

## BELONGING AND RECOGNITION AFTER THE POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE: A CASE STUDY ON LABOUR MIGRANTS IN NAIVASHA, KENYA

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**Summary:** The 2013 general elections in Kenya entailed no recurrence of the 2007–08 post-election violence. Closer examination at the local level, though, indicates that the experiences of violence continue to influence the social sphere. Divisions between a long-established population and newcomers are blatant especially at places with high levels of immigration. This paper addresses how experiences of violent conflict over identity and territorial belonging affect and transform socio-spatial organisation. The analysis is based on an empirical study at one of the venues of the post-election violence, a poor and heterogeneous workers' settlement in Naivasha in Kenya's Rift Valley. Naivasha area is internationally known for its horticultural production and massive labour immigration. After the 2007 elections, radical individuals of the local Kikuyu ethnic majority claimed Naivasha as their territory as a reaction to the displacement of Kikuyus from other parts of the country. Migrants of unwanted ethnic identity or political positioning were murdered or forcibly evicted from the place. Yet, due to poor job opportunities, especially in western Kenya, job seekers continue to migrate to Naivasha. The repercussions of the violence are expressed in the lack of acceptance, on the part of the long-established population at the place, of the presence of labour migrants. Experiences of ethnicised prejudice, mistrust, and fear between the self-described autochthonous population and labour migrants are tenacious. Kikuyus perceive Naivasha as their place of refuge and are willing to defend it if necessary. Migrants barely develop feelings of belonging to Naivasha, seeking rather to enhance their own security during their stay at the place. This study illustrates that memories of the violence still regulate socio-spatial realities and reinforce and accelerate processes of spatial and societal division.

**Zusammenfassung:** Nach dem Ende der postelektoralen Gewalt von 2007–08 befindet sich Kenia heute in einem friedlicheren Zustand. Auf lokaler Ebene wirken die Gewalterfahrungen jedoch nach und bewirken eine Spaltung des sozialen Gefüges. Besonders deutlich wird dies an Orten mit hohen Zahlen interner Migration, an denen die Brüche zwischen langansässiger Bevölkerung und Zugezogenen verlaufen. Dieses Paper gibt ein Beispiel dafür, wie Erfahrungen gewaltsamer Konflikte um identitäre und territoriale Zugehörigkeit sozialräumliche Organisation beeinflussen und transformieren. Die Analyse stützt sich auf eine empirische Studie an einem der Austragungsorte der Gewalt, einer ärmlichen und heterogenen Arbeitersiedlung in Naivasha in Kenias Rift Valley. Naivasha ist international bekannt für seine Gartenbauproduktion und die massiven Zahlen an Arbeitsmigration. Nach den Wahlen 2007 deklarierten radikale Individuen der lokalen ethnischen Mehrheit der Kikuyus Naivasha als ihr Gebiet, nachdem Kikuyus aus anderen Landesteilen vertrieben worden waren. Migrantinnen und Migranten mit unerwünschter ethnischer Identität oder politischer Positionierung wurden gewaltsam vertrieben oder ermordet. Aufgrund geringer Arbeitschancen vor allem im Westen Kenias kommen Arbeitssuchende jedoch nach wie vor nach Naivasha. Die Nachwirkungen der Gewalt drücken sich in der Nicht-Anerkennung dieser Migrantinnen und Migranten durch die langansässige Bevölkerung am Ort aus. Ethnisierte Vorurteile, Misstrauen und Angst zwischen der sich als autochthon verstehenden Bevölkerung und Migrantinnen und Migranten halten sich beharrlich. Kikuyus sehen Naivasha als Zufluchtsort, den sie notfalls gegen Übergriffe verteidigen. Gleichzeitig haben Migrantinnen und Migranten kaum ein Zugehörigkeitsgefühl zu Naivasha, sondern entwickeln Strategien, um ihre Sicherheit während ihres Aufenthalts zu erhöhen. Die Studie zeigt, dass die Gewalteindrücke von 2007–08 weiterhin sozialräumliche Realitäten bestimmen und dass Prozesse gesellschaftlicher Spaltung und räumlicher Neusortierung durch die Gewalterfahrung verschärft und verstärkt werden.

**Keywords:** Migration, Kenya, belonging, perception, place, violence

### 1 Introduction

Issues of control over and access to land, intertwined with questions of ethnicised belonging and recognition, are central points of public discussion in Kenya, especially during times of political decision-

making (OUCHO 2002). Both topics played a crucial role in the December 2007 general elections, during which people's sense of belonging to particular places was violently negotiated (LONSDALE 2008). Internal migrants, who the local majorities did not recognise as belonging to 'their' place, and who were

believed to support the ‘wrong’ political candidate, were the main targets of the post-election violence. Their forceful evictions resulted in over 1,300 casualties and an estimated half a million people internally displaced (HRW 2008).

