelling units as female oriented. These included cooking, preparing the children's sleeping place, and re-arranging of the house to create extra space.

The young children remain with their mothers inside the house, and grown-up children spend longer hours with dwellers in the yard. A strong feeling expressed by participant in R10 is that, "men need to be outside where they may freely discuss their affairs without the fear of someone eavesdropping."

There is also the question of one being able to intervene in an event. "While in the yard," participant in R9 stated, "it is possible that one can notice something that is wrong and thus intervene in time." The participant feels that as a man, one has a social

responsibility, and as such has to be in a position where he has knowledge of what is going on, especially within his territory.

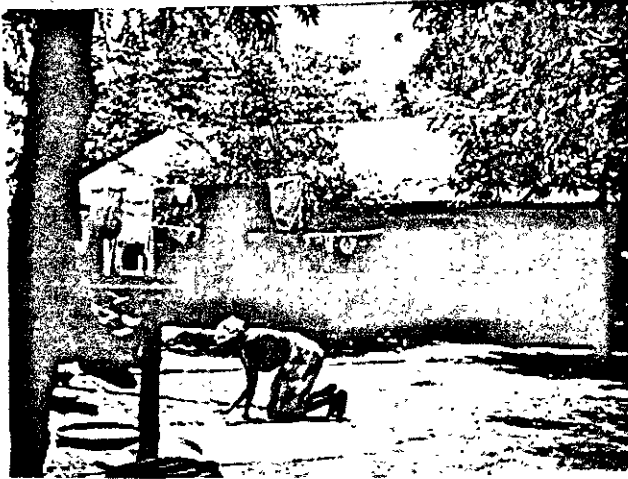


Diagram 6.5. Both in the vernacular settlements that are in the town (top) and likewise in the traditional settlements (bottom) women move into the open outside area both to perform the ordinary roles and to relate to others.

Participant from rural and urban settings, expressed the opinion that women prefer the inside and that they feel that is their rightful place and that men should be outside. According to participants R1, R4 and R6, women would be heard to tell their spouses, "get up, I want to sweep the room," if the man is in the habit of spending most of the time inside the house.

External space should not be viewed as being only the male domain. As we moved into several of the built settings during the day, we were able to witness women who were outside and involved in different kinds of activities. These ranged from washing

clothes, sorting out foodstuffs, cleaning utensils, etceteras. These activities are carried out in both traditional and urban settings.

In the settings that are found in both rural and town environments, females were in the habit of spending longer hours in the shade. While outside, they are involved in some domestic activity. Though that creates opportunities for the different women to come together (diagram 6.5).

6.3 Rites of passage.

6.3.1 Concept of mourning.

Societies within the study region have certain requirements towards fulfilling the mourning of their members. There are three events that are associated with mourning. The marking of the mourning period; burial in a place that is considered as "home"; and the remembering the departed are necessary. With slight changes, the basic concept continues to hold across the communities. The way in which people behave shows death to be accepted as a process of life.

The location of burial grounds in the homestead of the participant in R2 and co-participant R13 exemplifies their death beliefs. Following the traditional requirement there, each of the spouses is buried in the outside yard in a position that is immediately next to the doorway. In the view of participant in R2 and the co-participant in R13, though physically gone, one is still attached to those left behind. In the former case, it is a matter of the widow acknowledging the presence of her husband by being in contact with the burial place from within the dwelling unit.

It is in the light of a community trying to hold on to its departed members that condemnation by one of the co-participants in R6 should be viewed. Though he resided within an urban setting, when I suggested to his family to bury their dead in the town, he reacted straight away that such behavior would amount to throwing out one's kin to the wilderness.

In the traditional setting, during one of the mourning periods that was discussed by both participants in R5 and R12, some of the members of the kin are required to stay closer to the burial ground. On inquiry, one of the key informants briefed me on the necessity for certain categories of the members of the kinship to identify with the deceased. Maternal uncles and cousins spend their time next to the burial place. The rest of the kinship members are expected to mourn by spending the evenings together in the homestead.

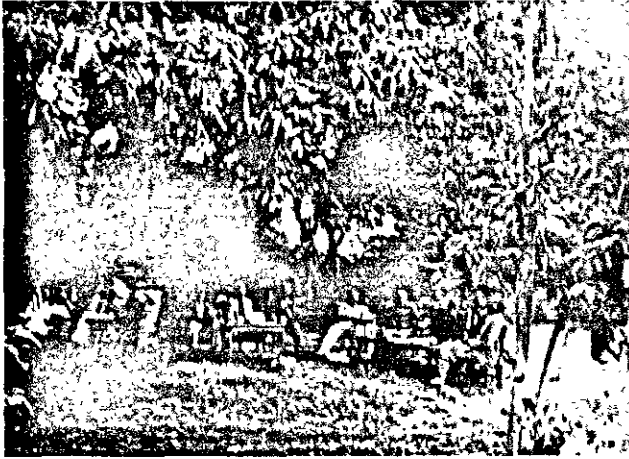


Diagram 6. 6. Activities like mourning are cultural and are held within the open outside area where different levels of kin should be able to move about freely.

In the urban setting, according to participants in R3, R6 and R10, mourning activities are held within the open yard (diagram 6.6). This suggestion was supported by participant in R7 who stated this as the best way that one could be “sent away”. As stated by both participants R11 and R14, it’s the common belief that after some days the spirit finally leaves the homestead. Both participants in R4 and 7 talk of the mourners dispersing to return to their homes only after the required number of days for the event has passed.

One other noted behavior is the act of leaving all doors open throughout the mourning period. The act of leaving doors ajar during the mourning period according to participants in R7, R11 and R14 is enacted throughout the dwelling units within the homestead where mourning is taking place. The participant in R11 explained this as creating wandering places for the departed spirit that is believed to be still within the setting.

Participant in R7 suggests that music should also accompany the mourning of the passing of an elderly person. Musical performance within the outside setting are accompanied by dancing, playing of traditional musical instruments and singing. When mourning an elderly person, as stated by participants in R4, R7, R13 and R14 livestock are slaughtered to help mark the occasion (diagram 6.7). In the mourning example of R5, elders instructed those who were to slaughter the two cows on the exact location for this. Slaughtering was done on the right side of the entry door of the person being mourned. This requirement is missing in the urban town. Lack of livestock may be a contributory factor

In addition to the kinship members, participants in R1, R3, R8 and R9 suggest the mourning scenes in town as consisting of friends. This new development defines the boundaries of an emerging community. Due to this there should be some change in the way that mourning is observed. There are rites, for example, of wake-keeping. According to participant in R9 when his brother passed away not everyone in the homestead observed this. Although everyone came out during the evening, not everyone spent the whole night in the open as is required by their culture.

This last is probably hard to fully enact in the urban town. Unlike vernacular setting that may be single family unit, defined urban town settings have accommodations for rental dwellers. Some of the dwellers according to R6 might not be familiar with the *Luo* society mourning requirements. For both participants in R6 and R9 when each lost a brother, not everyone in the setting left their doors ajar throughout the period of mourning.

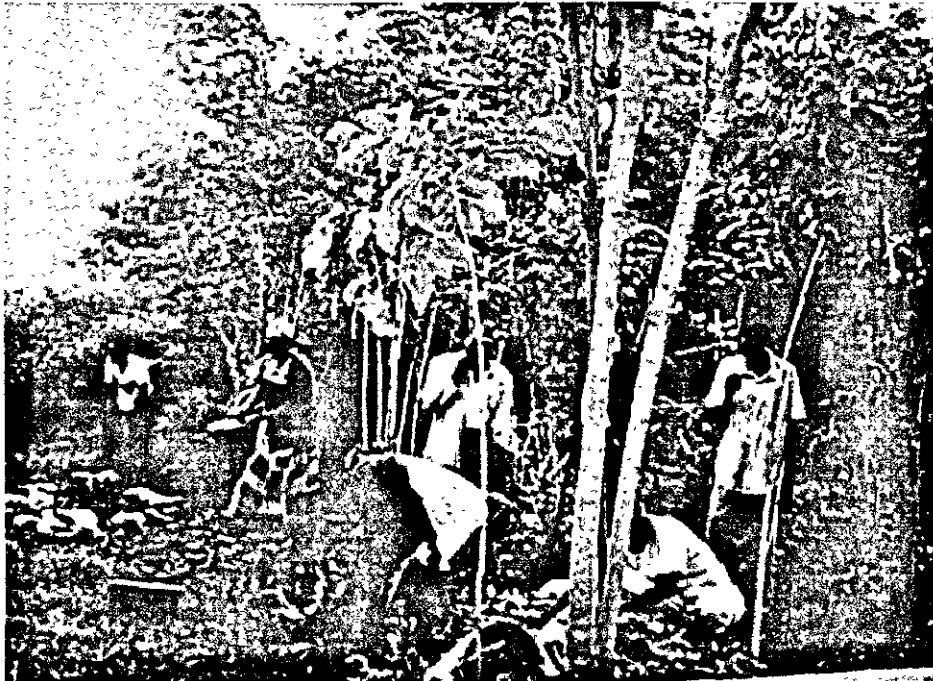
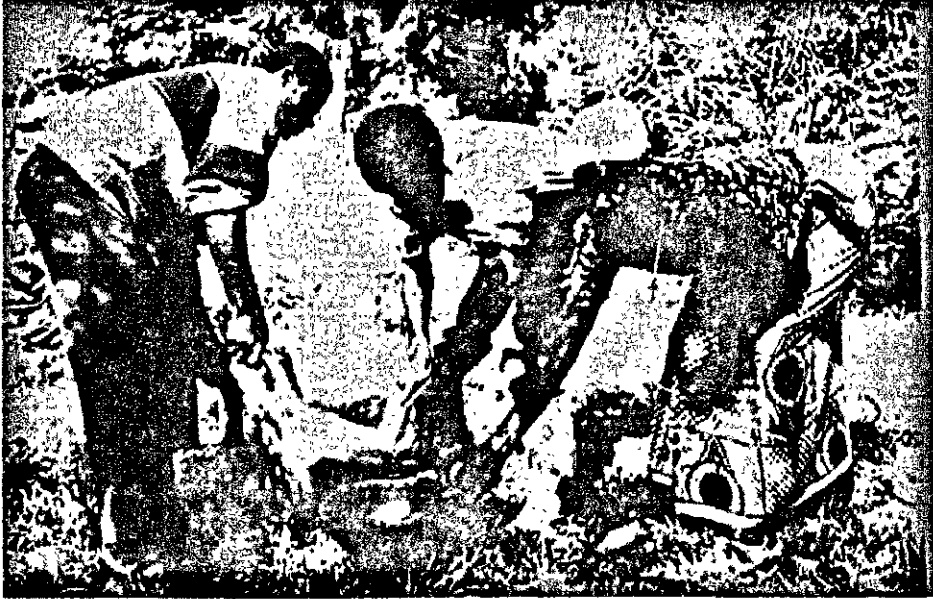


Diagram 6.7. To mark some rites of passage for example during the mourning of an adult person, the kin perform a sacrifice. This has to be enacted within a particular location of the setting, for example to the right hand side of the doorway of the deceased's dwelling.

The view of some of those people residing in the urban town was that dwellers should not be expected to be completely part of the mourning family. These people stay in the setting for economic reasons. Whereas people will be keeping wake, doors are not

left open. The participant in R9 could identify only members of the kinship observing this rite.

An example of the ways in which members of some of the urban social groups share a culture that is congruent with other social groups can accommodate and become part of the latter's mourning team, is offered by the participant in R3. The *Luo* and *Luhya* dwellers residing within the predominantly *Abagusii* neighborhood of *Daraja Mbili* in *Kisii* town readily join one another in mourning.

For those people who are residents of an urban town, one's burial place is strongly linked to the identification of the home. As articulated by different participants, for example participants in R1, R6 and R8, it is an anathema to bury ones outside an ancestral home. The participant in R9 articulated that as a means of burial place person realized his culture and started to identify with it. The participant rationalizes why he relocated his setting to a rural place. Though brought up in the urban town, the participant projected into the future and wanted all the *Luo* mourning requirements enacted for his mourning.

Participants in R1, R8 and R10 have been able to identify an emerging trend of urban dwellers that have identified the urban town as being the home setting. Where the participant in R6 buried his late daughter is still visible (diagram 6.8.). Unlike the traditional context, according to participants in R6 and R10, communities are shifting to a central burial location. Decreasing land size appears to be influencing this. Unlike their counterpart participants in R2, R5, R7 and R12 who talk of the burial ground as still being at the front of the dwelling unit, participants in R11 and R13 suggest that the community is re-locating this to the back. Shifting the locality appears to be a sudden development of thought of such a site being present to the visitors in the homestead.

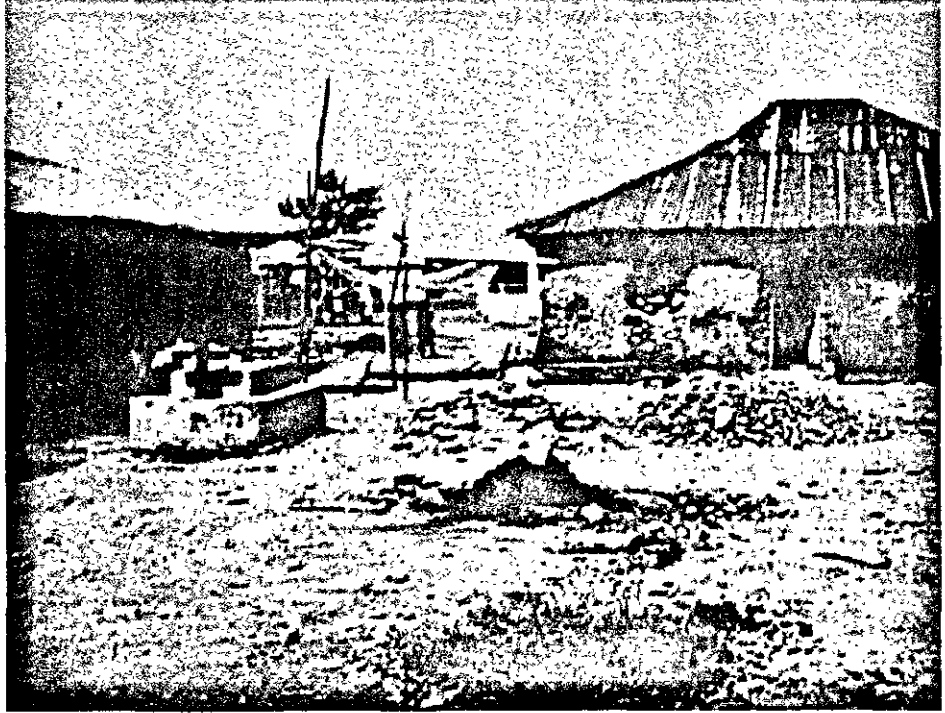


Diagram 6.8. In spite of being part of the urban fabric, in settlements such as Nyalenda, Kisumu town, kinship members are still buried next to the doorway as required by the Luo community culture.

6.3.2 Celebrating New Life in the Community.

In the region of study, participants in R2, R3, R4, R7 and R8 were of the opinion that the arrival of the new-born child and one's marriage are both viewed as bringing change to the community. In the first instance, there is an additional person to the group, while the second case is an opportunity for creating a social network. There are events that are held to mark these. The main aim is to make one part of the community. Participants in R3 and R10, according to traditions this should be also the period when one gets an ancestral blessing. Elders who attend this are taken to represent the ancestors. Without such a blessing, some people fear what may happen.

According to participants in R2, R3, R7 and R10 the community expects kinship members to attend the welcoming ceremony for a newly born child. During this period the child is brought into contact with the elderly kinsmen some of who carry out certain acts with the sole objective of welcoming the new member into the community. During this occasion culture influences the activities.

The rite for the coming of a child is held within the open outside setting. Some of the activities held may necessitate holding the ceremony outdoors. Also the type of the kinship members that are expected to attend could necessitate the holding of such an event in the open. There are cultural restrictions on the movement of some of these, especially the elderly persons within the house.

In the traditional setting this will also mark the first time that the newborn is taken out of the house. There is a consensus among participants in R7, R13 and R14 that a boy should be taken outside the house four days after birth and three days in the case of a girl. When brought outside, an elderly person holds the child while invoking the name of an ancestor. This is done right in front of the mother's doorway. Spirits are called upon for help in protecting the child from any future harm. The parents provide both food and drink for those people that are present.

The way in which the newly born are welcomed in the town as articulated by participants in R3, R6 and R10 differs slightly from the traditional approach. Some events, like invoking the names of an ancestral spirit, are not performed. Apart from bringing the new child out to be held by the elders, people are served food and drink. An underlying theme in the traditional and urban setups appears to be the presence of elderly persons who are traditionally viewed as representing the ancestors.

Another time members of the kinship group join one another in celebration at the time of marriage. After initial proposals, rites are involved. Both in the traditional and urban settings, some of the marriage ceremonies have to take place in the open yard. These are the times when the community is asked to become part of the whole event. Also, that one gets respect from the community from such an act.

In a traditional homestead, marriage events that involve members of the kinship group are held in the yard. The community has a chance, according to participants in R4, R11 and R13, of welcoming the person, to be one of them. The whole rite affects the kin in that it introduces a new person. Rather than immediate parents, it is those persons that are considered to be elders who play a more direct role with the visitors.

Different residents of urban settings claim to have anticipated the time that they will require proper settings for cultural events within their urban fabrics. Each of the participants in R6 and R10 planned his homestead to accommodate a central court. There are times in the past when participants in R6 and also R10 have had a marriage event in the front yard.

6.3.3 The Concept of Home.

For some people it is at home that social and kinship emotions are realized and subsequently ritualized. This is partly due to the cultural process involved in setting up a place referred to as "home." Urban participants in R3, R6 and R8 would like to be buried within the setting where their ancestors were buried. There are myths connected with being buried outside the ancestral setting, like the spirits returning to haunt the kin.

The structure of a home influenced by the need for social space becomes part of a material culture. The suggestion by participants in R2, R6, R7 and R9 is that home is a single place that is able to house certain rites. These are the behaviors and beliefs that are basic to becoming a member of a particular society.

For some activities the importance of the home is associated with some cultural rites and thus the need for a proper home setting for enacting the belief. Among the *Luo* people, there is a strong belief on a point of departure for going to consult with a traditional healer. As stated by the participant in R7, one should depart from the senior wife's house.

Myths about the sacredness of the senior wife's dwelling persist in the community. Among the *Luo* persons as stated by participants in R7, R9 and R11, the dwelling is viewed as the center of the home. For polygamous persons such as the participants in R9, R11 and R13, those that need to consult with them or are seeking advice are required by culture to first call upon the first wife. From this house, permission can be granted or refused, "all depends on the judgement of the first lady," states participant in R9. "She can offer an excuse that will make you go away if she thinks that you have a sinister motive."

Requirements of development somewhere that one may refer to as being "home" differ slightly between the regional social groupings. Underlying themes in the exercise however appear to be the same across the communities. It is this common theme that guides this discussion. Across the board, participants in R3, R6, R7, R9 R10 and R13 share the view that settings are structured as a response to cultural needs.

In identifying homesteads of participants in R2, R11 and R13, this research found the residents of a traditional setting to be the paternal head together with the other family members (diagram 6.9). When they have reached the adult stage, male children are expected to migrate elsewhere and start their own homes. R2, R11 and R12, with vast tracts of land in the rural places, people can still re-locate elsewhere from the parental home. Children can still inherit large chunks of land from their parents.

There is the need for an ideal home to be accepted by the community as part of its fabric. Elders visit a new place to signify this. In the traditional setting, they come to eat and drink.

There was a general consensus among the participants in R4, R7, R13, R14 and R15 on the role of the elders in a new settlement. When these persons are invited, food and drinks are served to them. For the *Abagusii* community there is an added dimension to the whole exercise. According to participants in R14 and R15 the elders would also plant a tree in the new place. After this, the new homestead is recognized as being part of the community setting. The owner is recognized as an elder and can be invited by the rest to contribute to social events.

In the urban place, due to the land problem, new methods of claiming home ownership have been established. This new development has been necessitated by the rising urban land costs. There are two approaches that have been followed by some of the people who reside in the urban town.

There is the example of the children of participants in R1, R3 and R8. After the initiation rites, the sons moved to occupy some of the empty dwelling units within the same built setting. These are a slight distance from the parental unit (diagram 6.10). Such efforts seem to be influenced by a search for privacy between members of these two social generic groups.

The next approach towards enacting the migration rite was followed by the participants' children in R6 and 10 children (diagram 6.11). The same house in the parental homestead has the door re-located. Doors face the fence where a new symbolic gate is cut through the perimeter fence. The exercise carried out when setting out a new homestead in the rural setting is repeated in the town according to participants in R3, R6 and R10. For example, elderly kinsmen would be welcomed into the yard and served with food and drink

Unlike the traditional setting representing a single kinship, urban ones have a slightly different one that has been brought about by the introduction of the renter. These new persons bring changes in the ordering pattern of a homestead. Identification of this setting as a homestead poses a problem. Though some efforts have been made towards isolating an urban setting into family and renter's side, in some of the cases such as R3 and R6 settings, this is not apparent.

The dilemma that has been brought about by the rental dweller has been addressed in two ways. There are those like participants in R1, R8, and R9 who have accepted the new-comers and integrated them within the block (diagram 6.12). There is a central yard that is meant for the use of both rental dwellers and the kinship members. Others such as participants in R3, 6 and 10 have developed a separate yard for the use of the renters (refer diagram 6.4 and 6.11). This last group regards renters as people who are in sojourn and as such are not taken as being part of the kinship. Hence their dwelling should not be part of the homestead structure.

In the urban setting there are different views as to what is to be considered a homestead. People of the third urban generation like participants in R6 and R10 have accepted and identify with their urban homestead. The places are viewed as part of the

ancestral memory. On the other hand, there are some of those that belong to the second generation, such as participant in R9, who still view themselves as being part of the rural background. This group is interested in establishing itself within a cultural environment whose characteristics are congruent with their cultural beliefs and their accustomed behavioral pattern.

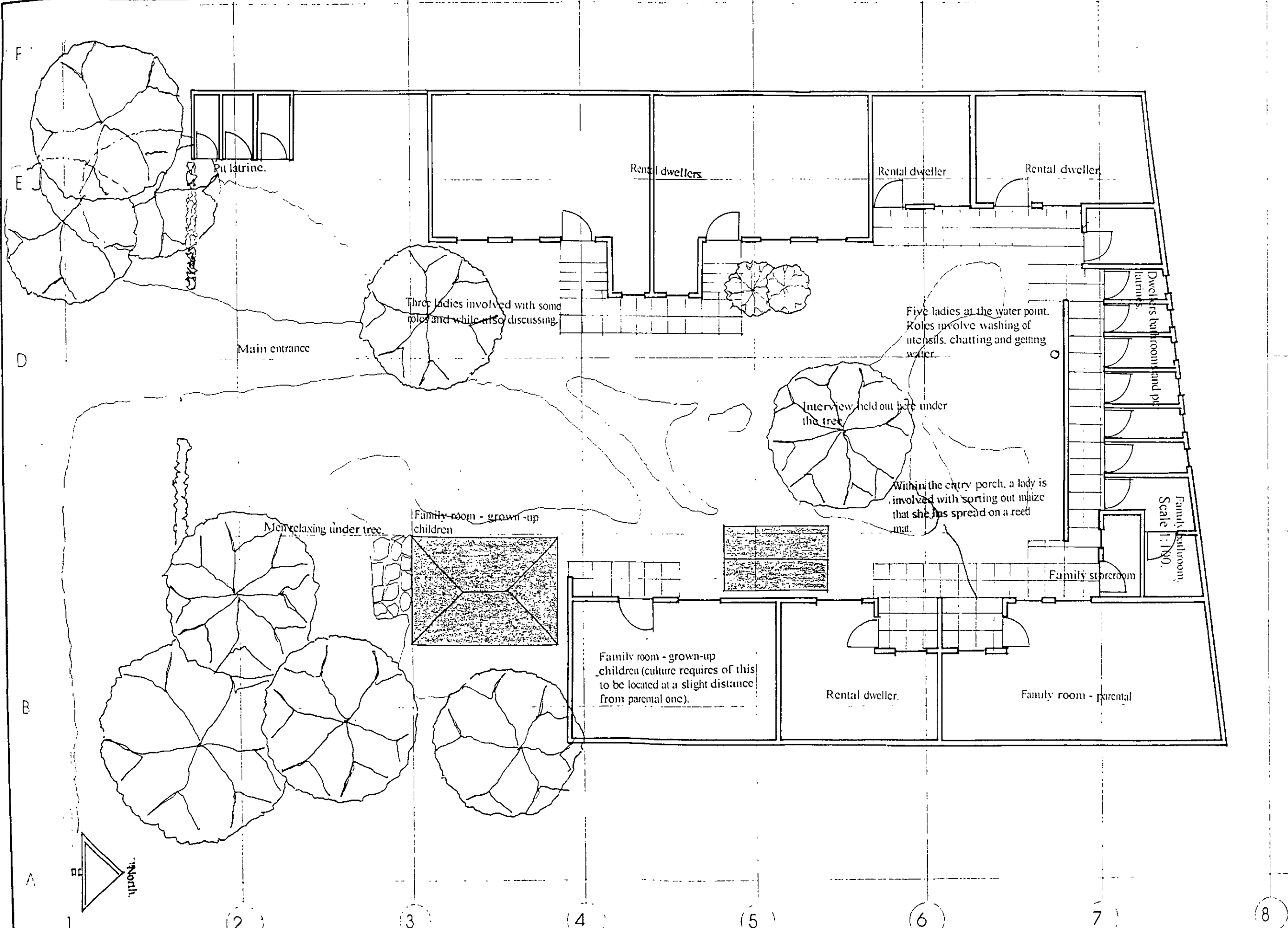
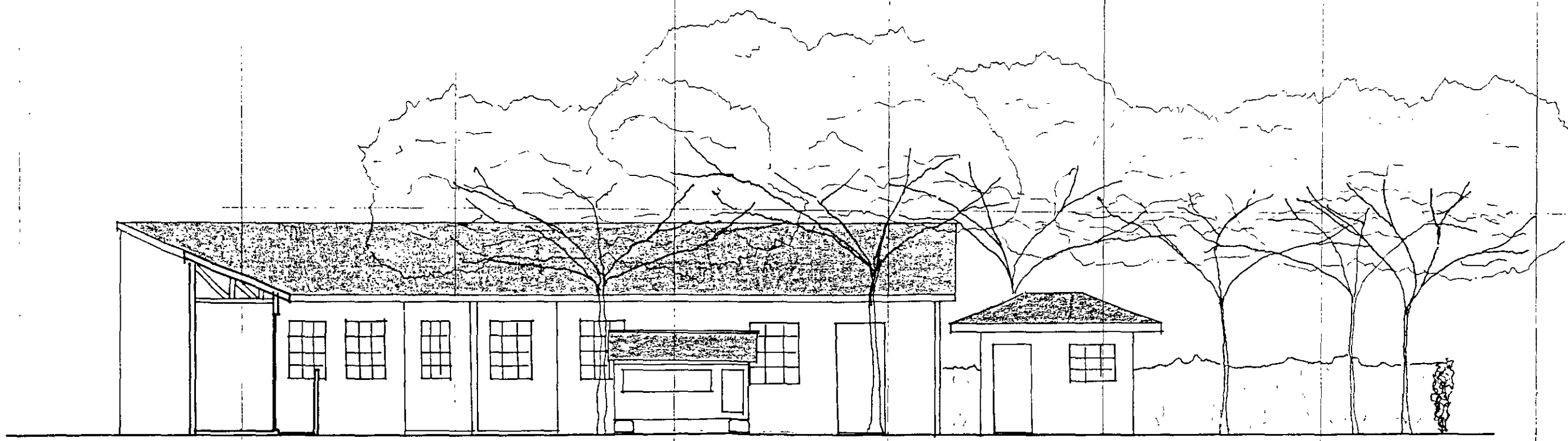


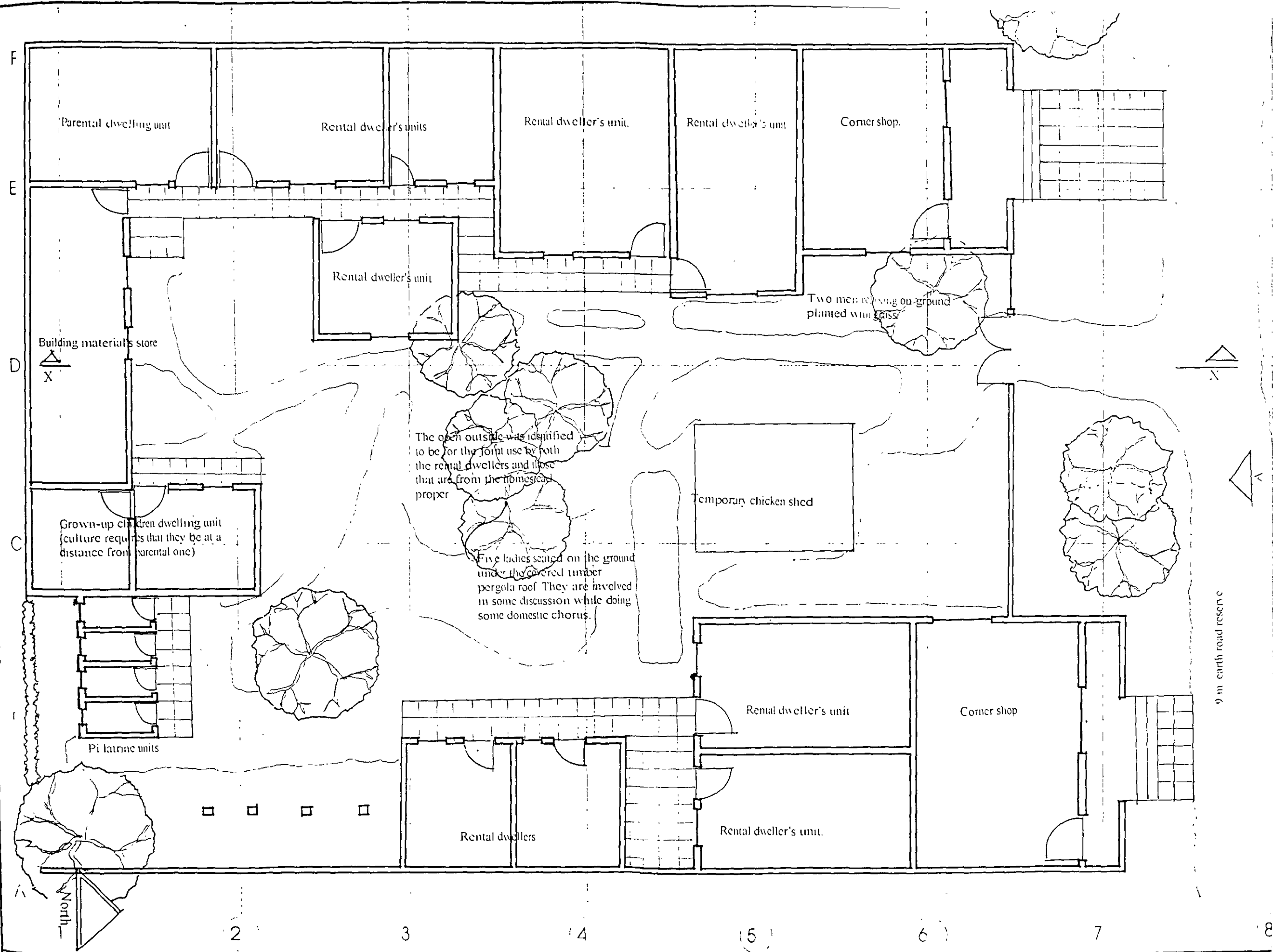
Diagram 6.10. In an urban homestead, siting of dwelling for those that culturally have taboo with one another are located at a distance, Daraja Mbili Kisu town - Case Study R8, layout plan, scale 1:100

F
E
D
C
B
A



Sectional elevation X-X,
Scale 1:100

1 (2) 3 4 5 6 7 8



The open outside was identified to be for the joint use by both the rental dwellers and those that are from the homestead proper

Five ladies seated on the ground under the covered timber pergola roof. They are involved in some discussion while doing some domestic chorus.

