



ROZPRAWA DOKTORSKA

w dziedzinie sztuki
w dyscyplinie sztuki plastyczne i konserwacja dzieł sztuki

Gwata Ntai: They have not lost bruises left behind.
Ndagwata: The East African Maasai and related communities
face and body painting art.

Anne Ntinyari Mwiti

Akademia Sztuki w Szczecinie

Promotor

prof. dr hab. Łukasz Skąpski

Szczecin, 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. TABLE OF CONTENT.....	1
2. 1.0 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS	2
3. 2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM	3
4. 3.0 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS 4.0	4
5. PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT	4
6. 5.0 THE THIRD SPACE IN AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY ART. TRANSITION FROM THE NATIVE TO GLOBALIZED	4
7. 6.0 THE HOW AND WHY OF THE PRACTICAL PROJECT	13
8. 7.0 METHODOLOGY	16
9. 7.1 PHASE 1	16
10. 7.2 PHASE 2	16
11. 7.3 PHASE 3.	17
12. 7.4 PHASE 4	17
13. 7.5 PHASE 5 DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL SKETCHES	18
14. 7.6 PHASE 6	19
15. 7.7 PHASE 7	- 21 -
16. 7.8 PHASE 8	- 22 -
17. 7.9 PHASE 9	- 22 -
18. 7.1.0 PHASE 10	- 23 -
19. 7.1.1 PHASE 11	22
20. 7.1.2 PHASE 12	23
21. 8.0 ABSTRACT	23
22. 9.0 REFERENCES/ LIST OF BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	24
X.0 ACCESSORIES/ ATTACHMENTS.....	26
AUTHORS DECLARATION	36

1.0 OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

The Maasai (*sometimes spelled as Masai*): A Nilotic ethnic group inhabiting southern Kenya and northern Tanzania.

Ameru: The Ameru or *Amĩĩrú* are a Bantu ethnic group that inhabit north and eastern slopes of Mount Kenya, in the former Eastern Province of Kenya.

Gwata Ntai: A Vernacular terminology from the Ameru meaning “to catch”

Ndagwata: A Vernacular terminology from the Ameru meaning, “to receive”

Eunoto: A Maasai ceremony which occurs every 15 years

Emurata: A Maasai ceremony that involves circumcision of an age set

Suri and Surma: Tribes of the Omo valley (Ethiopia)

Liminality: The middle ‘state’- a stage of transition. Liminality is a state of transition between one stage and the next, especially between major stages in one’s life or during a rite of passage.

In a general sense, liminality is an in-between period, typically marked by uncertainty.

The Third Space: A postcolonial sociolinguistic theory of identity and community realized through language. It is attributed to Homi K. Bhabha. Third Space Theory explains the uniqueness of each person, actor or context as a ‘hybrid’: a creative edge that derives from the condition of being in a place that simultaneously is and is not one’s home.

Gwata Ntai: They have not lost bruises left behind.

Ndagwata: The East African Maasai and related communities face and body painting art.



FIGURE 1 MAASAI TEENAGERS WEARING TRADITIONAL FACE PAINT, TANZANIA. ALAMY.COM

2.0 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

For a long time, paintings in Africa were thought to be non-existent to any significant extent, mainly because they could be found on the skins of human bodies, on the walls of houses [22] and on rock walls - none of which were collectibles. The Maasai of East Africa have preserved their cultural heritage for generations through ceremonies, some of which are processed with detailed geometric patterns such as facial and body imagery.

In an attempt to connect with my personal history and identity, I found a wealth of information about how painting as a genre was and still is present as face and body painting among the Maasai community in East Africa.

The purpose and meaning of these traditional forms of face and body painting are quickly lost with the advance of modernity and formal education.

This set of black and white abstract paintings was inspired by the face and body images of the Maasai people of Kenya, northern Tanzania and selected communities of the Omo Valley (Ethiopia) as well as Ameru riddles and proverbs from Eastern Kenya.

3.0 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The study covers the intangible Ameru culture of eastern Kenya through their indigenous riddles and proverbs, the face paintings of the Maasai community in East Africa, and the face and body paintings of the Omo Valley tribes in Ethiopia. This is done through a collection of photographic images from the Internet that were taken by photographers during the Maasai Eunoto ceremony. This method of secondary data collection was chosen because of the nature of the Maasai eunoto ceremonies, which involve face painting every 15 years. The Omo Valley in Ethiopia is not physically passable easily or comfortably as it is outside my country of residence (Kenya).

4.0 PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

The Maasai of East Africa have preserved their cultural heritage for generations through ceremonies, some of which are processed with detailed geometric patterns such as facial and body imagery. These face patterns are washed away after the Eunoto and Emurata ceremonies, leaving no trace of the beautifully detailed designs for future use, aside from photographic documentation taken by tourists. This inspired the painting project, which now has the dual role of recording and creating new art forms (abstract paintings) inspired by traditional Mayan face and body paintings. The paintings are a liminal/third space of practical hybridity, that is, not traditional face paintings as Maasai communities do, but an extension of abstract forms inspired by the geometric patterns of Maasai face and body paintings.

5.0 THE THIRD SPACE IN AFRICAN CONTEMPORARY ART. TRANSITION FROM THE NATIVE TO GLOBALIZED

The theoretical work proposed in the conceptual article is based on the context of the "third space" theory - Homi Bhabha's liminality, which Bhabha defines as a response and actual moment of intervention in the daily lives of people who are trying to deal with post-colonial issues such as the new era of governance.[10] Practical painting projects will conceptually identify with the theory of liminality and the tradition of Western abstract art.

Homi Bhabha, in 2004's *The Location of Culture*, presents a theory of liminality or what he calls a third space in the context of postcolonialism - the gaps between clashing cultures - which gives rise to something else, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. It is the space in between, where new cultural identities are formed, reforming and constantly becoming. Artists working in the Third Space talk about creativity resulting from being in a place that is and is not their home at the same time [6]. This gives rise to new forms such as abstract paintings that are inspired by traditional Maasai geometric patterns such as face painting.

"Third space" is explained as the uniqueness of any person, actor, or context treated as a hybrid, where hybridity is the most basic meaning, referring to a mixture of two or more ideas. Victor Turner (*Cultural Invisible Zones*) attributes the cultural significance of liminality to the contrapuntal nature and transformational nature of ritual that enforces these boundaries. Liminality, which in simple terms means the middle "state" - the transitional phase, the boundary zone or awareness of the borderland, which in a sense means that it is crucial to explain the nature and meaning of various forms of space that can be identified in the human cultural experience. [6] Liminality being the middle "state" - a transitional stage or

state of transition between one stage and the next, especially between the major stages of life or during a rite of passage. In a sense, liminality is an intermediate period, usually marked by uncertainty. [6]

Fetson Kalua in his article Homi Bhabha's Third Space and African Identity states that in *The Location of Culture* (2004) Homi Bhabha develops Victor Turner's fundamental idea of liminality with its associated symbolic registers (such as rite of passage, limen, communitas and antistructure) that are embedded in the ritual to explain the sensitive, non-dual and changing nature of identity in the modern (largely post-colonial) world. According to Homi Bhabha, the postcolonial perspective, which in his formulation is preceded by Turner's symbolic model of liminal social drama, is not mere speculation, nor mere reflection, nor a form of criticism, but a process of celebrating dynamic spaces of cultural change characterized by a change of identity. [6]

As a culturally middle stage and axis of action, the limen becomes a kind of displacement resulting in "a shift of meaning that is celebrated in the articulation of difference" (Bhabha 2004).[10] It is this slippage that virtually prevents the complete and free movement of cultural meanings between any two or more systems of cultural differentiation. Consequently, the truth of culture must always be questioned. This can be seen in the graphic illustration of the oval form in a series of images. For Turner, "the attributes of liminality or liminal or liminoid personae (threshold people) are necessarily ambiguous because this condition and these persons elude or slip through the network of classification that usually locates states and positions in cultural space" (Turner 1969). [6]. Thus, liminality is the moment "when the past has lost control and the future has not yet taken shape" (Turner 1992, 133). While it may be a moment of anxiety unleashed by an unknown future, it is also "an extended and eccentric place of experience and empowerment" (Bhabha 2004). In other words, liminality represents a phase in the life of the subject - individual, community, or nation - that defies all attempts at established assumptions about his identity because of the inherent contradictions and instabilities that often haunt the subject. It was the transformative nature of the ritual that made Turner fall in love with the idea of limina [6], which may refer to Maasai face and body paintings during eunoto and emurata ceremonial rituals and rites of passage. Face and body painting is practiced among the Maasai community on special occasions by various groups; warriors, older women and newly circumcised boys. Red ocher (ereko), a mixture of iron oxide and animal fat, is applied with the fingers or a toothbrush to the head and face of morans, while chalk paste (enturoto), a mixture of calcium carbonate and water, is mainly used by young circumcised boys who also they adorn themselves with black cloth and cover their faces with charcoal as camouflage.[14]

In her article *African Art*, Janet states that "painting was long thought to be non-existent in Africa, mainly because it could be found on the skins of human bodies, on the walls of houses and rock walls - none of which can be was to collect"[22].