Naivasha, a town in the eastern Rift Valley and one of the venues of the 2007-08 post-election violence, is amongst Kenya’s most important receiving areas for labour migrants due to its flourishing horticultural industry (WWF 2012). According to the last census, in 2009 Kenya had over half a million internal migrants, one third of whom migrated to the Rift Valley Province (GONDI 2013). During the violence in Naivasha in January 2008, at least forty people of Luo, Luhya and Kalenjin ethnic identity from the western parts of Kenya were forcibly evicted or killed by a mob of radical young Kikuyu men (HRW 2008). Irrespective of this history of violence against the non-autochthonous population, the economic prospects offered by the horticultural industries around Lake Naivasha continue to attract labour migration (KUNAS 2011).

Based on empirical research at one of the hot-spots of the post-election violence – an unplanned workers’ settlement in Naivasha – the objectives of this paper are to portray the situation of labour migrants in Naivasha after the violence, to take a look at the factors that constitute migrants’ recognition and feelings of belonging in Naivasha, and to examine how the violence influenced such perceptions. While our paper cannot offer a comparison of pre- and post-violence social settings, it nevertheless gives an account of migrants’ realities after 2007. The focus is on individual perceptions and senses of place and belonging due to the complexity of migration and belonging. We seek to identify patterns, but make no claim for the representativeness of our findings. We assume that before the violence, the common prospects of job and income opportunities, a more-or-less equal economic status amongst workers, and the continuous influx of labour migrants induced a rather broad-minded, work-oriented, probably tolerant social setting in Naivasha, as KASARA (2011) suggests. In any case, our considerations accept the societal divisions that existed before 2007, and which framed earlier outbreaks of violence (HRW 1993, 2002, 2008).

Feelings of belonging to a certain place or piece of land, and the related making of identity, are complex phenomena that involve individual perceptions of physical or ecological properties of the land and socio-cultural aspects (GUSTAFSON 2009). In Kenya, cultural practices depend on the properties of the

land inhabited and – through processes of political and ideological creation (OUCHO 2002) – ethnic identity is inextricably linked to land and place (JENKINS 2012). The common, strong emphasis on autochthony and belonging to a particular place is reflected in the recurring reference to the *majimbo* idea in Kenyan politics and society. *Majimbo* is the Kiswahili term for a decentralised regionalism based on the ancestral and colonially constituted homelands. Since independence in 1963, representatives of minority groups have promoted *majimbo* to secure their rights of control over ancestral lands in opposition to the nationalist ambitions of especially the Kikuyu ethnic majority (ANDERSON 2010). Among the effects of *majimbo* are the ethnicisation of politics and the marginalisation of ‘strangers’ – migrants, ethnic ‘others’ – who are treated as political opposition to local mainstream opinion (GESCHIERE and GUGLER 1998).

Since Daniel arap Moi’s incumbency, the “obsession with roots and origin” (ibid., 313) has been situated in a politics of belonging in which multi-party politics continue to be connected with the fear of being outvoted by strangers, and the village and the region form sources of power. In the 1990s, members of Moi’s regional networks intimidated and evicted an estimated 300,000 and killed about 1,500 Kikuyus in the Rift Valley, invoking *majimbo* as justification (HRW 1993). During the 2007 elections, the claim for *majimbo* by opposition leader Raila Odinga fuelled fears amongst Kikuyus of another outbreak of violence against their community (LYNCH 2008; MACARTHUR 2008). These fears were confirmed when, after the announcement of Odinga’s defeat by his Kikuyu opponent Kibaki, rumours of vote-rigging spread, and Kikuyus were evicted from western Kenya and their properties destroyed (ICG 2008; THROUP 2008). The violence against alleged Kibaki supporters – mainly Kikuyus or Kisiis – took its course in other opposition strongholds in the western Rift Valley, Nairobi and the coast (ANDERSON and LOCHERY 2008; OSBORN 2008; ICG 2008). In Naivasha and Nakuru, a second wave of violence erupted in reaction to the attacks against Kikuyus in other parts of the country. Luos and Kalenjins were expelled and their houses burnt down or given to displaced Kikuyus (ICG 2008).

The empirical findings from Naivasha are analysed against the background of the wider theoretical literature on land, place, and belonging. By investigating how belonging and recognition are created, and by coupling these processes with the role of intensifying (violent) conflicts over land, we can

make sense of migrants' realities in their receiving area. The following section engages with theoretical works on land, place and belonging and places a particular emphasis on the situation in Kenya. Section 3 gives a record of land-related conflicts and of the post-election violence in Naivasha. After a brief description of the methodological approach in Section 4, Section 5 presents the empirical findings of the factors that determine migrants' recognition and feelings of belonging at their places of work after the violence. The paper concludes with a synopsis of the broader context of Kenyan land-related conflicts and the effects on the social sphere and labour migrants' lives in Naivasha.