Two men relaxing on ground planted with grass

Diagram 6.12. In some of the urban homestead, the open outside is shared between the rental dwellers and the kinsmen, *Daraja Mbili, Kisumu town - Case Study R1*, layout plan, Scale 1:100

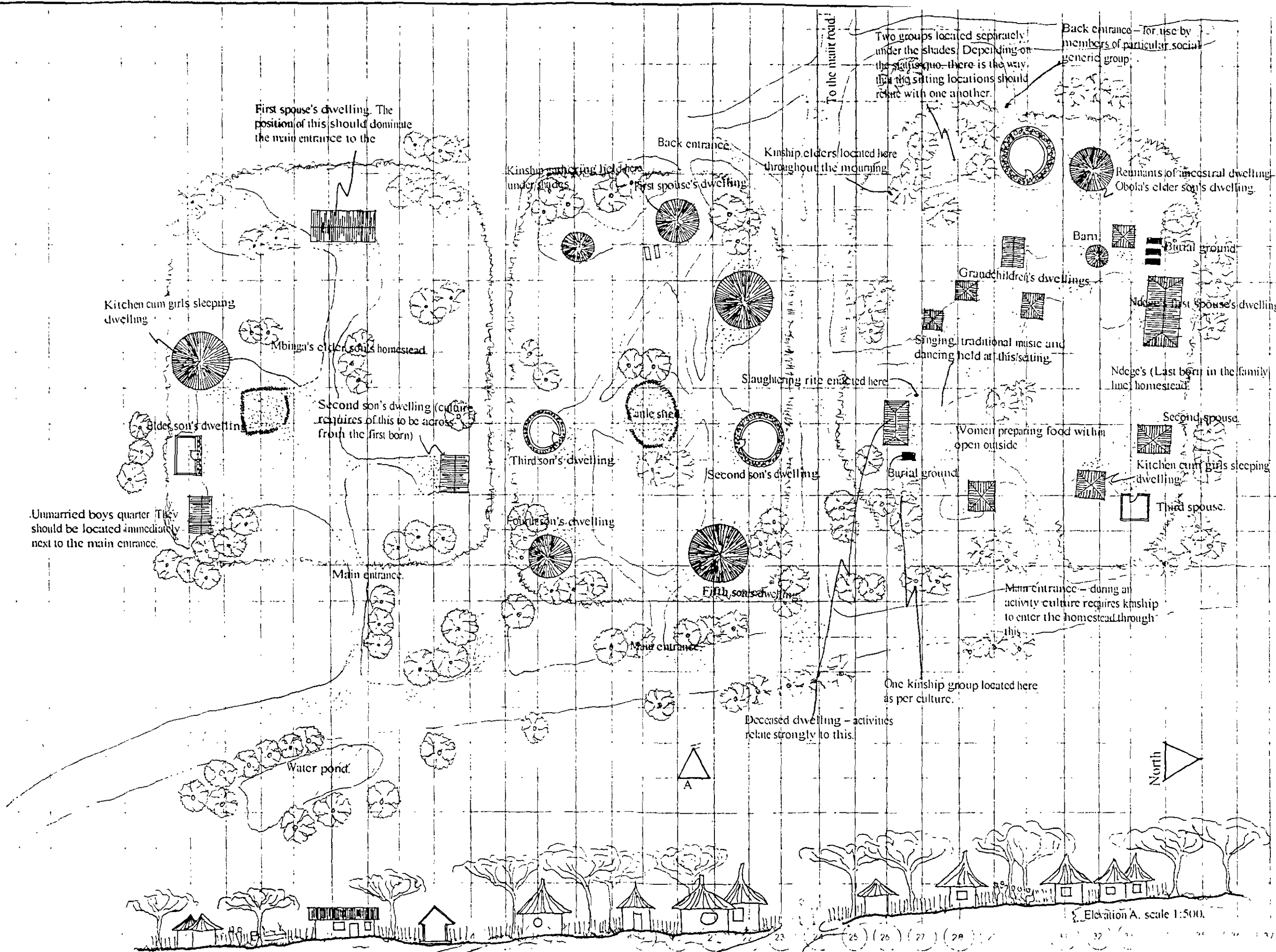


Diagram 6.13. During a cultural activity, elders form a council that locates itself in a position where they are able to monitor the ongoing, *Alego*. *Siaya* district - Case Study R5, layout plan, Scale 1:500.

6.4 Concept of a Community.

6.4.1 Being in a Community.

In the traditional homestead and in the urban setting, the feeling of being part of a large community is a theme that appears more often during discussions with different people. Participant in R2 believes that human beings can not be independent of other people. There are times when we need one another. In the opinion of R4, the existing social unity has been beneficial to people of the region.

The typical traditional set-up has two levels of community structure. There is the immediate one that is identifiable with a single vernacular setting. This will have a single patriarchal head (diagram 6.14). The next level involves the kinsmen with related homesteads (refer diagram 6.11).

Relationships that are developed from kinship affiliations are active. The patriarchal cousins of participants in R4 and 11 provided both social and material support during mourning. After the mourning period, according to participants in R7, R11 and R14, members of the kinship group would meet to discuss ways of assisting the bereaved family. Participation in community matters is motivated by the possibility of needing assistance someday. There is the law of reciprocity as stated by participants in R2, R7 and R11 that the community would only come to the assistance of those who attend to others.

Meetings by members of the kinship to resolve issues are held in the yard. For the participant in R12, this is an ancestral concept. According to participant in R11, there is a better chance of judging commitment by people with better view of them.

In an urban setting, apart from the kinship, community membership was suggested to include the rental dwellers and friends. In the case of the participant in R10 there is the religious group. These different people intervene when there is need. For people such as participants in R1 and R6, attending to kin is a social commitment, "*Abagusii*

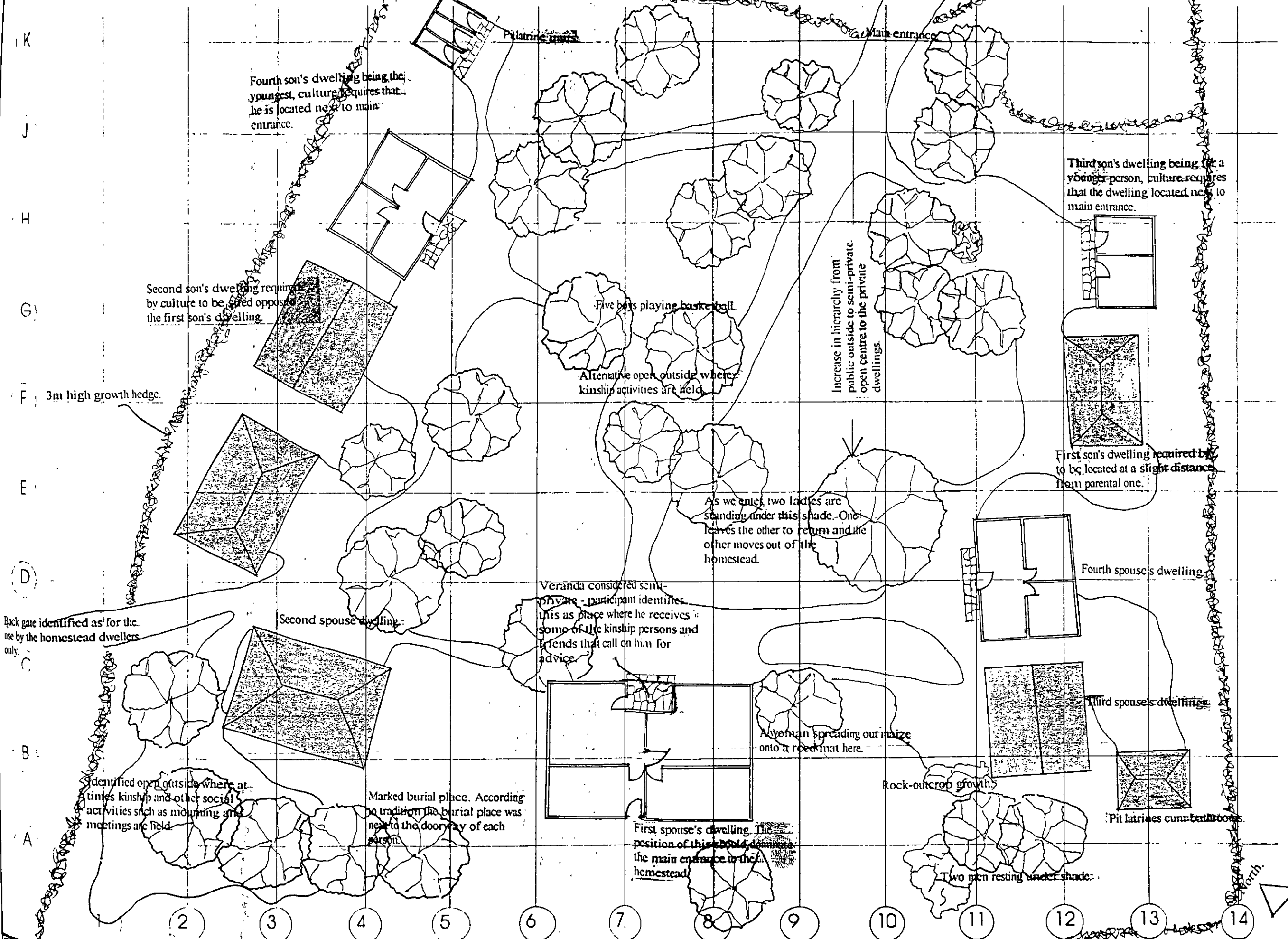


Diagram 6:16. Structural layout within a single homestead in the Lur community, West Kajulu, Kisumu district. Case Study RII, layout plan, Scale 1:200.

culture requires members of the kinship to travel from wherever they may be when required."

In the urban setting, community events are held in the yard outside. Having lived within the same setting with one another for a long period of time, both participants in R3 and R10 felt part of the family.

Community roles are disappearing in the town. The participants in R1, R3 and R11 are of the view that the youth lack proper role models. Unlike the modern one, traditional society is seen by the participant in R11 to have had a structure where everyone had a responsibility towards the youth. Any youth seen doing something that was not socially acceptable was reprimanded by whoever was close. For some, developing a place where youths can go to learn from their elders is seen as necessary.

6.4.2 The Elders Court.

These are the activities that call for the participation and/ or presence of elderly people in the clan. In the region, this research found that elders had roles over and above the rest of the people. Singly or in groups, these people are expected to intervene when social or cultural issues are at stake. When in need of some advice, people call on the kinsmen who are considered to be elders.

When an elder's view has been sought, the participant in R12 describes his decision as being given priority over everyone else's. This was evident from the discussion between participant in R9 and an administrator to whom the researcher had a chance to listen. The administrator was the person who had introduced us to the participant in R9. Earlier in the week this participant had been approached by the administrator to intervene with a couple who were experiencing marital problems. I listened as he briefed the administrator on the steps that he, as an elder, had taken towards solving the problem. The administrator was in agreement with the decisions that the participant had taken as part of the duty that he had been assigned.

According to participants in R4, R7, R12, R13 and R15, in the traditional setting, when marking a rite of passage, there is always a council of elders whose role it is to advise. There are matters that may arise and which may require intervention. At times an elderly person will invite peers for deliberation.

When cultural events such as initiation rites, marriage and funeral, are being carried out within a vernacular setting, elders are in attendance. During the mourning period that is talked of in case study R5, there was a council that was composed of the elders from the kinship. All of the mourning activities were within the open yard in the homestead. From where they sat, the elders had a commanding view of the entire setting where the rest of the people were (refer diagram 6.13). How the elders council is perceived by the community, is articulated by the participant in R13 who stated that elders should not leave their place without one of them remaining behind.

In the traditional setting, marriage events are viewed as communal responsibility. Participant in R11 talked about the necessity of having elders around. Ancestors should be represented since marriage introduces a new member into the community. It appears then that the presence of a council of elders is an integral part of a cultural occasion.

Participant in R7 states that ordinarily elders have a habit of calling on their peers. For the man, it is necessary that some of the issues that are raised are confidential. As a spiritual healer there are many people who confide in him. There are three places where he meets with those calling to consult him. Foremost is the spiritual house that has been located next to the main entrance. Within the house is the verandah, and then there is the shaded area that is next to the main house. To the man, it is important for an elder to maintain secrecy if those people that one meets with are to hold one in trust.

With most examples, shaded places have been identified within the court for the holding of elder meetings. Participant in R15 has developed a pergola roof that identifies the place more obviously. It is in this place that we met him hosting his peers for a drink (diagram 6.15). With most vernacular settings, we were able to

identify clearly the open place in the yard for the coming together of elders. As stated by participant in R12, the place next to the perimeter fence is usually for specific use by the elders.



Diagram 6.14. There are times when kinship members come together. Usually there will be the traditional beer that is served to those that are in attendance.

The traditional court is also a feature of the urban town, especially during mourning. It is the clan elders according to participant in R6 and R9 that form a court in the urban settlements rather than the kinsmen. They are in place throughout the period mainly playing advisory roles. Due to the nature of the urban setting, participant in R6 identifies the center yard as the place where elders will be located. With the exception of a few built settings, such as the participant in R10 has, the setting is such that the buildings are next to the perimeter fence thus leaving room only at the center.

Most cases of holding court in the urban setting are limited to the participation of one elder. There is the example of members of a kinship who are residents of the town who regularly consult R6 and 10. At times, the participant in R10 talks of inviting

other elders to help him with a court. Both talk of the need for a setting where one can discuss freely with others.

Although in the past they have participated as elders during activities that involve the kinship members, participants R8 and R9 identified problems this institution. In the town, there was the problem of bringing together a sufficient number of elders. Whenever there was need for an elders' court, participant in R8 would travel to the rural settlement where most of the kin were. On his part, after realizing the problem, participant in R9 re-located himself to a rural settlement. When there was a need, the location of the new settlement enabled the participant to reach out for kinship members.

It is easy for the participant in R6 to identify the single tree that is in front of his house as the place where he regularly meets with his kinsmen and some of the clan members who call on him. For the participant in R10, since he has several trees located at strategic points, he identifies a cluster of trees with particular meetings. It highlights where he prefers to be with the sons, his favorite place and where he meets with tenants. The central open outside setting is for activities that involve wider kinship.

CHAPTER SEVEN.

7. CASE STUDIES - SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

7.1 Introductory Background.

This section discusses cultural and the spatial accommodation. These are those needs are seen as important to the group's survival and identity¹. The needs that have been identified include spatial hierarchy and experiencing the threshold and setting for the community activities.

Spatial hierarchy characterizes setting both in the traditional and in the urban built settings. Hierarchy orders settings that require different kinds of behavior, such as the bodily movement and/ or level of accessibility. On the other hand "threshold" is composed of cultural materials whose character alerts one to enact a particular kind of behavior. Threshold are located at different points within space.

With traditional settings, spatial hierarchy is achieved through two kinds of control. Different elements are planned in terms of space and there are different built types. There are ways that certain members of kinship are required to move through space (refer diagram 6.9). These are the result of cultural diversity on taboo. According to participants in R2, R3 and R13, the spatial hierarchy is aimed at maintaining the status quo.

Unlike the rural where hierarchy in planning is still being developed on a large scale, the complex nature of urban settlements leaves little chance for development. This is a characteristic that has been demonstrated in most cases on a single homestead level. Parental and immediate children's dwelling units are what is considered to be a reasonable distance from one another. This is an important cultural requirement.

¹ Refer chapter 6.

Among the elements that assist in spatial hierarchy are thresholds. Thresholds are elements that set into motion spatial hierarchy. Apart from providing a setting for an activity, it was found that elements such as entry points, burial ground, and particular dwelling types such as the parental could also become the center of the focus. There are also the thresholds of the kind that makes them be perceived as being nomadic. When we were in participant's R13 place, one of the ladies refused to move near to where we were until she had learnt our proper social identification. To the lady, we could have been people whose cultural taboos prevented them from freely mixing with us.

Culture prevents potential mothers' in-law and their daughter's suitors from freely mixing with one another. In the case of the lady in participant's R13 setting, if we were related in such a manner, the place where we sat in the homestead would have become a private one which she could not easily access. Hierarchy can be understood at three different levels and these are planning, movement and activity.

Another cultural value that has been shown to be necessary is the coming together of the members of kinship. This involves different levels of kin. There is the problem of relevant setting for this in that cultural taboo prevents some of the kin people from being free within the territory of some of the other kinsmen.

This research for example has found that the contemporary modernity has introduced both demographic changes and changing taste. Trends in migrations, residing in the same built setting as those from different communities, and developments from the field of science are among the factors that have introduced change in the manner that people relate to some of the cultural needs. This has forced the way that people enact some of the traditional norms to change. Places are adapted to encompass certain rites. Of importance are also the new institutions such as the local authority, rental dwellers and different religious movements among others.

7.2 Vernacular Setting.

7.2.1 Hierarchy through Planning.

Planning within a homestead is influenced by the need to relate the dwellings between some of the kinsmen to a certain order. There is a permitted level of mixing between the kin that should be maintained. Participants R2, R7, R13 and R15 all explain that the homesteads allow for the different members of the kinship to relate to each other in a particular way (refer diagram 6.9).

With regard to filial settings both participants in R13 and R15 state that the brothers' homesteads have to relate to one another such that these homesteads not be in a horizontal line facing gates. This would imply a confrontation attitude among brothers who see themselves as being equal. According to the participant in R13, there is the need to uphold the status quo in the kinship.

All the participants in R2, R11 and R15 homesteads state that the cultural requirement is such that the children's dwellings and/ or the homestead should be able to provide the parental one with the necessary protection. The youth dwellings are the ones that are located next to the main entrance.

The two levels of planning allow the need to provide protection to be satisfied. For participants in R2 and R15, growth is planned around the parental homestead. The parental one is surrounded on approximately all sides by the rest of the homesteads (refer diagram 6.2). The next level of planning is witnessed at the homestead level. Relative to the position of the parental dwelling, the built settings for the youth are the ones that are located next to the main entrance (refer diagram 6.11).

The researcher was informed from R11, that an enemy from the outside should first encounter the "strong youths" before finally reaching the elderly people. Even with those homesteads that for the participants in R13 and R15 that appear to be more complex, the order has been maintained. From the outside, for those with the

knowledge of the culture, the parental homestead is still seen to be in a distinguishable position.

Within one homestead, dwelling units for the youths are located at a slight distance from those belonging to their social parents for example uncles and aunts. According to participants in R2, R7, R13 and R15, during the evening, members of one generic group may get involved in activities that are considered by the society to be profane when witnessed by anyone from an adjacent social generic group. For example, one may bump into a member of the next generic group joking with his/her spouse.

Planning of a traditional homestead aims at achieving social order. The structural layout of the dwellings aims at upholding the status quo that exists between the members of the different generic groups. Another cultural requirement that traditional planning aim at is to achieve the desired level of privacy among the different people.

7.2.2 Hierarchy through Movement in space.

Within a kinship, there is a certain form of relationship between social parents and the grown up offspring that is based on mutual respect. In the homestead this relationship is observed through body movement. For people like the in-laws, there are places that are sacred and which should be approached with care and only with permission. Controlling the movement of some of the people within a setting is aimed at maintaining the level of privacy between the different social members. Some of the places provide settings where "unclean" materials may be seen for example the sleeping place, that belongs to one party, may if seen by someone else be embarrassing to both.

When persons of a given social generic group approach another's territory, it should be done with care. There is an increase in privacy as one approach the other party's dwelling with the doorway becoming boundary between semi-private and private. The participants in R7 and 11 have both developed an entry verandah where the two can meet freely. On the first day that we entered the homestead of the participant in R7, he was sitting inside the verandah with those that we later learned were his children. This is one typical setting where both parents and children can be relaxed with one another.

There are homesteads like R7 and R13 where the gates are used to control contact between members of the different generic groups. The gate becomes of use especially after dark when one is either moving into or out of the homestead. Some homesteads will have two gates. There is the major gate that is at the front and at the back is one minor one. According to the main participants in R13, during evening periods, when the different generations are free in their own territories, privacy should prevail. Locating two gates in a compound creates a situation where those with taboo towards each other can freely move into and out of the homestead without encountering one another.

The second level at which privacy is observed is when members of kinship such as the in-laws are on a visit. There are the occasions such as the marriage celebrations that were identified by both of the participants in R14 and R15 as being when the in-law and his visiting party are received outside the main gate. During this period, spatial hierarchy begins from the entrance, which serves as the semi-public element. The bridegroom should not be welcomed inside before being accepted by the bride's cousins. Upon being accepted, the party is led to the inside court that is seen as the semi-private place. For an occasion of this nature, the inside of the house is private and one is only shown there when fully accepted.

The next place where in-laws are at times welcomed is within the yard. There is the case with communities such as the one in homestead R13 where they will not receive the bride's suitor inside when the bride and her suitor are not on good terms. One is received within the open outside setting that is considered a semi-private place, is the central court.

When marking certain mourning periods like the one that was held at R5, culture requires that the mourning be held within the open outside setting. This is where the different in-laws come to mourn together. The community refers to this celebration as "remembrance for the dead". During this celebration, locating the seating for the different relations is influenced by the social order. Efforts are made at upholding the status quo of the different relations. The participants in R4 and R11 identify another

mourning period as well when the in-laws should sit in the court. Then the court becomes the setting for the different kinds of events that include dancing, entertaining visitors and food preparation among other things.

In a traditional homestead the court is an important element during parts of the celebrations. It is the semi-private place. It embodies the character of the inside private and the public outside. The next section identifies some of the materials of culture that help in setting up some of the events.

7.2.3 Threshold and Meanings of these.

Within a setting, there are those materials within the homesteads that are of cultural significance. Depending on the kin type, entrances to homestead, parental dwelling place, and at times burial grounds are approached with care. The spirit of the cultural material influences one to behave in a given manner.

Thresholds are of two kinds. There are periods that have been identified by the participants in R13, R14 and R15 when in-laws should stop at the gate. For example during mourning sessions the gate element is seen in another context. As stated by participant in R7, the gate symbolizes transition from the public domain to the relatively private one that is inside.

There is another element when threshold itself assumes a central role. In such the sub-regions such as the ones where homesteads R 11 and 13 are located, the burial ground is considered sacred to some of the kin. During mourning the burial ground becomes private to some of the kin. Although they can move around the homestead, there is a level of hierarchy which is maintained between the visitors and the place of burial.

Cultural material can also become of central importance when people from different social generic groups approach one another's dwelling. Participants in R2, R4 and R15 prefer to meet with their children next to the doorway that is considered the semi-private place. For the grown-up children, the parental place is sacred and thus private and vice versa (refer diagrams 6.1). The doorway symbolizes the level of transition. Going beyond the semi-private is usually a negotiated process.

There is a level of respect that is observed between different social generic members that should be upheld. For parents, their grown-up children and in-laws, some of the elements in a homestead symbolize particular meanings and they are seen to be private. As an example the participant in R13 identifies movement to lower sectors of the homestead by the parents especially during the evening as something that is not recommended. Many things can be witnessed in the dark that may be taboo.

7.2.4 Place Setting for Community Events and for Rites of Passage.

Throughout the region, activities that are considered to be of social significance are held in the open outside setting. Certain rites of marriage, mourning, and initiation are central to the life of the groups that are under study. Some of these events are enacted with the support of the community.

There is a structure in a traditional homestead that is more evident during a ceremony, especially when there are different levels of relations participating. Both participants in R4 and R7 state the cultural requirement that the status quo should be upheld. When social groups share a space, as was during the marking of mourning that was witnessed in R5, and from what was said by participants in R4, R7 and R13, there are distinct seating places for each social group.

The social order influences the location of the seating places. During celebrations in R5 whether a group should occupy places to the right or left becomes very important (see diagram 6.13). The participant in R7 agrees with the way that events were performed in R5. There is a need to set up a temporary territory for each of the in-laws. This means that the host recognizes person's presence.

The open outside area is not fluid but rather there are territories. As stated by the participant in R11, the space that is around the dwelling is culturally considered to be part of it. External places that are next to the dwelling have a double characteristic. While typifying the building that is next to it, it also has the characteristic of the open outside setting. The setting is considered semi-private territory and there are no cultural inhibitions for any member of the kinship within this.

Depending on the type of event, the seating can be either next to a particular dwelling or simply within the open outside area. For example, according to participants in R2, R7 R12 and R13 during an initiation, the newly born is brought out next to the doorway. For the participant in R2, such an activity can then spill over to the "actual open outside" setting that is more a semi-public domain. The weekly family discussions that are held, in case study R7, are simply held within the open outside area.

As the researcher witnessed in R5 and from the participant in R4, during mourning the central yard is established as a semi-private place. Most events are re-confirmed within the open outside area. Yet, as the researcher witnessed in R5, there are those events, such as the slaughtering of the ceremonial cow that have to be done within a given territory next to the deceased's house on the right hand side as one moves towards the entrance door.

An interesting development in space is the phenomenon of linking the interior and outside open place. According to the participants in R7 and R11 during the mourning period, the doors are kept open throughout. It is believed that spirits wander around the homestead in every place. On the other hand, R4 is of the view that the open outside setting.

The open outside area can be a place where people feel free during activity like marriage. As stated by the participant in R2, marriage events involve eating and dancing. During such an event, the yard becomes a semi-public space.

Another order in planning is the reliance on courtyard typology. Built settings are organized around a court. Irrespective of the scale of the homestead, there is an open center that is inherent in each. The open outside should define the social locus. The participants in R2 and R4 verified that it is within the open outside area where the activities that involve different people in the community takes place.

The open outside area appears to be an important element in the layout of a traditional homestead. For the participant in R2, the open outside area provides a setting where members of different generations can meet. Planning is aimed at helping to avert the free mixing of the different social generic groups. Through this, cultural taboo is averted.

Evidence of the traditional settlements shows two levels of open outside area. There is the one that is next to the dwelling and that derives its character from the particular dwelling. Each building seems to throw around itself an invisible ring that brings under influence territories that are next to it (see diagram 6.3). The character of the dwelling defines the space that is around it. The next open outside area is the large central one that should be the semi-public one. It is this space that enhances communication between the semi-private and/ or the private world inside and the public one that is outside.

7.3 Urban Settings.

7.3.1 Hierarchy through Planning.

The urban settlements that were studied consist of fabric that can be described as single homesteads layout. The nucleus kinship homesteads layout that is common with the traditional settlement is missing. Rather, there are those homesteads that are set out on their own without bordering kinship territory. Spatial hierarchy is best articulated at this level.

In the town, one of the participants in R6 identifies the problem with the settlement growth as being rooted in lack of ancestral land where the filial generation can migrate to and start a new settlement. Layout has taken cognizance of both the traditional as well as the need for commerce. Apart from the family, urban settlement has a third person in the form of rented dwellers.

With some of the urban homesteads there is a clear distinction between the dwellings that are being occupied by the renters and the ones that are meant to be for the members of the kinship (diagram 7.1). For both homesteads R6 and R10 the renters'

block is located to one side of the homestead. As articulated by participants in R3, 6 and R10, homesteads are supposed to be private, hence a clear distinction between the two. For both R6 and R10, the renter dwellings fall outside the homestead proper perimeter line.

On the setting that locates the dwellers within the main settlement, the participant in R10 sees the *Luo* culture as permitting settlers to build within the same setting as those from the kinship. A marked difference is that their dwellings should be outside the boundary that is created by the perimeter line².

In another example with increased densification in the setting as with R1, R3 and R8, the dwelling units for rental purposes are set apart from those that are meant for the kinsmen (diagram 7.2).

At another level, the layout of both R6 and R10 has been influenced by tradition. There is a requirement for the youths' dwellings to be next to the main gate. Planning introduces a hierarchy in that from the youths' territory one moves up to the parental one. As stated by the participant in R6 there is a social order that is discovered in the way that space is encountered (refer diagram 7.1).

² He uses the *Luo* term *bath chiel* to explain the act of building outside the circumference of the ordinary fence line.

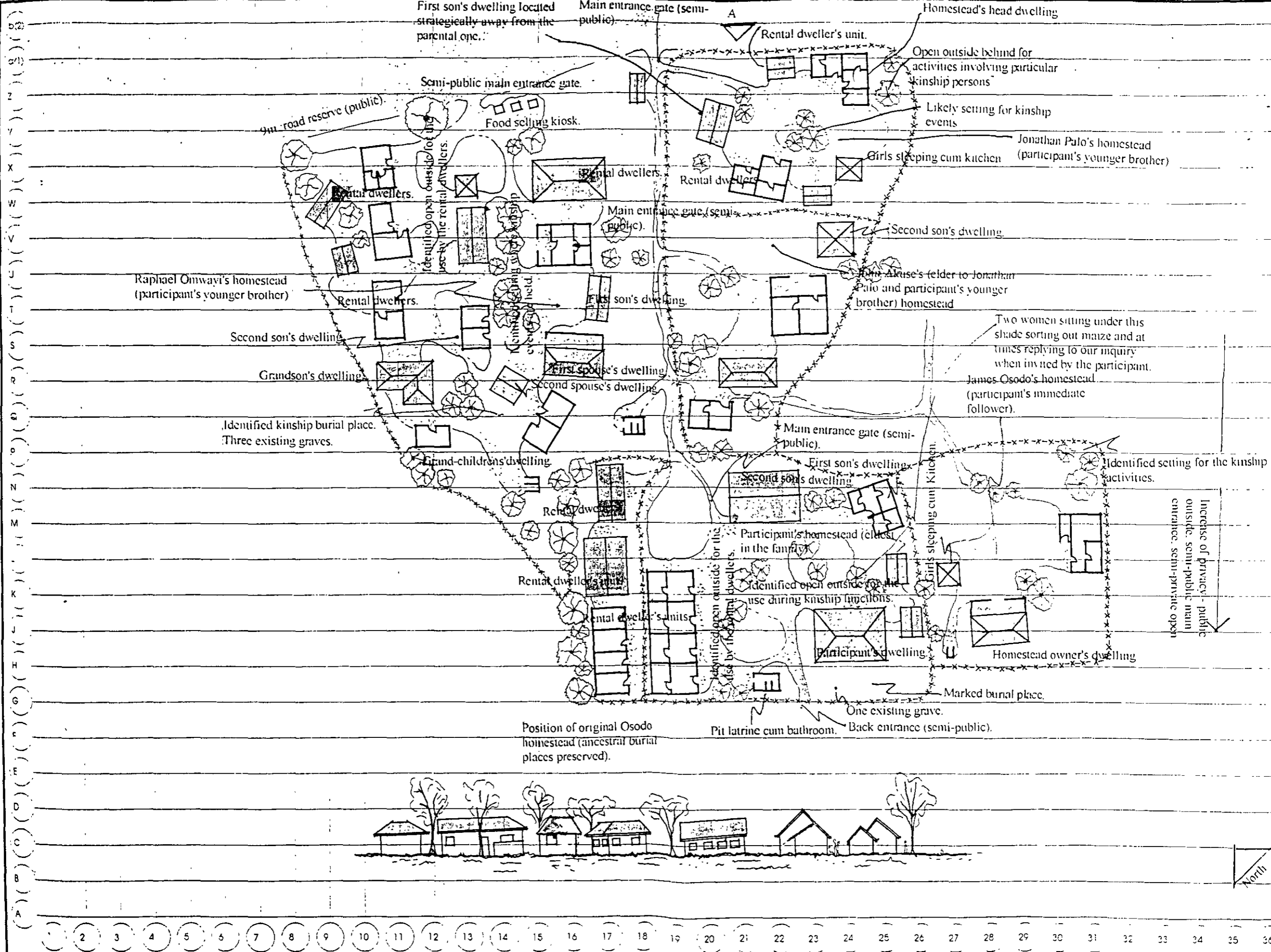


Diagram 7.1. Spatial hierarchy between kinsmen in an urban settlement, Nyaleruta, Kisumu Town - Case Study R6, layout plan, Scale 1:500.