About 20,000 years ago, the first humans ground, charcoal and minerals, and used colored powders to create paintings on cave walls. Sometimes the powders were mixed with saliva or animal fat to form a liquid that was blown through reeds or applied with the fingers. [37]

The first figurative paintings of humans found in Africa date back to about 10,000 years ago and apparently originated in the Nile valley and extended as far west as Mali about 8,000 years ago. [13]

The history of painting goes back to the artifacts of prehistoric people and includes all cultures representing a continuous, if periodically disturbed, tradition of antiquity.

The development in the eastern parts of world painting today is similar to the development of Western painting in general, compared with several centuries earlier. African art, Jewish art, Islamic art, Indian art, [3] Chinese art, and [4] Japanese art have had a significant influence on Western art, and vice versa. [5]

Eastern and Western painting, initially serving utilitarian purposes and then imperial, private, civic and religious patronage, later found audiences among the aristocracy and the middle class. From the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, painters worked for the church and the wealthy aristocracy. Beginning in the Baroque era, artists received private commissions from the better educated and wealthier middle class. [7]

In Africa, painting was seen and practiced differently; as body modification, including body painting, scarification and tattooing. Depictions of body markings on rock art in the Tassili n'Ajjer Mountains of Algeria, textual records attesting to the practice in ancient Nubia, intricate details of facial markings on culturally symbolic artwork including the Bronze Head of Ife and Nok Terracottas, and the discovery of cave drawings from before 100,000 years old in the Blombos Cave in South Africa, all indicate that leather has long been used as a painting surface on the African continent. [4]

In thousands of ethnic groups, including the Omo Basin in Ethiopia, the legendary Maasai, Himba herders in Namibia, Voodooists in the Republic of Benin, Igbo, Tiv, Efik, Yoruba, Idoma, Igala, Nupe and Kanuri - just to name a few from Africa leather has long been used to convey information about identity, affiliation, personal history, lineage, status, and aesthetic choices. [9]

Of all these cultural expressions, tribal markings are becoming increasingly unpopular. In many countries across the continent, the practice has been outlawed, mainly due to its mandatory and consent-free nature, as well as the potential for the spread of blood-borne diseases. [15]

As involuntary representations of past cultural expressions, body markings today are often a source of stigma, ridicule, discrimination and exclusion as the perception of tribal markings has been influenced by colonial experiences and modernity. They are now often associated with a barbaric, primitive and savage notion of indigenous cultural expression. [13]

Despite few cloth garments, the locals are draped in jewelry and ornaments. Indeed, using the body as a surface for a particular type of art is a long-standing tradition of many inhabitants of the earth. African tribes have five main ways of beautifying or decorating the body. These are scarification, body painting, beads, jewelry, and body mutilation. [18]

Body painting is a common method and is used in religious rituals, ceremonies, and to indicate sexual maturity. Colors often represent a tribe (as a sports shirt would indicate which team a viewer supports) or can be used to convey a specific message about that person. Oil, clay, chalk, ash and plant products (fruits, juices, etc.) are traditionally used to create different colors and textures. East African Maasai men are painted and decorated all over their bodies between the ages of 17 and 30 to indicate their stage of life, while other tribes only use paints for worship or mourning. [20]

Tribal "makeup" plays a key role in many different groups. Makeup, often in the form of face paint, is used for many different reasons and can mean many different things, such as hunting, religious and traditional reasons, military purposes, or scaring the enemy. They also function as social markers, distinguishing boys from men, men from older men, men from women, and tribesmen from outsiders. Face painting indicates status and conveys strong cultural meaning. [14]

It is estimated that Africa has a total of 3,000 tribes, all of which are extremely different in terms of language, culture and traditions. [8]

Some of the most famous tribes in Africa that paint bodies are the Zulu tribe whose members live in South Africa, Lesotho and Zimbabwe, the Maasai who can be found in Tanzania and Kenya; San Bushmen who live in Botswana, Namibia and South Africa and Yoruba who live in Nigeria, Benin, Ghana and Togo.

Additional tribes include the Xhosa who live in South Africa; Hausa, living in Niger, Gabon, Burkina Faso and Cameroon; Himba who live in Angola and Namibia; Borana Oromo who live in Ethiopia and Kenya; Kalenjin from Kenya; Chaga from Tanzania and Fulani from Nigeria, Guinea, Sudan and Senegal. [16] Face paints are usually made of clay of various shades using dried plants and flowers. Each color and each symbol has a specific and specific meaning. [14]

Black is usually used to signify power, evil, death, and secrecy, while gray is commonly used to signify security, authority, maturity, and stability. Purple commonly signifies royalty, luxury, wisdom and passion, while yellow is used for joy, energy and warmth. Red stands for danger, boldness, urgency, and energy, while blue stands for calm, calm, confidence, and affection. Green is usually used as a symbol of life, growth, freshness and healing while white stands for hope, purity and light. [22]

These colors, how they are selected, used and in what specific function or ceremony forms what we refer in part as culture. For example the Maasai, are monotheists, believing in one omniscient god, Enkai. Enkai is represented by two colors: black and red. The black god is benevolent and brings rain to replenish the grazing lands while the red god is vengeful and brings drought.

Culture is an umbrella term that covers the social behavior, institutions, and norms found in human societies, as well as the knowledge, beliefs, arts, law, customs, abilities, and customs of individuals within these groups. [13] The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, adopted by UNESCO in 2001, is a legal instrument that recognizes cultural diversity as the "common heritage of humanity" and regards its protection as a concrete and ethical imperative, inextricably linked to respect for human dignity. [9]

In addition to the Declaration of Principles adopted in 2003 at the Geneva Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), the UNESCO Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, adopted in October 2005, is a legally binding instrument for all States Parties to the Convention which recognize [8] cultural heritage for the distinctive character of cultural goods, services and activities as carriers of identity, values and meaning; that while cultural goods, services and activities have significant economic value, they are not mere commodities or consumer goods that can only be treated as items of trade. [13]

On the other hand, cultural diversity is the quality of differentiated or different cultures, as opposed to monoculture, global monoculture or homogenization of cultures, close to cultural dissolution. The expression cultural diversity can also refer to the fact that different cultures respect their differences. The phrase "cultural diversity" is also sometimes used to refer to the diversity of human societies or cultures in a particular region or around the world, while globalization is often said to have a negative impact on the world's cultural diversity.

Cultural universals occur in human societies and include forms of expression such as art, music, dance, ritual, religion, and technology such as tool use, cooking, shelter, and clothing. [13]

Material culture includes the physical manifestations of culture, such as technology, architecture, and art, while the intangible aspects of culture, such as the principles of social organization (including the practices of political organizations and social institutions), mythology, philosophy, both written and oral literature) and science are part of society's intangible cultural heritage. [8]

Cultural currency is the intellectual wealth that a society, organization and/or community cherishes when it actively encourages different perspectives; explores genuine difference expression and learning; and performs acts of genuine inclusion. Cultural currency in the field of sociology or cultural capital includes the social assets of a person, i.e. education, intellect, style of speech, style of dress, which promote social mobility in a stratified society. [13]

Cultural identity theory in relation to cultural identity refers to a person's sense of belonging to a particular culture or group. This process involves learning about and accepting a culture's traditions, heritage, language, religion, ancestors, aesthetics, thought patterns and social structures. Usually, people internalize the beliefs, values, norms and social practices of their culture and identify with that culture. Culture becomes part of their self-awareness. [13] However, some studies have noted that the existing

theory of cultural identity may not take into account the fact that different individuals and groups may not react or interpret events, events, attitudes, etc. in the same way as other individuals or groups.