## 2 Theorisation of land, place, and belonging in the Kenyan context

The social processes that produce places include the historically infused connection of meaning and identity to a definable geographical unit (TUAN 2001). Places are interrelated with land through the meaning of certain pockets of land, or geographical units, as a material resource, through the relationship of land and its inhabitants, and through people's identification with the land (COULTHARD 2010; BARKER and PICKERILL 2012). Places are centres of individuals' activities, felt values, and well-being (BUTTIMER 1980). Among the primary functions of place is the evocation of senses of belonging and attachment, which have significance for individuals' identity formation, through people's association with physical objects and things (PROSHANSKY et al. 1983).

TWIGGER-ROSS and UZZELL (1996) conceptualise the development of a place identity, which we regard as a prerequisite for the creation of a sense of belonging to a place. The spatial effects of places on individual perception require the distinctiveness of a place and the continuous presence of an individual at the place. The use of a place for individual activities generates self-efficacy, through which self-esteem and association with the place are acquired.

Shifting the focus from the effects of place to the subjects inhabiting the place, GUSTAFSON (2009) implies that a complex interplay of individual perceptions of the environmental properties at a place determines feelings of belonging. Belonging to a place depends on individual differences regarding age, length of stay, mobility, origin, profession, educational level, economic status, religion, etc., as well as on the characteristics of the communities inhabiting the place, such as size of the community,

economic development, or social composition and bonds (LEWICKA 2011). LOW and ALTMAN (1992) note that psychological processes and the sociocultural relations a place signifies are equally important to its physical or ecological properties.

Autochthony, in the sense of 'first arrival' or seniority in a place, may determine inclusion and exclusion, or belonging or not belonging to a place or local community. Local citizenship is not only defined by national governments, but also by authorities at lower levels, which endow individuals with land or community rights (LUND 2011). Where national laws allow legal leeway, customary systems do not necessarily guarantee equal access for people of differing ethnic origins, religions, genders or ages, but "are intimately tied up with the dynamics of division and exclusion, alliance and inclusion that constitute class formation" (PETERS 2004, 305). Not being recognized by the local majority means not being endowed with local recognition to claim land or other regional resources, meaning that property cannot be secured (LUND 2011).

JENKINS (2012) examines the bottom-up processes within Kenyan society that – along with the majimbo discourse – produce feelings of autochthonous belonging to a place. She illustrates the centrality of ethnicity and land or territory, which are inextricably linked in the Kenyan context, in the making of identity in Kenya. The autochthonous sense of belonging may be regarded as a naturalised, taken-for-granted, "everyday" and without-any-alternative rootedness in a place (HUMMON 1992). Another way of creating belonging, according to HUMMON (1992), is through an ideological, actively chosen commitment to place – a possible effect of the post-election violence, which we will return to later.

Those who consider themselves autochthonous tend to label migrants as 'others' and 'guests' and expect them to act according to local conventions, which presents a challenge to new arrivals' development of a sense of belonging (JENKINS 2012). The perception that guests take a greater share of the local resources than the autochthonous population is a reason for contention. By supporting, for example, a political candidate who is not favoured by local majorities, as happened during the 2007 elections, migrants contravene the rights of hospitality in their 'host' regions, which exacerbates conflicts (JENKINS 2012). JENKINS's findings from the cultural sphere, the inextricable connection of ethnicity and place in the sense of majimbo, as well as the prevalence of politically fostered ethnicised networks, prompt an uncritical public acceptance of homogeneous elec-

toral units within distinct spatial boundaries. The Kenyan example adds a political dimension to the above-mentioned environmental, psycho-emotional and sociocultural aspects that determine belonging.

The importance of autochthony in Kenya in connection with high levels of internal migration leaves the question of which places migrants actually feel they belong to. The history of migration in Kenya is one of varying cultural and customary settings, power imbalances, and spatial disparities in natural resource availability, economic chances, and infrastructural services (MACHARIA 2003; OKOTH 2003). The forces motivating the predominantly rural-urban migration include hopes for educational and economic improvement, ecological-environmental and cultural drivers, and people's reliance on social networks (MACHARIA 2003; UNEP 2009). The complexity of migration in Kenya is discussed in detail by MACHARIA (2003), but, as he says, "migration can be a very personal decision sometimes defying all above-suggested reasons" (ibid., 23).

Regarding the relation between mobility and sense of belonging to a place, GUSTAFSON (2009) in his literature review, compiles different results ranging from the assumption that mobility decreases people's sense of belonging to a place (FRIED 2000; LACZKO 2005), the realisation that mobility can also strengthen territorial bonds (POLLINI 2005; SAVAGE et al. 2005) to the recognition of the possibility of a sense of belonging to different places simultaneously (GREINER and SAKDAPOLRAK 2013a). This indicates that the study of senses of spatial belonging is intricate, depending on the scale of inquiry, or the vantage point of actor-oriented or place-based approaches and time frames, as well as the quality of portraying individual senses or feelings (HAY 1998).