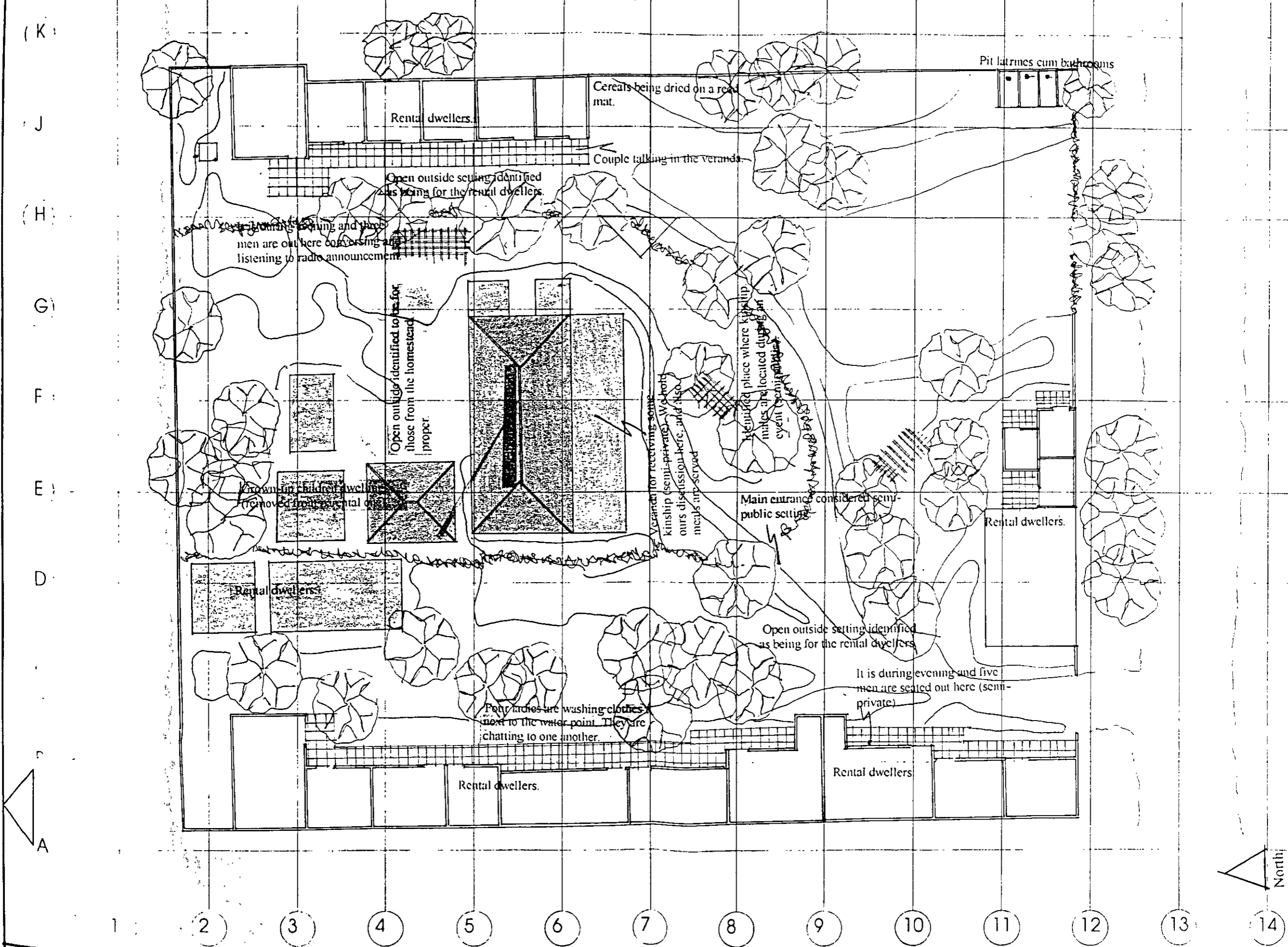
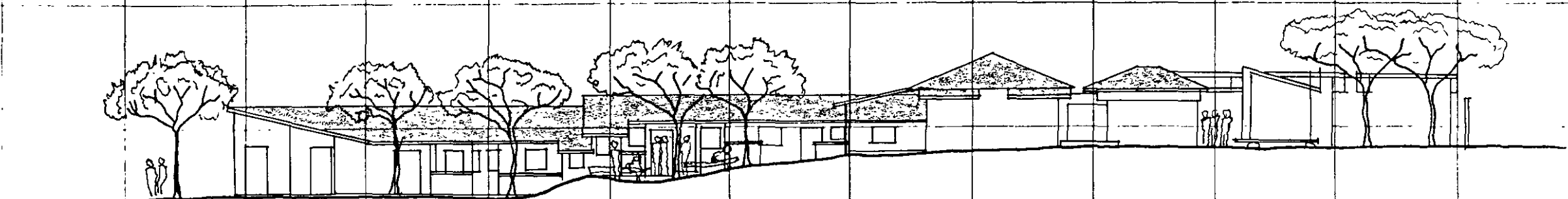


Diagram 7.2. There are those urban settlements with a clear distinction in the structural layout between the setting that is meant for rental and the ones where kinship members dwell, *Daraja Mbili, Kisii Town - Case Study R3, layout plan, Scale 1:200.*

(K)
(J)
(H)
(G)
(F)
E
D
C
B
A

1) (2) (3) (4) (5) (6) (7) (8) (9) (10) (11) (12) (13) (14)



Elevation A. Scale 1:200.

When there has been densification in the setting as with R1 and R8, the dwelling units that are allocated for rental purposes are set apart from those that are meant for the members of the kinship (refer diagram 6.12, 7.2). Another point is that the dwelling units for the grown up youths are also set apart from the ones the parents are in. There is the culturally desired level of privacy between the social generic groups that has to be observed in the arrangement.

In spite of being in an urban context, settlement planning takes cognizance of cultural needs. Spatial layout is such that members of the different social generic groups do not inconvenience one another. This is so that the status quo is still maintained in the setting. On the whole the kinsmen dwellings are defined.

7.3.2 Hierarchy through Movement in Space.

Spatial hierarchy in an urban homestead is achieved through the feeling of moving from one space with less control to the other that is under control. There are transition elements that one is made to go through. Both the gate and the court are points of place orientation. Doorways are also cultural elements. They control movement, When approaching, care is taken. The presence of these can be witnessed in every homestead.

In most cases, vernacular homesteads are planned around open places. Open space can be single like in R8 and R10 or several like in the case of R6, R9, and R10. As will be witnessed from the cases, open outside area as an element of spatial organization introduces spatial hierarchy.

The significance of the gate is summarized by the participant in R3 when he states that those coming in through this understand that they are being monitored. First is the movement from the public space that is outside into the homestead, holistically considered as a private entity. In spite of this feeling, within a homestead there is further dismembering of the spatial hierarchy. The court is considered the semi-private domain where visitors can be received.

From the outside, the gate is the semi-public element that one first encounters. Participants in R1, R3 and R6 suggest the gate as an element that helps in orientating the visitor to the place. The element marks the point of transition between the two worlds and by entering through it, one realizes one's whereabouts.

The gate is of symbolic significance. It signifies some of the rites that can take place in the homestead. When going to accomplish a cultural rite, participant R6 exits from the homestead through the gate. The homestead may have several gates but there is one that is considered the official one. Herein lies the dilemma of the renters should they wish to transport a body into the homestead. Should the renters want to bring a corpse into the homestead, suggestion by one of the participants in R10 is for bodies of those that are outsiders not to come in through the main gate. Culture defines some activities that should not happen through the gate.

When inside the vernacular dwelling, places of different hierarchies are revealed. The first space that one encounters is the open outside area that organizes the rest around it. The open outside area should be of two types. There is the case of R3, R6 and R10 where some of the built types have an element of verandah at the entrance (refer diagram 6.1). When this is the case, the open outside setting should be viewed as a semi-public one. The next type is where the open outside setting is the only element that is encountered when coming from inside the dwelling. When this is the case, like in cases R1 and R8, the open outside should be seen as a semi-private place.

The level of hierarchy of open outside is evident from some of the activities that take place there. In the first example, participants in R1, R3 and R10 identify certain members in the kinship, such as the in-laws and the grown-up offspring that have their movements controlled by cultural requirements when in specific places.

In the first example both participants in R1 and R6 are more comfortable when they are with the children on the verandah. Likewise the participant in R3 feels at ease when he is with his in-laws on the verandah. In the second example, according to participant R6, when there is a marital dispute between the son-in-law and the wife, when he comes to have the dispute settled he would be received at first within the

yard. It is here where members of the kinship would try to deliberate the issue at hand. In the third example, according to the participant in R10, unfamiliar people are received in the open outside area, for their mission is yet unknown.

In the third example both the participants in R3 and R6 are able to identify the open outside setting that is patronized by members of a particular social generic group. With cases R3, R6 and R10, the open outside setting that is meant for the use of the kinship members is located slightly away from the one that is used by the renter dwellers. There is the level of hierarchy in an open space that is inherent in the social generic system that is identified with it.

Efforts throughout have been made to show that spatial hierarchy should be identified and recognized in terms of cultural materials and/ or context. As was articulated by the participants in R1, R3, R6, R8 and R10 for a vernacular setting the use of space and the kind of social generic members that are identified with the particular place, establish the necessary spatial hierarchy.

7.3.3 Setting for Community Events and for Rites of Passage.

Members of kinship are expected to attend social events. These are held within the open outside area. Activities can be held next to one of the dwellings in the homestead or seating can be loosely around it. As stated by the participants in R8 and R10, although the event is in the open outside area, they may be related to a particular dwelling. Also, there are periods that are identified by the participants in R1, R3, R6, R8 and R10 when members of the kinship do come together in the open outside setting. Celebrating a rite of passage and mourning are among those cultural events that bring together members of the kinship.

During a community event, the open outside area becomes the center of the focus. Participants in R1, R3, R8 and R10 identify initiation events as taking place in the open outside area. Activities that have been identified by participants in R1, R3, R8, R9 and R10 as among those that can take place when community people are together includes the serving of meals, accomplishing required rites, wake-keeping or sleeping out in the open outside area, drinking, deliberations and forms of traditional music.

When it is a community event, according to participants in R1, R3, R8 and R10, different types of kin attend. Since there are cultural inhibitions that influence movement by some of the kin when in some of the territories, the open outside area becomes the focal point for the different activities. Unlike the individual territory that is private, in these cases the open outside setting is a semi-public domain. Behaviors can be tolerated within this.

There are activities that take place in the evening. Both participants in R3 and R10 have taken cognizance of the habitual use of space in the evening. Then females and children will move to be within the interior. Their male counterparts will move outside to be within the yard or next to the doorway. For the participant in R3, there is a porch that has been incorporated in the doorway and that is meant to provide one with a place that is relatively quiet. As viewed by the participant in R10 separation of genders is a social expectation that is meant to facilitate free discussion. When being used in this way, the outside open and the verandah or doorway is thus treated as a private place.

Societies here are characterized by having two values. Firstly, there are the different community events that involve participation by the different types of kin. Secondly, when within others territories some members of the kinship have their movements inhibited by cultural requirements. In the vernacular homestead, the open outside setting that is particularly used in cases R3, R6 and R10 has been the culturally prescribed alternative venue. When it comes to community events then the open outside setting can be of two types. There are times as identified by the participant in R10 when people escape here to discuss some secretive issues and it becomes a private place. At times people only move into them to be with one another in free discussion as identified by R3.

7.4 Summary of Chapters 6 and 7.

This section sets out attributes of culture and their respective settings. Researcher identified that the traditions that involved members of the kinship were performed in settings that required similar spatial characteristics.

Events.	Vernacular homesteads		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
Relationship between the social generic groups – R1, R2, R3, R4, R6, R7, R10, R11, R12, R13, R15,	<p>-Members of the kinship were involved.</p> <p>-Taboo between some persons within kinship. Tradition required that the level of mixing between the parents and their grown-up children be controlled.</p> <p>Dwellings which were associated with one group, were considered sacred by the other group. Those members of the kinship members who observed taboo with one another took care while approaching the other's dwelling.</p>	<p>-Semi-private setting within the open outside area.</p> <p>-Settings within the open outside area, such as under the tree, that is identified with social generic group.</p> <p>-Although within the same homestead, some of the dwellings' were located at a slight distance from one another.</p>	<p>-Kinship members were involved.</p> <p>-Taboos between some kinship members. The place where members of one social group sleep is considered sacred. These are approached with appropriate diffidence.</p> <p>-Lack of proper setting has ended in a situation of promiscuity in that different social generic members freely socialise.</p>	<p>-Semi-private setting, for example, veranda and under a tree, within the open outside area.</p> <p>-In the first urban homestead type, kinsmen dwellings were still located at a slight distance from one another.</p> <p>-In the second urban homestead type, the presence of rental dweller and the increase in the number of dwellers resulted in a more complex setting. Dwellings for those that observe taboos are located at a distance apart from others. According to tradition, the units are detached from each other.</p>

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
<p>Relationship between genders – R3, R4, R7, R9, R10, R11, and R12.</p>	<p>-Kinship members were involved.</p> <p>-Sharing of setting, for example during deliberation involving the kinship members.</p> <p>-Performing cultural activities for example during initiation of the youth into adult life.</p> <p>-Social roles for example sorting out the foodstuff.</p>	<p>-When together in same setting, different genders occupied positions that are across from each other.</p> <p>-Settings identified for the different gender, for example during an activity, women would be involved with preparation and serving of meals and traditional drinks.</p>	<p>-Kinship members were involved.</p> <p>-Sharing of setting during cultural activity.</p> <p>-Roles assigned to specific gender group.</p>	<p>-Semi-public outside.</p> <p>-Identified setting for member of gender groups.</p> <p>-Setting identified for some of the roles, for example during initiation celebration men would be located under a shade that is within the open outside areas.</p>

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
Concept of mourning – R2, R5, R6, R7, R9, R10, R12 and R13	<p>-Kinship members were involved.</p> <p>-Rites included “wake keeping”, “remembrance”, and slaughtering of livestock.</p> <p>-Central issues are the location for the burial and where some of the slaughtering is performed.</p>	<p>-Semi-public open outside setting.</p> <p>-Location of burial within a setting that was referred to as “home”.</p> <p>-Slaughtering in a specific setting within the open outside area.</p>	<p>-Kinship members were involved.</p> <p>-Rites included “wake keeping.”</p> <p>-Decision on the burial location a problem.</p> <p>-Due to the presence of rental dwellers, rites not observed by everyone. For example during the evening, not everyone slept within the open outside areas.</p>	<p>-Semi-public open outside setting.</p> <p>-Location still required to be within the cultural “home”.</p> <p>No urban solution seemed possible particularly as densities increase.</p> <p>-To mark the mourning, slaughtering was no longer necessary, and where this was still being performed, there was no specific setting for this activity.</p>

Events.	Vernacular settings.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
Celebrating new life in the community – R2, R3, R4, R6, R7, R10 and R13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Kinship members were involved. -Rites that helped with marking birth, initiation and marriage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Semi-private open outside setting for example, next to the doorway. -Semi-public open outside setting where kin should come together for example during celebration of a marriage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Kinship members were involved. -Rites that that helped with marking birth, initiation and marriage. -Due to requirements for modernity some of the traditions had been discarded altogether. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Semi-private open outside setting for example, next to the doorway. -Semi-public open outside setting for example, the central open outside area, or courtyard.

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
The concept of home – R2, R3, R6, R7, R8, R9, R10, R11 and R13.	<p>-Part of community settlement.</p> <p>-Material for social identity. The location of the homestead within the kinship set-up informed those with the know-how the identity of the owner within the kinship.</p>	<p>-Setting for cultural rites.</p> <p>-Each individual had a home defined by a layout that had been influenced by tradition.</p>	<p>-There were cases where home was still part of the community layout.</p> <p>-Material culture for identity.</p> <p>-Rental dweller influencing the way that home was being re-defined.</p>	<p>-In the simple homestead type, setting for cultural rites had been influenced by traditions hence reference to this as home. Homestead was clearly defined from the setting for the rental dwellers.</p> <p>-With decreasing resources, it was becoming increasingly hard sustaining the rural type of layout in the town.</p> <p>-With the complex homestead type, the whole setting, including the setting for the rental dwellers, was viewed as home. In this way, homesteads lost identity in that tradition requires only kinship to be the dwellers.</p>

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Setting.	Culture.	Setting.
Being in a community – R1, R3, R2, R4, R7, R10 and R11.	-Kinship members were involved. -Source of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity. • Social security. 	-Semi-private open outside area, for example next to the doorway and under a tree that is part of a particular dwelling type. -Semi-public open outside where everyone comes together.	-Kinship members were involved. -Source of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identity • Social security -Presence of rental dweller introduced new participant.	-Semi-private open outside area, for example next to a particular dwelling type. -Semi-public open outside setting.

Events.	Vernacular homesteads.		Urban homesteads.	
	Culture.	Settings.	Events.	Culture.
<p>The Elders Court – R4, R5, R6, R7, R10, R9, R12,</p>	<p>-An institution comprising of elders from the kinship. -Required to be on stand-by during performance of any of the cultural activities. -There are times when the institution members came together to deliberate on an issue. -Elders belonging to the kinship would ordinarily come together.</p>	<p>-Semi-private open outside setting such as in the veranda and under the tree shade.</p>	<p>-Involved the kinship members and/ or clan elders. -Required when a cultural activity was being performed. -Ordinarily elders would come together.</p>	<p>-Semi-private open outside setting such as inside the veranda and under the tree shade. This is a matter of the density of land use and the setting is only possible where there is sufficient outside space.</p>

CHAPTER EIGHT.

8. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS.

8.1 Introduction.

The research inquires about the issues of traditional culture for communities found in urban settings of a regional kind. In Kenya the majority of the population of regional towns is from the surrounding areas. In some towns the majority of dwellers share a similar cultural influence.

The first objective of this research was to identify elements of a culture core, the term used in Rapoport's sense, in the population of *Kisii* and *Kisumu* as well as in the adjacent rural settlements. The purpose of this was to identify changes in elements of the culture core between the rural and urban populations. Related data was collected from different homesteads.

The second objective was to identify the physical settings within which the elements of the culture core were set. The purpose of this was to establish the congruence between the physical settings and the culture core in the urban context and in the rural context. Related data was collected from different homesteads.

The findings of this study are placed in the theoretical context of studies in development, culture change and supportive design with particular reference to the work of Rapoport and Hardie.

The third objective was to recommend ways that the built environment of the regional town settlements could be improved upon in order that they may be supportive of the cultural needs around them so that these towns would be an element of social identification. There are recommendations as to ways that the built environment of the regional town could be improved upon in order that these settlements may be supportive of the cultural needs of the people that are found in Western Kenya.

8.2 Summary and Influences.

In the inquiry that was conducted both in the town and a similar rural setting, two basic observations were made into the culture and development of these. Firstly, even when the people from the region move and settle in the town and/ or when the regions that they traditionally occupy become part of the urban growth, they continue to perform some of their traditional roles and activities. Those cultural values that urban dwellers continue to hold onto require the participation of the rest of the kinsmen. Secondly, those activities that require participation by the kinsmen are mostly performed within open outside settings. Certain activities between kinsmen require forms of behaviour that have traditionally and conveniently taken place within open outside areas close to the dwelling. The study illustrates that traditional culture is a feature of the regional town.

It was found there are traditional rites that are performed to mark different specific events. Activities are held to mark a marriage, initiation into the community and during mourning. Also, those from one social group are expected to relate in a given way with those from others.

8.2.1 Behavioural Patterns.

i. Relationships between the social generic groups.

Various taboos existed in the different social generic groups¹. These groups are typically parents, grown-up children, grandparents, grandchildren and others. One way of observing taboos was by an avoidance relationship in which case there are some controlled forms of behaviour. While approaching some of the dwellings, cautionary measures became necessary. Also, there were particular settings in the open outside areas that were associated with certain social generic groups.

Both with the rural and the urban communities, as a form of addressing the way that some of the kinsmen would be together, open outside semi-private settings were developed as part of the dwellings. These included below trees and the veranda. Activities by particular social generic groups were held in these settings. Some of the

kinsmen would come together within specific settings without compromising their inter- and intra-relationships.

Relationships are also controlled by the structural layout of the homestead in which case dwellings for those that should observe taboo were located at a slight distance from one another. In this way a specific spatial hierarchy was introduced.

This exercise was conducted both within the rural and urban settings in which homesteads were found to be generally of two types. The first was the simple type that was loosely tied in nature and whose primary planning was influenced by cultural needs. The second type was where the kinsmen who were required by the traditions to control their body movements towards one another were allocated dwelling units that were at a distance from one another. Research noted that with demand in urban land, the first example was disappearing due to the development of urban homesteads tending towards the complex type.

ii. Relationship between genders.

Behaviours between different gender groups were controlled and reserved². There are two occasions when this behaviour would be immediately obvious. First was during the period when the different genders were involved in an activity. Second is that ordinarily in a homestead, settings were identified with certain gender groups.

There would times when kinsmen are required to participate in certain activities. There are two kinds of such activities. The first example is when activities are defined for each group. There would be a separate setting for each gender group. The second case is when the genders are required to be within a common setting. When sharing a setting, positions that would be occupied by each of the gender group members would be located across from one another.

¹ Refer section 6.2.1.

² Refer section 6.2.2.

Ordinarily, within the open outside, there were settings that could be identified by certain gender group members. They would occupy the respective setting while performing certain roles.

In the above typical relationships between social and cultural roles and their respective settings, the urban dweller behaved in a similar way to their rural counterparts. Efforts were being made to uphold the traditional social and cultural values and cultural values and adaptations were made:

- Either by adapting elements of tradition,
- Or by adapting the setting.

8.2.2 Rites of Passage

i. Concept of Mourning.

Certain activities were performed as part of the act of mourning the dead³. These included keeping wake and remembrance. The latter would be the period during which kinsmen returned to the homestead to perform the final mourning rites. The decision as to the burial place was also an important factor. Mourning was a community affair in which all persons were involved.

Mourning activities were performed within the open outside area. Among these were various deliberations, playing traditional music, singing, dancing, and serving of food and drinks. As part of the traditions all the doors had to be left open throughout this mourning period.

In the urban settlements due to the composition of some homesteads it was not possible for everyone to be part of the mourning. The rental dweller was not fully part of the kinship. During mourning, the people, for example the rental dwellers were not part of the kinship and were under no obligation to participate during cultural activities.

Both in the rural and urban settlements, the appropriate setting for the burial was still located within the homestead. Unlike the tradition where the burial ground was next

to the doorway in the majority of the homesteads, the central setting for this purpose had been set aside and was located within the open outside area at the back of the dwellings.

The traditional way of burial appeared to be less prevalent in the urban homestead. Although the urban dwellers would support the habit of locating the burial setting within the homestead, according to the traditions, apart from about three cases, there were few burial ground within the urban homesteads. This would suggest that the tradition of locating the burial setting within the homestead was slowly disappearing. People were still avoiding public burial grounds. Two cases of urban dwellers who had to be buried in the rural area where other kinship members still dwell were identified.

ii. Celebrating New Life in the Community.

Both urban and rural dwellers performed initiation rites⁴. These are performed to mark birth, marriage and initiation into adulthood. Activities during these included slaughtering of livestock, drinking, playing traditional music, singing and dancing.

Here rites were performed to usher people into the community and as such everyone in the kinship was expected to participate. The rites are important in that they are relied upon to induce social identity. Two characteristics were inherent within the nature of the rites. First was that they became meaningful only when performed within a particular setting. Second was that there are traditions that control level of body movement between some types of kinship members.

Rites would be performed within either of the following two settings. There are those, for example, the marking of birth, that strongly relate to a particular dwelling and were performed next to it. This is a semi-private setting. Others such as mourning and marriage are held within the open outside area and are therefore semi-public. The latter setting drew its particularity from every surrounding building. This formed a social locus.

³ Refer section 6.3.1.

⁴ Refer section 6.3.2.

Unlike their rural counterparts, urban dwellers did not fully perform the required rites. Only those that were congruent with the setting were performed while the rest were omitted.

iii. The Concept of Home.

The home or dwelling was an essential component of material culture in that it helped in the identification of a person within the larger kinship group⁵. The positioning of homesteads for kinsmen was largely influenced by tradition. When the culture was understood, it was possible to identify the pattern of occupation of the particular setting.

As a way of marking when the homestead becomes part of the community settlement, the kinsmen came together to participate during the necessary rite. There would be slaughtering of livestock, eating, drinking traditional beer, dancing, and other activities.

As research has shown, these rites were still performed in the rural settlements. In the urban settlements there were some changes in the activities that were performed. These changes could be attributed to a number of related factors: the decrease in resources, for example land and finances, the advent of the rental dweller, changes in the layout of homesteads due to planning and land-use constraints and the need for greater security. The response to these changes have been addressed by means of:

- Re-organising the built environment by identifying different settings for kinship members and for the rental dwellers. Traditional hierarchy between the dwellings that belong to some of the kinship members was then introduced. Traditions influenced the way that certain type of kin should relate to one another's dwelling.
- Organising the overall built structure so that the rental dwellers were part of the homestead. Hierarchy was then introduced at the level of locating dwellings for some of the social generic members. The dwellings are spaced so as to conform to culturally appropriate patterns and distances from one another.

⁵ Refer section 6.3.3

The overall finding is that the rites of occupation and of using space that involved participation by the kinship members however were still being performed by the urban dwellers.

8.2.3 Concept of a Community.

i. Being in a Community.

The community as an institution implied that person could trace their roots to a common patriarchal figure⁶. Traditionally, the clan and/ or kinsmen that defined the community settled within close proximity to one another. The community was therefore always related to both patterns of kinship as well as occupation of land and spaces in a particular ways. These were over time seen as being traditional. This duality of community relationship on the one hand and traditional patterns of land and space occupation provided individual and group identity, social security and a meaningful form of life.

During times of need, the community bond brought everyone together. Rural dwellers frequently took part in community activities. Typical matters that would bring kinsmen together were activities such as discussions deliberations on social issues and attending to a particular rite.

This research has shown that even in the urban settlements, these relationships are still supported. However, in the urban settlement there are new material and social conditions that force change.

The rural duality of community relationship on the one hand and traditional patterns of land and space occupation which provided individual and group identity, social security and meaningful form of life can not be fully sustained in the urban areas. However, as the research has shown, change is resisted, and finally adapted to, either modification of behaviour, by re-defining social relationship to include non-kinsmen.

⁶ Refer section 6.4.2.

During times of need, the community bond still brought everyone together as in the rural settlements. However, the dispersal of kinship members was making this increasingly difficult.

ii. The Elders Court.

Kinsmen elders were accepted as ancestral representatives with traditional roles⁷. Apart from some of the daily roles, their presence was necessary when activities that involved a community were of issue.

In the rural settlements, when elders visited, they would be received within the semi-private setting of the open outside areas. The rural homesteads and dwellings included elements such as trees and a veranda where this would take place.

During an activity such as mourning or marriage, the elders' council was located in a position where they would be in control of activities. Research shows that this was still done by both the urban as well as the rural dwellers.

However, in the urban areas, the general feeling is that urban settlements lacked a sufficient number of important attributes. For example, on the social level there were not a sufficient number of ancestral representatives. The reasons for this perceived lack are as follows:

- Some of the urban dwellers have acquired land within the rural area where they have re-established their new homesteads.
- For some of the urban dwellers, most of the kinsmen are found in the rural areas.

8.3 Conclusions in terms of theory of settlements.

The question of theory related to settlements, culture change and supportive design has largely been rooted in the works of Rapoport and others⁸. This section concludes on an overview of how these research findings correspond to this general model and also by drawing on two other related examples. The first example by Rapoport puts

⁷ Refer section 6.4.1.

⁸ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp249-268.

theory that identifies meanings while explaining the relationship between culture and related physical setting.

Three suggestions towards the development of settlements in the developing countries have been put forward by Rapoport⁹. The first is that cultural attributes are specific to a community. The second is that even with change, there are those cultural needs that a community holds on to. The third is that there is congruency between culture and the appropriate physical setting.

Cultural variables that belong to a group are important in that these help to define the relevance and preferences of the aspects of environment to the group, thus whatever is necessary or relevant differs from group to group. This is because these variables help to define their lifestyles and therefore clarify clear what kind of environment supports their needs.

With every community, Rapoport suggests the existence of two types of cultural attributes. There should be those considered to be important and have been referred to as culture core. These are necessary for two things. Firstly is that they act as a vehicle that enables the community members to identify themselves. Secondly is that this kind of cultural need should provide for the group's continuity. The second kind of cultural needs are termed as peripheral. Although of importance to the group, they lack the qualities that are associated with the culture core.

Both the culture core and those that are peripheral undergo two kinds of change. Because of the importance that is associated with culture core, people hold on to those cultural needs that have been judged to be this. The principle behind the rituals within the culture is always upheld.

Two developments are possible with peripheral needs. Some of these can be completely discarded. This happens when they are no longer relevant to the community's. There is also the possibility of the development of a cultural need that could be the result of combining some elements from the new and some from the old.

⁹ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp250-258.

This involves the modification of old cultural regulations to suit ongoing social change.

Each environment is a result of several factors. There is, for example a complex arrangement of settings, expressing separations and linkages of people, privacy, transition, a range of activities and levels of significance. In a typical traditional environment the physical structure is a direct result of cultural beliefs. Settings for different activities and/ or kin members relate to one another in a given way. People who belong to one social generic group are expected to relate to the following from the next one in a given way within the environment. For example, during celebration the women, youth and men each celebrate in different groups despite the fact that they are united.

The environment should be capable of supporting the activities of the people who live in them. These are supported by various physical elements and settings on different scales and by various institutions. The relationships of this kind explain congruency between setting and community ideals. Congruency between culture and built setting can further be demonstrated by identifying the way that the two change in tandem.

Rapoport's theory identifies examples of built environments that are in transition. Due to various influences, built environments experience change both in cultural characteristics as well as in the physical form. In the second example, the same theory has been re-stated and then tested in research jointly by Rapoport and Hardie¹⁰. The research was undertaken within the different built examples that were found in M'Mabatho, a regional town in Southern Africa.

To understand the relationship between culture and the physical built setting, both the theory and earlier fieldwork raised three issues that were of importance. The first was that any built environment is shaped by ideals; for example beliefs, behaviours, lifestyle and social organisation. There would be those issues that would be brought in to play the role of modification. The second was that there are ways that an environment would affect its occupants and users. Depending on the attributes, this

¹⁰ Rapoport, Hardie, Op Cit., pp35-61.

could have negative or encouraging effects. The former could possibly develop into the experience of stress. The third was that there should be ways and means that assist with linking people with the environment in a supportive and mutually re-inforcing manner.

The current research found it necessary to first identify a community. There should be some common aspect of life that is shared by everyone. Cultural ideals were adopted as the unit of identification. Everyone responds to aspects of this for example requirements for taboo, beliefs, performing traditions, and interpretation of these attributes of this in a similar way.

Data was collected from two levels. In the first instance, after discovering cultural needs supportive physical setting were identified. The second approach was different in that it involved finding cultural meanings in the already identified attributes that were in the built environment. This combined approach was seen as a build up from the single approach centred on the latter one that had been developed and experimented with in M'Mabatho.

Another development of this approach was the different way that samples were selected rural as well as urban examples were selected. The rural settlements were evenly distributed and samples were taken from these. This was a new development as the earlier approach that had only focused on settlements that were located within the town of M'Mbabatho¹¹.

Data collected from towns were from three informal settlements. Of this, two were located in one town and one from another. The majority of built environments that were found within these settlements had each been in existence for a minimum of forty years. Two sets of information that were seen as adding to the data and therefore seen as an advantage would be identified from this type of environment.

The first advantage of the informal settlement was that since they were in transition, some examples of the built environment shared similar characteristics with those that

¹¹ Rapoport, Hardie, pp52-61.

are located in the rural districts. The setting was thus used to identify and re-confirm issues that had been raised in the rural settlements. The second example was that the built environment was at different levels of development in the informal sector. This is from a simple layout that still represented a rural scene to a complex urban block that was the result of different forces. The different levels made it possible for the research to identify the way that cultural requirements are performed within these. It was thus confirmed that a change in the built environment also influenced the way that cultural needs were performed¹².

Focusing on built environments that were within informal settlements provided for a chance to develop data within a relatively coherent economic group. This becomes necessary for discussing social “needs” and “wants”, two of the terms that have been raised in the theory about the traditional settlements¹³. “Needs” result from cultural requirements. There is a proposal that depending on the meaning of “wants”, with time these could assume the role of “needs.”

An informal settlement provides a baseline for the discussion of “wants.” Although not within the scope of this research, the recommended approach to include settings represent different social levels, for example, from the informal up to the ones that are meant for the elite, is capable of turning some of the projections into speculation. Initially the economy could be modifying the attributes. Later on the economic factor could have an influence in the same direction of development that the built environment takes. There is the possibility that some of the wants could be turned into cultural issues that has been described as peripheral. These are those cultural needs that are unable to withstand the changes.