Myron Lustig notes that cultural identity is crucial to self-esteem. This is because cultural identities "are central, dynamic, and multifaceted components of self-concept." [13] Lustig also points out that cultural identities are dynamic and exist in a changing social context. As a result, a person's identity changes with their current life experiences. [13] Other scholars describe cultural identity as referring to the content of values as guiding principles, meaningful symbols, and lifestyles that individuals share with others, though not necessarily within recognizable groups. In addition, Boski et al. point out that most books and studies have ignored cultural identity as a theoretical construct in the field of cross-cultural psychology. Instead, books and magazines report work on social identity. Social identity is described as a sense of "ourness", i.e. attachment to the group of which one is a member, and by comparison with others. [9]

While this construct of "Us" and social identity is probably acceptable, the world is slowly being influenced by the effects of "banal imperialism" in which the Western world, through new information technology, uses "soft power" to force traditional cultures and worldviews to accept cultural imperialism. . Cultural diversity is valuable in itself for preserving human historical heritage and knowledge, or instrumentally valuable as it provides more ways to solve problems and respond to disasters, natural or otherwise. [28]

Art has traditionally been used for centuries as a means of cultural expression as it has a unique ability to reflect societies and their way of life. It helps us understand who we are as human beings and where we come from, influencing how we relate to one another. [29] For example, in the Maasai community of East Africa, as part of the Eunoto ceremony, the morani (warriors) traditionally wear red ochre on their heads. This color symbolized rebirth, strength and courage. The East African amiiru traditionally used white ochre during the circumcision period of boys. The body paintings/art forms on the skin of these two communities were a means of communicating their worldview to the rest of the world. They use art as an expression of their inner thoughts, feelings and experiences. [21]

The Maasai and Amiiru worldview encompasses their natural philosophy, fundamental, existential and normative postulates, themes, values, emotions and ethics, expressing the basic cognitive orientation of individuals in their communities. It also includes their society, embracing the totality of the knowledge and "point of view" of the individual in society. Worldviews are often assumed to operate on a conscious level directly accessible to articulation and discussion, as opposed to existing on a deeper, preconscious level such as the idea of "ground" in Gestalt psychology and media analysis. [23]

The East African Maasai have managed to preserve their cultural practices and worldview by cultivating their (Eunoto) (Emurata) ceremonies, opposing public education, and using oral traditions as methods of dating past events. [27]

The Maasai (sometimes spelled Maasai) are a Nilotic ethnic group living in southern Kenya and northern Tanzania. They are one of the best-known local populations due to their residence near many wildlife parks in the African Great Lakes areas and their distinctive habits and clothing. The Maasai speak the Maa

language, which belongs to the Nilo-Saharan family related to the Dinka and Nuer. They are also educated in the official languages of Kenya and Tanzania, Swahili and English.

The Maasai are a tribe of people living in parts of Tanzania and Kenya known as tall and fierce warriors. They can be recognized by the special red clothing they wear called Shuka. Maasai Shuka has become their hallmark and they wear it with the utmost pride and elegance. Red dominated; other primary colors used in various Shuka patterns represent different aspects – or elements – of Maasai culture. [14]

The Maasai community is one whole, and their worldview is instilled and encoded in their psyche from the moment of birth. Maasai warriors practice painting each other's bodies after a successful lion hunt (empikas), or during a ceremony (eunoto) that takes place every 15 years. Face painting is sometimes applied by the prophet (Oloiboni) in a process called emuny in Maa.

Women only paint the body during ceremonies where mothers with their sons (morans) shave their heads and apply red ochre during eunoto ceremonies. The faces of brides were painted with red ochre by older women, similarly red ochre was applied to the faces of young girls singing for warriors in the eunoto ceremony. Newly circumcised boys paint their faces with chalk every time they leave the manyatta to protect themselves from evil spirits/eyes as they are believed to be defenseless against these types of attacks. [15]



FIGURE 2 MAASAI BOYS WITH WHITE OCHRE FACE PAINTING. PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY DREAMSTIME.COM

The Meru or Amĩĩrú (including the Ngaa) are a Bantu ethnic group that inhabits the Meru region of Kenya in the fertile lands of the northern and eastern slopes of Mount Kenya, in the former Eastern Province of Kenya. The name "Meru" refers to both the people and the region, which for many years was the only administrative unit. In 1992, Greater Meru was divided into three administrative units: Central Meru, Nyambene and Tharaka-Nithi (Tharaka and Southern Meru). Following the promulgation of Kenya's new constitution on August 27, 2010, Great Meru was redefined and now consists of the twin counties of Tharaka-Nithi and Meru.[4] The Great Meru covered about 13,000 square kilometers (5,000 square miles), stretching from the Thuci River, on the border with Embu County in the south, to the border with Isiolo County in the north. The Ameru people are made up of nine groups: Igoji, Imenti, Tigania, Mitine, Igembe, Mwimbi, Muthambi, Chuka and Tharaka. The Tharaka live in the semi-arid part of greater Meru and together with Mwimbi, Muthambi and Chuka form the Tharaka-Nithi district. The Ameru, however, are not related to the Wameru of northern Tanzania, except that both groups are agricultural Bantu communities. [37]



FIGURE 3 *AMERU HUSBAND AND WIFE*

I have chosen and cited here the short stories of the Amĩĩru and the Maasai of old East Africa because they are two communities that are a direct cultural heritage relevant to my research and are and are relevant to the painting part of the PhD.

It can be seen that riddles, rhymes, traditional music and ceremonies were the methods used to convey to children the cultural "worldview" of traditional Maasai and Ameru communities. In this project, which I consider the third space of hybridity, it is possible to borrow patterns and folklore (traditional beliefs, customs and community history passed down orally from generation to generation) from intangible folk art to create new forms such as black and white paintings on canvas.

The series of twenty abstract paintings was created in the process of extracting and/or withdrawing ideas and images from something else, in this case from the geometric patterns of Maasai face and body paintings. In these works, I used impasto brushstrokes that create a textured effect in the paintings, as shown in the samples of the three illustrations below.



FIGURES 4 *THE PROCESS OF CREATING IMPASTOS IN WORKS OF ART*

6.0 THE HOW AND WHY OF THE PRACTICAL PROJECT

The exploration of images of the face and body of the Maasai and related East African communities as inspiration to create a series of abstract paintings was the result of a persistent search for my own identity, which is fraught with multiplicity and ambiguity. I follow my history and cultural heritage by studying the migration of the Maasai people (my paternal element and ancestry) along the Nile River where Maasai communities have settled in different countries, stretching from South Sudan, Ethiopia and Kenya to northern Tanzania. The selected communities are the Suri/Surma of the Omo Valley (Ethiopia) and the Maasai tribes of Kenya and northern Tanzania covering the former East African region.

Twenty paintings in the 80x60 cm portrait format reflect the search for essential meaning and control over my dispersed heritage. Moving away from experimenting with styles and subject matter (as I've practiced over the years), this body of work creates an unusual DNA and "life" that clings to what I feel is "escaping". The images (black and white abstractions) signify the tension of thought, reasoning, pseudo-freedom and self-awareness of my identity. In these works you can see an attempt to gain control over the oval shape as a form that represents a subconscious, important for me problem, how not to completely lose my worldview; ultimately, the placement of the "oval" in the paintings is a conscious and deliberate choice. What is noticeable, the oval shape becomes the leitmotif and the focal point of abstract compositions as a repetitive form, a thread connecting the series. What's more, the colors chosen - neutral black and white - give a sense of simplicity; at the same time, black, borrowed from the Maasai color palette, is used symbolically, representing power and mysticism (benevolent God).

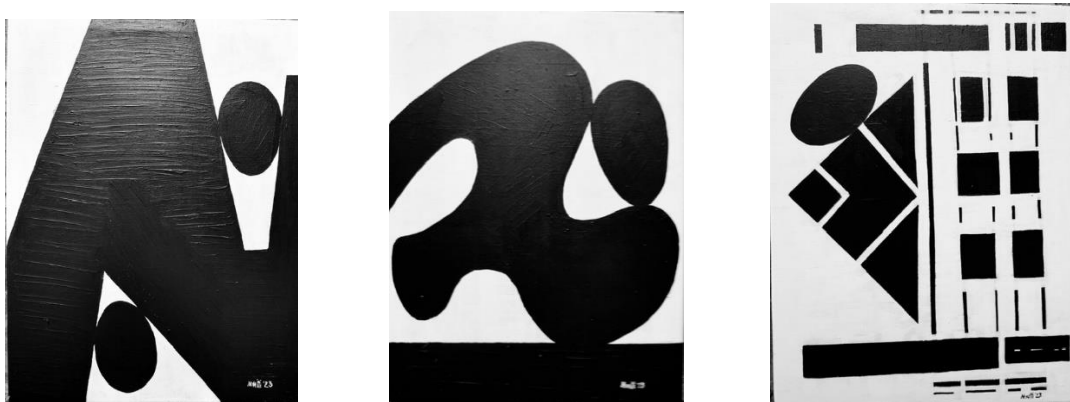


FIGURE 5 *BLACK AND WHITE PICTURES SIGNED*

The artworks' expression is not too foreign to me building on my earlier minimalist style that evolved at a one month Tafari Art Foundation residency, 2019 (an art space in the Laikipia county, Kenya).

The familiar signature is clear lines, defined borders, subtle forms that are suspended in communication with each other, a minimalist color palette all add up to a purposeful thought process and numerous graphic choices.