GESCHIERE and GUGLER (1998) note that the connection between Kenyan migrants and their home areas is a resilient one, and that their loyalty to their sending areas is continuously sustained through a constant exchange of goods and remittances, as well as moral relations and norms, and an everyday language of kinship and solidarity amongst members of the same community (see also GREINER and SAKDAPOLRAK 2013b). Even people who grew up and lived their whole lives in urban environments refer to their rural homeland somewhere in the country when they speak of 'their' place, or home (JENKINS 2012). They imply that they have relatives, ancestors, land properties, or some kind of autochthonous bond – such as name, language, customs, place of birth – in or with the

place they name as their original home, and that they are very much aware of this connection no matter where they currently stay.

Do those autochthonous bonds with the sending area in the context of recurring conflicts over land and places mean that migrants cannot create a sense of belonging to their receiving areas? Exclusion and non-recognition by a community claiming a place as 'their' ancestral territory may lead to dislike and estrangement or "place alienation", "place relativity" in the sense of only conditionally or ambivalently accepting a place, or "placelessness", meaning a total indifference and lack of emotional bonds with a place, among migrants (HUMMON 1992).

PETERS (2004) embeds conflicts over land in Africa in unequal social relationships and conflicting customary, communal, collective, or legal ownerships. Exclusion from access to land creates a sense of impoverishment, and with increasing competition over resources, the significance of inclusion in or exclusion from the groups that belong to a certain place and claim control over it increases. At the same time, divisions *within* social units narrow the definition of belonging or not belonging to a local community or place (PETERS 2009). In other words, the contestation of belonging in many cases is rooted in unequal participation, but also falls back into naturalised legitimisations.

Conflicts over land as a productive resource and a symbolic means of existence are prevalent and persistent in Kenya's history and are well documented (e.g. HAUGERUD 1989; BERMAN and LONSDALE 1992; MACKENZIE 1993; KANYANGA 1998; SOUTHGATE and HULME 2000; KLOPP 2000; BERRY 2002; BOONE 2011). They involve the general productivity of land, as well as socio-political relations and organisation such as the land tenure reforms since the 1950s, shifts in land usage, a growing complexity of actors at multiple levels, resettlement programs, privatisation, expropriation, displacement, and the recurring pattern of ethnicised conflicts (KANYANGA 2000; BOYE and KAARHUS 2011). During the post-election violence, migrants of certain ethnic identities, geographical origins, and alleged political affiliations were denied their belonging at different places in Kenya, including Naivasha, and were forcibly evicted or killed. The following section offers a closer look at the local context of land as a contested resource, before we attend to the question of the changes that came with the post-election violence regarding the legitimisation of belonging in Naivasha.



### 3 Intensifying land conflicts in the receiving area of Naivasha

Stakeholders from the global to the local level make claims for land around the freshwater lake of Naivasha in the Kenyan Rift Valley. They include powerful national actors such as the Kenya Electricity Generating Company and the Kenya Wildlife Service, internationally operating private companies such as the Olkaria geothermal power plants, as well as small-scale farmers, fishers or pastoralist groups claiming access to water, and control of the remaining parcels of land (ISYAKU et al. 2011). Kenyans of European origin, who use the land privately for tourist facilities or wildlife conservation, own much of the land around Lake Naivasha. Another 4,000ha at least are used by the horticultural industry (BECHT et al. 2006).

Horticulture is Kenya's third main source of income after agriculture and tourism, and about 70% of the national horticultural output is produced at Lake Naivasha (OTIANG'A-OWITI and OSWE 2007; ISYAKU et al. 2011). The horticultural industry employs 25,000 to 30,000 people directly. An estimated similar number of people on site indirectly depend on it as service providers or workers' dependants, and an uncounted number of dependants in the sending areas rely on the remittances (BECHT et al. 2006; OTYANG'A-OWITI and OSWE 2007; WWF 2012).

Prospects for jobs and wages, as well as services such as clinics, houses or schools, are considerably higher in Naivasha than in other towns and the rural areas of Kenya. Thus, Naivasha has been a magnet for labour migrants, especially from sending areas in western Kenya, and has faced a tremendous population increase following the area's economic development since the 1980s. The number of inhabitants increased by 64 per cent during the 1990s, and continues to increase. Today, the total population living in the Naivasha basin is estimated at 650,000, with approximately 160,000 people living immediately around the lake (WWF 2012). The rapid influx of migrants results in a proliferation of unplanned urban and slum development. The workers' settlements lack basic amenities such as fresh water, sanitation, and waste disposal (BECHT et al. 2006). Yet, as chances of improving one's prospects are worse in the sending areas, migrants continue to come to Naivasha and abide the poor living conditions, as the place offers hopes for better opportunities.