Aspects of culture that were common to both the rural setting as well as the town settlements were identified. Cultural needs that were common to the two settings were viewed to have survived. A common theme that was identified with every surviving culture was the participation by everyone in the community. Activities were of two types. In the first one there were the required forms of behaviours between members

¹² Rapoport, Hardie, pp36.

¹³ Rapoport, Op Cit., pp253.

Rapoport, Hardie, Op Cit., pp60-61.

of one kin group especially those that belonged to different social generic groups. The second need called for ritual performance to mark rites of passages for example some of the marriage activities, initiation ceremonies and holding of mourning.

Behaviour between kinship members is organised in two ways. The first is by introducing privacy between those that are affected. Their respective dwellings are set at the distance that is viewed as apart. In this way privacy is thus introduced.

The second way that accepted correct social behaviours between kinship members are accommodated is by incorporating elements into the environment that would accommodate the two. Settings for example veranda, roof overhangs, and tree shades are viewed as semi-private. Compared to the inside that is private and behaviours are reserved, everyone was free within these.

Settings that were semi-private in character were present both in the rural as well as urban settlements. Research thus agrees with earlier theory that the environment is shaped by ideals¹⁴. It was asserted that the built environment was influenced by the cultural needs for community activities and behaviours between different kinship members.

Further demonstration of the influence of ideals on built environment was illustrated by the way that those that should observe taboo with one another were allocated space within a complex built setting where there is hardly any room for one to build. These would be at reasonable distance from each other.

It was also demonstrated that when an environment could not support some of the cultural needs, this would affect the people. Two examples illustrated this. In the first, there were those who realising the inability of the urban settlements to support their cultural needs made a decision to migrate and to settle in the rural district. Two kinds of opportunities were identified. The first was that one would be nearer the rest of the community members. The institution would provide social support. The second was with the rural setting that would influence the settlement in a positive way.

¹⁴ Rapoport, Hardie, p36.

community members. The institution would provide social support. The second was with rural setting that would influence the settlement in positive way.

The second example of lack of supportive environment was demonstrated by the way that some of the cultural requirements for example holding of mourning were being performed. Problems were being experienced in spite of the efforts to accommodate some of the needs especially with the introduction of the rental dweller. When there was an activity, they would not be expected to participate fully. It was confirmed that during such there would be tension between the community and these other dwellers.

This research agrees with the suggestion that an environment would affect one. Examples above further show the appropriate environments have mechanics that would link people to them. To realise this, there should be characteristics within this that have positive meaning and/ or image. Urban dwellers were able to identify two attributes within the setting that assist their cognitive schemata. There was the traditional layout that provided for privacy between the community members. Next was that in having other kin members provided a feeling of security and thus the environment was seen to represent "home."

8.4 Conclusions in terms of this research.

This research has identified and confirmed that there are culture core that are being supported by the people who dwell in the towns within Western Kenya. Apart from everyday behaviour when between those of same kin group certain forms of behaviour are expected between persons of different social generic groups, there are the activities that would involve everyone in the community. Members of a community would come together when a rite of passage for example initiation activity was being performed. Some of the activities helped people to re-assert being part of the community.

Research noted the changing trend in performing the traditions by those people who had settled in towns. Urban forces were contributing to this. Although cultural activities would be present in the town, they are affected by the lack of proper setting. Changes have impacted on them in that everything can not be performed as per the

people found themselves isolated from the kinsmen who would be residing elsewhere in the rural district.

Kinship members were found to develop different forms of social relationships with one another. These were based on the social generic group. When in a group, the physical relationship of the different social generic groups is determined by traditions. Levels of privacy between members of social generics are still upheld.

There are the different gender groups. Opposite gender members were expected to relate to one another in the proper socially accepted way. Other social generic groups were for example parents, youths, grandchildren, grandparent, and in-laws. When within the same setting, there would be the prescribed ways that those from one group, for example, grandparents and their grandchildren, would be expected to behave towards one another.

Depending on the requirement, relationships between members of different social groups could be friendly and jocular. This offers an opportunity for people to freely mix. There could also be relationships based on principles of avoidance. This later example does not offer those concerned opportunities to be relaxed in the presence of one another.

With both the rural as well as the urban cases research was able to identify the different forms of relationship within a kinship settlement as having an influence on the layout of a built environment. This resulted in two types of layout within the built environment. For the kinsmen that would be expected to relate to one another in an avoidance way; for example, parents and their mature children, dwelling for each would be located at a slight distance from each other. The hierarchy thus introduced privacy.

The relationship between members of one kin group also resulted in incorporating elements, for example, the veranda and trees as part of the built environment. Unlike the interior of one another's dwelling unit that is socially considered to be private by those that relate through avoidance means, settings of this nature are accepted as

being semi-private. When compared to the interior where culture requires avoidance of relationships control their body movement, there was room for one to manoeuvre around and to become relatively free.

Cultural activities that were still being performed by urban dwellers included celebration of marriages, holding of mourning, carrying out an initiation for example marking of new birth. It appeared that because of their nature, they had survived the urban forces. Research identified two objectives of these needs. First is that it is during the performance of these that social bonds are expected to be renewed. Kinship members were able to rediscover one another. The second is that they assist with re-confirming social identity since it was expected of everyone to participate in a community activity.

In order that taboo between members of the different social groups is avoided, community activities would be held in a setting within the open outside. This would achieve two forms of seating arrangements. The first would be that some of the social groups, for example, the youth and adults would be located in separate settings. In this way taboo would have resulted in some of the utterances and/ or body movements by those from one group are controlled. The second is that the open outside is taken to be fluid and lack a formal characteristic. Compared to the private inside, everyone would feel relatively free within this.

Overall it was noted that the open outside had been influenced by culture to accommodate different social levels. Both the central court and the main entrance to the kinship built environment were seen as being semi-public and or semi-private. Within these there was minimal control of anyone. Further movements of the individual built environment exposed zones that are more semi-private. Research identified shades under a tree veranda and doorways as representing this. It was re-asserted that necessary precautions are taken when approaching the dwelling.

In order for the open outside to be accepted by the community as a suitable setting there should be a characteristic that is inherent within this and that is derived from the relation between this and the surrounding built environment. It is the relationship

between the open outside and the built setting next to it that is responsible for spatial characteristics.

In the towns research would assert that cultural needs were being recognised in a slightly changed way and/ or the setting for recognising these were also undergoing change. This would show in the way that setting a cultural activity would be identified. Dwellers would respond in three different ways. Firstly would be those that would adapt setting to accommodate the required activity. Secondly would be those that, realising the difficulty of fully performing the cultural requirements in the town would revert to the principles that were behind the requirement. Thirdly would be those who decided to migrate and to settle in the rural districts.

Settlements that were identified in the town were of two types. Both were the result of cultural change. There was the simple homestead with built units and other types of spatial elements, all of which would be loosely tied together. An edge and a common entrance to the urban homestead would define this. Other noticeable features were the different axes that would provide linkages and open settings of different hierarchical levels. The majority of the dwellers would be a mixture of related members and renters. Kinsmen could still afford to set their dwellings a distance apart.

The second type of urban built environment was the complex one. This had been influenced by the urban demands, for example, diminishing land. The built units were physically joined together. There would be the social locus in the form of an open outside at the centre and that would also provide the setting for other activities. Although some of the dwellers would still be members of the kinship, the majority would be renters. Research identified the habit of locating those that have a taboo with one another in dwellings that would be at a reasonable distance from each other. This last built environment type was quickly taking over the fabric in the settlement.

The complex homestead type is emerging as the predominant one in the urban settlement. There is the decrease both in land and financial resources. Although the homesteads are still maintaining the traditional open outside, it is the compact layout of this that describes true urban settlement type.

The complex homestead type is emerging as the predominant one in the urban settlement. There is the decrease both in land and financial resources. Although the homesteads are still maintaining the traditional open outside, it is the compact layout of this that describes true urban settlement type.

One other development that was noted in the town was the migration by the urban dwellers to settle in the rural districts. The cause of this trend was identified to be the situations where with time people have found themselves without kinsmen who would assist in the time of need. Research could ascertain that as an institution community was taken to represent security. There was the expectation that everyone would be involved in an activity and that involvement brought everyone closer together. In spite of settlements that were marked by dispersal and migration of person's kinship, kin group members would still be drawn together when there was need.

This research has identified two attributes of built environment that were influenced by culture. First is the level of both spatial hierarchy and the introduced privacy. Second was the need for setting where cultural activities in which everyone was expected to be involved would be performed. Research shall now turn to arguments that were put forward at the beginning. Recommendation guidelines that would assist in the development of the settlement with a layout that is influenced by cultural needs shall be suggested.

8.4.1 Need for homologous relationship between regional culture and built environment.

At the beginning of this research, the first argument put forward was *that the absence of the vernacular in regional urban settlement constitutes a critical omission in modern urban planning*. From the case studies, this argument has been proven to be partially correct. There are two developments that begin to influence the way that dwellers perceive their environment and the activities that are performed.

Firstly, at the beginning dwellers saw one another in terms of belonging to similar kinship. Later on, this changed as other persons that were from diverse cultural background joined as rental dwellers. In such a homestead, not everyone was

expected to participate during the performance of a rite. Secondly, there was the change in the homestead type from the traditional one that had a simple layout to one that was complex. This latter settlement type appears to have developed due to the arrival of the rental dwellers.

In spite of the development within the homestead type, kinsmen continued to perform the important cultural activities. Setting was construed to cater for the cultural needs. Further research is necessary in order to identify the implication of the continuous homestead growth on the setting for cultural performance within a regional town. Homesteads experience vertical as well as horizontal growths. It would be necessary to investigate the survival of culture for the dwellers of urban homestead types.

8.4.2 Culture, Setting and involvement by the kinsmen.

The second argument put forward was that, *both in the traditional and in the urban settings, many social and cultural relationships take place and are re-confirmed outdoors. Kinship members are drawn together in these outdoor settings.* The following argument shall show that this has been proven to be correct.

In the research region, community was identified as an institution that was necessary for the dwellers of both rural as well as urban settlements. It was necessary both for identification and for social security. Feelings towards these could be suggested to be the spirit that assisted with bringing the kinsmen together. This is so in order that those that are concerned could jointly become part of the required cultural activity.

The research has shown that within both the rural and urban homesteads the way that community members behaved towards one another was influenced by their cultural requirements. Community activities were performed within the open outside. Selection of setting was such that the requirements of the tradition could not be readily compromised.

8.5 Recommendations.

The intention has been, research set out to develop guidelines rather than being prescriptive. The town has been taken as the baseline for the project.

defined in terms of kinship and/ or clan. This represents scale on which cultural requirements were observed.

The aim of the recommendations is to help with structuring a setting in a manner that would be congruent with the cultural needs of the dwellers. Two important spatial characteristics are: settings within which activities that involve the kinsmen and/ or clan should be private. As shall be shown, with the recommendations below, there is a structure that is inherent in the traditional homesteads which may be relied on as a guide to urbanisation.

1. The first recommendation is that in the cases where rural areas have become part of urban development, planning efforts should ensure that the traditional structure of the kinsmen homestead is retained. An infrastructure network such as roadways, and other forms of communication should not adversely affect the pattern in a homestead. In the urban settlements, the traditional, highly integrated social and physical unit tends to persist in spite of urbanisation.
2. Overall, there is need to recognise and to incorporate in the planning, the new elements of social institutions, for example, the drinking places and community halls. These provide focal points for inter-community activities.
3. An important characteristic that is inherent in the traditional setting is the privacy required by the hierarchy within the homestead. Movements into the settlement are controlled through a single entrance. Within a homestead, the rest of the entrances are used by specific social generic such as the youths. The structure of the homestead is such that if one were to move across the space, there would be an apparent dead end. In terms of circulation, homesteads become cul-de-sac. Unlike the cul-de-sac found in some planning layouts that are neutral in effect, the homestead is a living active cul-de-sac. Types of circulation can thus be a component of these traditional homesteads.

The following guidelines are based on the idea of circulation:

- Homesteads should be organised around the principle of a single access in order that privacy can be introduced between dwellings that belong to the kinsmen. The layout of the urban homestead should be based on the requirement for privacy between people of different social generic groups. On the homestead level, the circulation patterns should be influenced by the need to introduce privacy related to a hierarchy of private-public relations.
 - Particular building groups should be clearly defined, possibly by a boundary or edge. In this way individuals would be given the opportunity to relate strongly to their built environment and thus assume responsibility them. Urban management may facilitated and boasted through this.
- 4 The second characteristic is the importance of the open outside area. Traditional settlements the relationship between the built environment and the open outside area within the specific grouping in particular to the culture core. Traditional homesteads appear to have addressed the commonality of the open outside by structuring dwellings around a single open outside setting. Rather than the open outside setting that is used by a single family dwelling, the open outside is shared by several dwellings that form its edge. The traditional open outside is a social locus. For the community that is found within Western Kenya, activities that involved the kinship should be held within this focal setting.
- 5 A further recommendation would thus be for the planning of the settlements within regional towns to respect the complex relationship between dwelling and dwelling and dwellings and open outside setting. This relationship is derived from possible traditions, taboos, beliefs, values and meanings that are shared by the dwellers. The possible relationship between the people who share the open outside setting has been identified in terms of the kinship patterns.
- 6 Another recommendation is that the division of the land that was formerly freehold should take cognisance of the tradition that allowed for ownership of larger land holdings.

Since in any kin group, dwelling is defined through an individual, the average plot size should be tied to two issues. First is the need to establish within the region the average household size. This then should provide the guidance on the possible yardstick for the plot size. Second is that planning of a cluster unit should be influenced by the sharing of a manageable open outside setting by the several dwellings.

It should be noted that densities are to be kept low with increase in the intensity of land use recognised as being counter to traditional culture.

- Fourth recommendation is that the designers should recognise the dwellings that are within a kinship setting as part of a single framework. Dwellings lack social meaning when on their own. There are principles of culture that relate the parts to the whole. Thus designers should learn to respond to designing the individual dwelling in the same way that they would have done to the whole.

8.6 Recommendations for Further Research.

The research has identified the presence of tradition, beliefs and taboos in the dwellers of the settlements. These have been identified both from behaviour as well as the layout of the built settings. Both the recommendations for planning together with the guidelines that are stated in the above section have been based on these. It is recommended for the future research to focus on two kinds of developments that arise out of this kind of built environment. First is that the research has focused on the settlements where activities are performed at the ground level. What direction are the different cultural requirements and the related built setting likely to take?

There is a trend in the development of towns towards higher densities and consequent multilevel housing. Further research needs to be carried out in order to establish:

- The impact of traditions on the existing planning requirements.
- The influence of density on built type setting and on cultural performance.
- Identification of elements of syncretism and the survival of these.

- Identification of elements of syncretism both from the new and old and the survival of these.
- The influence of new institutions, for example, the local administration and levels of education on traditions.

Appendix 1.

GUIDANCE TO THE DATA COLLECTION.

1.0 Background to Culture core.

Surviving cultures are usually crucial to the groups needs. Some of the group knowledge that survives through periods might be important to the people. In Western Kenya, the suggested Culture core comprises the activities that that bring the related people together within a kinship setting, vernacular and/ or rural.

Kinship relationships are enacted most visibly during rites of passage and social transaction. These occur in public or next to public space. In observing these occurrences, and in placing events in public spaces, the concept of privacy and transaction are important.

Privacy means the relationship between people and/ or groups in setting. This involves thresholds, gates, limits to movements, the relation between the origin and destination. While transaction mean particular event or happening in the public space.

Following information were to be identified:

- Activities that bring the respective people together within a kinship vernacular setting, the homestead.
- Note activities that bring the respective people together within the urban setting, urban block.
- Sketch the different places where people come together in the vernacular and/ or urban setting.

Some of the rites of passage that are seen in terms of Culture core are:

1. Marriage.
 - Different types of celebrations involving cross married relations.
 - Different gender roles during celebrations by married relations.
 - Meeting places for the celebration of rites of passage between married people.
2. Death.
 - Different events taking place during the mourning period.
 - Gender roles during mourning periods.
Mourning takes form of clan and members meeting, entertainment through music, wake keeping and occasional and/ or annual remembrance of the dead.
 - Place setting for mourning activity/ and or roles.

Leading questions and/ or issues to observe.

2 Vernacular built environment.

Section A.

2.1 Social and economic characteristic of informant.

- 2.1.1 Location of the field work _____.
- 2.1.2 Participants name _____/group participation.
- 2.1.3 Sex _____.
- 2.1.4 Age of informant _____.
- 2.1.5 Level of education _____.
- 2.1.6 Employment _____.
- 2.1.7 Marital status _____.
- 2.1.8 Nature of marriage _____.
- 2.1.9 Length of stay in place _____.
- 2.1.10 How the land was acquired _____.
- 2.1.11 Period that calls for family, kinship and or clan assembly.

2.2 Setting of the built environment.

- 2.2.1 Reference terms if any for the following places within a vernacular setting.
 - 2.2.1.1 Upper side _____.
 - 2.2.1.2 Lower side _____.
- 2.2.2 Reference point for orientation in the setting.
- 2.2.3 Measurement and documentation in the individual vernacular setting.
 - 2.2.3.1 Open spaces.
 - 2.2.3.2 Thresholds.
 - 2.2.3.3 Official and related entrance to the homestead.
- 2.2.4 Measurement and documentation of the kinship settlements of:
 - 2.2.4.1 Open spaces.
 - 2.2.4.2 Thresholds.

2.3 Institution of marriage.

- 2.3.1 Important marriage activities.
- 2.3.2 Participants in a marriage ceremony.
- 2.3.3 Places where activities related to marriage are held.
- 2.3.4 Period of day when activity is held.
- 2.3.5 Sketch the setting indicating where activities are held.

2.4 Marking of death.

- 2.4.1 Activities held during the mourning period.
- 2.4.2 Participants during the period of mourning.
- 2.4.3 Gender roles.
- 2.4.4 Location of activities held during the period of mourning.
- 2.4.5 Sketch the setting and indicate areas where activities are held.

3 Regional town.

3.1 Social and economic characteristics of informant.

Section A.

- 3.1.1 Participant name _____/group participation.
- 3.1.2 Sex _____.
- 3.1.3 Age _____.
- 3.1.4 Level of education _____.
- 3.1.5 Employment _____.
- 3.1.6 Marital status _____.
- 3.1.7 District of origin _____.
- 3.1.8 Length of stay in place _____.
- 3.1.9 Where does family live _____.
- 3.1.10 Nature of participants marriage _____.
- 3.1.11 Periods that calls for family, kinship and/ or clan assembly.

Section B.

- 3.2 Regional town setting.
 - 3.2.1 Measurement and documentation of the external layout of single urban block indicating:
 - 3.2.1.1 Open spaces.
 - 3.2.1.2 Circulation.
 - 3.2.1.3 Thresholds.
 - 3.2.2 measurement and documentation of external layouts of related urban blocks indicating:
 - 3.2.2.1 Open spaces.
 - 3.2.2.2 Circulation.
 - 3.2.2.3 Thresholds.
- 2.3 Institution of marriage.
 - 2.3.1 Significance or importance of institution of marriage.
 - 2.3.2 Provision of setting
 - 2.3.3 Participant in marriage events.
 - 2.3.4 How place setting is solved for marriage events.
 - 2.3.5 Times of the day when activities are held.

Marriage is used as nomadic metaphor that represents events such as, initiations, and forms of relationships between the gender groups.

2.4 Marking death.

- 2.4.1 Activities that are held during the period of death.
- 2.4.2 Participants in activities held during the mourning period.

- 2.4.3 Places where activities are held.
- 2.4.4 Period of day when activities are held.

Appendix 2a.

Pius Onyango Obar, *Mbita* – Rural (R7).

Mbita is a small fishing urban village on the shores of *Lake Victoria*. This remote town is located in what has traditionally been referred to as being the *South Nyanza* district. The growth of the town has been enhanced by the location of the largest research station for the *International Center for Insect Physiology and Ecology* [ICIPE]. This is an institution that is the size of a large faculty on the campus.

We arrived in the township around midday. It is a market day. The location of the field work is within one of the rural neighborhoods with the immediate border of the township. We spent the first few hours moving around the market and in trying to locate the man who was going to lead us into the field. Earlier on during my visit, I had met the person who was to lead us to the participant.

The man that we were to be introduced to happened to be the area county council councilor. He presented one of the rural wards within *Mbita* county council. Originally the guide had located two people one of who was the current chief. After some consultative discussion with selected people we settled on the councilor. Apart from being the Councilor, we were being whispered to that our intended man was also a "respected consultant on traditional matters. Through the charms, he was able to mediate between those in need and the ancestors."

With the help of our guide, we are able to easily locate our proposed participant's home. It is a modest homestead on the shores of *Lake Victoria*. There are seven houses in total. The houses are what in local terms known as semi-permanent. Walls are of adobe and plastered with cement, and a roof that is covered by corrugated galvanized iron sheets. This dwelling type is considered a prestige. They typify wealth.

On entering the homestead, there is one house that is directly facing the main gate. This house appears to dominate the landscape within this place. *Jaduong*, or the old man, as the people around here refer to him would see us in two days time. From a small discussion with the man, one can gather that he is not in good health. For three days he had not gone to *Mbita* town where he has an office. An elderly lady walks in to greet and welcome us. After a short while she returns through the same door. There is some exchange of news between the woman and the man who was earlier on with the old man.

On coming in through the gate our guide pointed out a small house that is next to the gate. The structure of this house is strange in the sense that though it is small in size, it has been made to face the front of the homestead. Apart from the dominating house, the rest of the shelters are orientated towards the central court. This house also has no windows in it. Though not directly in contact with the main entrance, there is a successful attempt to represent this symbolically. It appears as if the house is trying to show its authority to anybody that is coming into the home. Only this small house and the dominating one are facing the front entrance.

Later on in the discussion, when I attempted to pursue this issue, participant was defensive. "This is my homestead. I have the senior wife's house facing the main gate. But, also." He stares at me before continuing, "each homestead in *Luo* land has the protecting individual ancestor. It is this spirit that protects the homestead from any ills that may befall the people. For me, I have decided to build a shelter for the spirit. You can see that it is facing the main gate. No one can enter this homestead with any bad intention or charms and succeed in his mission."

Back on the appointed date for the discussion, upon entering the homestead, we noticed some men who were seated in the porch of the house immediately ahead of us. They seem to be of differing age groups. Whatever they are involved in seemed to be something that is informal. Apart from the old man who seems to be enjoying the argument, everybody appears to be in high spirits. After the participant breaking into laughter, he calls on one of the boys to bring out more seats. The man takes time to introduce us to the young men who he was with.

Three of the youth are his sons. We learn that one of them is a very good football goalkeeper. The man plays for his high school team. The elder son happens to have come back from Uganda to see his family. Two of the boys who are there are first cousins to the boys. Their homestead is the one that is across the fence. The old man points it out for us. "The father of these children is my direct follower. They called in the morning to welcome their 'brother' who only arrived the previous evening from Uganda. They know that if they do not get hold of him now, they will not be able to later in the day." Apart from our guide who seems to be on familiar terms with people in the homestead, the old man takes time to introduce our intent to the youths.

The same lady who we had met on the first day emerges from the house to welcome us once more. After she left, our guide takes his time once more to introduce us. *Jaduong* as he is referred to is called Pius Onyango Obar. He would have first liked to know from which of the two *Alegos* I am from. "Are you from *Alego* that is in *South Nyanza* or that one in *Central Nyanza*?" I inform him of being from the latter.

The man intended to spend the day at the county council offices. Having been away from work for a few days, there was the need to update himself with current events. He also intended to move around this location and to see if all was fine with his people. He urged us to return the following day when he would give us more the time.

On the appointed day, we found the old man in the same place that we had met him on the previous day. He was in the company of a man who appeared to be of the same age. From the mood, one can judge that they held some kind of discussion. As we approached, our host called out to someone inside the house to bring out more seats. The person who had been introduced to us as Onyango Mbare happened to be a neighbor. The man came to consult our host on some undisclosed matters.

Without wasting any time, we set out on our discussion. Both participant and his brother migrated to this place from *Rusinga Island* at a place known as *Wawere* location. The original home is from the coast and is five miles from the new one. Since moving here in 1973, the two migrants have accepted their new place here in *Ka'sigunga*. Movement to this place was necessitated by the then lack of proper

physical connection between the mainland and *Rusinga Island*. Since he owned transport vehicles, those driving them had daily problems with leaving them on the mainland. Obar is a professionally trained accountant. The man worked both in Uganda and Kenya for BP/Shell oil company for thirty years before retiring.

Participant still maintains contact with those relatives who are living in *Rusinga Island*. "When there is an occasion in either of the two places, kin members from both sides are expected to attend and to assist in whatever manner is required. During a marriage of any of our children and likewise during a funeral, we must all try to be present there."

There is a welfare society that serves to bring together clan people who live in *Ka'sigunga* and *Wawere*. Obar is the current chair of the group. Explaining to us the aim of their group, he reckons, "we have this society so that in times of crisis we can offer support in whatever manner is necessary. Can you crash lice with one finger only? Don't you need the thumb to accomplish the intent." I answer in the affirmative and he continues, "haven't you heard that 'one can not bury his own body.' We all need one another." He looks sideways to the person that is sitting next to him as if for some kind of support. The man nods up and down as if in agreement with whatever is being suggested. "What society requires of one is to be present." Mbare interjects and continues, "One's presence in a place is more important than any material thing that might be sent along."

For them when there is mourning, people spend three weeks with the family. During this period all doors in the homestead must remain open. Mats that are woven out of reed are spread outside for sleeping. People sleep outside as they help to give company to the departed spirit. There is a fire that burns continuously next to the graveyard. People sit around this fire. "Apart from helping to keep the departed soul warm, *Luo* people burn this fire to show those remaining behind that the person is not completely gone, his spirit is still living and we must keep it warm. As the spirit wonders it returns to the burial site. It is after seven days that the fire is extinguished, then the spirit has completely left the body and has joined the rest of ancestors."

There is a format of sitting between the in-laws. During mourning, seating areas for in-laws are culturally prescribed. Seating arrangements help in maintaining aspects of status quo between the different people and more so the in-laws. People who are seen as being in-laws can not move freely in the homestead. There are certain places, such as behind the houses that are out of bounds to those married in the village and likewise their relatives.

It is feared that an in-law may encounter certain people while they are engaged in acts that may be embarrassing to both of the parties. "Even when visiting in-laws need to go for a walk around the neighborhood, message is sent around, and there are certain places in the neighborhood where they dare not go to." When he stops Mbare explains further, "while moving around, one may encounter somebody that is bathing and is nude. You can also come across someone who is engaged in an act that should be private. Also, should they enter the mother-in-law's house, it is required that they should not move on to the side where the sleeping bed is placed."

When asked the origin of some of his ideas, participant looks at the *Luo* development in retrospect. The different beliefs and response to situations have been with the *Luo* people right from when they were in Egypt. "Those people who migrated along the River Nile to settle here in *Rusinga*, *Alego* and everywhere in *Nyanza* have continued to enact and protect our culture.

To the participant a relatively important ceremony to mark death occurs during the remembrance time. A certain time after the mourning period, close family members will decide to invite both relatives and friends to attend the last rite of death. There is no fixed time before which this must be. "I have seen people holding last rites for their father after several years since the person had passed away. Then people come together to spend the night in the deceased homestead. Depending on the ability of the relatives, different kinds of music may be brought in to help people spend the night. Music is played throughout the night." As to where people are likely to be, Obar exclaims, "this is a day of joy. You have come to spend the last time with the deceased, how do you then go into the house to sleep?"

Participant believes that ancestral spirits are present within a homestead. "It is because of this that you bury a person with his head facing the direction of the main entrance to the homestead. The spirit should remain within the territory of the homestead. When one is buried with the legs facing the direction of the gate, then his spirit might leave the homestead. When a spirit is not properly contained, it will continue hunting the relatives.

To the participant, some spirits appear in dreams to explain something. It is advisable to consult a seer who is capable of interpreting the phenomenon when such a thing occurs. "Each homestead in *Luo* land has the guardian ancestral spirit that protects it. When you look down there in the homestead," he points towards the gate, "you can see that I have constructed a shrine for the guardian ancestor spirit near the entrance. Nobody can enter this homestead with evil intention and succeed in his mission." He boasts at us. "When I have people who are being disturbed by ills, I take them to the shrine where I can be able to consult the ancestors."

One other important time when ancestors are re-united with their relatives happens during the naming ceremony. Each *Luo* child has a spiritual name. On the day of holding the ceremony relatives are invited to a feast. Usually a goat or at times a cow is slaughtered for the guests. Those invited sit under a shade and women take part in the food preparation. Before this time, an ancestral name would have been selected for the new child. "It is important that kin people are present because this is when the reincarnation of the ancestor in that child is being made public."

At some point, the child would be brought outside from the house for dedication to the protector ancestor. A young chicken is used to carry out the rite. The chicken is never killed and allowed to roam around freely. When pressed further, participant explains the process involved. "An elder will rub the chicken around the child's body while calling on the ancestor to protect him from all evils that may come on the way. The sex of the chicken has to be the same as that of the ancestor. People begin to behave towards the child in a similar way that they would have done to the ancestor. "

To the participant, in a good clan there are scheduled meetings between people to review and discuss issues. "People should not wait for funeral occasions to bring them together, in a good place, there should be regular discussions." Both the old and youth attend and are expected to attend the meetings.

There are scheduled times when *Ka'sigunga* and *Wawere* people get together. "During Christmas or at Easter time, we can decide to meet together to celebrate and to hold discussions either here in my home or in *Rusinga*. "We meet so that our children can get to meet one another. Else, one day they might meet in the urban town and develop sexual lust towards each other without being aware of the existing relationships between them."

The participant concedes that gatherings that bring together kinship people were there before the advent of Christianity in the *Luo* society. "Among the traditional people, there have been periods when relatives do come together. I have given the example of a child naming. Also I have given you other instances such as remembrance of the departed by the relatives."

"With our ages," looking across to his companion, "we are some of the few elders who both youth and others can seek advice from about social cultural issues. People also come to us when there are family problems. And, we also consult one another. I have told you that one finger can not crash lice. Like today, this one here is my neighbor, we always spend time together exchanging teachings." When he stops it is Mbare who adds, "one man can not have knowledge on everything."

"I had decided to call here early to find out how my peer is doing. I was told that of late, he has not been well." In my view if the man was not in good state of health, then the more reason why he should have stayed indoors. Participant becomes defensive, "there are certain issues that may arise in the course of our discussion and that should not be for the consumption of any ears. We are old people and some of the issues that we discuss should remain between us. It should not be that whatever people come to consult you about is on everyone's lips the day after."

"As you have been told I am a spiritual healer. When people come with spiritual matters, I will come out with them to discuss the problem. I do not like people here to know the things that I discuss with my visitors. When we have discussed the matter here, I may decide to visit the shrine for consultation with the spirits."

"Harvesting of cereals is one period that was escaping my mind." Obar claims on being reminded. "Every household with a good harvest will hold celebrations for the relatives. Old cereals will be used to make traditional beer for the day. This celebration will start in the afternoon and continue until sunset. We can call a lyric person to entertain people. It is also possible that people just come to drink. While drinking, there are some elders who might start singing praise songs to those present."

When celebrating, only the elders are present in the yard. The youth will just hover around the place. "Young people may have their own gramophone near where their houses are." Women's roles will be in cooking and bringing warm water to fill up the

boozing pot. It is only those women who are considered as being grandmothers who may attend and secure space next to the men. "They will sit on the ground."

To Obar, there has to be some reason that will bring people together. "Like for myself, when there are some disturbing things that I have noticed, I will consult with a few selected elders. My wife will prepare some drink for us. It is during this period that I will seek views from those people who should be there."

"What you are being told is," Mbare interjects, "when you need advice from elderly people, it is common knowledge that you invite them under the pretext of beer drinking. When the time comes, you will ask the youths to arrange seats somewhere with little disturbance. For such a meeting you can not sit where at the moment we are. This is the threshold to the house. You only let people that you have not welcomed into your home stay here. When you have a visit by your peers, it is better that you entertain them somewhere that they feel recognized. You can sit with them under a tree shade." Asked if they can sit in the house, the man is defensive, "you don't sit with men folks inside the house. What are you hiding from people?"