Just as works hold their visual weight and gravity well thanks to understood and controlled design principles, placing each element on a vertical canvas format captures the image's energy through the visual tension generated by the black forms. Asymmetrical balance is applied and realized in each of the works, although each painting is a separate abstraction and spontaneous expression.

The collection of works was created over three years (2020-2023) from the conceptualization of ideas to the completion of twenty paintings on canvas. I worked with the philosophy of keeping the processes as close as possible to the source of inspiration (Masai face and body paintings). I am intrigued by contrast, the play of dark with light, the attraction of empty space against the desire to fill it, the placement of lines and shape, and subtle textures such as the use of impasto. This is what shaped the graphic philosophy of the black and white color palette, in a conscious effort to simplify the process and designs, bearing in mind that the process is never simple and good design must always be balanced and strong.

Unconsciously, I had to let the image take over, without losing control over the intentionality of the forms - Maasai face and body paintings. I searched for answers and revealed an intimate, personalized insight into my inner landscape - both graphically and metaphorically - known and unknown, existing and imagined.

Face and body paintings among Maasai communities are traditionally performed in specific ceremonies (Eunoto and Emurata) with clear cultural understandings and meanings. In this way, the Maasai continuously preserve their cultural heritage and worldview from generation to generation. They weave this immaterial material culture like a fabric. The use of cotton fabric (canvas) in the painting process is my idea of depicting the skin on which the Maasai paint, as well as a symbol of the social fabric. I prepared the canvas by first applying a white vinyl base, then several layers of acrylic paint in colors borrowed from the Maasai color palette (red ochre, green, yellow and blue). This process was followed by the stage of writing the puzzles in bold black acrylic paint. The reason for placing puzzles in the paintings is to graphically illustrate the concept of intangible culture, which is the backbone of all traditional African cultures. Every African child born into a community's tradition is unconsciously taught the customs of their community through riddles, proverbs, and songs.

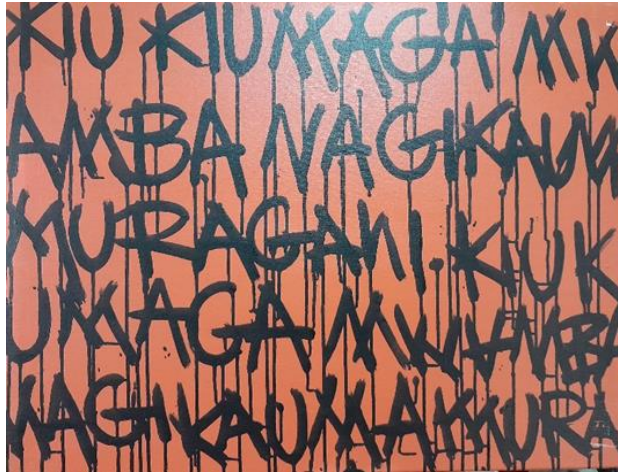


FIGURE 6 *HAND-PAINTED RIDDLE TEXTS ON COLOR CANVAS BEFORE WHITE VARNISHING*

The advent of modernity, formal education and technology is slowly replacing the essence of African traditions, philosophies and ultimately their worldview. These impulses that held traditional communities together are being replaced by new Western cultures that seem more attractive.

The concept of replacing traditional cultural practices among Kenyan communities with modern cultures of the Western world is symbolically illustrated by the white glaze covering the texts

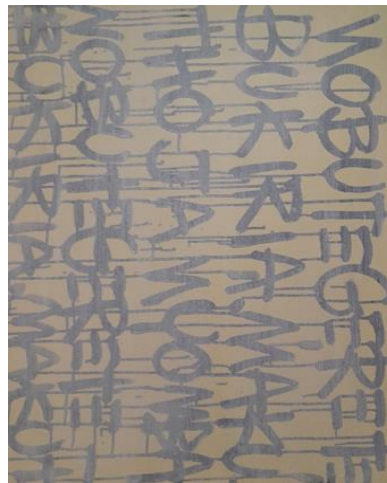


FIGURE 7 *HAND PAINTED TEXTS OF A SELECTED RIDDLE OF MERU ON CANVAS 80X60 CM*

After the ceremony, the painted skin is cleaned and/or peeled off, and the entire painting process and artistic effect is lost. In this group of paintings I try, and I hope to succeed, not to replicate the patterns of Maasai face and body paintings, but to create a new form of artwork in a painting medium that is sincerely inspired by ceremonial art.

The traditional practice of cultural/ceremonial face and body painting has not been used before in contemporary art practice and this PhD project gives me a double opportunity to document and highlight this tradition through the international style that is abstract art.

7.0 METHODOLOGY

The methodological process consisted of several steps, which are explained below.

7.1 PHASE 1

Internet search for pictures of painted Maasai faces from East Africa.



FIGURE 8 ALL IMAGE COURTESY OF ALAMY.CO

7.2 PHASE 2

Reproduction of photographic images on drawings (ink/pen) in A4 format.