Conflicts over use of and access to the land mainly arise from the variety of actors and interests present in Naivasha. Non-corresponding land titles and obscure and corrupted allocations of title deeds are one major

source of dispute (BOONE 2011). Environmentalists' concerns over the sustainable use of natural resources, and the industries' interest in maintaining the productivity of the land under their use result in the enclosure of huge areas with walls, barbed wire, iron gates and tight security. This prevents the local population from accessing both water and land, restricting their activities to the congested and rubbish-strewn settlements and severely limiting livelihood opportunities. Cases of resistance to these exclusionary practices recur frequently in the form of disregard of regulations or of violent encroachment on private property (e.g. NTV KENYA 2011a, 2011b).

The 2007-08 post-election violence was a climax of conflict in Kenya, for which Naivasha's workers settlements became venues (ANDERSON and LOCHERY 2008). Apart from the political precursors of the violence (CHEESEMAN 2008; GHAI 2008; MUELLER 2008), much of the Kenyan crisis was about questions of land and belonging, local concepts of self-worth and cultural value (LONSDALE 2008; HRW 2008). Historically, Maasai and – after their settlement during the post-independence land redistribution – Kikuyu ethnic groups have claimed Naivasha as their land (BOIX FAYOS 2002). Traditional claims perish under the area's rapid industrial development, but they mattered all the more during the post-election violence. Whilst Maasais maintained a neutral position, Kikuyus in Naivasha – in reaction to evictions of and violence against members of the Kikuyu community in western Kenya – retaliated against people perceived as not belonging to 'their' place (HRW 2008; ICG 2008; KNCHR 2008). As Naivasha continues to be a magnet for labour migration, how, after the aggravation of contestations over the place and over belonging during the post-election violence, do migrants perceive their situation there? How are migrants recognised? How have their senses of belonging changed, and how is belonging negotiated and legitimised in the everyday social spheres? Insights from the local level help to generate an understanding of migrants' realities at a place where they supposedly do not belong.

### 4 Methodological approach

To generate insights into migrants' realities at Naivasha's former venues of violence, the first author of this paper interviewed fifty-seven residents of an unplanned workers' settlement who were directly or indirectly affected by the events between May and September 2011. The interviews related to personal information on place of origin, reasons for and dura-

tion of being in Naivasha, as well as to memories of the post-election violence.

The first task was identifying migrants from western Kenya. Among them were newcomers, but also people directly affected by the violence who shared their experiences and perceptions of changes at the place. From there, it was a simple matter to ask about friends, neighbours or other acquaintances who also had a story to tell. It was useful to produce visibility and spread handouts with the author's contact details and research interest, as they brought new and unexpected encounters.

The three Maasai research assistants could also make contact with long-time residents of the settlement who provided the author with even sensitive information about the violence. Kikuyu youths who had been part of the killing mobs agreed to share their experiences and frankly gave insight into the reasons for and procedures and effects of the violence. One of those young men later guided transect walks that followed the routes of the mob, and initiated contact with several Kikuyus who had been affected by violence in western Kenya, or who had actively participated in the violence in Naivasha. The sensitive information gathered during the empirical research necessitates that in this paper, personal information as well as recognisable spatial descriptions are concealed.

The transect walks through the settlement were conducted to contextualise the interviews, to engage more closely with the place, and to put spatial features into perspective. This mobile method allows an understanding of the emotional associations of informants with the place they inhabit and to notice behaviours and interactions during encounters with passersby (WYLIE 2005; PAASCHE and SIDAWAY 2010; EVANS and JONES 2011; MENDOZA and MORÉN-ALLEGRET 2013). The walks were led and organised either by the above-mentioned young Kikuyu man, by Maasai witnesses of the violence, or by a Kisii man who was coerced into joining the mob during the violence; they tracked the movements of the killing mob, and passed ruins and other spots where violent acts were carried out.

## 5 Belonging and recognition of migrants after the violence in Naivasha

The information gathered during the empirical phase preceding this paper revealed four striking patterns regarding labour migrants' belonging and recognition that pervaded most interviews: perceived competition over resources; widespread, though often concealed prejudice and mistrust between people

of differing ethnic identities; the naturalised spatial (self-)allocations of interviewees reflecting the *majimbo* discourse; and finally the non-recognition of migrants amongst the (self-)perceived autochthonous population, combined with migrants' lack of feelings of belonging to their place of work. These four patterns will be explicated in more detail:

### 5.1 Perceived resource competition amongst Naivasha residents

Conflicts over jobs and prosperity, and high competitive pressure amongst workers, are ongoing in Naivasha. Economic prospects in most parts of the country have not improved since 2007. Instead, the national unemployment rate has risen to over 40 per cent, and most of the employed work in the informal or private sectors and are underpaid (ETALE 2013). All interviewed migrants from western Kenya said they had no work opportunities in their home areas, and named economic drivers as the sole reason for their returning to or remaining in Naivasha after the violence (compare KUNAS 2011; GONDI 2013). During the transect walks, idleness and poverty were ubiquitous at the settlement, visible for example in poor building stock, littered dirt roads, and loitering people in ragged clothes crowding the streets during work hours. High numbers of assaults and robberies and a common feeling of insecurity were reported by residents. A young Kikuyu man expressed his interpretation of the difficult living conditions and offered a solution:

*"The problem here is the stomach only. People have bad minds because they lack something to eat. The problem with Kenya is you cannot survive without the cash and nobody here has that cash. When you lack something you go to steal. We should get these people [labour migrants] out of this place so that our supply could be more".* (Young man who participated in the violence during group discussion with five Kikuyus, 15.09.2011)

The speaker's idea was to decrease the number of people at the settlement, so that those remaining would have better chances. His opinion was shared by the other group discussants. The perceived competition amongst workers over jobs and other resources is striking. While labour migrants from western Kenya particularly mention the necessity of moving to Naivasha due to poor or nonexistent job opportunities at their places of origin, long-term Kikuyu residents see the migrant flows as a threat. The generally perceived neediness results in felt competition over income opportunities, which is

linked with territorialised thinking and a language of othering and exclusion. This provides an example of LUND'S (2011) assumption of local processes that determine access to or exclusion from community rights, and supports theorisations of divisions within social units and of uneven concessions of rights on the local level (PETERS 2004, 2009). The lines between inclusion and exclusion drawn by Naivasha residents embrace the second salient topic identified from the interviews.

## 5.2 Ethnicised societal divisions, mutual distrust, prejudice, and fear

The societal divisions pervading the 2007 elections had not been overcome in 2011. Even though tribalism is publicly identified as a politically induced cause of the undisputed societal disintegration (GITHONGO 2008), the use of ethnic categories in everyday language is naturalised (OUCHO 2002). Blatant utterances of prejudice and mistrust against people of differing ethnic identities reveal deep-rooted underlying social distinctions:

*"There's also another thing that makes people hate these Luos [...]. The traditions now are abomination. We don't like it. We really hate the traditions of the Luos and still believe the Luos are dirty [...]. Because the way they live they don't live like humans, they live like animals. That's how we call them animals. Because we believe they are not human beings".* (Transect walk with young Kikuyu man from Naivasha, 12.09.2011)

Other interviewees are less direct than the Kikuyu speaker and conceal their fears behind generalised accusations. People of shared ethnic identity are collectively made responsible for individual crimes, which are remembered because they belie the common expectations of a 'guest's good conduct' (JENKINS 2012).

During the transect walks, the author was frequently warned about members of the 'other' group. The Kikuyu guide cited above would only reluctantly enter a plot where Luos lived, warning the foreign researcher of potential, fictitious risks. A Luo interviewee said that he would never enter the area around Kikuyu nightclubs and pubs because he believed that 'those bad guys' lived there (Interview with Luo man who was evicted but returned after the violence, 10.09.2011). The Kisii guide, who was forced to join the mob during the violence or otherwise be killed, refused to enter the Kikuyu areas during a transect walk. Neither would he pause in the vicinity of those places, or the sites of violent events

in 2008. As he said, he felt uncomfortable due to his fear of being seen there and being taken for a traitor (Transect walk with Kisii guide, 19.09.2011). These empirical examples of violence-related fears of the 'other' group intensify existing societal divides. The spatial relatedness of those fears illustrates the socio-cultural and psychological processes involved in the creation or suppression of feelings of belonging, as theorised by LOW and ALTMAN (1992) or GUSTAFSON (2009), and leads to the third identified pattern.

## 5.3 Naturalised spatial allocations

The divisions amongst inhabitants of the workers' settlement were not only palpable through uttered aversions, criminal accusations, or fears of people and places; they were also linked to the unquestioned spatial allocation of people with certain identity features. Kikuyus frequently uttered concerns of a 'hostile take-over' of the Naivasha area, or of repeated eviction and expropriation by other ethnic groups. A Kikuyu flower farm worker commemorated the 2007 campaigns, during which these allocations were both solidified and contested:

*"When we [flower farm workers] went to canteen, the Luos were telling us [Kikuyus] that when Raila [Odinga] gets that [presidential] seat, we will just have to vacate. They said 'the plots you are boasting around with and the property you have will be ours. It will be ours! You'll carry those properties to Central Province. We just wait Raila to get the seat. You Kikuyus we will enclose you like envelopes, you will see! Naivasha will no longer be a Kikuyu place, it will be taken over by the Luos'."* (Interview with elder Kikuyu woman from Molo, 08.06.2011)