To the participant, unlike the traditional times, a trend is emerging where only close family members get together. The old style of coming together had its own advantages. An important gain from coming together is the opportunity to be able to meet one another. "You are always being sensitized of being a member of a wider group of people." Some of the divorces between couples at times can be caused by lack of knowing one another properly. "Both the parents know very little about the other family's background." To the man, occasions that can serve to bring people together are barely there.

Several forms of mystical arts can be found among the *Luo* people. There are the night runners, spiritual healers, witchcraft and ordinary medicine men. To the participant, the worst kind of people should be the night runners and witchcraft people who help to destroy the people around them. Participant perceives his role as being there to assist people. He intervenes between the ancestors and the rest of society.

Important structure within this particular homestead include, the four houses belonging to the wives, the shrine. The first wife's house is important in that she is the custodian of this homestead. "It is from this house that I emerge from when I am visiting the shrine. Also those in need come to wait for me here."

"There are certain acts that if I am going ahead with, this place becomes my departure point." Participant explains. "It is here that I have kept all the traditional artifacts that I used to establish this home. There is the single axe, mortar and grinder, things that traditions require the senior wife to be the custodian of."

"On the first day of the planting season, it is a requirement that I spend the previous night in my senior wife's house. It is from here that I emerge when taking the first seeds to the field. Likewise during harvest, I spend the previous night in the senior wife's house."

"You are forgetting an important thing," Mbare comments, "even when my son is bringing his wife home on the first day of marriage, it is required that you also spend that night in the first wife's house. By enacting this, you are blessing them to have children. And here in *Rusinga*, are you near any lake in *Alego*? If you are next to a lake then you have fishermen. Here in *Mbita*, when taking out a boat to the lake on the first day, you should have spent the previous night in the senior wife's house. Not that you are supposed to do anything, it is just a symbolic gesture." Because of the importance of the first wife's house, it is the only one in the entire homestead that has to face the main gate. Failure to recognize the authority of the first wife may bring bad omen to the family.

Pointing at some wooden timber under a nearby tree, Obar joins in, "You see that that is a boat which is being constructed. On the day of its being mounted onto a stone here in the homestead, I would be told so that I spend the previous night inside this house." He points down to where we are.

"Also when my sons are taking it on to the lake, they will inform me the previous day so that I go through the needful process as required by the *Luo* culture." On being asked about the first insinuation, participant explains how the boat is gradually developed. It is usual to first start construction when the boat is on the ground, later on after some stages, the works is hoisted onto boulders.

According to tradition, each person has to have his own gate. Even when the homestead lacks a fence, it is necessary that there is an official entrance that is properly defined. "It is the position of the gate that one has to establish when starting a home. It is established to be directly on the same axis as the door to the senior wife's house. It is this lady who is the guardian of the gate."

Homesteads have fences to provide security around. Those with ulterior motives are prevented from sneaking around unnoticed. "It is our tradition that a homestead is fenced and with a proper gate. All the people who want to see the old man are required to report to the senior wife's house. It is her who would then send word around to the old man wherever he might be. What I want you to understand is that the homestead belongs to this lady." Mbari adds.

There are places that have been earmarked for sitting. The yard or *siwandha* is one key place. There may be physical elements that demarcate the spot. Though not outrightly visible, there may be a certain locality within the homestead that has been designated as a yard for events.

As for *siwandha*, when the in-laws are to be received there, there are designated seating sides. The guests occupy the side considered as being 'upper', and those adults from within sit on the side that is directly opposite to this one. The third side is for the elderly women who may attend to listen. "It also happens that it is the women who are consulted to provide a solution when there is an impasse in the discussions." The youth can not be allowed to sit in *siwandha* together with those they refer to as uncles. "When alone, clan members sit in a circular position. The booze is usually placed at the center where each of the people is able to extend his drinking straw.

In times of mourning, depending on the number of in-laws, other areas are developed to become a yard. "During a combined visit, each in-law has his own *siwandha* or yard where he can rest with his people. It is the rest of the guests who are entertained within other areas of the homestead.

The participant prefers to meet with members of the family outside in the yard. It is usual that they meet every weekend on Sunday when they come from church. "During festivals, we prefer to stay outside. I have a daughter-in-law, who may not freely move inside my house. Being her mother-in-law's house, *Luo* belief requires that she refrain from going into most parts of the house.

There is nothing that one is hiding from the outside world. Most times when you do discuss matters in the open people begin to know that you have nothing that you want to hide from them. It is a good reputation when a man does all his things in the open. You may hear people say, 'so and so is a man of truth. His things are done in the open.'"

I remind him that one can be in the open but is still up to no good. Mbare smiles and talks first, "Everywhere people know the evil ones. When evil people do meet with one another, those around can straight away tell that they are up to no good." Obar comes in to comment, "evil people will be harsh to children who may happen to pass nearer to where they are. If you move around, you will learn that here in *Ka'sigunga* evils ones are well known. When you announce your intent to visit them, you will notice that people will raise their eyebrows.

"Again you would want to meet with people in a place that you are of the opinion that they will speak without any fear." The shrine is one such place where people are likely to feel intimidated. "Like women. It is not that we do not like them to be where we are. Their presence in a place can make most people feel uneasy. You find that when there is a woman around, some people begin to sound ludicrous."

"Women have to be respected." Mbare adds in, "Like some of us men, there are those ladies with certain aspects of weakness. Some tend to prefer idle talk and gossiping. Not only have you been advised not to mix too much with ladies, there are also certain categories of men who are often avoided by their male kind. Where you come from, have you not noticed that women also tend to look down on any man who has a habit of spending long hours in the company of his wife?"

To Obar, before setting out to do anything there is need for consultation with the wife. It is only the wife who can tell one the truth. "What we are against is for one to spend all the time in the company of women. I do consult all of my spouses before I embark on doing anything. You can not ignore your wives because they have a very important social and economic role to play in our homes.

Here in *Mbita* it is the women who are the main traders in fish. My wife takes off to the lakefront everyday and only return from the market after disposing of the fish that they purchased. Today's woman is not the same as those of our forefather's time."

To both men, there is absolutely nothing peculiar in sitting with guests within the yard when he has a house. "The house is only one of the places that I can be in the homestead," observes the participant.

There are different roles for the participant within the course of the day. It is usual that he oversees the milking of cows very early in the morning. "I have assigned to each woman a dairy cow. Though there is a common herdsboy in the homestead, each woman has to be careful that the man's meal is well taken care of.

"At the same time, I will be receiving any news of happenings from my children and anybody else. That is why I prefer sitting here in the verandah. If there is anyone who requires some assistance, this is the time to bring it to my attention. Maybe there is a woman that is in need of something, this is the time for her to come over. Again, this is the time that each lady will bring over her porridge."

Now that Obar is a councilor, there is a slight change in the itinerary. Unlike in the old times, he might decide to cycle to the market place to find out the news from there. It is in the morning when fishermen return from long night journeys on the lake. One also meets and talks with those coming to buy fish at this time. "Why I talk of change is because most people coming for spiritual consultations prefer to come around during the morning hours. I now only go to the market twice a week in the morning. I can not do the same thing daily. I prefer dealing with cultural cases early in the morning."

From the early hours of evening, the man again oversees the milking of cows. "It is also then that I make sure that the herdsman have lighted fire inside the cattle shed." He explains that this fire is to keep the cattle warm. Before going to sleep, the men will spend time besides this fire. Apart from general talks, there will be those that involves lessons that one can learn from, youth will raise questions about issues that they have encountered, and food will be brought for those present.

A lady emerges from one of the houses across the homestead to inform the participant about something. It is almost two in the afternoon. After some consultation, the lady moves back to her house. She soon returns with several bowls that she places on the floor. The third time she emerges from the house, she has two bowls of food and a young girl is following with a large bowl. Holding the bowl, the elderly lady offers us water to wash our hands.

We settle down to eat. We have been served cooked maize meal and delicious tilapia fish. "Is it normal for one to eat outside?" I inquire looking at Obar. "Eeh, for someone my age it is advisable. Though I have seen some of my peer groups who would like to hide inside the house while eating. I have several grandchildren who at times might not be with their parents. And, again, someone in the compound might be having a guest but there might not be enough food for both.

With food in the open, I can just shout, 'hey you people should come and eat,' those with visitors but lacking food take this as sign of invitation." The participant this call will have been directed at no one in particular. "Again for someone like myself, you are required to test each of the wife's cooking. You should have some people who can

provide company during eating. A lady can feel so hurt if you do not taste her cooking.

When we finish, the participant calls out for someone to take away the dishes. It is the small girl who comes and starts to clear away the utensils and fallen bones from the fish. Soon the old lady brings water to rinse our hands. She holds out the bowl for each of us apart from the two old men. On turning to the two men, she places the bowl in front of them.

After a rest, the participant suggests he show us the lakefront. It is there that the herdsboy, after moving around with the animals in search of food, takes them to drink water. It is usual for him to visit the lakefront during the afternoon. He has to reassure himself that the cattle have been taken care of. While there, the man also has a chance to study the cattle and to find out if all is in order with the animals.

All of us decide to move to the lakeside. On the way, we came across several people. From the reactions of those people that we meet, one can notice the level of recognition that is given to the participant. People stop on their way to offer the man some greetings, with some taking time off to explain some of the happenings in the recent past. They would first inquire whether the man had come across a certain piece of information.

At the lakeside, we find two boys who have just brought in the animals to drink. Some of the cattle are Obar's. After a few moments of exchanging words with one of the boys, Obar suggests to us to return home. "One has to always be on the lookout." Obar comments as we move away. "Some boys can be so cheeky. They will get involved in other matters and leave the animals to wander into someone else's crops. It is only in the evening when you will have some people coming to quarrel with you for what your cattle have done to their crops.

On the way back, Mbare asks to be excused. The man has some business that he needed to attend to. On returning to the home we find about four women sitting under one of the shadows within the homestead. The ladies seem to be sorting out something inside the big individual baskets that each of them is holding. On noticing my curiosity, participant provides the information that the content of the basket was dried fish.

Obar is a member of the Catholic religion. The man sees no conflict in the two beliefs that he does profess. To the participant, there is the god that Christians tells us about. There are other spirits that exist below this supreme god. The ancestors are the spirits that protect us from all the evils that may befall some of us.

The man starts his Sunday by going to church in the morning. "This is the day of family meetings. From church, the whole family will sit there" pointing at the tree. "I have already made it clear to my people that we must all get together and exchange ideas on Sunday. On that day each woman brings her food there to be tasted by all. We might have general discussions, and we also review issues that arose in the course of the week. We may end up just discussing current affairs." To Obar this day is

important for him since it is during the talks that he gets to learn about some of the social issues that are disturbing the family.

Since permanently settling in Kenya in 1986, the Sunday family meeting has almost become ritualistic. "When I have traveled to a far off place, it is to senior wife to bring all people together. My people know the importance that I attach to this gathering. Anybody who happens to miss on Sunday understand my feelings. They know that the old man will not like it."

Whenever he is in the home, the man prefers to be in the yard. "There might be certain issues that any of my son's might like to raise. When you are inside a house it might not be easily accessible to some of the people. There are houses that generally people don't think well of. There might be a feeling that a certain woman is not friendly to people. The house is nothing but the person who dwell it." He concludes with this saying.

I return to the Sunday family gatherings and inquire about the events on Sunday when there are people who are visiting the homestead. Depending on the type of visitor the matter is decided. "If we are of the general feeling that the visitor is a close family member, then we at times allow the meeting to take place." He adds that not all of the close family members are honest.

The different elements of the homestead are arranged as per the *Luo* people traditional social cultural belief. In the center is the yard that participants claim is for use by each person in the homestead. Obar explains about the two distinct places within the homestead. "Up here there are my wives houses. That is the fourth wife's house." He points at the second house to the right from where we are. Now after that you have those down there which are my son's houses.

"That is 'down' and this is 'up'." He emphatically states. The man explains that down incorporates only the houses that belong to his sons. After dark, it is advisable that the two people that live in the different sectors of the homestead do not make a habit of wondering into the other one's territory. "I might accidentally be within the surrounding when my son is sharing a dirty joke with a visiting girlfriend. When it comes to certain matters, I have to respect my age."

We go back to further find out about the structure of the homestead. "This one here is my senior wife's house. You can see that where we are seating is directly facing the main gate." The man has intentionally located the shrine within the lower sector of the homestead. "I had earlier on mentioned to you that this is what helps in protecting my homestead. The spirit that I have built this shrine for is my grandfather. My children are actually members of his generation. I can not bring him up here."

The porch serves for different occasions. It offers the man an area where at times he can spend his time. With visitors, at times they may decide to be out here. "When I am here, I can exchange information with some of the people passing out there. That is how one is able to learn about certain things. "All of these houses have a porch." He points at the houses in the upper sector of the homestead. "When visiting any of the houses, I can afford to be on the porch."

When the brother moved to come and settle next door, they followed the established format among the *Luo* people in arranging their homesteads. "Despite the homes being next to one another, we are in such a way that 'water' may not flow from his home to mine. Being younger than me, it is a taboo when his village slopes towards mine." He explains that it is a taboo for certain fluids like urine to flow from the younger brother to the house of the old person. That kind of a thing can bring curse to the younger brother's family. Because of the social belief, participant had earlier on advised the younger brother to be next to him on the slope, "so that when we urinate all flow down to the lake." Participant suggests a walk to where the brother is.

The fences are next to one another. "Though the homes are next to each other, I advised him to plant a fence," pointing out the two fences that ran barely a meter and a half besides each other. "I would have cheated him if we had settled on one fence between our homes so that one day I will be blamed for any ills that might happen in his home."

One other necessary element in the homestead is the cattle shed. Unlike the old times, the participant has located the shed next to the main house. It was in keeping with hygiene that the structure was located in this location. This is an individual decision. Unlike the old times, the outlook of the home becomes much better without the cattle shed in the middle. Apart from being symbolic of wealth, there is no requirement for the shed to be in the center.

To the participant, it is socially important to be keeping some cattle. "If you do not have cattle, what will your sons use for the bride price?" He put the question across to me. "Even with money, a *Luo* must at least take one animal to the in-law. One gives to the in-laws both male and female cows. The female cow gives birth, and you are indirectly telling the in-laws that just like the cow, you expect their daughter to give birth and produce milk for her child." To him it will be a surprise were he to enter into any home and miss to seeing any sign of cattle.

Talking about owning cattle he was to say, "during the mourning period in a village, depending on the age of the deceased, there are several needs to do with a cow. Apart from food, certain rites will demand a cow." Participant compares owning goats and sheep to that of being in possession of chicken. "When I am a friend who you hold in high esteem and I do visit, you are likely to slaughter a goat or sheep for my consumption. Again when an in-law that I have high respect for is visiting us, we might end up slaughtering a cow for food.

"There is something that I would like you to know about. Each homestead has the protective ancestral spirit. It is a requirement that the spirit is represented by a cock which is left to move freely in the home. The spirit will communicate through the cock. This cock is never slaughtered. This tells you that ancestors are alive. They communicate with us through dreams that can only be understood by the wise men. Only by listening to the ancestors are we able to live in peace and to have prosperity within a home.

To Obar there is a need for schools. "They should learn everything that can be taught. I can only appeal to people like you now not to abandon our social thinking." He looks at me. "What you see us believing in goes back to the time of our migration from Egypt. Our grandparents were not silly to have believed these things."

The sun is already setting and the herdsboy is bringing the cattle back. On noticing the animals the village there seems to be in commotion in most parts of the homestead. One lady who is standing on the threshold to what seems her house calls out for someone to remove the clothes from the drying ground. "The cows will eat those clothes," she shouts. The young man is slowly herding the cattle into the shaded area. Soon each animal is safely secured to the ground. When all is done Obar calls the boy to where we are sitting. General discussion ensues between the two after which the boy is dismissed. Participant seems to have forgotten something for he calls back the boy who has not moved very far. "Just start on milking the cows. I will be with you very soon," he informs him.

We then continue from where we were, "People like you who are still at school have their parents who are able to shield them from social cultural roles." He explains that we shall only know about the world when these people are gone from us. To the man, for any *Luo* person, in ones life, there are certain social cultural undertakings that are inevitable.

Irrespective of whether the parents are still alive, after one has established his home he automatically assume certain social roles. "Most of the educated *Luo* people lack sufficient knowledge on how to live with and also to behave towards others in society. Ignoring certain issues can bring about misfortunes that can afflict a family."

Participant goes on to explain "how a proper *Luo* person should establish a home. Using the younger brother as an example, he starts, "when he was migrating to this place from *Rusinga* Island, we had the uncles 'pointing' to him where to build." The act he explains means being lead to the intended ground by somebody society views in terms of being related to the migrant person as a 'father.'

After leading the to "son" where he should locate his homestead, the uncle or the paternal head returns to his homestead and returns to the new setting the following morning with other elders. Upon return food is placed in the central yard for the group and the rest of the men in the homestead. "By this act, the uncle or paternal head has set everybody including the in-laws free to enter and be served food in the new home." He warns that anybody going against such requirement may have a curse befalling him or her. In a warning voice he goes on to say that, "ones parents have to bless the home."

To the participant, those who blindly embrace Christianity are to blame for the ills that afflict them. Some of our people have ended up rejecting important requirements of our people's lifestyle. Just because they stay in town, some people tend to have an opinion that some of the social thoughts are not necessary for them.

"Though a practicing catholic, I have not abandoned the beliefs of my society. I will bring destruction to my home if I blindly embrace something. Let me tell you

something that I have seen happening here in our land." He offers to explain, "there is a strong belief among the *Luo* people that someone who dies outside the home can not have his body brought back to the village through the main gate.

"It is usual for a temporary gate to be made through the fence for the body to be brought inside the homestead. We call this entrance, '*mbunga*' roughly translated as '*the gate of death*'. Even Christians are afraid to go against this requirement. When bringing a dead back home, Christians likewise create an entrance through the fence. This is the same action as ours, but you find that the Christians call this '*the gate to heaven*'. They condemn our action as being secular." The man smiles at this.

I have noticed the human traffic movement to the cattle shed. Youths carrying jars trek to bring milk to the houses. When the old man sees my interest he comments, "each house has its share of milk. The herdsboy understands which cow belongs where." Even without the man's presence, the boy will carry out the duties properly.

The herdsboy is from one of the neighboring homes. He has been assisting Obar with the cows now for the past three years. For the work that is done, the boy is paid a monthly salary. After some time, the boy returns to inform the participant of his having finished with the role. He is excused to go home. Being nearly dark, we also ask the participant to allow us to continue with the discussion the following day. In the end, we agree to meet after two days.

When we arrive back at the appointed time, we find that the participant has gone to market. He had left word for us to wait for him. Chairs were brought out for us from the senior wife's house. At first apart from the little boy who offered us the chairs, the homestead appeared to have been deserted. But soon, there are some people who come over to exchange words of greetings with us.

Participant's son who is visiting from his workplace emerges from one of the huts and comes to join us. We get into general discussion. The man too is an accountant. He claims to have been influenced by the father in his decision to be an accountant. Soon a lady emerges from one of the houses to offer us two calabashes with porridge inside. The old man arrived on his bicycle before we finish with our drink. The man wonders where we had left our guide who is not with us.

He had gone to the county hall to deliver something that he had kept here at home. The man was in charge of the social service committee within the council. There was a letter that had been written by a youth group to the ministry of culture and social services in Nairobi, through his office. He had gone to get the county chairman's approval of the document so that he could forward it. "I knew I had an appointment with you people today. I also told my chairman about this meeting. He is also interested and hopes that something positive comes out of the results. We are searching for projects that can assist our people here.

We return to the question of death. On returning a body to the ancestral home, I am assured that only the living enter a homestead through the main gate. Those who die outside the home are considered to have abandoned the place. They are considered as being in terms of a stranger to the homestead. If someone wishes to be considered as

being part of the homestead, then one should go back to die there. After bringing the body inside, the temporary gate position is sealed to become a part of the main enclosure.

Apart from post-adolescence ladies, those people still residing within the parental homes are buried near the threshold of the entrance to their parent's house. For the former group without any matrimonial homes, burial is outside the homestead. Married ladies are buried next to their marital house.

The necessary development during a funeral is its natural tendency to bring the different relatives together. There is a need to assist with funeral arrangements. Certain rites call for participation by other relatives. "When a family loses one of the parents, there should be an auntie to shave the children after a certain number of days has passed by." He explains the whole thing as being symbolical.

"Four days after the burial, the children and any of the surviving parents are made to sit in front of their house. Starting with the older person, somebody walks across shaving each person in turn. Depending on the earlier agreement, the least she may have to do is remove traces of hair from the back of each person's head."

In the first four days of the mourning period, both the relatives and friends are required to spend the nights in the open next to the burial ground. "In the days when mourners are out in the open, all the doors in the homestead are required to be left partly open. For a female we spend three days." This is viewed as an important way of keeping the deceased company before the spirit finally leaves the body. "We enact these needs in order for a family to come up in a proper manner. And even for those in the home, this is a blessing."

Participant identifies another important rite for the dead as the period of memory. "This is a period of celebration and joy." It is usual for a family to first organize themselves before calling back the relatives and friends to a final farewell for the deceased person. The length of period for which people has to be called back is never fixed. It may be between one and many years.

"If the deceased had in-laws, then word by invitation is sent to all of them. Apart from these, the maternal uncles have to attend. Uncles are important in that they are expected to be the first to start doing anything. No guest can enter the homestead before the maternal uncles do. Likewise, in the morning, they are expected to leave the homestead for their places before anybody else. That is why I say that they are very important.

Since time immemorial, in times of crisis, people are not formally invited to attend and assist. Through word of mouth, both relatives and friends are supposed to come along. It is usual that for those who do not attend to others, things do not augur well when it comes to their turn. To Obar it is even unheard of for kin members not to support their own in times of crisis. "From an earlier age, it is required that the parents get their children to know the kinship people in the line. Like now, if any of my relatives call in and we are not in, the children know them. They will welcome them and make them wait for us."

When any of Obar's children gets into some form of mischief he usually summons the rest of the family to offer the culprit advice. "Recently one of my children was becoming very rowdy. What I did was to invite my brother to assist. I also wrote to my son who is in Uganda to come along. We came together and advised the young man. I have seen that things seem to be fine.

Obar was born in 1930 and is the elder out of the two surviving brothers. The man is the councilor of *Gembe* ward, one of the rural domains of *Mbita* county council. The man chairs different committees. Education, health and social services and environment are under him.

At this point we informed the participant of having arrived at the end of our discussion. He would like to know whether we had gotten all of the information that we had wanted. We assure him of our success and he requests us to play back the tape so that he can listen to some of the things that he had said. I agree to run some parts of the recorded interview for him.

The man prevails upon us to wait for the midday meal. One of the ladies had remained home when the rest went to the lakeside to wait for the fishermen. Not wanting to offend our host, we agreed to wait for the meal. The talks become general. It the son who would like to know what we intend to do with the results after the study. The man is carefully listening. He is the elder in the home, and has to often travel back from Uganda to assist the old man with some of the decisions.

Someone is being summoned from one of the houses in the lower sector of the homestead. When nothing is happening, the man that we are with stands up to shout across the home. When a young man emerges from one of the houses, he is informed of the earlier on call. The boy goes behind one of the houses. After a while he comes back to enter the house and emerge with a bowl and a jug of water. These he comes with and places where we are sitting. Another young man emerges from behind the house with a bowl of cooked maize meal flour and similar bowl of fish. The first boy offers us water for rinsing our hands. Two more boys from the hut where the first one had come from also come to join our company. All of us including the boys settle down to eat. When the meal is finished, we are again offered water. The boys jointly clear the dishes from where we are.

After the meal we spend a few minutes in the home before requesting permission to be allowed to leave. The old man shouts across the home to inform someone of our departure. It is the lady who had earlier on offered us porridge who emerges from behind the house where food had earlier on been brought out from. She is the one remaining in the home to take care of the old man. The rest of the people will soon be home from the market where they take the fish. We exchange a few words with her before finally bidding everyone farewell.

Appendix 2b.

Siambe Ongira, Ugenya, Siaya district (R13).

I was introduced to the case by a neighbor of the participant. "This man should be an encyclopaedia of the social cultural happenings. Apart from his rural grounding, he has lived and worked in Tanzania. So he would be able to give you a relatively balanced view of some of the lifestyle and beliefs in the *Luo* community." Already, prior arrangements had been made with the man that we were going to meet with.

Ugenya is within *Siaya* district in a place that is about 120 kilometers from *Kisumu*. There are several rural urban centers in *Ugenya*. The study area is within what is commonly referred to as *Central Nyanza*. The study district is bordered both to the north and north west by the different *Luhya* communities. Most immediate ones are the *Abasamia* and *Abawanga*. Within *Ugenya* there are parts where it is hard differentiating between the different people. There has been much inter-marriage between the communities and that has helped to bring them closer.

The homestead that we arrive at is large enough to accommodate several clusters of houses. The entrance to the home is marked by about four meter wide gate. The entrance is defined by growth that has been planted at the edges. There are a total of eighteen detached houses in the home. Groups of houses define courts. Different courts are linked together through walkways with clear marks on the walking places left over on the ground. In each court, there is a tree that seems to define the resting-place. There is an obvious footpath that seems to divide the home into two. The entire home has been defined with well-grown trees that provide shade along the perimeter.

One feature that is found next to the gate is a fresh burial ground. The guide explains this as the place where the intended host's daughter has been buried. He explains that since the lady was not yet married, there is a communal belief that she is buried outside the home. It was feared that going against such an act could bring a bad spell to the home where such a lady has been buried. If they had a committed boyfriend, then he may request to be given the body. He further explains that the act is so since the community has a belief that women belong to their matrimonial homes.

Our guide is familiar with those in the home. They are able to exchange news about the just concluded general elections with some of the people that we come across. The first person that we come across is a woman who is breast feeding a small child. She exchanges few words with our guide. Ahead of us, I notice a man who is about to enter the next house. Upon noticing that we are heading towards his direction, the man stops to wait for us.

Other activities are happening in the homestead. We stop to talk to two boys who are sweeping the cow dung together in the enclosed cattle shed. Plant leaves have been bunched together to provide a broom. Subject calls out greeting to us as we near him. Besides one of the houses, near where he is, two ladies are involved in some discussion. They casually call out greetings to us. Subject stretches out his hand when we get near. There is a brief exchange on current affairs between him and our guide. After a short while, he informs my guide, "lead him into the 'big house'." He uses the

term of *maduong* to refer to the house where I am to be taken to. He promises to join us. The structure is what in local terms is referred to as a semi-permanent house. The adobe walls have been plastered and corrugated iron sheets have been used for the roofing.

My guide leads us into the next house that is to the left of the one that we are in front of. When we knock a voice from inside calls out for us to enter. Two elderly ladies are inside the house. Our guide is familiar with the two ladies. One of the ladies gets up and moves to take up a new position next to the other lady across the room. We are seated directly opposite the ladies. From our positions we are directly facing the door that leads into the inner room. There is some exchange with the ladies before the old man walks into the room. One of the ladies indicates to us where to sit. As we sit down, the old lady who was sitting near where we are about to sit gets up to go to the other side. The two ladies are now seated on the same side that is next to the door that leads into the inner room.

After a few moments, the guide introduces us, "these people have been sent to you by my brother." He appears thrilled that the man who has sent us is back home from Nairobi. He dwells on the virtues of the man who had sent us here. "He is one of us," he goes on, "If he has sent you, I should be able to give you whatever information you need. He had already sent a message around for me to expect you people, as such I have been waiting for you people. Else by now I would be in the sugar plantation down there." I learn that the man has a sugar farm. The farm runs along the narrow stream that is "a walking distance from his home."

I introduce both the assistant and myself. At the same time, I decide to provide a rough outline of our mission. When introducing myself, I identify for him where I am from in the *Luo* community. The man introduces himself as Siambe Ongira of *Ugenya Segga*. One of the ladies is the owner of the house "the other one is your sister. She is the daughter of Akumu Okello of *Ka'Ruoth* the same place that you come from." revoking the name of my clan which I had earlier on referred to in the introduction. "And just imagine," the lady exclaims looking at the man, "I had thought that they may be people that because of social taboo, I may not sit closer to. But you are my brothers," she says feigning surprise.

He has been residing in this place since 1966. Prior to this, he had been working in Tanzania, a neighboring country to Kenya. "If you have been sent by Professor Syagga, I will get you to know all that I have knowledge about and that you would like to know about. We have been longing to send him to parliament but all along he has refused our request. As you know, there are so many educated people here in Ugenya, but they have no time for us. As for Professor, we do sit down and discuss issues about our development."

"I have also been writing a book about my life," he looks at me cheekily. "Writing the text has taken up my lifetime. That book is here in my head. I will discuss my book when you are ready to write one for the university. You can find many people of my age without any book to write. It is because of such knowledge that you have been sent over here by Professor."

The man is among a selected group of elders in the whole of Ugenya who assists the administration with land adjudication. When there is an impasse on a particular belief and or behavior, and precedence or way out is needed, people turn to some of us for advice."

When the lady of the house moves to the inner room, the one who had been introduced as my sister remains behind. She intervenes to find out my parental background. She appears not to be familiar with my parents but knows the name of my great grandfather. "I am also married in this homestead. This one here is my brother-in-law. My home is the next one," pointing across the wall. "My husband has already passed away. He is now the person that looks after us," pointing at the main participant with the mouth. The lady has a co-wife who was also left behind.

We come to learn that the lady speaking to us used to be of different size than she is at the moment. Since the main participant's elder brother passed away the previous year, the woman has become small in size. Main participant suggests that we move outside and sit at the side of the house.

We move outside and sit next to the house but on the right hand side besides the house. Outside, the man takes time and places his seat a slight distance from where mine was. A young girl brings out a table from the next house. The table is placed between us. The old lady who had been asked to come along, sits on the ground at a slight distance from both of us. For a while, silence prevails.

According to the main participant, the pattern of arrangement that we were later on to witness between the different kinship people homes has been instructed by the *Luo* community beliefs. Similarly, the same kind of forces has continued to instruct element arrangements in his home. Taking my sketchpad, he illustrates the arrangement of home between him and the other two brothers. His home is to the left of Beya, an elder brother, while Andrea who is younger to the main participant has his place to the left.

Likewise, the senior house in the young brother's home is not in the same axis as that of the main participant. When I point to their homes being in a straight line contrary to *Luo* beliefs, the man denies this. He identifies the position of his elder wife's house and it is not in the same axis with that of Beya's elder wife's house, "I had to locate it slightly lower in the landscape. Even if I had intended to locate my house in line with Beya's, the elders would not have allowed me to." When asked he explains the general communal belief that such an arrangement implies confronting one another, "people will interpret such an act to imply chest thumping to the elder, a forbidden act between brothers."

The main participant also makes use of the relationship between his elder son's home and his to further explain the pattern of settlement between the filial members. The son has started his home immediately to the right of the main gate, "this is as required by the *Luo* community beliefs." He explains that he has been asking his second son, who happens to be from the second wife, to start his home. This next boy will settle immediately to the left of the gate.

The main participant has a son who is married to two wives and is still living in this home. He asks me to look towards the gate on the right. When he feels that I am not seeing what he is trying to show me, he gets up to walk me to the cluster of houses that is to the right as one walks into the home. There is a lady kneeling outside one of the houses forming the cluster. She is removing dried fibres from the dried cassava that she has spread on a reed mat. The lady gets up to welcome us. The main participant speaks to the lady. Our mission in the home is briefly explained to her. We are being taken around the home. This is one of main participant's daughter's-in-law. The second wife stay with the husband who is based in *Mombasa*, one of the coastal towns of Kenya.

"These are my son's houses," pointing across, "you can see that he has two houses. One is for each of the wives. He can not face the gate or cross to build on the other side of the home. This is his side, and he can only re-organize the houses. When he does start his own homestead, then he will let the senior wife's house face the main gate," pointing at the house that faces the central yard, "this will then face the main gate. But here in my home he can not do that." Between the houses, there is a barren ground. The in-between spaces appear to be areas for joint use by the residents. Clear marked footpaths lead from each of the three houses to the place.

Much as the polygamous son who is still in the parental home organizes his houses within a small space, there is an order that is followed while locating the different houses. Facing the middle of the central yard, main participant identifies his right as the place where the senior wife's house will be located. The next lady is located onto the left side. Main participant inquires whether or not I have witnessed what he has been saying about the format followed when filial members build near one another. I answer in the affirmative and he reckons that understanding this is very necessary.