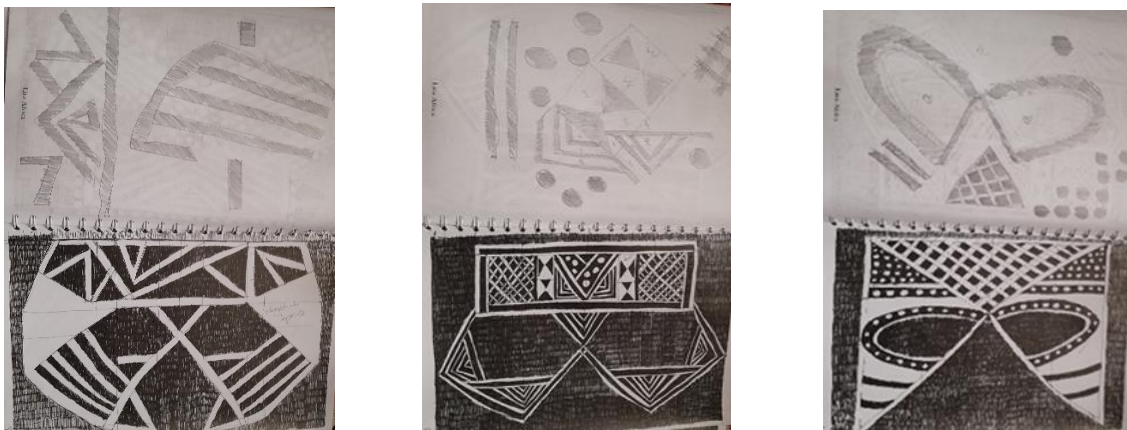


FIGURE 9 DEVELOPMENT OF INK AND PEN DRAWINGS INTO ROUGH SKETCHES IN GRAPHITE PENCIL

7.3 PHASE 3 Development of abstract sketches from ink and pencil drawings.



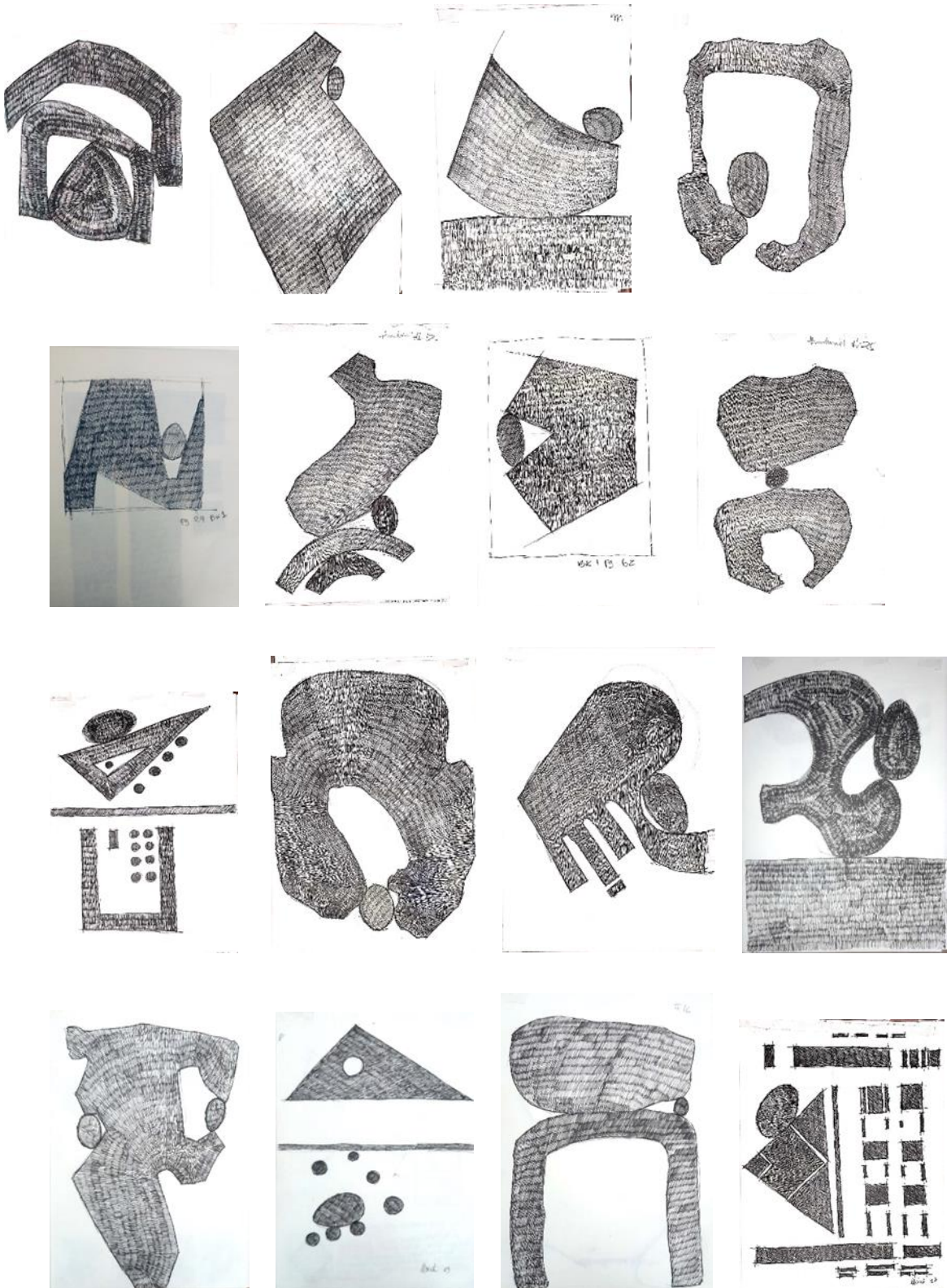
FIGURE 8 PRELIMINARY GRAPHITE PENCIL ABSTRACTION SKETCHES

7.4 PHASE 4 Further development of pencil drawings into working drawings.



FIGURE 10 DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL SKETCHES

7.5 PHASE 5 DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL SKETCHES



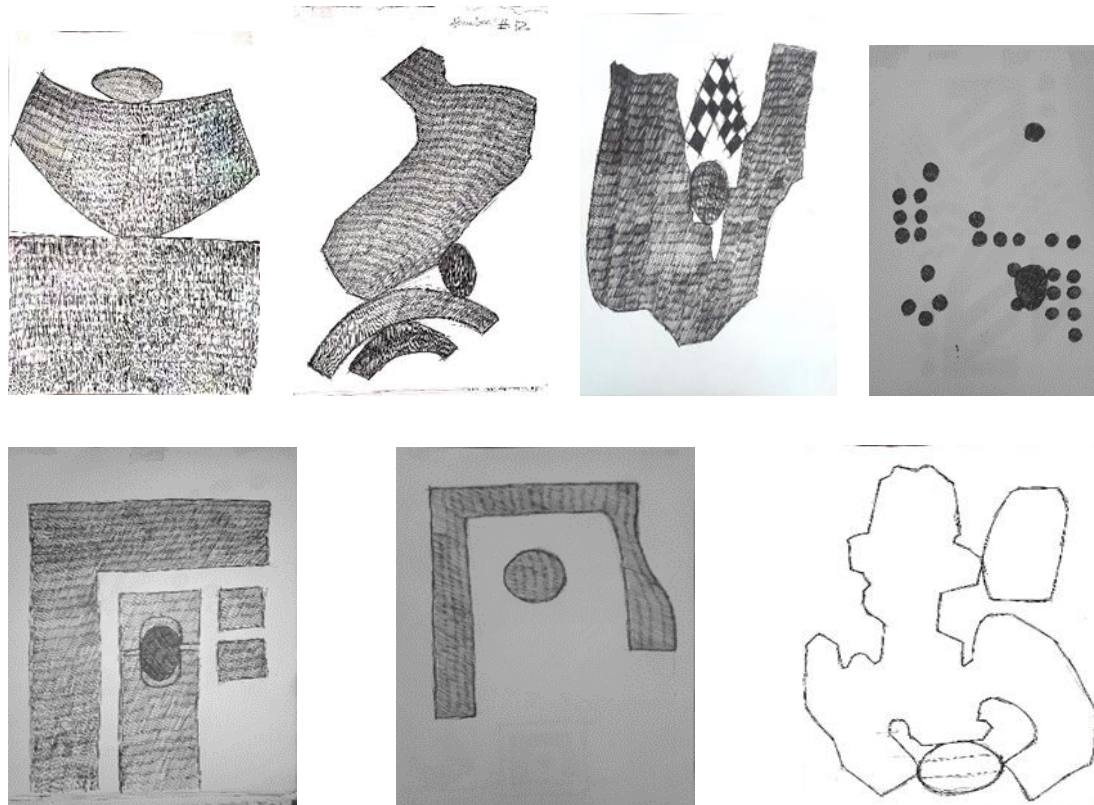


FIGURE 11 FINAL INK AND PEN SKETCHES

7.6 PHASE 6

Preparation of canvases in the 80x60cm format. Then primer with vinyl backing in different colors used by Maasai communities and writing riddles in the background. The purpose of this process was to give texture to the background of the images.

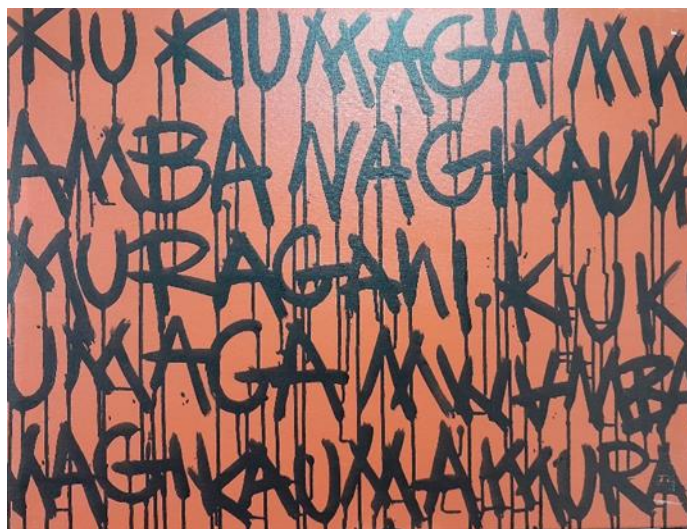


FIGURE 12 BACKGROUND WITH THE TEXTS OF THE RIDDLES OF MERU

7.7 PHASE 7

Change the canvas orientation from landscape to portrait. This made the texts images rather than words that could be easily read.

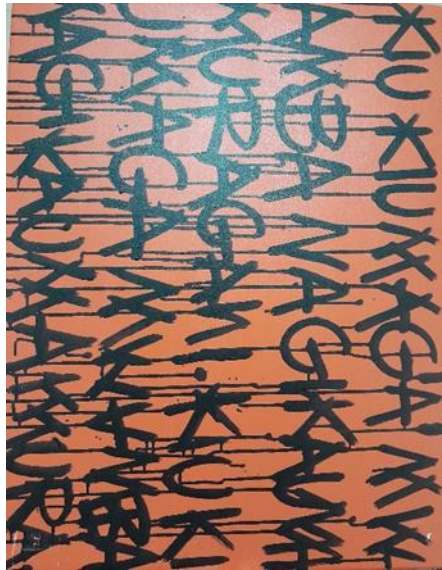


FIGURE 13 *PORTRAIT ORIENTATION FORMAT FOR IMAGE CREATION*

7.8 PHASE 8

White paint covering the puzzles as a diluted mix of paint and water to create a translucent effect.

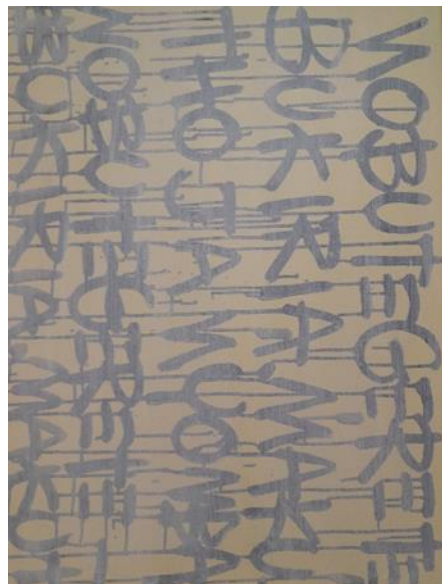


FIGURE 14 *APPLICATION OF WHITE PAINT TO CREATE LASER*

7.9 PHASE 9

From face painting to sketches to the final painting. How a concept evolves and becomes abstract.