The electoral campaigns were charged with mutual ethnicised provocations, fuelling fears of exclusion from land and resources and the take-over of properties (compare WILLIS 2008). The speaker was a migrant to Naivasha who was evicted by Kalenjins from Molo in the 1990s for being a Kikuyu (HRW 1993). According to her statement, Central Province belongs to the Kikuyus, while the obviously economically successful place, Naivasha, is contested and must be renegotiated in the course of the elections. As a Kikuyu, she did not see herself as a migrant, but as a recognised Naivasha resident. Through her ethnic identity and the fact that she had been evicted from elsewhere because of that identity, she felt she had a legitimised right to claim Naivasha as a safe place for her to live. Her ethnic identity and the post-election violence supported the speaker's taken-for-granted feeling of belonging to Naivasha, as concep-

tualised by HUMMON (1992). Other Kikuyu interviewees' statements can also be linked to the ideological, committed creation of belonging to a place (ibid.), as especially the young men say that they would defend Naivasha, with violence if necessary, to keep it a safe place for the Kikuyu community to live at (Group discussion with five Kikuyus, 15.09.2011). Such patterns on the local level reflect the majimbo discourse, and exclude people with other ethnic identities from the place. Land continues to be an issue of dispute in the post-violence workers' settlement, and these issues are usually linked to ethnicised allocations.

#### 5.4 Migrants' non-recognition in Naivasha

The patterns of felt competition over work opportunities, of ethnicised societal divisions and of the continuing land struggles and fixed ethnicised allocations lead to the fourth point of understanding emerging from the empirical research. Labour migrants who disregard local expectations of voting behaviour, social conduct or economic development in any way are not accepted in the place (compare JENKINS 2012). As we stated at the outset of this paper, we count this non-recognition, in its current intensity and its impacts on social life, among the effects of the post-election violence (compare KASARA 2011). Irrespective of the situation before 2007, the violence has hardened the societal order amongst migrants and autochthonous inhabitants of Naivasha. Migrants of Luo, Kalenjin and Luhya identity were burnt in their houses, mutilated, forcibly circumcised, and hacked to death during the post-election violence because of their alleged political views. Ethnic identity and geographic origin were the criteria determining death or survival (ICG 2008). After the violence, the new or newly intensified societal orders are still in effect. The physical evidence for this can still be seen in the ruins of former Luo properties that have not been reclaimed. The 'lesson for others to learn to respect the Kikuyu dominance in Naivasha and to stick to local conventions' (Interview with young Kikuyu man from Naivasha, 10.06.2011) continued to effect labour migrants in the run-up to the following elections. An encounter with a passerby during a transect walk describes this situation:

Guide: "I heard of no Luo who came back to their original place [...]. If someone disappoints you, you give him a warning [...]. I think the Kalenjins who are here are only ladies because I have never seen any gentleman who is a Kalenjin. I know two ladies who are here. I have never seen any gentleman who's a Kalenjin."

Passerby: "No. Unless those who are working. Majority they stay at the companies houses in the staff quarters."

Guide: "People don't stay here who are not of our tribe."

Passerby: "No they will be afraid, they cannot do nothing." (Transect walk with young Kikuyu man from Naivasha and Kikuyu passerby, 12.09.2011)

The violence endowed Kikuyus with a new, intensified association with Naivasha. The place's history carries associations of shelter and safety for Kikuyus, which consolidate their feelings of belonging (compare PROSHANSKY et al. 1983), but mean something completely different for labour migrants.

Those migrants who survived and returned to Naivasha, or those who came after the violence confirm their having heard the above-mentioned warnings. The threats of another eviction prevent young people from mingling during their leisure time and provoke grouping in ethnic alliances. Migrants face restrictions regarding freedom of movement and choice of residence, expressed in the spatial segregation of people. The autochthonous residents live in the centre of the settlement or look for the most convenient areas to buy a plot and build. Labour migrants prefer to dwell at the horticultural company premises where there is enhanced security, or they look for rental rooms in the outskirts of the settlements and in Maasai neighbourhoods. Amongst Luo circulates a piece of good advice from their families at home to look out for a Kikuyu landlord, because 'no Kikuyu would ever attack another Kikuyu's properties', promising greater security for the tenant (Interviews with Luo newcomers, 31.05. and 01.06.2011). At the same time, any kind of permanent engagement with the place is avoided:

"Those who returned after the problems, we now live in selected places. We don't just, they don't just live like that. Most of them live in [outskirts of settlement], a confined place. You can't find a Luo living in [Kikuyu-dominated centre]. You can't find them near these nightclubs or pubs. Because they believe those bad guys they walk and live around those places. So they live here but in selected places [...]. Like now you can't even tell any Luo to buy land here in Naivasha because even those who bought land in Naivasha during those days they tried to sell the land and they sold them off. No, no. Now I believe the whole Naivasha no Luo can accept any land, no." (Interview with Luo man who was evicted and returned after the violence, 10.09.2011)

Migrants' stays are arranged in a temporary manner, meaning that valuable property is either left at home or transferred to where parents or extended family lives. Naivasha is considered as nothing more than a place to work (KUNAS 2011). To this end, only one or a few family members decide to migrate, whilst



the rest of the family remains in the ascribed places. The discomfort amongst migrants heats up in times of political decision-making. In 2011, several informants from western Kenya had started to shift their properties to their western home places, expecting the next elections to occur imminently. Those who had relatives elsewhere sent their children and sometimes wives to stay with them for safety. Others who did not have such family networks said they were extra vigilant, listening carefully to conversations on the road and observing the public mood attentively. The Kisii informant mentioned earlier did the same, and shortly after the transect walk left the place for good. A Luo informant who had lived in Naivasha for almost a decade, and who was attacked during the violence, concluded:

*“Generation after generation, elections after elections, if we shall be experiencing what we experienced in 2007-08, then it may mean to me that this is a place where I should look for money, and develop back home. Because at the other end, nobody will chase me with my panga [machete] because I have a place or a parcel of land which I inherited from my parents. Or even if I buy, I buy it in a locality that nobody will hunt me out of that place because it is within my community. My wife and children have been here [in Naivasha]. It is only because of the post-election violence that we saw the need. That instead of running up and down with the children, you change school, you change the place of residence, it is hectic. So I thought it wise, personally, to transfer my people back home upcountry so that they may stay where they will go to nearby schools and they will come back home where they are not disturbed. I may call this place [Naivasha] a risk for them. Then staying at home, maybe giving them one or two months, then we see one another. I see it developing me here, then the other things developing at home are just on standby.”* (Interview with Luo security guard, 03.06.2011)

Through the post-election violence and the ongoing exclusion of migrants by the (self-)perceived autochthonous population, the identity of Naivasha changed from a place of opportunities to a place of risk for labour migrants (compare TWIGGER-ROSS and UZZELL 1996). The continuing non-recognition of migrants at the place, combined with the altered place identity, have led to a strong sense of non-belonging amongst migrants from western Kenya, even if they have stayed in Naivasha for a long time. As a result, migrants develop or readopt closer ties to their home area, which agrees with GESCHIERE and GUGLER'S (1998) assumption of migrants' resilient connection to their home areas. At the same time, HUMMON'S conception of place alienation, and especially place relativity due to the processes of exclusion, may be adopted, although speaking of labour

migrants' placelessness in the sense of a total indifference towards Naivasha does not apply, as emotions associated with the place are strong.

The more general, long-lasting issues of perceived resource competition, which affect Kenya on a larger scale, interact with the temporally and locally circumscribed incidence of the post-election violence. The violence reinforces societal and spatial divides, and alters the meaning of Naivasha, a place where people from many different social categories congregate. This altered place identity requires the reorganisation of belonging and recognition of people in the place, and leads to an intensified place commitment amongst the 'autochthonous' group, whilst the group of labour migrants originating from western Kenya, collectively ranged in a particular political context, is increasingly excluded from Naivasha.

## 6 Conclusion

By the time the interviews were conducted, residents of the workers' settlement expected the next elections to be held in the near future, probably in early 2012. Due to controversial interpretations of the respective passages in the new constitution, the election date was later postponed to March 2013 (OBALA 2012). Notwithstanding this political uncertainty, the timing of the empirical research might explain the salient impression of an extraordinarily tense and watchful public mood in the settlement. Possibly, the examined time frame draws an exaggerated picture of the situation of labour migrants in Naivasha. Nevertheless, during times of political uncertainty, a repetition or continuation of the observed patterns may be evident.

Naivasha continues to represent hopes for jobs and economic improvement, and is highly relevant for Kenya's poorly qualified workers. At the same time, its inhabitants perceive resources to be limited, as their hopes for personal development at the place are being dashed. This common perception demands that the number of people who have access to Naivasha's resources be reduced, which is carried out through the exclusion of certain groups of workers, by stipulating who belongs to the place and who does not.

Processes on the political level like the majimbo discourse, which build upon historical ethnicised allocations, play a central role in the creation of feelings of belonging. Connected with these, negotiations on the local level, in which relative population sizes and durations of presence in the place matter, determine who is accepted in Naivasha and who is not. The

post-election violence, which may be seen as a fierce peak in the processes of negotiating questions of belonging, intensified the divisions between the (self-) perceived autochthonous inhabitants and labour migrants, and between people of differing ethnic, geographical, cultural and political backgrounds.

The violence left its traces in peoples' memories and in the landscape. These traces reinforce taken-for-granted feelings of rootedness at the place among the local autochthonous population. They also create an ideological connectedness, as Naivasha is perceived as a place that needs to be defended against 'others' (compare HUMMON 1992). The unwelcoming atmosphere in Naivasha after the violence has its effects on the labour migrants, especially those from western Kenya, who feel unrecognised and even endangered at the place. They consider their stay in Naivasha as a limited period in their lives during which to gain an income without investing much or taking greater risks (compare KUNAS 2011). In the long term, they see themselves and their families in their ascribed areas of belonging. This perception intensifies ties to their home places and reduces their engagement with the receiving area. The divisions between migrants and autochthonous people are manifest after the violence, expressed in the everyday making of difference, mutual fears and mistrust, and new social life and settlement orders.

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