In the main participant's home, an axis runs from the gate and divides the home into two. The house where we have been in and which he explains as the one that belongs to the senior wife is the only one that directly faces the main gate. Other houses that he claims to belong to the other three wives radiate from this one. They are on either side of the axis. There is a hierarchy of spatial arrangement that the children follow when arranging their houses. Starting from the gate, there is the young person, with the most senior one being near the middle of the home.

The last son of the junior wife is the one with the house next to the gate, "he is the junior in the home." Getting up, he asks whether I am able to see that there is the unbuilt space that runs across the home, but parallel to the main gate. He points at the house that is to the right of where we were and indicates that as for his elder most son. "None of them can build on this 'upper sector' of the home," he explains. He inquires whether I would like to know the reason behind that, and I answer in the affirmative. "This is the line that divides the home into the zone for adult people and the other for the young people. The zone for the young people is referred to as *karangach* or *kasimba*, while the other one is *kaduol*. Now, I can not move into that side," indicating where he has demarcated as the youth side.

From the explanation, the dividing axis seems to be a matter of instinct for everyone. To the main participant it goes without saying that being a *Luo*, one should be able to

clearly identify the axis. He goes on to explain the meaning of *simba*, a house for the unmarried youth, while *duol* or *abila* is the house built by an elder for his rest. "I can not just freely move towards the direction of *simba* in the evening unannounced. And even for my sons, "It is required of them not to just wonder into this part we are in, especially during the evenings. When I am to move there, I will normally sound a warning, like, I may cough. Then they know that the old man is coming. Anybody who was playing around with his wife in the open has to appear decent. They know that the 'old man is coming'" It is a social requirement that he should always sound a warning before venturing into the 'lower sector,' of the home. "That is also when you command respect from your children. It is rare that in the evening you will find an old man moving out through the main gate. Most instances, there is the gate that is behind and which is only for the use of those from the home."

He explains the home as having two gates. There might be more secret gates but only known to particular people. Usually some of the youths would have created a gate behind their house. This is the gate that the youths used to let themselves back into the home whenever they arrive back late.

There is the main gate that is at the front. All of the visitors are expected to come into the home through this main entrance. A subsidiary gate is at the back. The back gate affords residents and especially the old people, opportunity to sneak into and out of the homestead unnoticed. The two gates exist so that in the evening, the different age groups can have the opportunity to move in and out of the home without getting into one another's privacy.

Location of the main entrance is decided by the topography of the land. It was customary that the main gate should face the stream or source of water. "By facing the sloping side, water will flow from the 'upper sector' to what is considered the 'lower sector' of the homestead. It is a requirement that the unclean water should flow from the section of the homestead where the elders have their houses to that where the young people are." Main participant points at the stream from his home. There is sugar cane at a slight distance that the man informs us marks the location of the stream.

The main gate is clearly defined, "it is the gate that shows the strength of the home. Each homestead has a single gate that is primary and is used during all the official functions. This is the entrance that is linked by a direct axis to the senior wife's house. It is the one that announces to those visiting the home who the owner is." He explains that the second gate is not one as per se, rather, it is a small entrance for the residents to sneak into and out of the home. Subsidiary gates have their origins in the old days when the main gate would be locked after dark.

There is a third gate that he refers to as *mbunga*. "Whenever someone who has died outside the homestead is being brought back, a gate is made through the fence." It is the old lady who comes in to contribute "it is considered that the person has deserted the homestead. If he did not then he should have come back to die in the homestead. Since the departed spirit is considered to be angry, the body is sneaked into the homestead. If the body is brought in through the normal entrance, the spirit may

someday haunt those people in the homestead. And even after the body has entered the home, a hen is still sacrificed to appease it."

The main participant comes in when the old lady stops. Initially there is no *a priori* thought towards such a gate during the setting out of the homestead. Rather, when there is a need, people will decide where such an entrance should be created. After the rite, the place is usually sealed and/ or planted with growth. The two confirm this as an act that is still widespread among the members of the *Luo* community. "Even those who are brought from Nairobi, have seen *mbunga* being made for their bodies to enter the homestead," the main participant remarks.

When in the house, corpses are laid on state in the 'upper sector' of the house. It is forbidden for bodies to be taken to the 'lower sector', even when it is the house owner. "In death one is considered to have abandoned the house. One is laid in the place visitors occupy when they enter the house.

When asked why the center is left open, he sees this as an important question. "Our community treasures cattle. You can see the different stumps in that enclosed space. Let us go nearer so that you can see them," he suggests and we get up to move towards the clearly marked cow shed. Tree branch stumps have been driven into the ground at several points. He points these out as the places where the cows are tethered. He explains that he has several cows that are already out grazing. The man has recently felled down part of the sugar cane as such he can afford to let the cows in that section of the farm.

A young man has been employed to help with herding the cattle. Participant spends most of his time tending the sugar cane farm. As a *Luo* person he has to keep some cows. He claims that the community attaches a lot of importance to cattle rearing. "How will I enact some of the social rites if I do not have even a single animal here?" he asks. "A cow has so many uses. An old man such as myself, if I do pass away it is the beef from the slaughtered cow that will be cooked for mourners. And even for my in-laws, it is this that they will eat."

A cereal barn is found next to some of the houses. Each woman has her own barn. A barn was an economic symbol for a woman. It showed that one was able to feed the family. The barn was oriented to face the owner's entrance door. This was a source of pride for the woman. It demonstrated that one was hard working and was able to feed the family.

As long as one was still living in the parental home, the person was buried in front of the mother's home. Boys are buried to the right hand side next to the threshold as one went into the house. Pre-adolescence girls are buried to the left. I inquire of the fresh grave that one witnessed as you walk into this home. That was his daughter who used to stay with one of her brothers in Nairobi. Since she was already an adult though not yet married, she had to be buried outside the home. "Such bodies can end up bringing disaster to the family when buried inside the home. The spirit is angry that by not being able to get a husband, society has rejected them. They would rather that they are kept outside of the home forever." Heritage is recited as the reason behind holding on to some of these beliefs.

The main participant talks of the new burial place in most homes. People now do bury their relatives behind the house. Similar traditional format of placing bodies is adhered to in the new development. "From the house, for a male person, those carrying the body turn to the right. For the female, they turn along the left. Males are buried in the side that he was taken with to the back and similar rule applies to the females." He explains the existence of a perpendicular axis that runs from the door along to the back of the house. Those from the same house are buried on either side of the axis.

It is the woman who exclaims, "when I do go, I would not like to be 'thrown' behind the house. Am I an animal? Or are people so fed up with me? As for myself, I should be buried in front of the house." She -promise to show us where she has buried her husband, "infront of the house where I reside. When I walk out of the house, I see the grave and I know, 'there is son of Ongira.' How can I just throw him like that?"

One other issue with burial is the requirement for the body to be placed in the ground with the feet facing the direction of the gate. To the main participant, "it is the location of the stream or the water source that pre-determines the burial direction. By orientating the body this way, the spirit stays in the home to protect the people. When the head faces towards the gate, the spirit will wander outside the home and return to haunt those living in the homestead.

As long as one has not yet built his own compound, he is buried next to the mother's house. "When he migrates to start his own place, then he becomes the 'president' of his home, and can now be buried next to his house."

When the son-in-law's team come to mourn someone in the home, they are welcomed in the yard, or *siwandha*, that is located behind the 'main house.' When they reach the house that I am buried next to, they follow the opposite direction to reach the back. To reach the positions where they are to sit at the back, in-laws take the opposite side from where I am buried. Similarly, during the burial of any of my wives, there is an established trend that is followed"

When coming to mourn, a strict order is followed on where the in-laws are to sit in the yard. "They sit opposite to where one is buried." He repeats the perpendicular axis from the door to the back and that divides the back yard into two. The man inquires whether the explanation is clear. "I would like you to be clear on this. It is a very important requirement.

One should not view any of his parents-in-law in a naked posture." He explains that when dead and even while the burial ground is still fresh, the deceased person is considered to be in a naked state. Despite the corpse being dressed up for burial, both the people insist that the community still believe that one is naked. This belief is a development from the old times. Then, some of the dead people were laid in state while wrapped in animal skin for the burial. Mainly the elders and those people that the community chose to show honors were the ones that were wrapped in fresh ox skin when being buried.

On entering through the gate, mourners are required to directly approach the victim's house. When one is an in-law, he will detour and pass on the opposite side to the burial ground. The case only applies to those people that one relates to and refers to in terms of being an in-law. Both participant and the spouse may freely relate to the peer generations from the other side. Whenever he does visit his daughter's marital home, he moves freely in the home, "it is only my daughter's house that I should not enter inside."

The main participant gives an example of the dual relationships between him and the lady who is participating with him in the exercise. "If I look at her from *Kasiger*," the lady's maternal home, "she is my 'sister.' But when I look at her from her marital position, then she is my sister-in-law." With reference to the later relationship, there are no requirements that forbid our mixing. The man's maternal home is also in *Kasiger*. He repeats the earlier statement to the extent that both the in-law's parents can move freely whenever they do pay his family a call. The same applies to him when he goes for a visit.

"And there is something here," the lady joins in, "when he is dead, the daughter's husband should not come into the home before we have put the body into the grave and covered it with soil. You just camp outside until we have covered him with soil. There will be messengers who will be coming out and thus briefing your team on what is taking place inside the home."

"And also," the main participant picks up, "if you are my-in-law and you have come to see me when I am sick there are two requirements. If it is judged that I am still in a good state, then you are allowed into this home. If I am in a critical state and it appears that I may go at any time, then you will be required to stop outside of the main gate. A messenger will from time to time be sent over to brief you about my condition. Even if I pass away while you are at the gate, you should not enter into the compound. After you have confirmed the news you go away to inform your people. It is then that you will return with other mourners." When one returns, he should not move near the burial ground. "You should have utmost respect for the in-law's burial place. It is pointed to you at a distance from where you are seated.

The main participant explains that when in a critical situation, even those people that are considered to be his daughter's-in-law are required not to reach where he is. It only those people who are considered by the community to be my wives social peers that will be allowed to nurse and to take care of me.

"Even if you were to enter my house. Did you see the side that you sat in?" referring to when we called into the first wife's house, "that is your side." I remember that as we entered the lady of the house had indicated to us where to take our positions opposite the side with the door that leads to the inner room. "You should not sit on the side where I sleep." He refers to what he calls his side as, *kamwalo*. But I do remind him that I am not married in his house so why the fuss.

As a male, I have the potential of someday marrying one of his daughters. Also he has married daughters, I might be related to one of the husbands in some way that we do not realize at the moment. To cover any eventuality, it is usually expected that a

person treat all men that he is not related to through blood as potential in-laws. The idea is motivated by the simple reason of being capable of meeting one in a state that may be considered as being indecent.

He explains the yard behind the main house as being the place for receiving the in-laws when they come to mourn. "When arriving to mourn, people are not expected to enter into any house, rather, positions are reserved on the outside for each of the distinguished group of people. For each of the in-laws there is a particular place in the home to be in. Both food and drinks are served in the yard where people are seated. And it is worse for the in-laws. If you are married to my daughter and you arrive to mourn me, even if it is raining heavily you are confined to the yard. It will rain on you until it stops. After that, you will go away in that form."

Ordinarily there are two types of visit that an in-law can pay to the home. When there is a quarrel and a possibility of separation between the couple, the son in law should not enter into the mother-in-law's house. "He comes and asks to be given a seat near the barn. It is in that place that he will be required to state his message. If the girl's people succeed in convincing one to reverse his decision and to forgive, the person goes ahead and enters the house.

Remaining outside implies that the relationship is not all right. It used to be that when you visit the girl's home and you have quarreled, then you remained outside the main gate. The girl's uncles were summoned and they come outside to try and convince one to otherwise enter the homestead. It is by refusing to enter the homestead that one gets the people to learn that all was not well in their marriage. It is usual that after quarreling with the wife one happens to visit her maternal home you should go inside.

The main participant claims that as per the social requirements, complete divorce is not easy among the *Luo* people. "There will be a day when the children require a rite that needs the participation of either the mother and or father. Have you not seen cases when grown up sons bring back their mother to the marital home?" an arrangement of this kind occurs since the *Luo* community is a paternalistic one. The child will always belong to the father's home.

"There is the informal calling where one would like to see the parents-in-law. Ordinarily such visitors are first welcomed into the house. It is then that the host will decide whether he needs a wider circle of family people to be with the guest. Though ordinary, the nature of calling may dictate the location of entertainment. The topic of discussion may warrant participation from other kinship people. It may also be that the bride's mother intends to show off her in-law." Socially, the lady is not expected to freely mix with the visitors. In-laws bodily movement should be controlled while he is within the house. Eyes should not wander all over the place. One may see something that is considered as being taboo.

It is expected that when kinship people are to meet with an in-law, seating arrangements should be in the outside. The different people with social reservation towards one another may then stay at a distance. Different people that are expected to maintain a particular level of status quo with one another have a chance to fulfill this goal in a place that is more open. The requirement applies mainly between the in-law

and the uncles. He adds that even when the mother in law is with the son-in-law in the same room she will have to keep a distance between them. "It is required that they should not sit opposite one another.

"It is because of the need for maximum respect between the two parties that uncles are brought in to provide company. During the old days, mother-in-laws could not sit where the son-in-law was." It is the old lady who explains what happens when the two meet on the way.

"Up to now, even with you educated people," looking at me, "there is no way in which a mother-in-law can directly encounter her son-in-law within a walkway. When they are going to meet, the mother-in-law will stop in her path and wait until such a time that the son-in-law has passed by." She demonstrates how one faces away from the path, "it is after the man has passed that she goes on in with her journey." It is considered a contemptuous act when the son-in-law's penis directly points at his wife's mother. Again you should not meet eyeball to eyeball with her. "It is the mother-in-law who one has utmost respect for." She adds that for a real *Luo* woman, one should not directly face his son-in-law when they are talking. While talking, one turns to face either to the left or the right direction.

I shift the talk to inquire from the main participant as to why his grandson has built next to his house. The man explains that his grandchildren are his equals, "I have no reservation towards my grandchildren. They play and call one another names with my wives. That is why you can see that they have built near my house. It is their children who I must control the manner that I relate with." The lady adds how it is the grandmother's role to educate their grandchildren on sexual roles, and how to relate to their male friends.

The main participant comes in to explain how his post-adolescence son can not enter into the mother's house. "When he enters the house, he stands on the same side that you sat in when you went into that house. When there is something that he should get from the house and it is on the side where the parent's sleeping place is in, then he can not venture to get it. The expected thing to do will be for one to look around the home for a young person who he can then send over to get the thing. The same requirement applies both to the post-adolescence daughters and likewise the daughter's-in-law.

At this point, a young lady brings water in a bowl to where we are. The main participant asks the girl in a suggestive voice as to whether food is ready. The girl affirms this and returns to the house where she came from. In no time she returns with cooked *ugali*, or maize meal. An elderly lady who we had earlier on met with closely follows her with a bowl of stewed tilapia fish. After welcoming us to the food, she turns to whisper to the other lady to follow her back to the house.

A young man who appears to be bedridden from some disease comes out to join us for meals. He is with someone else. He seems to have been informed by the lady who had at first brought in water. After putting the maize meal bowl down, the lady went towards the house where the pair later on came out from. We all settled down to our food. Main participant is interested in finding out how the sick boy is feeling. He introduces us to the boy and the colleague who happens to be the boy's cousin.

I inquire why the old lady who had been with us all the time had to move away when it came to eating. "Women and men are required to eat separately." When I inquire the reason, he claims that to be the way that it has been. Talk shifts to the coming general elections. One of main participant's son is vying for the local councilor's post. He would like me to tell him whether the man was in the right party. He was on the ruling party's ticket. We finish food and main participant's nephew holds the bowl for us to rinse our hands. It is the main participant who calls out without referring to anybody for the removal of the utensils. The girl who had come in the first time arrives to remove the things.

When we have settled, the old lady comes back to join us. She expresses her hope that we should give her some money at the end of the session, "I have put all aside for this. I did not even attend to my garden." I re-assure her that things will be fine. Main participant scolds her in a friendly tone for asking the visitors for money. "These are our children. What they are writing about will someday help your grandchildren." She calms him down with the words; "I was merely testing them."

I decide to find out the role of women during mourning. Main participant turns to the lady, "that is your side." The lady inquires whether I am asking about the bereaved or the rest of women. I ask her to explain what happens to the former during mourning. She informs us that while mourning is going on it is required for the wife to remain indoors. "She rarely ventures outside her house. It is forbidden of her to meet with the in-law." This is a requirement that dates to the old days when widows stripped themselves naked during the burial of the spouse. Though people no longer strip, the habit has remained so. She adds that even though women no longer strip, it is usually feared that while being emotional, some women may expose their body in a manner that should not be witnessed by an in-law. It is the rest of women in the kinship that are free to move about.

Upon death, the main participant informs us that the most important people who have to be informed at first are his maternal uncles. "Nobody should eat during my mourning unless my maternal uncles have arrived and tested the first food that has been prepared for those attending the ceremony.

During any mourning, there are traditional places that are reserved for recognized groups of visitors. People sit in the yard behind the main house. Without even being guided, each group understands where they are supposed to sit both in relation to the rest of groups and also with respect to the homestead. Likewise, each social group understands before hand what is expected of them in terms of fulfilling a rite. The central yard is left for wailing. Also, the central yard is for receiving and guiding people to their sitting places.

During the entire mourning period another important sitting that the main participant is able to identify is the place where kinship elders are seated. "This is a very important group. They are not invited. It is a social commitment, so that when my 'brother' passes away," referring to the cousin, "I know that the bereaved family needs to be guided on how to behave. So we will all meet there. Whenever there is an

impasse on the way of approaching a rite, it will be brought in front of us. And we can tell them, 'go and do this and that.'"

On being pursued, what will happen if at some point all members of the council have gone back to their homes. According to the old lady, that is something that can not occur as, "the elders will always leave one of them behind. Something may happen, and your maternal uncles may suggest that you first get the opinion of your paternal elders. "Someone has always to be there throughout the mourning period." The elders will be in the yard behind the main house but in a place that is slightly detached from the rest of the people.

A certain period after the mourning, I am informed of relatives coming together in a ceremony that is referred to as 'memorial rite.' "There has to be a memorial rite for each person who is past adolescence age. "Unlike the current period when such ceremonies last only two days," the old lady reminisces, "when I was growing up, we celebrated for a week. People traveled from afar to attend the last rite, and so such an event could not be rushed. It was not like nowadays when one can use a car to quickly reach a place.

During each evening, there will be traditional singers and/ or musical poets with their eight stringed guitar instrument to entertain the visitors. Festivities were held in the open. A disagreement arises between the two. Main participant talks of remembrances that lasted for such a long period being held only for rulers and very elderly people. In his view for the rest, an event that lasted two days sufficed.

The man views the Christian faith as being bent on condemning some of the good social behaviors. In his view, there are some changes that have been brought about by religion. The man is non-committal on whether these have benefited the community. While not condemning Christianity, he carefully sounds a warning to the extent that while it is an individual choice, one has to be careful on what to embrace, "certain behaviors guide family to greater prosperity. There are certain requirements that when you do not enact, then one is condemning his descendants." When pressed further, he accepts Christianity as having brought some positive changes, and adds, "I am not claiming that everything that we are taught is wrong. We can not embrace everything that they tell us. There are some cultural deeds that being a true son of *Luo* community, one has to enact."

In his view, traditional societies practiced more democracy than is currently being witnessed. "If I talk of our community, during any of the events, there is a role for each of the social grouping. Members of each team including, the aunts, cousins, fathers, women and every other person understood his or her role during an event. Nowadays, whenever there is a need for assistance, roles are not properly defined.

Both the main participant and the lady views in-law as a very distinguished person. He views those people that can be referred to as 'brother' in a similar manner to the in-laws. "When your in-law is visiting, they should be let to know that there is perpetual peace between the people in the home. In the course of the visit, everybody is expected to show co-operation. Irrespective of any friction that may be there, everybody in the homestead will come along to help welcome the visitor."

It is required of one to first inform the parents about an intended marriage partner before fully getting committed to the relationship. It is normal for the parents to first check out the intended partner's background and to advise their progeny about the best course of action. Parents will approach relatives and especially the aunts who are within the vicinity where the partner is from. Close friends are also sought out to provide any information.

"Marriage ties two families together, it is advisable to know the character of the family that you are joining with. Here in *Luo* land, there are some families who are considered as being wicked." He explains that such people are involved in activities that are viewed as diabolical by the community at large. The man casually asks whether I have not seen those type of people in *Alego* where I am from. I answer in the affirmative and the man does not respond.

It is the bridegroom's father who will announce the proposal to the girl's parents. After this the first visit is arranged between the families. It is after the first move that the father avails a cow for the son to take to the in-law. "The act of giving the first animal symbolizes acceptance of the partnership. Through this, the bride's parents are able to learn that the other family has accepted the marriage.

When the father hands the son the symbolical cow that marks parental acceptance of the marriage, the team sets out for the visit without entering again any of the houses within the homestead." Thinking that I have not understood the explanation well, the old lady comes in to explain. "It is required that upon receiving the dowry animal from the father, the team should start their journey to the bride's home without entering any house in their home. There is free mixing between the parent-in-law, "between the parents, there is no rule that governs their sitting when they visit each other."

When a man goes to propose, one is welcomed to the mother-in-law's house. Senior uncles from both the sides are required to be the ones that will discuss a marriage. Though the bride's father will be there, he should not utter a word, "less he offends the son-in-law. Offence from the uncle will be lightly taken." When the visiting team announces their intent, the bride's side will summon the girl into the room. It is usual that the girl confirms the identity of the bridegroom, and accepts the marriage in front of those present.

There is an obscure but yet a very important rite that happens in the bridegroom's home when the bride starts to stay. "A goat is presented to the girl by the bridegroom's uncles and old cousins. The animal is then slaughtered there and then all those present have to test part of the flesh. This is an act that binds the girl and her new family. She is also reminded that a curse is bound to follow her should she cut off links with this new found home.

"People share the flesh to symbolize that they have jointly witnessed the commitment." The ceremony is performed in the open space with kinship members in attendance. According to the main participant, this ceremony is still prevalent among the *Luo* people. "When one does not perform it, then when the wife passes away, her

uncle's will demand this, in *Alego*, have you not witnessed during burial when in-laws demand this goat. In-laws can insist that you supply them with this goat before they can participate in the funeral," referring to it by the traditional name of *díel diso*.

When the lady asks to be allowed to leave, the main participant at first objects. After the lady has explained her intent to visit someplace it is agreed that she can leave. Main participant is hesitant, and when he finally speaks, it is to request us to return the next day. We all agree to start early the following day. The lady extends an invitation for us to visit her home when we have finished the exercise.

As the lady walks back to the house, the main participant escorts us to the main entrance. A group of children playing within the yard requests us to photograph them. After taking the picture, I promise to pass it on to their grandfather. Before hand the main participant had informed me of these being his grandchildren. The main participant sees us beyond his home while showing us the extent of his land, and his brother's pieces. We part company at the market place.

When we return the next day, the lady is already waiting for us. Together with the senior wife, they are sitting on low stools to one side of the doorway. From a distance, she teases us for not being able to observe time. The main participant is sitting by himself in front of one of the houses that are to the right within the 'upper sector' of the home. We approach the place where he is sitting. The man calls out for no one in particular to bring chairs. One of the boys who had meals with us the previous day comes from one of the houses and enters another one where he emerges with three seats. After placing them down, the boy greets us. The man calls out for the lady to come to the "class." Leaving the stool behind, she comes along to join us.

I direct my attention to the lady and ask her what is important when a new child is born. She informs me of the naming ceremony. While there is the name that is given at birth, a second one follows, "that helps connect the newborn to one of the departed spirits in the kinship." An elder is asked to offer prayers to the ancestors. After prayers, two chickens of opposite sex are selected. Early in the morning both are thrown atop the roof of the house that the child is in. "It is the one that fails to come down from the roof, that tells the sex of the ancestors, "Who wants the child to be named after. The name is chosen among ancestors with similar sex as the chicken that refused to jump down." The main participant agrees with this as being true.

"That way of selecting spiritual name is but one." He adds, "it can be that one of the people in your kinship has a dream. He or she may ask that the child be named after him or her. When he wakes up in the morning, one is required to look for a chicken that represents the sex of the spirit. You then call an elder to dedicate the chicken to the spirit. Dedication ceremony is done in the central yard, in front of the mother's house. In the presence of other people, the child is lifted to the sky and the ancestor's name is then revoked to help protect the newly born child. After this rite, food will be served on those present. " The man adds that spiritual chickens are not to be killed, they are perceived in terms of being holy and thus left to die naturally.

It is the lady who comes in to identify a third approach that happens when a new born child is continuously wailing. "An elder will hold the child on the lap while reciting

out the names of related ancestors." It is believed that when the relevant name is called out, the newborn will keep quiet. "That is the spiritual protector of the child." The old lady adds. The old lady is interested in knowing whether I have children and if so, how did I choose their spiritual names. I explained having followed both the second and third approach for the different children. She insists on that being the right way that a sincere *Luo* should respond to issues. Likewise she claims this as being important since it gives one a reference.

"When you introduce yourself, people can recall the name and say, 'ooh you are from such and such a place.' Spiritual *Luo* names can be connected to certain localities. One can also avoid any development of romantic affairs between people of the same blood." She gives example of the existing relationship between her and myself. Being from *Ka'ruoth*, she is my 'niece' and as such, "my daughters are your grandchildren. As such you can not marry in my house."

At this point a man walks into the home and approaches directly where we are seated. He extends the hand out to greet us. The main participant introduces this as the person who helps to look after his cattle. After being introduced, the two then go on to discuss where to direct the herd. They agree with the herdsboy to return to the place where he had taken the animals the previous day. "There is still enough fallen sugarcane," the main participant reckons.

He gets the herd's boy to know about the dotted cow that was troublesome during the milking in the morning, "check if there is something wrong while it is in the field." The main participant promises to ensure that food is delivered to the help-hand where he may be with the animals. At the same time, the man is informed that we have agreed to take care of his pay. When I ask how much it would be for the two days, the man suggests sixty Kenyan shillings. I readily give him the money. He leaves us to go and start untying the herds from their positions in the yard.

Moving on to yesterday's discussion about the yard, the participant informs of the yard, *siwandha*, being treated as "a house." "When there is a planned function in the yard, then it is required for the sides to be provided with cover. Tree branches and leaves are woven around the place, and only one entrance is left. The entrance to the place has to face the main entrance to the home." The main participant explains that during such a ceremony, the yard assumes the roles of the main house per se. While becoming the center of focus it also becomes the place for the fulfillment of social requirements.

There are four sides in a yard. Upon entering, the left will be for the kinship elders. The right hand side is where the visiting in-laws seat, when there is need for them, the youth will be next to the entrance. Youth sit next to the entrance so as to provide security. Also, the widowers will occupy the fourth side, which is opposite the main entrance.

The main participant compares the seating order in yard to that of the Christian altar. "While the priest and altar boys occupy the altar, the worshippers understand that they should not move uninitiated to the altar. You find that seating in the yard is also according to one's generation. For the kinship elders, even if you are very old you sit

next to those people who are taken to be of your generation. It is exactly because of such that you will meet some elderly people acting as youth wingers during an occasion that involves certain group of people. They will also understand that they should sit next to the main entrance. Their work will be to provide security."

There are matters that will be discussed ordinarily without having a prescribed venue. "It is only matters that involve family and/ or kinship members that are required to be in the open. This happens so that one day no one from within can have a chance to someday claim lack of knowledge on a particular happening." In a warning tone, main participant proceeds, "the yard is not a place for jokes. Even the trees in, the yard, *siwandha*, should not just be felled down like that. Everyone holds the trees that may be grown within this particular place in high esteem.

When there is need, such as during drought or deaths in a family, elders may decide to come together within a particular homestead. It is usual that the selected home will have an accommodative yard or, *siwandha*. This is the place where either a sheep or goat will be sacrificed for the ancestors. Some of the flesh and blood from the sacrificed animal is thrown into the forest for the ancestors. The ancestors will be asked to intervene and help solve the problem.

When there is a seating, people approaching the yard are under 'fear and respect' for the place. For matters that concern immediate family members, seating is provided in the central yard and not in the space that is behind the main house. A place is selected next to one of the entrance threshold to the house of an elderly lady where everybody can have free access."

It is expected that an elderly person, and especially a man, should not be indoors most of the time. "He is like the teacher when something is going wrong. When you go into most villages, you will see that most elderly people have their favorite place within a certain place in the home. Like here in my home, most times, I would be found here," indicating where we were.

"When someone is looking for me, this is the first place that they will come to. When I am not here, those in the home will clearly understand that I am not within. If I am within, then they will know that I am not feeling well. This is the place where I do hold my courts. And again, when my children desire to meet with me, they will come here. So each elder has a favorite place within the home where one is likely to spend most of the time. Again it is here where during visits, the visitors are likely to be entertained.

While continuing to support the presence of a yard within a homestead, the main participant is quick to point out the need for each homestead to have a yard. "Where will you sit with people that you consider as your 'father' when they come for a visit?" he asks looking across at me. Most elders who want to command respect will not enter into the houses of those people that they can refer to in terms of 'sons.' "Whenever they do call to see one, they expect to be received within a place that should be next to the fence." The main participant asks us to get up and take a walk with him so that we may be able to see the yard that is behind the house.

On moving to the backyard, while having a shaded area, the yard has been defined by growths that are arranged in an elastic manner. He points out the yard that can during the large gatherings run along the whole back. At the same time, there is a clear marked out place with no growth on the ground. We take time to move around the main house. The marked place is situated relatively behind the structure that was earlier on referred to in terms of being the 'big house.' Trees are viewed both in terms of being able to offer shade during the time that people are there, while also helping to mark out the exact spot that people will usually sit around.

Leaving the old lady to return to where we have been, participant suggests that we move around the home so that we can see whatever we want for ourselves. There are two predominant themes to the ground around each of the houses. In most cases, the immediate ground in front of each house is barren. There is a careful effort to mark out the space. Another feature is the tree that is basically next to each of the houses. "These," according to the main participant, "are efforts by the individuals to define an external place next to each house. It is customary that each person plants a tree to help define the place outside the immediate house where he can sit with visitors.

"One requires a place that has little disturbance and from where time may be spent." For the participant food is usually served next to the threshold to the senior wife's house entrance door." Upon being pursued further, main participant identifies the social need for eating in the open. The man has children and grandchildren who might go without food in their houses.

"It is good that whatever we have is shared. These are all my children." To the main participant, since time immemorial, *Luo* community members have had this type of lifestyle. When food has been brought to him, all children in the home especially the boys understand that they are welcome. To the man, anybody who is calling the home is welcome to share food with him. Those in the home do understand his sentiments and are always sending their visitors to join him at meals time.

Appendix 2c.

Nathan Meda, *Manyatta*, *Kisumu* town – Urban (R10).

It is the area Chief that has directed us to this compound. The chief commented that though professing to be a Christian, the man Meda still adheres to a particular lifestyle that identifies one with a *Luo*. The man has arranged houses within the compound relying on the *Luo* social format. He has built for the four sons as per the *Luo* community format requirements.

There is the way in which his three sons have related their houses to one another. Coming into the homestead, one goes through a clear well-defined entrance. Thick growth on either side marks the entrance. It is this same growth that wraps around the homestead to define the perimeter.

The chief gave us a briefing about our area of study. *Manyatta* is a large urban village that has accommodated the different immigrants from different parts of *Nyanza*. Although in the center of *Kisumu* town, *Manyatta* should be described as a village for three reasons. The individual homestead is the dominance feature of the rural landscape dominates. Secondly, some of the cultural rites are enacted in a manner that they would be within the rural settlement. And thirdly, features of landscape such as livestock are common here. Though it is a home to people with diverse ethnic backgrounds, the *Luo* people dominate. Most of the people here still lead their life as if they were staying within a rural setting.

This is roughly a circular compound with houses arranged roughly around the central yard. On entering in from the main gate, the main house ahead becomes the center of focus. Several single housing blocks ring the court. A linear block that does not appear as part of the organized centric layout is located to the left as one comes into the homestead.

We knock on the door of the house with the entrance facing the main entrance. A lady opens to inquire. She welcomes us to the porch that is within the entrance. The man that we intend to hold discussion with is in the house. We are welcomed and asked to sit. The lady goes away to inform the man. She returns to tell us to move behind the house where the old man is relaxing. We are led through the living room to the internal yard behind the house. There are three elderly people resting.