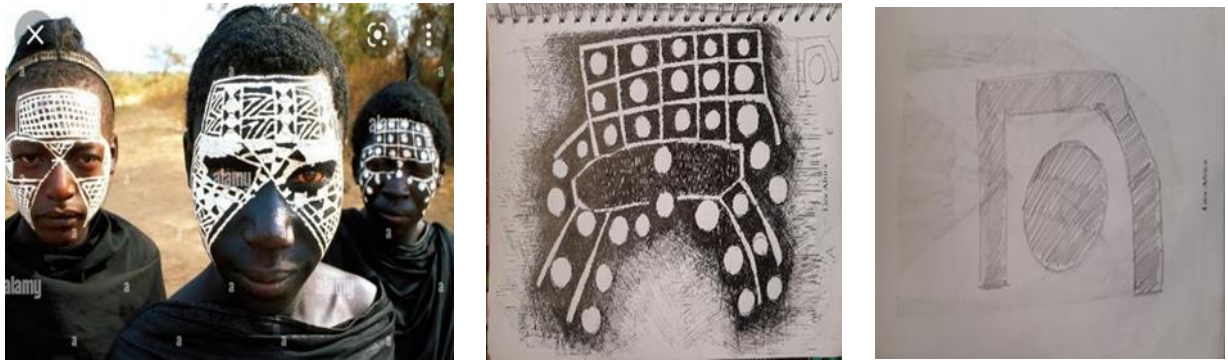


FIGURE 15 *THE PICTURE DESIGN PROCESS*



FIGURE 16 *FINISHED PICTURE*

7.1.0 PHASE 10

Transferring images to the 80 x 60 cm format.



FIGURE 17 *USING MASKING TAPE TO CREATE CLEAR EDGES*

7.1.1 PHASE 11

Finished abstract geometric work.

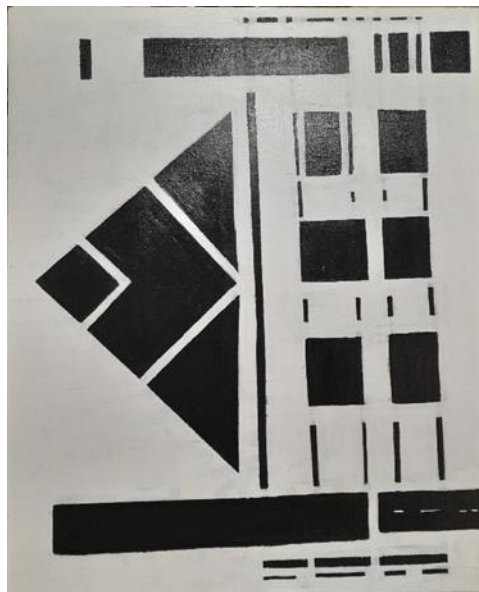


FIGURE 18 *GEOMETRIC ABSTRACT, FINAL PICTURE*

7.1.2 PHASE 12

Signed works selected from twenty works



FIGURE 19 *EXHIBITION OF COMPLETED, SIGNED BLACK AND WHITE PAINTINGS*

8.0 ABSTRACT

Gwata Ntai (Catch the Riddle): "They didn't get rid of the bruises left in the past." Ndagwata (I catch): "The East African art of face and body painting by the Maasai and related communities." The practice-based PhD project involves the realization of a series of twenty black and white images. For a long time, painting was thought to be insignificant in Africa, mainly because it could be found on the skins of human bodies, on the walls of houses and on rock surfaces - none of which was collectible. The Maasai of East Africa have preserved their cultural heritage for generations through ceremonies, some of which are processed through detailed abstract paintings of faces and bodies. In trying to connect with personal history and identity, I discovered that painting as a genre was and still is present in East Africa among Maasai communities. This practice-based PhD studies the riddles and proverbs of the Ameru of eastern Kenya, the face and body painting of the Maasai of Kenya, northern Tanzania, and selected communities of the Omo Valley (Ethiopia) as a source of inspiration to create a series of black and white abstract paintings. The project will include an exhibition consisting of paintings referring to traditional "Masai face paintings" from Kenya. The text "Gwata Ntai" loosely translates to "Catch the Riddle" in Kimeru, one of the Bantu languages of East Africa. When studying the history of the Meru and Maasai of ancient East Africa, one can see that riddles, rhymes and traditional music were methods used to convey the community's cultural "worldview" to children. In this project, which I consider to be "liminal" or "third space" hybridity, I borrowed patterns

from intangible folk art, and face and body paintings from Maasai and related communities to create "new forms" such as paintings on canvas. According to Meru oral folklore, Gwata Ntai ("Catch the Riddle") is followed by the reaction of Ndagwata which means "Catch". In this case, the use of the form is a way to prepare for the question that follows the cultural knowledge of the recipient. The traditional cultural purpose and meaning of this folk art form is no longer as important today due to the advancement of modernity and formal education; this is illustrated in the paintings as barely piercing words appearing from beneath the white glaze. My painting project again wants to revive the purpose and application of intangible folk art using vernacular language. The detailed concept was developed with the help of sketches (ink, pen and watercolors) and led to the realization of the final work as images and multimedia products.

9.0 REFERENCES/ LIST OF BIBLIOGRAPHY

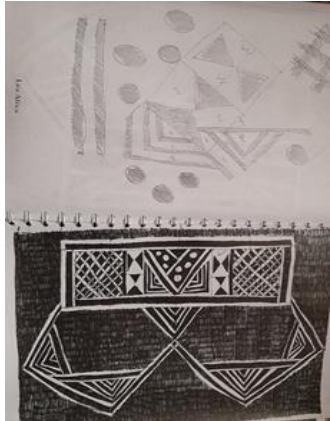
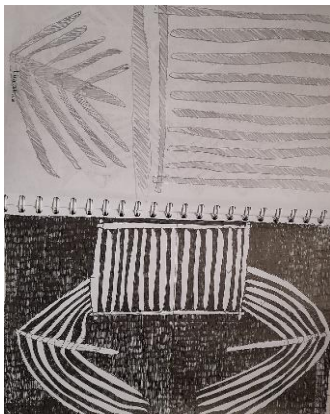
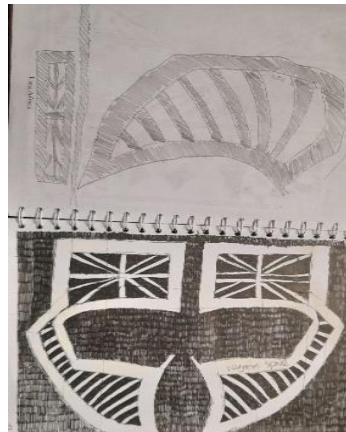
1. Art, n. OEP online. December 2011. Oxford University Press
2. Art: definition Oxford Dictionaries
3. Boski, P., Strus, K. & Tiaga. E. (2004). *Cultural identity, existential anxiety, and traditionalism*. E-books. Retrieved Feb. 28, 2013.
4. Chibbu, Uchendu Eugene (November 24, 2014). *Repositioning Culture for development, women and development in a Nigerian rural community, Community, work and Family* pp. 334-350
5. Clausen, John A. (ed) (1968) *Socialization and Society*, Boston: Little Brown and company.
6. Fetson Kalua in his journal article, *Homi Bhabha's Third Space and African identity* Journal of African Cultural Studies , June 2009, Vol. 21, No. 1, [Post-colonial Theory](June,2009),pp.23-32 Published by: Taylor & Francis, Ltd.
7. Finnemore, Martha (1996). *National Interests in International Society*. Cornell University Press. Pp 22-24, 26-27
8. Groh, A. (2019). *Theories of Culture*. London: Routledge. ISBN 978-1-138-66865-2
9. Grusec, Joan E.; Hastings, Paul D. Handbook of Socialization; *Theory and Research*, Guilford Press, 2007- pg. 547
10. Homi K. Bhabha, 1994 *The location of culture/Homi K. Bhabha*. Simultaneously published in the USA and Canada by Routledge 29 West 35th Street, New York, NY 10001
11. <https://artincontext.org/abstract-artists/>
12. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3774788>
13. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cultural_diversity
14. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nilotic_peoples
15. <https://nypost.com/2019/01/28/a-rare-look-inside-the-daily-life-of-a-rural-african-tribe/>
16. <https://www.britannica.com/art/African-art>