One of the men gets up to welcome us. Our lead does the necessary introduction. This is the person that we are coming for a meeting with. "That one over there is my sister," our subject introduces the lady who is seated on a low level stool, "she is also living here with us. And that one," turns to the other man who is behind, "is our neighbor Jaduong Ogutu. His home is after this fence that you can see when you walk out." He indicates with the walking stick that he is holding in the hand. The Chief seems to be familiar with people around here he casually inquires into some issues that seem to be common around here.

From what one can notice around, the yard appears to be used for different activities. There are the pieces of cutlery that are lying on a table, several clothes are hanging on

the line, while some maize is being dried at a corner on a reed mat. A lady comes out from one of the doors that open to the court. After greetings, she has some warm exchange of words with the chief about the ongoing political scene. She returns to where she had come from.

From the discussion so far, we are able to take note of the man having been notified of our visit. Despite being on medication the man agrees to give us some of his time. The lady that they are with is the widowed sister. They are staying with her. A man walks through the back gate. This is the grandson who is also living here with them. "He helps with the work in the compound." The man waits while being introduced before excusing himself.

It is the Chief who is the first to seek permission to be excused, "since I have to attend to some issues in the court. There are some youths that hail from this neighborhood and have been arrested. The youths are being held in the court at *Winam*. I need to be there. Some of the youths who have been disturbing people here were recently arrested. With this the man wished us success in our work. We agree to pass through his office when we have finished with everything.

The participant asks that we move over to the front porch. We leave the lady behind. He introduces himself as Nathan Meda. His parents were originally from *Gem* before settling here. The man they are with is his age mate. "When I went to work with the Kenya Railways in Nairobi, Ogotu went on to work with the government. We all got employment after completing standard eight primary education. Now we are all retired.

The Chief came here to request a meeting with you. Is that not it?" Not waiting for an answer, he goes on, "he also asked me if it was possible for me to bring along somebody of my peer group. Is that it?" I affirm both of the statements. You will have to brief us on what you are after. It is then that we can tell you whether or not we judge ourselves to be of any help.

I introduce myself and then give a brief expose of what we are after. We are collecting information about selected *Luo* elders who have built their homes in the urban town. Our interest is their response to the *Luo* community cultural demands, and how these people are able to adapt to the context they are in. His response was, "as someone who professes the Christian faith I may not be of too much help. Since being saved, my life has continued to be guided by the bible." I inform him of our having earlier been informed so.

"Alright, "he responds, " we are two people. My peer mate here will assist with whatever I do not understand clearly. The man's colleague is not saved, "we have been friends from childhood. Whenever there is something here in the compound, he usually comes out to assist.

"You hear my son, this is my brother, this friendship was started by our late parents. They were family friends. They brought us together to think like brothers. When Meda here sent a message for me yesterday, I had to put everything that I had planned to do aside. When I do send for him, he must also put all aside and come along for he

will know that I need him." Ogotu adds that since he had been told of the Chief's involvement in the affair he had decided to be here. The administrator is a very popular man in the neighborhood where he has been of assistance to many people.

It is Ogotu who gets us to know that they were both born in *Manyatta*. "That does not imply that we do not live like *Luo* people. So even when my brother here claims to be a Christian, it does not mean that he has stopped believing in some of the things that our grandparents did. Christianity is there, and our culture is also there.

"When you walk around this homestead of his," draws an imaginary circle, "you will realize that he has built this his sons in a pure *Luo* manner. There is no mixing of houses. Each of the sons have been located in the rightful place. Do you realize that where we are in the senior wife's house. Stand up," he motions to me, "when you look outside can you see the gate." I respond positively. "How can you then claim that he is not following the *Luo* traditions? The old man interrupts, "just tell them that this is my only wife."

"I am not telling them that first," he comments, "I want them to see that this house is directly facing the gate. "Arrangement of the primary spatial elements has been guided by the *Luo* community ideas of living. There are the respective places that each of the persons in the home should locate the dwelling house." Primary elements that formally define a home include the senior wife's house and the main entry gate. Between these two, the man claims to have left enough room for growth.

The key participant interrupts to offer one other dimension that has guided him in the setting. There is the tenant block. He inquires if while coming in we took note of a linear red adobe block to the left. "Those are the tenants houses. You could see that I have set them outside the main homestead. They are not part of my family, and as such, I can not build for them within the compound.

"The block is outside the parameter line of my home." He goes on to explain how they fall outside the boundaries that mark out his home. All of his children's houses are orientated to open into the central yard. Similarly the buildings fall within a relatively round curve. Now with the rental block none of these principles would apply. The doors of rooms on the block opens into a separate court. Likewise, the block has been set back from the rest. There is the parcel of land that was gotten back from the municipal, and tenant houses are to be built.

I ask the key participant to identify for me some of the activities that will in principle bring together the different relatives. The key participant identifies religious meetings as something that he is most involved in. Apart from holding prayer sessions, there are times when they discuss and plan development projects. When there is a misfortune that has hit either of them or a family, they also get together. There are different groups within the church. People come to the assistance of one another when misfortune strike's a family.

On whether there are other meetings, family meetings are named as one such. The man views the Christians friends and his close family as one thing. When there is a feeling with him or some of the family members to get together with others, he may

decide to call them together. The married daughters are also invited to attend. Such a meeting can be held behind the house in the internal yard. One other place for the family meetings is besides the house where there is a mango shed.

The key participant accepts the suggestion that when any of the kinship people living in *Kisumu* town experience social or cultural impasse, they would consult him. "I am one of the elders from my clan who is residing here in town. When it is an affair that I may lack full knowledge about, I take along another elder. We learn from one another." Depending on how the key participant feels, he may decide to ask those seeking his assistance to come for a meeting in this house.

"Likewise, Meda may decide to hold a meeting with the affected parties here in his compound. When asked the venue for meeting, the participant promises to show us on our way out the mango tree that is next to the house. "I have a large shed besides here. I get people to sit beneath this." Apart from kinship people who reside in *Kisumu*, Meda's family has maintained contact with the father's cousins. Whenever there is any trouble, people come all the way from *Gem* to be of assistance.

All of Meda's children have built their houses within this compound. The daughters are all staying with their husbands. Ogutu does not agree with Meda when he suggests that his peers should not be having young children. "It is only that for him," looking at Meda, "the pastor has stopped them from marrying other women. That statement can not apply to everybody." Ogutu laughs at himself.

Meda was born in 1918 and he went to school in this neighborhood. My father migrated to this place from *Gem* after he came to work in *Kisumu*. From the parents, the man acquired some knowledge on earlier settlements here. When most people were coming to work in *Kisumu*, there was a man known as Jairus Owino who was already working at the District Commissioner's office in the town between 1903 and 1904. The man was from *Gem*. The whole of *Manyatta* was then wilderness. It was Owino who was given the responsibility of allocating land to those people who wanted to reside in this place.

From primary eight, the key participant joined the then *East African Railways and Harbors* as a clerk. "We were in the same class with him," points out Ogutu. The discussion is interrupted briefly by an elderly lady who walks in to whisper something to the key participant. She goes out and comes back carrying four drinking mugs. She goes out and returns with a jug of porridge that she proceeds to serve out to us. After saying grace, she walks out and leaves us to continue. It is the key participant who goes ahead to pick up his cup and urges us to proceed with the same.

I inquire from the two participants whether there is a Council of Elders in *Manyatta* and if so if they are part of it. While accepting being a member, the key participant claims not to be a frequent attendant when 'heathen beliefs' happen to be the subject of discussion. His Christian faith does not allow him to attend to such. The *Manyatta* Chief understands what the key participant's religious faith demands. Even when he does not attend a meeting, he will still give his opinion on the matter. For a meeting that is meant to deliberate on something in his compound, Meda will attend. On why

this should be so, the man feels that being the owner of this home he has such a responsibility.

Ogutu, on the other end, is a regular attendant to Council of Elder's meetings. There are those whose meetings involve land disputes in this place. Elders will be called upon by the Chief to give retrospect information about the issue in question. There are also disputes that involve kinship people and that can be brought to the attention of elders. Meetings of this nature are held in a place that is decided by the elders. Most times if not all cases it will be within one of the affected party's homes.

Being aware that need may someday arise people usually plant trees that will have enough shade in the yard. Such a shade may even be besides the house, "as an old man, there should be somewhere within the compound where you can spend time with your peers who call on you. That is also your 'parliament.'" Likewise, the tree becomes useful during the time people are building. It is expensive for one to build a house if the parent's have no trees. Then one has to buy everything.

When discussing a dispute, it is also recommended that the seating should be held somewhere that can appear to be a neutral ground. For such a meeting it is left for the elders to decide the actual venue in the homestead. "Elders do understand these things," he comments.

"It can be that a son-in-law is calling to discuss something with me," Ogutu adds, "I will have to get him somewhere that we may discuss certain topics." He asks whether I am aware that one may summon his in-law to warn him of some upcoming behavior. Certain events may necessitate this type of response. Continuous mistreatment of the partner and also when one fails to take responsibilities at home, then the parents may intervene.

Within the place that we are, Meda identifies the shade of trees that is between his house and that of the elder son as the place where they may meet. It is taboo for one to sit with his in-laws besides the house. When identified, though the key participant accepts the possibility of entertaining in-laws in the porch, the issues that may be mentioned are limited.

Meda calls out the name of someone that should clear the table. A lady answers the call and she is also asked to bring along the medicine. We resume the discussion when the lady has brought the medicine packet and left.

On being asked, Meda explains the arrangements of the boy's houses within his homestead. When this question is asked, he suggests that we move outside from where he can clearly show us. There are three houses that are standing at a distance from one another. Compared to the rest of his children, the elder boy has built nearer the parent's house. After the first boy's house, the rest of children maintain a particular order in locating their houses. A hierarchy is maintained with the old boy's house next to the parent's and the junior one's next to the main gate.

There is an alternating manner in which houses are located in the homestead. With the gate providing the line of symmetry the sons arrange their houses in an alternating

manner. The people who are born next to one another are always opposite in the homestead. He identifies the debris from destroyed building as what used to be his third son's house. The heavy El Nino rains that hit most parts of Kenya from mid-1997 brought down the house

We are standing in the middle of the homestead and the whole compound can be seen with buildings as planned around a central court. The rental court housing links with the family one. The key participant informs us of his parcel of land being so large prompting the local authorities to annex a portion that has since been restored to him. Together, we take a walk to the fence where there is a piece of land fenced with barbed pieces of wire. Both of the two roads that run next to the compound were part of his land. He was for the land.

When asked about the different clusters of trees in the compound key participants have a reason for this planning. He will usually be found resting under the shade in the afternoons. For Meda, places such as the immediate lobby to his house and the shades offer him a wide choice over where to be when he wants to be in the open. There is general feeling that under the tree it is both cooler and refreshing when one is there. Likewise there is minimal disturbance from around.

There is the immediate cluster that is at the front. It is in this spot that we are standing. The place is between the key participant's house and that of his elder son. This place is both for family rest and he also holds meetings with tenants here. Usually when something appears amiss or he would like to communicate something to the residents, he will call them to a meeting. Most of the time, it is the elder son who while home will bring friends to rest under the shade.

Another use of this particular spot comes during the Christmas session. The key participant has a custom of hosting a joint party for both the family and tenants. At the end of the year, each of the houses within the compound will contribute a given amount that will go towards purchasing things for the party. "We will sit here, and soft drinks and tea will be served, people will also share the food that women here would have prepared together." People come together after returning from church. Many of key participant's grandchildren that are living within *Kisumu* attend the celebration. Because of so many young children, the man prefers the celebration to come to an end before darkness sets in.

Another time when one will find people in this spot will be during the time when the wife has a meeting with other women. There is the lady's religious group known as, *Nyoluoro*, and both the wife and the sister that is staying with the family are members. He explains that the name is a *Luo* term that implies, 'going around.' The name developed out of a format for holding the monthly meetings that have been adopted by the group. The meeting rotates between different people's houses. The only time that they do return to the first place is when they have visited all other people's homes. Upon inquiry, Ogotu joins in to lay claim that people prefer to meet in the open, "so that when there is an issue that has been agreed upon, it is done in the open. This kind of meeting brings together our daughters-in-law, people that you should understand can not move freely inside this house here," indicating the house.

The key participant indicates us to move together to the left side of the main house. There are three grown up mango trees that have together created a beautiful shade beneath their location. This happens to be the spot where he will be found most of the time. Usually he will be there during the evening. "It is here that I have already indicated the spot where I will be laid to rest when I die." He points at the spot for us and notices my surprise.

"At my age I have witnessed a lot. I don't want people to disagree over my burial place. It is people your age who are afraid of facing death." When I inquire whether this is normal, both the people agree so. "When an elderly person is of a particular age group, it is normal that one indicates where he should be buried." Meda speaks first. The man has likewise earmarked this as the burial place for his family members.

Pointing out another shade not far off from the spot where we are, he identifies it as the place where he prefers to be during the afternoons. "At times, my lunch will be brought for me out there. I do like that place for when you are sitting there, there is a fresh wind coming from all directions.

The porch is there for periods such as this one. When the man has visiting male relatives staying with them, they come to sit out in the porch during the evening times. Most times, it is expected of men to leave the house for the women. "Men need to be in the outside where they may freely discuss their affairs." Likewise after meals, when there is someone who has called in they will retire to the porch.

And, like in our case, when people call in and you're not very familiar with them and or the purpose of the visit, it is better that you hold the talk outside the house. He explains that some topics that may be mentioned may be taboo to some of those who may be around. "People may call on you as an elder to advice them on some social matters. He prefers to eat inside the house because of the dust that is continuously blowing outside.

Whenever any of his children would like to discuss some issues with him, depending on the number, they may decide to hold the meeting in the lounge where we had been or under the mango tree. He prefers the mango tree because the place is relatively hidden from the rest of people within the home. Matters that they may discuss range from family affairs to those that are general in kind. Most times, when either of the children travel back from the towns where they are working, they are likely to be spending some evenings together. Though the frequency of such meetings can not be predicted, it is within the first days of arrival back that such events are common. The cousins are likely to join the company.

I inquire on the reason why some elders are in the habit of entertaining their guests in the open under the shade. "When you call on an elderly person, he might not have prior knowledge of the issue at hand. One would prefer to hold a discussion in such a place that one can feel free to freely speak his mind. "When you discuss within earshot of some people, news about the issue may be all over," Ogotu comments. Luck eludes anybody when you are pursuing an affair that so many know about." Ogotu suggests that by holding talk with one in a secluded place, you are asking the person to trust in you.

The back yard is identified by the participant as the equivalent of his 'wife's office.' Although he may be found there, it is the women's domain. It is where she will be found with her friends when they call around. He claims this as being one of the reasons that made him move with us to the front porch when we called in today. Also when the daughters do come back for a visit, they spend most of their time with friends in the backyard.

Appearing exhausted, the key participant suggests that we should move to the porch. After moving there, he suggests that we make a point to meet the following day. Ogutu agrees to be there with us the next day. The man calls out to inform the wife who is behind the house of our departure. When the lady comes over, she suggests that we stay over for lunch. After a bit of discussion, we agree to join them for a meal any other day. On the way out we notice three young ladies drawing water from the well that is at the corner of the compound.

The next day, we are in the place before the sun gets high up in the sky. Our host is relaxing in the yard behind. The other participant has not yet arrived. The host welcomes us to sit down. As we are sitting we can note that the man has eyes on the grandson who is ironing on the table. The man is instructing the grandson on the way to handle one of the clothes. When I comment on this, the old man recalls the schooling days.

"In our days, you would not be allowed into the class when your clothes were not properly ironed. Every morning during the assembly time, there was an inspection to flush out those with creased clothes. When discovered, you were caned and then sent home to bring your parents to the school." For the man, it was even an impossible feat to leave home with a creased cloth. "Your father would have noticed this. He would be the first person to discipline you in the morning." The man points out this as one of the reasons behind the youths being undisciplined. "When children are let to behave like some 'Governor'," in reference to the colonial ruler, "how do you expect them to acquire discipline?"

The key participant asks me to play back the last part of our discussion the previous day. He does not let me finish. After about three minutes of play, he asks for it to be stopped. He has confirmed the position where we had left the discussion.

Taking him back, I inquire whether the rest of the residents excluding the family, spend time under the shade that is provided by the different clusters. Over the years, his sons have stuck up friendship with some of the tenants. Whenever they are home, they can be found spending time together next to the entrance threshold late in the evening. Among the activities that they can be involved in includes sharing the newspaper, listening to the radio news and the funeral announcements or just discussing their own affairs. Food will be brought out for them. When food is brought out, those who are still considered as children will remain inside to eat from within, the big boys will be expected to join the adults outside.

Ogutu comes in through the front door while we are still discussing social evenings. The man had been attending to some issues in the neighborhood. It seems the host is aware of where his friend is from.

Meda will not sleep under the same roof cover with the in-laws. If they must spend the night in the home, they are left to sleep where their peers are. It is a taboo for the son-in-law to share the same roof cover with the wife's parents. Taboo prevents sharing of roof between the in-law and the spouse's parents during sleeping time.

There is the central yard that is meant for the use of the family. The use of this space comes when there is a big occasion. There is a tent that is erected when people are to be in the yard. "That is why I do not want anybody to interfere with that place that you see out there." Pointing out through the perforated walls. "It is my *Siwandha* when I have several guests." He gives the example of the wedding of his son a few years back. After church, people moved back to the homestead. They had put food out here to welcome the wife to the home.

On inquiry, it is Ogutu who identifies celebrating the arrival of a newly born child in the family as a period that people come together. The newly born should be welcome to the community. Depending on the sex, a certain number of days should elapse before a newly born is formally initiated into the community. Four days should pass in case of the boy and three days when it is a girl. On the day, the newly born is brought to be welcomed by people in the family and friends. It is when grandparents may come forward to bless the newly born child. He explains how this is done. While holding the child, the person scatters spit on the forehead.

In case there is something happening in the homestead, people do not expect to be invited. "Everybody that gets to hear the news knows that one is obliged to attend. "Both friends, neighbors and relatives attend. Like if I lose someone in this home," Meda reckons, "I think people will fill here. They come along to offer us company, and to show their concern. It is only after the burial that people will disperse.

"During death, there are requirements on where each of the son-in-law may sit when he comes to mourn." Ogutu adds this as the reason behind some men planting several clusters of trees in their homes. There is the traditional side that has been allocated to each group. Beginning with the place that is occupied by the people representing the elder daughter's marital home there is a hierarchy of arrangement for seating clusters that should be maintained.

Also identified as necessary during the mourning period is the place where the elders from around seat throughout the period when people are in the home. This is the Council of Elders who are time and again consulted about certain matters. The elders in the clan are seen as the wise people and they form a council that holds permanent seating in the affected home throughout the period. Ogutu adds that such a council is necessary when ones in-law are to visit. "It is required that before the arrival time of the visitors, you consult with the 'brothers' about the matter at hand. There is what they may help to clarify for you.

You may be intending to go ahead with an action that lacks precedence in your immediate family." On being pressed to give an example, Ogutu offers an example of the dowry cow. He gets us to know that one can not give a dowry cow if your parents never enacted this. This may bring a curse to the family. What will happen in this case we are told, is either for your father or any of the surviving uncles to enact this and take a symbolical cow to any of the living maternal uncles.

On whether as a Christian Meda has gone through this, the answer is affirmative. It is Ogutu who adds to the comment, "Do you think that things will be okay in this homestead without him enacting these traditional act?" Meda suggests to us that being a Christian does not stop him from getting involved in certain things. "The bible teaches us not to harm our neighbors. But if you are enacting something that is not of danger to anybody, who will refuse you." The key participant admits to both his daughters and sons marrying according to the required *Luo* traditions. "My sons paid the required dowry cattle, and likewise my sons-in-law gave me the necessary cattle before they could take the bride away."

When asked whether he has married children, Ogutu laughs before answering. "Someone of my age, how old do you think my children are?" When no answer was coming from me he continues, "you are asking someone who is now waiting to see his great grand children. Ogutu admits that though they reside in town, he saw that all traditional rites were enacted before any of them could move to stay with the partner. "I did not want to be blamed someday in case some misfortune was to befall my family. People may think that 'such and such has happened since so and so did not enact a particular rite."

For the residents here, two alternatives exist for the burial. "For those with small acreage of land, they go to bury at the *Mamboleo* public cemetery." Pointing at himself, he goes on, "when I lose any of my descendants, then I will bury the body here in my homestead." he goes ahead to re-state the earlier statement to the effect that he will be buried within the compound.

Meda feels that the municipality is not sympathetic to where people living in Manyatta should bury their dead relatives. Over the years, they have come to know of Manyatta as their only home. "I was born here, and we have children who were born here. This is the only home that they know about. It is in this place that my parents have been buried. So if you tell me to go and bury my children in *Mamboleo*, I can not do that." The man views an act of this kind as a development that can bring bad misfortune to the family.

While arguing for the family, the case of those on sojourn is different. Renters have to transport any of the family members to the rural home. "Each of these tenants has a traditional home. Usually mourners will gather here to make arrangements about transporting the body to the rural home. I will even allow them to bring the body here to sleep overnight before finally transporting it to the burial place. I will allow them to bring the body into the home through the main gate. This is behavior that our community is against. When you go to 'heathen' people's home, then they will require for a body of an outsider to be brought into their homestead through a gate that is cut

within the normal surrounding fence." Being a born-again Christian, he does not mind this act.

When Meda reckons that nothing can affect anyone who lets an outsider's body through the gate to the compound, Ogotu is quick to rebuke him. "Don't lie to these children. If they write down what you are telling them then one day another member of our community will come across the writing and he will end up thinking that they are liars. Leave alone many excuses and just let them know that you do what you do because of being a Christian."

There has been a period when mourning has been marked in the homestead. Apart from the kin member's participant reckons of neighbors having come to help them keep wake. "Nights are spent in the open yard," he explains, "that is one more reason why you can see these many trees around. During mourning it is expected that kin members attend evening sessions." On whether all dwellers do attend the man is sceptic; "these are renters. I have them here because of business. Those who want to attend do." It is Ogotu who issues a warning to the extent that those who do not attend to other people's trouble expect the same when their turn comes. On whether doors are open throughout when mourning, "you can not force these people," Ogotu answers, "they are residing here because of their money."

I move the discussion to find out their feeling on the municipal by-laws. The key participant insists that since the land is his, the municipal people have no right to tell him what to do there. I ask what will happen when the Municipality forces him to subdivide the land into quarter an acre plots each. "That one I will not agree with. I am the one who understands the size of plots that I need to subdivide the land into." The man is supported by his friend who views it as a dream to expect a *Luo* person to set up a home within a quarter of an acre plot. Already, a cattle shed in Ogotu's homestead occupies that much land.

Both men wonder where I expect the children to erect their houses with that size of land. Ogotu wonders whether I am not aware that boys should not build near the parent's house. My next question is what then follows with decreasing size of land in town.

Two options are explained to me as being open to the boys who intend to set up their homes. The first option is for one to purchase land outside the town in the rural area. They express the fear that with the current economy, one may not easily lay his hands on money. They agree that one can not force the son to migrate and start his own home.

A second option that they agree to have witnessed in *Kisumu* involves re-orientating the main entrance to one's house. "Most young people," Ogotu explains, "build a house with two doors. There is the main entrance that faces the yard and also the back one. At one point, one may agree with the father. You then completely block off the front entrance. The house now has an entrance that faces the fence. After all this, you create an entrance that directly faces the re-oriented entrance through the fence. "You now have your own gate that is facing the main door. If your father gave you the go ahead for this, you can then invite him for food." He explains that you host food

within the yard that will be in front of the house. He further explains that this act symbolizes the start of a new home. To Ogutu, one's father should not even reach within the threshold that is marked by the doorway. He reckons that it is possible that one may witness some material artifact that is a taboo. "Since one now has his own gate, this is taken to be your compound."

Both men agree that due to less wealth, there is evidence of more people in *Kisumu* following this second rite of passage in establishing a new home. Ogutu further explains that in a *Luo* home, the most important element that shows a home is the gate and the door that faces it. "When either of this can not be located, then that stops being a traditional village." It is Ogutu who was to add, "there will always be elders who are able to pinpoint where these elements were once located. It is the location that is necessary. When position is known, a symbolic thing can be erected in place and this will enable people to proceed on with the necessary rite."

Though the boys are expected to migrate to the new home with the parents, there are those who later return to live in the grandfather's homestead. "My grandsons will one day reside in this house," Meda remarks. When I pursue him, he claims that since the grandchildren are of "my generation, they can even wear my clothes."

Going back to the marital status, Meda has a lawfully wedded wife. He married in 1938, and had his first born in 1940. The man went through the customary marriage before taking his bride to church. "I enacted all of the marriage rites as per the *Luo* community requirements." Key participant insists.

When asked, Meda's wish was that the municipality does not stop his people from burying his body in the spot that he has pointed out to them. I ask if he has thought of erecting a commercial plot for his family. We walk to the middle of the homestead. Pointing out the unbuilt perimeter plot, Meda has earmarked this as a future commercial zone. He points out the rental block as being his only source of income. His children have constructed a borehole in the homestead. The family sells water from the well to the neighbors since *Kisumu* always has water shortage problem.

There is an entry porch in each of the rental houses. "I had wanted somewhere that one may take a rest in when with friends."

Having reached here, I thanked both the people. We walk back to inform the old lady of our having come to the end of our mission. It is almost two o'clock and the old lady insists on us waiting for the lunch. After long hugging she allows us to leave. The two men see us to the porch from where they bid us farewell.

Appendix 3.

IDENTIFICATION OF IMPORTANT CULTURE REQUIREMENTS.

1.1 Vernacular setting culture.

- Avoidance relationship.
- Lineage and or clan gatherings.
- Marking of death.
- Being in a community.
- Mourning in the open
- Relationship between genders.
- Relationship between generations.
- Sharing of food.
- Celebrating the new birth.
- Joking relationship.
- Community in marriage.
- Confidentiality in discussion.
- Marking of marriage.
- Hierarchy in contact.
- Council of elders.
- Celebrating with traditional drink and food.
- Concept of home.
- Remembrance rite.
- Dowry payment.

1.2 Urban setting culture.

- Avoidance relationship.
- Lineage and or clan gatherings.
- Marking of death.
- Being in a community.
- Mourning in the open.
- Relationship between genders.
- Relationship between generations.
- Sharing of food.
- Celebrating the new birth.
- Community and marriage.
- Confidentiality in discussion.
- Marking of marriage.
- Hierarchy in contact.
- Council of Elders.
- Celebrating with traditional drink and food.
- Concept of home.
- Development of commerce.

1.3 Surviving Culture Requirements.

1.3.1 Concept of Community

- Lineage and or clan gatherings.
- Being in a community.
- Council of Elders.
- Community and marriage.
- Confidentiality in discussion.
- Sharing of food.

1.3.2 Behavioral Patterns.

- Relationship between genders.
- Relationship between generations.
- Avoidance relationship.

1.3.3 Rite of Passage.

- Marking of death.
- Mourning in the open.
- Celebrating the new birth.
- Marking of marriage.
- Concept of home .

1.4 Supportive elements.

- Elements of threshold.
 - Dwelling units.
 - Entrances.
 - Burial ground.
 - Spatial hierarchy.
- Clear distinction between inside and outside.
- Elements of homestead.
 - Open Outside
- Building types.
- Structure of homestead.

Appendix 4.

CASE STUDIES - CULTURAL DIMENSIONS.

7.2 Behavioral patterns.

Relationship between social generics - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Sharing of the same activity space by kinship members who are of different social generation - 1 and 2.
- ii. Holding of informal discussion between one and the grown up social children - 2 and 7.
- iii. Visit by parent to their daughter's matrimonial homestead - 4 and 5.
- iv. Members of same gender group occupying positions in the yard - 7.
- v. View about urban fabric not being efficiently planned so that it can accommodate activities of the different social generations - 8.
- vi. During the daytime, women activities take place within the open yard - 12.

Case study R3.

- i. Receiving visiting parent-in-law - 6.
- ii. Socializing between those in what can be considered as homestead proper and the dwellers - 13.
- iii. People from different generations within the same clan loosely socializing within the same setting - 9.
- iv. Socialization between different social groups who are residents of the same built setting - 5.
- v. Occupation of spaces by those in what should be considered as homestead proper and the dwellers - 13.

Case study R6.

- i. Sharing of common meal between an elder and the grown up social children - 8.
- ii. During the evening, dwellers moving out of their units to be within the open space outside - 8.
- iii. Women sharing same space while involved in an activity - 3.
- iv. Bodily movement by those considered in terms of in-laws when attending their parent-in-law's mourning - 5 and 6.
- v. Elderly person holding discussion with some of those people that call upon them - 6.
- vi. Body movement by those people who are considered in terms of son-in-law while visiting the spouses' paternal homestead - 6.
- vii. Elderly persons' habit of sitting in the outside space with some of those people that are calling on them - 6.
- viii. Occasionally holding a joint meeting that brings within the same setting the two different sexual group members - 8.
- ix. Youths hosting their peers - 8.

Case study R8.

- i. Movement by parents into their grown up social children dwelling units - 6.
- ii. Socialization between peers - 7.
- iii. Community meetings that involve members of the two gender groups and likewise people of the different social generations - 5.
- iv. Movement by the initiated children both within and into their social parental dwelling units - 5.
- v. Receiving a visit from those people that one should socially consider as a parent - 6.
- vi. Members of the different genders occupying their own space within the open outside.
- vii. Socializing pattern within a normal day in a homestead.

Case study R9.

- i. Loosely mixing of elderly persons and the youths - 8-9.
- ii. Sexual counseling by the grandmother - 11.
- iii. Mentioning of some topics when different social age groups are in the same space - 11.
- iv. Receiving a visit from those people that are socially considered as parent-in-law by those who are residing in an urban setting - 4.
- v. Within the open space that is outside there are activities that can be related to one of the sexual groups - 9-10.
- vi. Evening socialization between male urban dwellers - 10 and 11.
- vii. Those old women who are socially considered in terms of being grandmothers are able to successfully intervene in ones marital problems - 11.

Case study R10.

- i. Elderly persons' habit of resting during the afternoon periods - 7.
- ii. Migration by the grandchildren back to reside in the grandparents' original setting - R11.

Relationship between social generics - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Meeting between members of similar generation with peers who are on a visit - 5 and 7.
- ii. Movements by parents into the dwelling units of those that they socially consider as being the children - 11.
- iii. Women preparing meals during an event that brings together the clan people - 5 and 7.
- iv. When visiting some of their children who are residents in the town, parents' are restrained by their culture in movement both into and within the visited dwelling unit - 7-8.
- v. Celebration of an initiation by the kinship people - 11.

Case study R4.

- i. Sorting of cereals by women - 1.
- ii. Hosting of in-laws by the kinship people - 4.

- iii. Elderly person being able to hold an undisturbed discussion with a visitor - 5.
- iv. Members of different sexual groups sitting in same setting to share traditional drink - 6.
- v. Some of the marked visits by the son-in-law to the suitor's parental homestead - 14.
- vi. Youths holding a dance within the homestead - 16.

Case study R7.

- i. Youths and an elder in a discussion that appears to be informal - 1.
- ii. Involvement of elderly persons in a celebration - 5.
- iii. Body movement by the visiting in-laws - 3 and 7.
- iv. Spending time in the company of one gender group for most of the time - 8.
- v. Men folks sitting around the fire in the open yard during the evening - 9.
- vi. Different women who are independently involved in sorting out something from the basket that each of them has placed at the front - 10.

Case study 11.

- i. Women involved in laundry work - 1.
- ii. Mixing between clan people of similar social generation - 4
- iii. Marked visits by the son-in-law to the bride's parental homestead - 6 and 7.
- iv. Enacting a marriage rite - 8.
- v. Parental visit to their daughter's matrimonial home - 8.
- vi. Involvement in a celebration by different social levels of clan people - 8.
- vii. Clan meeting that is attended by members from both genders - 9.
- viii. Women being all by themselves - 9.

Case study R12.

- i. Women all by themselves - 1.
- ii. Kinship deliberation that brings together the elderly persons - 2.
- iii. Kinship members hosting a visit by the son-in-law - 3.
- iv. Visit by parents to their daughter's matrimonial homestead - 3.
- v. Discussing with an elderly person - 4.
- vi. Several of the in-laws being present within a homestead at the same time - 5.
- vii. Socialization between social peers and type of topics that may be discussed - 6.
- viii. Deliberation that involves members of both genders groups - 7.