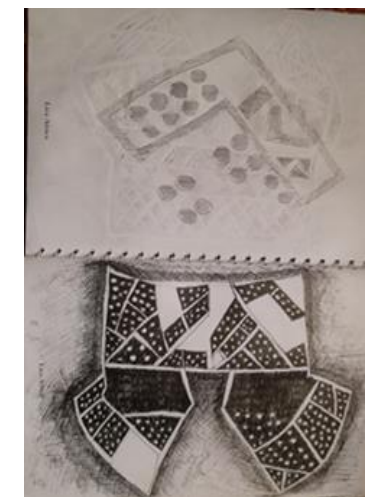
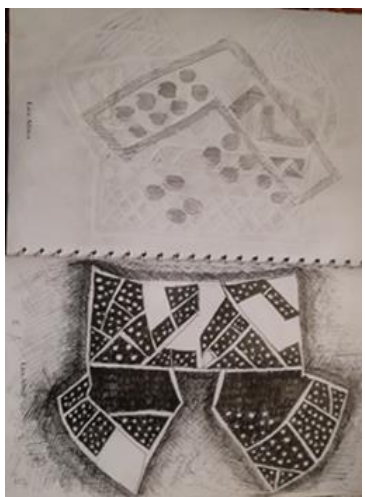
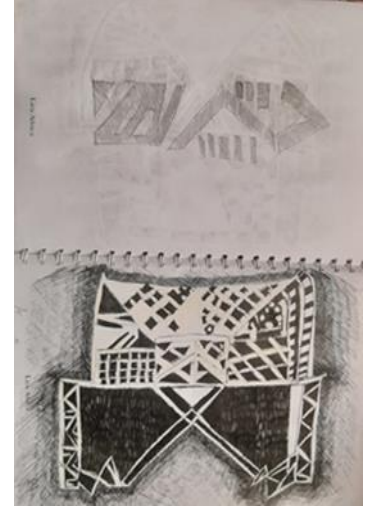
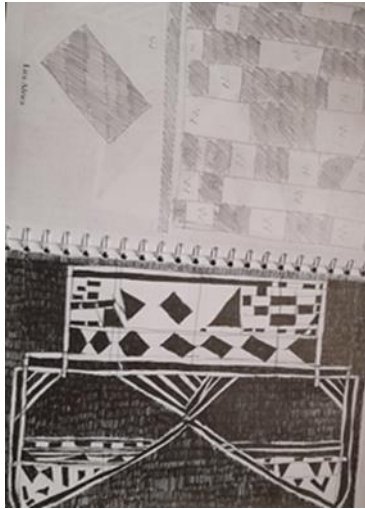
17. <https://www.eden-gallery.com/news/why-is-art-important>
18. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3774788>
19. <https://www.tate.org.uk/art/art-terms/a/abstract-art>
20. <https://www2.palomar.edu> *Social organization: social groups*
21. J.P.E Harper-Scott and Jim Samson (2009) *An Introduction to Music Studies*- Cambridge; Cambridge University Press. Pp 52-55
22. Janet B. Hess. Assistant Professor of Art History, Hutchins School of Liberal Studies, Sonoma State University, Rohnert Park, Calif. Author of *Art and Architecture in Postcolonial Africa*.
23. Iapinski, M.K.; Rimal, R.N. (2005). *An Explication of Social norms. Communication Theory*. 15 (2): 127-147
24. Legro, Jeffrey W. (1997). *Which norms matter? Revisiting the Failure of internationalism*. International organization. 51
25. Lustig, M.W. (2013). *Intercultural Competence Interpersonal Communication across Cultures*, 7th ed. New York: Pearson.
26. Macious, John J. (2013) Boston: Pearson. Pg. 126
27. Monga, C.1996. *Anthropology of Anger: Civil Society and Democracy in Africa*. Boulder. Co. Lynne Rienner.
28. North, Douglass C. (1991) 'Institutions' – *Journal of Economic Perspectives*. 5 (1): 97-112-
29. Palmer, Gary B. (1996). *Toward A Theory of Cultural linguistics*. University of Texas Press P. 114
30. Powell J. Richard, 2002. *Black Art; A Cultural History*. Thames & Hudson world of art
31. Prisl, A.C.; Kilian, S.; Mann, A. (2020). *When does a social worm catch the worm? Disentangling social-normative influences on Sustainable Consumption behavior*. Consumer Behav. 20
32. Record of the Art Museum, Princeton University
33. Sabrin, Mohamed (2013) *Exploring the Intellectual Foundations of the Egyptian National Education*.
34. Sanchez-Burks, J., Nisbett, R.E., & Ybarra, O. (2000). Cultural styles, relational schemas, and prejudice against out-groups. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (79(2), 174-189.
35. Sayre, Shay; Cynthia King (2010). *Entertainment and Society: Influences, Impacts, and Innovation* (2nd Ed.) Oxon, New York
36. *Theories of Identity*. (2012). Retrieved Feb. 28, 2012.
37. Tylor, Edward, (1871), *Primitive Culture*. Vol. 1 New York: J.P. Putnam's Son
Vol. 58, No. 1/2 (1999), pp. 7-15 (9 pages) published By: Princeton University Art Museum
38. Vossen, Rainer. 1982. *The Eastern Nilotes: Linguistic and Historical Reconstructions*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag. ISBN 3-496-00698-6

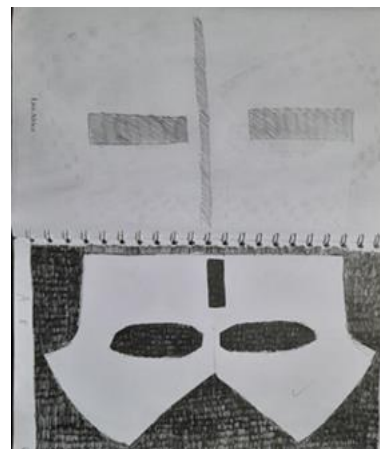
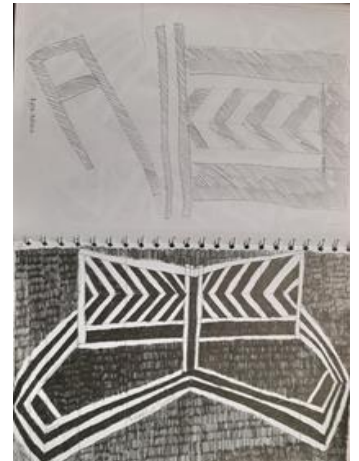
39. WA Thiongo. N. 1986. *Decolonising the Mind: The Politics of Language in African Literature*. London: James Curry

X.0 ACCESSORIES

EXAMPLES OF DEVELOPING A PICTURE INTO DRAWINGS



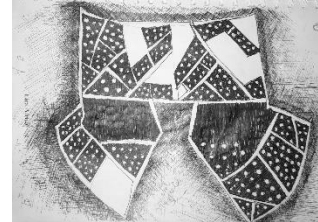
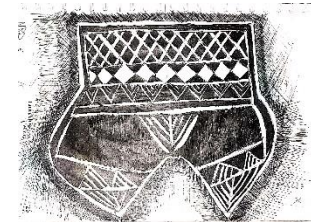
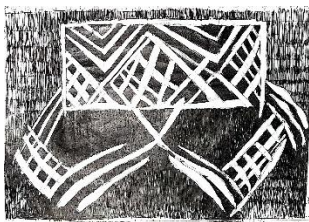
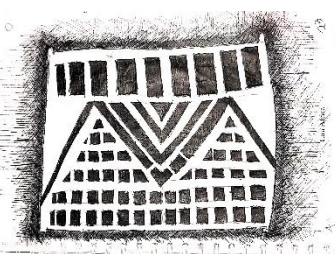
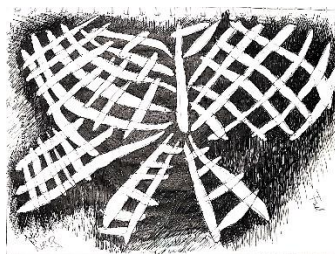
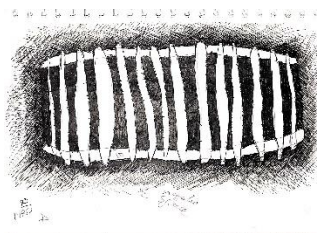
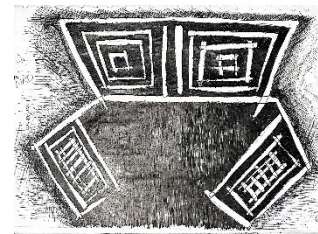
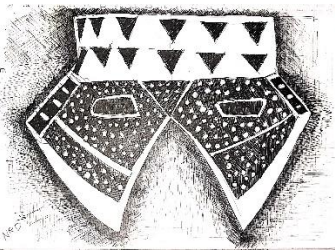
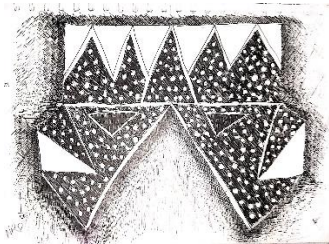
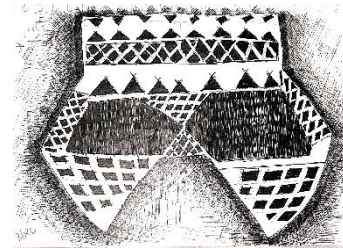
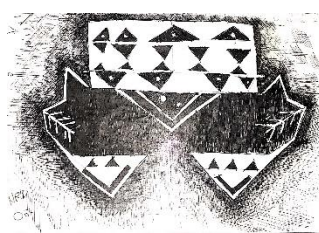
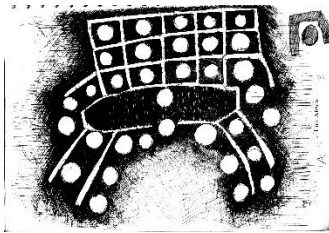