Case study R13.

- i. Mother-in-law sitting in a position that is next to her son-in-law - 2.
- ii. Discussion that involves participation by the different gender groups - 3.
- iii. Bodily movement by an elderly person across the homestead after dark - 5.
- iv. Parental visit to their daughter's matrimonial homestead - 7.
- v. Joking between grandparent and grandchildren - 7.
- vi. In-law attending to the parent-in-law who is critically ill - 8.
- vii. Axial movement towards one another between mother-in-law and her daughter's suitor - 9.
- viii. Loosely mixing of the grandparents and their grandchildren - 10.
- ix. Elderly people but from different social generations occupying the same setting within the same time - 15.

- x. Kinship people hosting their son-in-law in the homestead - 15.
- xi. Different social generation members occupying a setting in the same time - 15.
- xii. Movement by social parents into their grown up children's dwelling unit - 16.

Case study 14.

- i. Women sitting all by themselves - 1.
- ii. Parental; visit to the daughter's matrimonial homestead - 3.
- iii. Movement by parents into grown up children's dwelling units - 4.
- iv. Mediating by grandmothers in a matrimonial quarrel that involves their grandchildren and the spouses - 4.
- v. Movement by the grown up children into their parental dwelling units - 5.
- vi. Meeting that involves the presence of both gender groups - 9
- vii. Marking a youth's initiation into adulthood - 9
- viii. Youth misbehaving in the presence of community elderly persons - 9.

Case study R15.

- i. Marking the initiation of a child into adulthood - 5
- ii. Movement by a parent into the grown up children dwelling units - 6.
- iii. Holding an event that requires participation by the different social generations and genders- 7. -

Relationship between genders - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Members of the different genders being in the company of each other for longer time than necessary - 3 and 8.
- ii. Related female activities within the open space outside - 4 and 12-13.

Case study R3.

- i. In the course of evening period, men moving into the open space outside to discuss the ongoing with other dwellers or visiting friends - 8.

Case study R6.

- i. Ladies doing laundry in the open - 3.
- ii. Social expectations from women members of a community during celebrations in a homestead - 4.
- iii. Joint deliberations that involve participation by both genders - 8-9.

Case study R8.

- i. Different women who are involved with roles while busy conversing among themselves.
- ii. Mixing loosely between members of the different gender groups - 6.

Case study R9

- i. Gender related activities - 9-10 and 11
- ii. Moving out to be in the open outside with other dwellers - 10.
- iii. Occasional women meetings - 10
- iv. Being lose with one's mouth when different genders are around - 11.

Case study 10.

- i. Occasional women clan meetings - 6.
- ii. Holding discussion within a setting where those people that are involved become open in their discussion - 7.

Relationship between genders - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Preparation of meals within the open space is outside - 7.

Case study R4.

- i. Women sitting by themselves while sorting out cereals - 1 and 10.
- ii. Deliberations and/ or social events that bring together members of both gender groups - 6.

Case study 7.

- i. Holding a function that requires participation of selected females within the clan - 5 and 7.
- ii. Ladies involved in some work while sitting under a tree shade - 10.

Case study 11.

- i. Women laundering clothes - 1.
- ii. Holding a meeting that brings together both kinship genders groups - 9.
- iii. Groups of women that appear to roughly represent same social generation are relaxing within the open outside - 9 and 15.

Case study 12.

- i. Women sitting alone by themselves and appear to be in relaxed mood - 1.
- ii. Joint meeting that brings together the different gender groups within the clan - 7.

Case study 13.

- i. Women in a group that appears to be informal - 1.
- ii. Joint meeting that brings together both the genders from the clan - 3.

Case study 14.

- i. Different genders loosely mixing with one another - 9.

Concept of mourning - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Decision about one's burial location - 5.
- ii. Opening of doors in all houses within mourning homestead - 6.

Case study R3.

- i. Clan and neighbors responsibilities during the course of mourning - 4 and 11.
- ii. Preparation of meals during mourning - 4 and 11.
- iii. Decision about where one should be buried - 11.

Case study R6.

- i. Decision about where one should be buried - 3, 7 and 9.

- ii. Performing mourning rites - 7.

Case study R8.

- i. Performing the last ceremony that should mark the end of mourning period - 5.
- ii. Neighbors' roles during mourning times - 9.

Case study R9.

- i. Lighting mourning fire - 4 and 6.
- ii. Spending the night in the open during the mourning period - 9

Case study R10.

- i. Decision on where to locate the burial - 6 and 10.
- ii. Bringing a corpse inside the homestead from outside this - 9.

7. 3 Rites of passage.

Concept of mourning - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Locating the burial ground - 9.

Case study R4.

- i. Son-in-law and those that are attending the mourning of the parent-in-law - 7.
- ii. Locating the burial ground - 11.
- iii. Bringing a traditional musician to entertain people during their mourning time - 13
- iv. Slaughtering of livestock to mark mourning - 15.

Case study R5.

- i. Roles of the community members in times of mourning - 1.
- ii. Slaughtering of livestock to mark mourning - 1, 3 and 5.
- iii. Seating arrangement by the different social groups who are attending to mourn - 2.
- iv. Decision on where to locate the burial ground - 2.
- v. Cooking in a homestead during mourning - 3.
- vi. Calling the traditional musician to help mourners mark an event - 3.

Case study R7.

- i. Accommodating mourners - 3.
- ii. Marking of the last mourning activity - 3 and 14.
- iii. Locating the direction of alighting the burial ground - 4.
- iv. Slaughtering of a livestock to mark mourning - 12.
- v. Bringing in the body of a corpse into the homestead from outside this - 13 and 14.
- vi. Related events that are enacted for the family to mark mourning period - 14.

Case study R11.

- i. Role of the clan people to the deceased person's family - 11-12.
- ii. Widow or widower's required style of mourning - 12.
- iii. Decision on where to locate burial within the homestead - 13.

Case study R12.

- i. Last event that is held to mark the end of mourning - 5.
- ii. Decision on where to locate the burial - 9.

Case study R13.

- i. Decision on locating the burial ground within homestead - 1, 6 and 7.
- ii. Bringing in a corpse into the homestead from outside this- 5.
- iii. Movement with the deceased body while taking it to the burial ground from the dwelling unit - 6.
- iv. Hosting a son-in-law who is attending the mourning of those he can socially referred to as being parent-in-law - 9.
- v. Last rite that is performed to mark the end of a mourning - 11 and 12.

Case study R14.

- i. Decision on the location of burial ground within the homestead - 6.
- ii. Slaughtering of livestock to mark a mourning event - 7.
- iii. Role of the community to those that are left behind by the deceased

Case study 15.

- i. Slaughtering of a livestock to mark mourning event - 4.
- ii. Decision about the location of the burial ground - 4.
- iii. Movement with the deceased body while taking it to the site of burial from the dwelling unit.

Celebrating new life in community - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Parental blessing in a marriage.

Case study R3.

- i. Community in marking the arrival of a newly born child - 4.
- ii. Community role in the new marriage - 4 and 7.
- iii. Community in the marking of one's initiation - 4.
- iv. Ancestral blessing in a marriage - 5.

Case study R6.

- i. An activity that is performed as part of fulfilling a marriage relationship- 4.
- ii. Hosting someone that may be referred to as being son-in-law and whose message is to announce the possible severing of the marriage relationship with one's daughter - 5.

Case study R8.

- i. Entering the future bride's homestead to propose an intended marriage - 3.
- ii. Future role of community members in a marriage - 4.
- iii. Marking an initiation - 8.

Case study R9.

-
- i. Dancing next to the bridegroom's dwelling unit as one of the events that is enacted to mark a marriage - 3 and 4.

Case study R10.

- i. Eating and feasting as one of the requirements towards marriage - 8.
- ii. Welcoming of a newly born child to the community - 9.
- iii. Requirements of a precedents for some of the actions within kinship for one to be able to enact some of the obligations of culture - 9.

Celebrating new life in community- Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Parental blessing for a marriage - 7.
- ii. Marking the arrival of a newly born child - 7.
- iii. Entertainment to mark a marriage - 8-9.
- iv. Bodily movement by the bride's parent into their son-in-laws' dwelling unit.
- v. Celebrations to mark an initiation - 11.

Case study 4.

- i. Celebration that goes towards the marking of a marriage - 5 and 6.
- ii. Ancestral role in a marriage - 4, 13 and 15.

Case study R7.

- i. Dedicating a newly born child to the ancestors - 4

Case study R11.

- i. Roles of community in a marriage - 6 and 7.
- ii. Special visits by the son-in-law to the bride's parental homestead - 6 and 8.

Case study R12.

- i. Special visits by the son-in-law to the bride's parental homestead - 3.
- ii. Role of community in a marriage - 7.
- iii. Decision about where one should be buried within the homestead.

Case study R13.

- i. Welcoming of someone that may socially be referred to as son-in-law when he arrives to announce possible severing of marriage relationship to the girl's parents - 9.
- ii. Role of the community in a marriage - 9 and 13.
- iii. Special visit by the son-in-law to the suitor's parental homestead - 9.
- iv. Parental blessing in a marriage - 13.
- v. Slaughtering of a livestock the purpose of which is to mark a marriage event - 13.
- vi. Dedicating a newly born child to the ancestors - 14.

Case study 14.

- i. Arrival at the future bride's homestead at the first time to announce the marriage proposal - 3.
- ii. Role of one's community in a marriage - 2.
- iii. Slaughtering of a livestock as a process in the marking of a marriage event - 3.
- iv. Celebrating an initiation by the community people - 8.
- v. Marking the arrival of the newly born child by the community - 8.

Case study 15.

- i. Arriving at the future bride's homestead to propose the marriage - 3-4.
- ii. Marking the arrival of a newly born child 5.

Concept of Home - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Decision that influences the location of where one should refer to as home - 5.

Case study R3.

- i. Relationship in activities between people in the homestead proper and the dwellers and placement of two settings - 5, 10 and 11.
- ii. Ancestral role in the marking of the beginning of a new homestead - 6.

Case study R6.

- i. Migrating to start a new homestead - 1, 2 and 10.
- ii. Decisions that are taken when settling in a new place that one may later on refer to as the home - 7.
- iii. Activity place between those in the home proper and dwellers - 7, 8 and 11.
- iv. Setting out from the senior wife's house while on the way out to enact a traditional requirement - 10.

Case study R8.

- i. Decisions that are taken before one can refer to a place as being home - 9 and 11.

Case study R9.

- i. Need to enact some of the traditions only within one's homestead - 4 and 7.
- ii. Setting out from homestead to take part in some traditions - 7.
- iii. Marking out the built element that can then be used to announce the independent state of a homestead - 8.

Case study R10.

- i. Developing a new homestead - 11

Concept of Home - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Starting a homestead - 5.

Case study R4.

- i. Paternal blessing of a new homestead - 8 and 15.

Case study R7.

- i. Requirements for one to set out from the senior wife's house when on the way to perform some traditions - 6, 7 and 11.
- ii. Activity that then helps to identify a homestead as being an independent state - 7.
- iii. Bodily movements by different generations within the homestead during darkness - 11.

Case study R11.

- i. Parental blessing of a new homestead - 12.
- ii. Migrating to start a new homestead - 13.

Case study R12.

- i. Bodily movement across the homestead by some of youths who are visiting their friends - 3-4.

Case study R13.

- i. Bodily movement by the different generations while moving across the homestead when it is dark - 5.

Case study R14.

- i. Paternal role in establishing of a new homestead - 4.

Case study R15.

- i. Paternal role in the establishing of a homestead - 3.

7.4 Concept of a Community.

The Essence of a Court - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Holding of a discussion that desires for some level of privacy - 3.
- ii. Meeting between kinship elderly people - 10.

Case study R6.

- i. Discussing issues that may call for confidentiality - 2 and 6.
- ii. Meetings that are required to set a free environment between the discussants - 11.
- iii. Participation of clan elders during mourning time - 12.

Case study R9.

- i. Role of an elderly person as one of the arbitrators within the clan - 1.
- ii. Discussing issues whose nature may call for level of privacy - 5 and 8.
- iii. Consulting with peers for advice when necessary - 5.
- iv. Role of the clan elders in times of mourning - 6.
- v. Consulting between peers - 7.

Case study R10.

- i. The role of elder people as counselors for traditional affairs within the clan - 3 and 4.
- ii. Holding discussion whose level may require given level of privacy - 5 and 7.
- iii. Traditional role of parent to their growing children - 8.

The Essence of a Court - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Requirement for holding some of the discussions within a setting that project some dimension of neutrality - 4.
- ii. The role of an elder as a sage - 4.
- iii. Meeting with peers - 5.

Case study R4.

-
- i. Elders from the clan forming a standing council body during mourning time - 3.
 - ii. Meeting with peers - 5 and 13.
 - iii. Discussing issues that require confidentiality - 19.

Case study R5.

- i. Standing council that has been formed by elders from the clan during time of mourning - 2

Case study R7.

- i. Holding of consultation between the elders with the issues that are being raised requiring some level of privacy - 2 and 5.
- ii. Consulting with peers - 5.
- iii. Consulting with the grown up children - 10.

Case study R11.

- i. Holding of discussion with peers - 4 and 14.
- ii. Role of elder persons as advisors within the clan - 5.
- iii. Discussing issues that may require some level of privacy - 8.

Case study R12.

- i. Holding meeting with peers - 3.
- ii. During a social event, elders sit around in case of matters that call for their attention arising - 5.

Case study R13.

- i. Elder person as an advisor on social culture matters and who might be consulted by the people - 3.
- ii. Presence of a standing council during the mourning time and which advises on matters that may arise - 11.
- iii. The need for an elder to hold discussion with some of the kinship and/ or clan peers - 16.

Case study R14.

- i. Social responsibility of an elder to the youth within the kinship and/ or clan - 6.
- ii. The role of an elder as advisor on social culture issues - 9.

Case study R15.

- i. Need on kinship and/ or clan people to hold discussion on issues that are of social importance - 2, 5 and 8.

Being in a Community - Urban Cases.

Case study R1.

- i. Activities by the dwellers during the course of the evening - 2.
- ii. Support by those from the clan and likewise the neighbors when there is a mishap - 5 and 6.
- iii. Kinship people coming together to share drink - 8.
- iv. Hosting friends to traditional drink - 11.

Case study R3.

- i. Those that are expected to attend during a social event - 5.

Case study R6.

- i. Meeting that brings together the different kinship people - 4 and 8.
- ii. Roles of kinship people towards one another - 9.

Case study 8.

- i. Attending to some of the neighbor's needs - 1 and 2.
- ii. Dwellers activities in the course of evening - 10.

Case study R9.

- i. Taking part in some of the events that involve the community and that are able to help in identifying of one with the group - 8, 9 and 11.
- ii. Meeting by kinship and/ or clan people to deliberate over issues of their community - 9.
- iii. Traditional responsibility of elderly person's to their community - 11.

Case study R10.

- i. Attending to some of the neighbor people's needs - 2.
- ii. Events that end up bringing both the people from the clan and neighbors together - 3.
- iii. Holding of meeting that involve kinship people in deliberation - 3-4.
- iv. Meeting between homestead owner, family members and the rest of dwellers - 6 and 8.

Being in a Community - Rural Cases.

Case study R2.

- i. Sparing time to inquire on matters that may affect other community people - 1, 8 and 12.
- ii. When away from home, getting some of the kinship to know where one is - 12.

Case study R4.

- i. Role of kinship and/ or clan people towards one another - 3 and 12.
- ii. Participating in events that touch on one of the kinship member - 3.
- iii. Calling kinship people for deliberation 10.
- iv. The spirit that has made members of the *Luo* society to be cohesive - 19.

Case study R5.

- i. Participating in an event that is being organized by one of the kinship member - 1.

Case study R7.

- i. When required, clan membership get together to deliberate and to find ways of assisting their person in need - 2.
- ii. Need for one another when faced with problem - 3 and 6.

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- iii. Clan meeting and holding of celebrations that bring everyone together - 4, 7, 8, 10 and 15.

Case study R11

- i. Attending an event that is being held by both clan members and neighbors - 6 and 12.
- ii. Role of an elderly person to the youth - 15.

Case study R12.

- i. Holding different levels of assemblies that involves kinship and/ or clan people the aim being to deliberate about matters that affect the community - 2, 4, 8 and 9.

Case study R13.

- i. Holding deliberations that involve participation by the kinship and/ or clan people - 12.

Case study R14.

- i. Gathering that involves kinship people the aim being deliberation on matters that may be affecting them - 4 and 7.

Case study R15.

- i. Events during the evening by the kinship people - 7.
- ii. Holding of meetings that involve clan members.

Appendix 5.

CASE STUDIES - SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS.

8.1 Vernacular setting.

Spatial hierarchy and Threshold.

Case study 2.

- i. Place where visitors can be received - 2.
- ii. Planning the son's homesteads around the parental one - 4.
- iii. The need for a shaded place next to the dwelling unit where one may be with some of those who are calling has necessitated people to plant trees - 5.
- iv. The open outside as an alternative place where meals may be prepared - 7.
- v. Increasing spatial privacy for parent when attempting to move inside the grown up child's dwelling unit - 8
- vi. Burial ground within the open outside next to the entrance to the dwelling unit - 9 and 11.
- vii. Marked segments of a homestead - 10.
- viii. Levels of spatial privacy for visiting in-laws within the built elements of the homestead - 10.

Case study R4.

- i. A single house has the entrance facing the main gate - 1.
- ii. Open outside as likely setting for discussing with those visitors that one is not properly familiar with - 2, 5 and 18.
- iii. When clan people with amount of traditional reservation towards one another meet, the open outside offers a better setting - 4.
- iv. Discussions that require some level of privacy are held within the open yard - 5 and 12.
- v. Some of the marked visits by the son-in-law are welcomed to the yard - 5, 7, 10 and 14.
- vi. Different levels of spatial privacy for visiting in-laws - 5, 7, 8, 11 and 14.
- vii. Deceased brought into the homestead through a special gate that is cut through the fence- 9
- viii. Increase in level of privacy for grown up children and likewise the son-in-law when approaching parental dwelling unit - 9 and 10.
- ix. Homestead has different segments that relate to generations - 16
- x. Character of open outside - 18.

Case study R5.

- i. Homestead as comprising different sectors - 2.
- ii. Traditional burial grounds is within the open outside next to the house - 2.
- iii. During mourning, the homestead is literally structured to create territories for different level of in-laws visitors and to minimize on the position of the teams being nearer to one another- 3.

Case study R7.

- i. Homestead planning instructed by belief on culture - 1, 6 and 11.
- ii. Entrance verandah has provided a setting where we meet the participant relaxing with some of the grown up sons - 1.
- iii. Importance of a gate as a symbol that show the homestead to be an independent entity - 7.
- iv. Homestead has different sectors - 11.
- v. After dark, there is relative increase in level of privacy for both parents and the grown up children while approaching each other's territorial grounds - 11.
- vi. Yard as an alternative place to be with visitors - 11.
- vii. Gate created through the fence to bring a dead body into the homestead - 11.

Case study R11.

- i. Presence of a distinct entrance latched gate that alerts one of the territory ahead- 1.
- ii. Senior wife's dwelling house main entrance door singly dominates the main gate - 1.
- iii. Central yard is being used as the main reception place and also where people can be bid farewell - 1, 3 and 5.
- iv. Planning of the homestead with the sons' dwelling units directly next to the main gate has been instructed by cultural belief - 5.
- v. At first the host moves with us to hold discussions in the verandah - 3
- vi. Planning with focus towards the center to provide homestead with enough security, and this also to provide the social locus - 5.
- vii. Levels of spatial privacy with visiting in-laws 6 and 7.
- viii. Levels of spatial privacy for the in-laws who are paying a visit - 7.
- ix. Identification of homestead sectors into the one belonging to the youthful activities and the other as being related to those by the elders - 9.
- x. Identification of a central burial place for those in the homestead - 13.

Case study R12.

- i. Open outside viewed as neutral place especially when settling disputes - 2.
- ii. Division of homestead into two segments - 3 and 4.
- iii. Senior wife's house as the only single one in the homestead with the entrance that directly faces the main entrance gate - 4.
- iv. Traditional norm followed when locating the burial ground next to the house - 9.
- v. Culture requirement for some rites to be performed in the open outside but next to a related house - 5.

Case study R13.

- i. Larger homestead with courts of different size - 1.
- ii. Planning layout of the different homesteads that belong to kinship people have been instructed by traditional belief - 3.
- iii. Planning the layout for the different dwelling units in a homestead has been instructed by traditional belief - 4 and 10.
- iv. Division of homestead into different segments with relatively younger sons locating their dwelling units next to the main entrance - 4.

- v. Main gate as the element that manifests the independence of the homestead - 5.
- vi. Traditional requirements for the burial ground revised so that it is now at the back of each house - 6-7.
- vii. Levels of spatial privacy for visiting in-laws - 8 and 9.

Case study R14.

- i. Levels of spatial hierarchy for the visiting in-law - 2.
- ii. Receiving the father-in-law within the open outside 4.
- iii. Increasing level of privacy for grown up children when approaching parental dwelling unit - 5.
- iv. Existence of different house types for different generations - 5.
- v. Following traditions in locating the burial ground within the open outside next to the main doorway - 6.
- vi. Traditional belief still influences the planning layout of the different dwelling units within a homestead - 10.

Case study R15.

- i. Levels of spatial hierarchy for the visiting in-laws - 3.
- ii. Both movements by the parent and likewise their grown up children are controlled while approaching the other ones territory - 6 and 7.
- iii. Traditional requirement influenced the planning layout of the homestead - 6
- iv. Setting of a place within the open outside where in-laws may be received - 7

Settings for Community activities and for Rite of Passage

Case study R2.

- i. Set place where elderly people can be in together - 4.
- ii. Setting for celebrating the arrival of a new born child - 7
- iii. Setting where kinship people can possibly share meals - 7.
- iv. Setting where marriage event may be celebrated - 10.
- v. Open outside for celebrating of an initiation 11.

Case study R4.

- i. Possible setting where one may meet with kinship people and/ or some other grouping and is capable of affording an environment for holding open discussion - 3.
- ii. Enacting a marriage event that brings together the different community members in a marked place in the open outside - 6, 15 and 16.
- iii. Setting within the open outside that is capable of getting people to freely discuss with one another - 9.
- iv. External setting where women may come together to socialize - 10.
- v. Shade offered by tree growth as an external area where people may come together to hold discussion - 10.
- vi. Setting where traditional music can be played as a way of mourning - 13.
- vii. Presence of non-negotiable place in the open outside and thus in turn is viewed as sacred - 6 and 17.

Case study R5.

- i. Setting within the open outside for the standing council of kinship elders - 2.
- ii. Setting for entertainment by the traditional musician in times of mourning - 3.
- iii. Setting that is next to the deceased dwelling unit for the slaughtering of a cow during mourning - 4.

Case study R7.

- i. Open outside as setting where mourners are to be within - 3 and 14.
- ii. Setting for the slaughtering of a goat during the dedication of a newly born child to the ancestors - 4.
- iii. Setting within the open outside that is reserved for holding of events that may bring the clan and/ or kinship people together - 4 and 7.
- iv. Setting on the open outside where elders may be in during an event - 5.
- v. Setting within the open outside where one may share meals with family people while holding deliberations - 8, 9 and 10.
- vi. Women holding activities within the open outside under the tree shade - 10.

Case study R11.

- i. Tree growth as necessary in marking out a setting where elders may meet with one another - 4.
- ii. Setting in the open outside where one may entertain in-laws - 7.
- iii. Setting within the open outside where the kinship women may come together for a meeting - 9.
- iv. During an event structuring of the open outside to accommodate different social generic members - 14.
- v. Setting within the open outside for women's activity - 15.

Case study R12

- i. Setting within the open outside for holding of kinship meetings - 2, 7 and 8.
- ii. Place setting where elderly people may ordinarily be found - 3.
- iii. Place setting where visiting in-laws may be entertained by community people - 3.
- iv. Necessary setting within the open outside that is next to the deceased dwelling unit where some of the traditional rites can be performed - 5.
- v. Setting within the open outside that enhances privacy in discussion - 6.

Case study R13.

- i. Standing Council of Elder's place within the open outside during mourning time - 11.
- ii. Setting within the open outside that may accommodate clan members during marriage activity - 13 and 15.
- iii. Setting for naming of a newly born child - 14.
- iv. Open place within the outside where an elder may be together with those that he should have social reservations towards - 16
- v. Tree as necessary element within the setting that define immediate external setting - 16-17.

Case study R14.

- i. Setting within the open outside where women may hold their activities - 1.

- ii. Need for setting within the yard where a goat may be slaughtered during marriage event - 3.
- iii. Setting within the outside where one may come together with the grown up children - 4.
- iv. Setting within the outside where a goat may be slaughtered to mark mourning - 7.
- v. Need for open outside where clan people may come to mark an initiation - 8.

Case study R15.

- i. Setting within the open outside where kinship elders may come together to discuss, and share traditional drink and meals - 5.

8.2 Urban setting.

Spatial hierarchy and Thresholds.

Case study R1.

- i. Setting where gender may be - 3.
- ii. Setting within the outside where the father-in-law may be entertained - 5.
- iii. Gates as elements that alert one of territory ahead - 5 and 10.
- iv. Identifying the outside open with particular gender group - 7 and 8.

Case study R3.

- i. Welcome to the verandah - 2 and 13.
- ii. Hierarchy of settings from across dweller's blocks to the homestead proper - 5 and 11.
- iii. Each dwelling unit has own entrance verandah - 6
- iv. Increase in spatial privacy level for parents-in-law while approaching their children's dwelling unit - 7.
- v. Setting within the open outside for women's activities - 8 and 12.
- vi. Verandah as likely place where dwellers take their meals - 13.

Case study R6.

- i. Increase in spatial privacy for the in-law - 5-6.
- ii. Level of privacy within some of the open outside setting - 6.
- iii. Traditional burial ground located within the open outside that is at the back - 7.
- iv. Homestead planning guided by the traditional requirements - 7-8.
- v. Gate as the element that alerts one of the whereabouts - 8.
- vi. Tree shade as providing setting where youth may be with peers - 8.
- vii. Traditional division of a homestead into segments - 10.
- viii. Planning the homestead to locate dwellers block within a territory that is considered as being outside - 7, 8, and 10.
- ix. Culture belief that some issues should not be mentioned within the dwelling unit - 12.

Case study R8.

- i. Settings within the open outside where dwellers can be during the evening - 10.

Case study R9.

- i. Setting within the open outside where participants in a discussion are able to properly articulate the issue - 2 and 5.
- ii. Verandah as likely place where some type of kinship people are received - 4.
- iii. The shade provided by the tree outside as likely setting where a stranger can be received - 5.
- iv. Setting within the open outside that can accommodate the mourners - 6.

Case study R10.

- i. Dwelling units arranged to follow traditional pattern with main house doorway the only one facing the central gate - 1 and 5.
- ii. Set place within the outside where one can be with in-laws - 5.
- iii. Existing choice of where to be within the open outside - 6.
- iv. Possible set place within the outside where one may be with kinship people - 7.
- v. Setting within the outside where one may spend time with grown up children - 7.
- vi. Setting where those in homestead proper and the dwellers may come together during the evening time - 8.

Settings for Community activities and for Rite of Passage

Case study R1.

- i. Setting within the open outside for being with peers - 3 and 11.
- ii. Water point as setting for gender discussions - 4 and 12-13.
- iii. Setting within the open outside for marking of an initiation event - 11.

Case study R3.

- i. Setting for celebrating arrival of newly born child by the kinship people - 4.
- ii. Setting within the open outside where kinship people may mark an initiation - 5.
- iii. Setting plan locates the dwellers' outside the built environment that is traditionally considered to be homestead proper - 5.
- iv. Setting within the open outside for those in homestead proper - 5 and 10.
- v. Set place within the outside for the dwellers - 6.
- vi. Set place within the outside where some of the clan people may be received - 6.
- vii. Setting in the outside open where peers may be received - 12.

Case study R6.

- i. Elderly people relaxing under tree shade within the central yard - 2.
- ii. Setting in the open outside for gender activity - 3.
- iii. Set place within the open outside where kinship meetings may be held - 4, 9 and 11.
- iv. Setting layout locates the dwellers' block outside what is traditionally considered homestead proper - 7.
- v. Conserving the traditional open outside place - 5.

Case study R8.

- i. Setting for gender activity within the open outside - 5 and 6.

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- ii. Setting within the open outside where one may receive some of the kinship and/ or clan people - 6.
 - iii. Set place within the open outside for holding an initiation celebration - 8.
 - iv. Setting within the open outside where an elder may be - 5.
 - v. Setting within the open outside for activities of the dwellers - 10.

Case study R9.

- i. Set place in the open outside for gender - 1 and 6.
- ii. Setting within the open outside for enacting of marriage ceremony by the clan members - 3.
- iii. Setting within the open outside where in-law may be welcomed to - 3.
- iv. Setting within the open outside where one may be with peers - 3.
- v. Set place within the open space for standing elders' council during mourning times - 6.

Case study R10.

- i. Layout planning instructed by traditional requirements - 3.
- ii. Setting within the open outside where one may get together with kinship people - 4, 5 and 6.
- iii. Set places within the outside where one may receive the son-in-law - 5.
- iv. Setting within the open outside where those in the homestead proper and dwellers can hold joint activities - 6.
- v. Set place within the open outside in the homestead for burial - 6 and 11.
- vi. Setting layout locates the dwellers' block outside what is traditionally considered homestead proper - 8.
- vii. Setting where clan members can hold celebrations for the newly born child - 9.
- viii. Setting within the open outside where mourning activities can be carried out - 10.

Appendix 6

GLOSSARY.

Names of places.

Alego.
 Bandani.
 Bobaracho.
 Bondo.
 Busia.
 Busungu.
 Central Kitutu.
 Central Nyanza.
 Daraja Mbili.
 East Kajulu.
 Gem.
 Gembe
 Gesonso.
 Githunguri.
 Gombe.
 Gusii
 Jogoo.
 Kakamega.
 Kano.
 Ka'sigunga
 Kasule.
 Kathunga
 Kibos.
 Kiboswa.
 Kisii District.
 Kisii town.
 Kitutu East.
 Kolweny.
 Kondele.
 Luanda.
 Manga Hills.
 Manyatta.
 Maseno.
 Mbita.
 Mbita.
 Migori.
 Milimani.
 Misri.
 Mombasa.
 Momboleo.
 Mosocho.

Mwembe.
 Nakuru.
 Nakuru.
 Nyabururu.
 Nyalenda.
 Nyamache.
 Nyamasaria.
 Nyancha.
 Nyaribari.
 Nyatunwa.
 Obunga.
 Ogembo.
 Rongo.
 Rusinga Island.
 Sakwa.
 Sega.
 Siaya.
 South Nyanza.
 South Wanjare.
 Ugenya.
 Wanjare.
 West kajulu.
 Winam.

Material culture and
or terms.

Abila.
 Baraza.
 Bath dala.
 Changaa.
 Diel diso.
 Eburu.
 Egctangura.
 Egesa.
 Egesemi.
 Egeticha-maino.
 Egetiti.
 Egetureti.
 Ekeigorogoro.
 Ekeigorogoro.
 Ekiaguri.
 Esigani.
 Geta.
 Jaduong.
 Kabweri.
 Kachiena.
 Ka'duol.
 Ka'duol.

Kamwalo.
 Karangach.
 Karangach.
 Kasiger.
 Kasimba.
 Khanga.
 Kimbo.
 Kul.
 Maduong.
 Magenga
 Mate.
 Mbunga.
 Mogaka.
 Moinende.
 Moino.
 Monuomori.
 Nyasaye.
 Nyatiti.
 Ofula.
 Omorororia.
 Omosocho.
 Omu'Gusii.
 Piny duaro.
 Rogoro.
 Simba.
 Ugali.
 Ugali.
 Verandah.
 Wairegi.

Names of cultural
groups and or clans.

Abagusii.
 Abasamia.
 Abawanga.
 Bantu.
 Bosigia.
 Botondo.
 Ka'ruoth
 Kasiger.
 Kikuyu.
 Kipsigis.
 Kuria.
 Luhya.
 Luo.
 Moguche.
 Mwamisoko.
 Nilotes.

Nubians.
Nyaribari.
Ormanyomoyio.
Wawere.

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