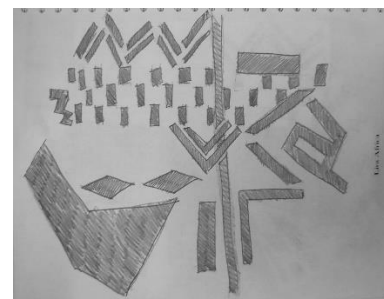
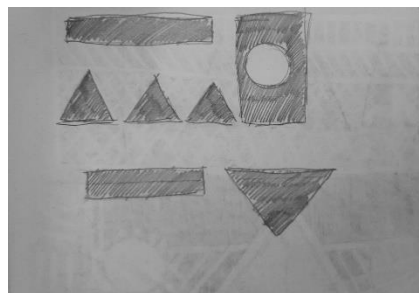
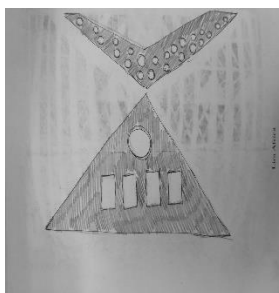
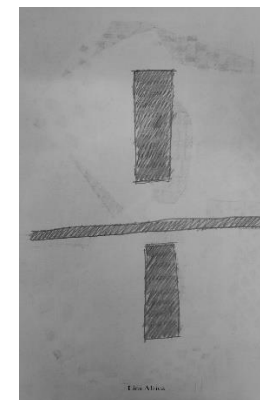
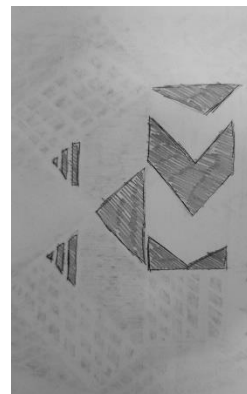
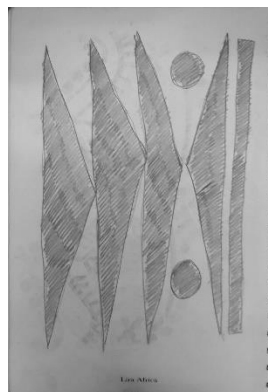
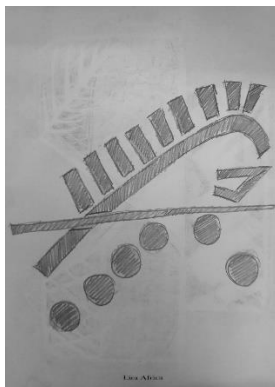
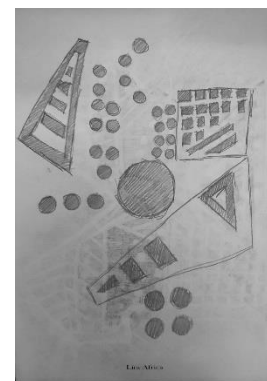
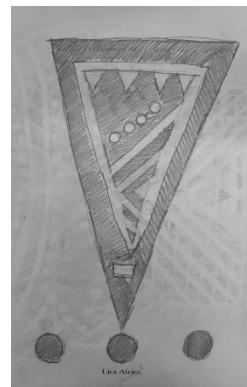
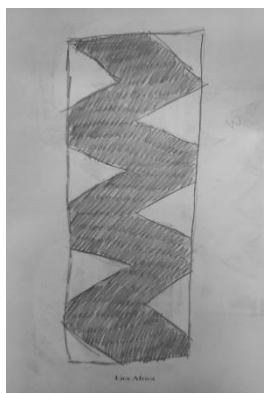
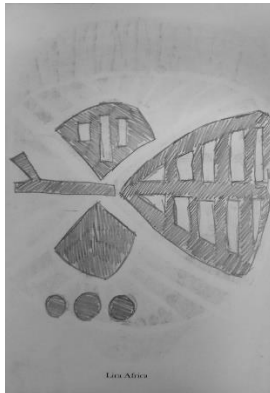
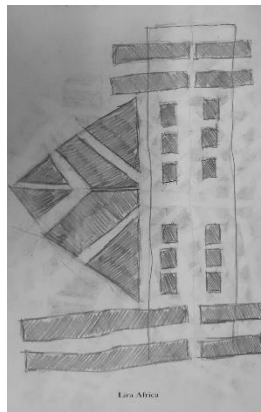
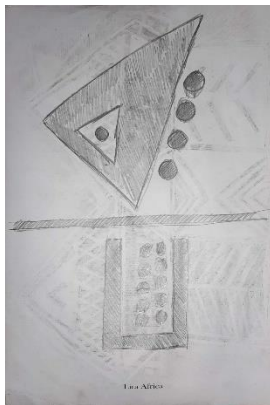
X. I ACCESSORIES

INK AND PEN SKETCH SAMPLES



X.II ACCESSORIES/ATTACHMENTS

EXAMPLES OF PENCIL SKETCHES



X.III ACCESSORIES

Meru riddles and proverbs passed down orally from my mother

Riddles (*Ntai*)

S. No.	Riddle (<i>Ntai</i>)	Answer (<i>Gichukio</i>)
1.	Nyomba iti mwari	Nkara
2.	Kubu kubu matumene	Rwiro rwa akaa
3.	Ita ndee nani mbite na ndee tuoge ujugu nguo	Rwoo rwa nyomba
4.	Mbakite njirene kenda nkethagwa	Iugu
5.	Kaniini gakurukite nyakwe gukia	Njuki
6.	Gatinki rwanja	Muriithi uti nguo
7.	Kaniini utimeria	Nkonko
8.	Kinya saa nani nkinye saa	Kiratu muthangene
9.	Kwaba kaini kwanwa na gwetu gutirainwa	Ithumbi bia muti
10.	Biiri biiri bingwanene	Thorua na ntankaro
11.	Nuu ubutegerete bukiria	Makutho ja nyomba
12.	Ndeji nkuu na ndeji nkuu	Ngorogoro kana nkwa
13.	Wakindwa ni muntu wa nthuki yenu	Toro
14.	Ndene ni nyama na iguru ni muruito	Nkara
15.	Kiiri mbunange, kiiri ngaciure, kiiri metho igana	Inanasi
16.	Winakwo na utikionaga	Igoti
17.	Munda jwa akaa atheri	Marigu

Proverbs (Njuno)

S. No.	Proverbs usually used by older Meru people
1.	Kaara kamwe gatiuragaa ndaa
2.	Mwamba aiyaga ntaame ya guta
3	Mugwi jwikagwa jutirathaga
4	Gantu kaitha kararagia ruuji rutai
5	Mwana waitha ekiromo kiri ruuji
6	Guti mwana waitema kaara agitemera ithe nyama
7	Kienjagwa mwene enda
8	Guti kuraja nkinyo
9	Guti barakura barendwa
10	Gukwia ti kugitwa
11	Kiu kiumaga mwamba na gikauma murogi
12	Kumagwa igocokagwa
13	Ume kukurukite inya
14	Kia kiiri matuku
15	Murega akiathwa atiregaga agikunjwa
16	Guti wa kiu na wa mugongo
17	Bia muka wa birijagirwa mamburene
18	Iraga kithana tomurago
19	Mwanthwa kirira nuuri kiawe

20	Muceera na mukundu akundukaga tawe
21	Guti mwamba na mutegeri
22	Ncamba iti kiero
23	Ikurumaruma itiambagwa ndwara
24	Mwamba utimugwete ni muria kawe
25	Ndinga na ndinga iti maruru
26	Runyunyagwa rwaikemba
27	Mugwi juri nkoro jutirathaga
28	Kuejana ni kuithania ngito
29	Guti mucoriro jutiejaga kiragara
30	Ndigwaka maguta nagwe ukambaka muju
31	Inoragia aria igiite
32	Metho ja kiura jatigiragia ngombe inyua ruuji
33	Ukamena kaganda utirona murari
34	Ndamu niyo ndito gukira ruuji
35	Itharagia urakua
36	Nyama ya ruume ititujagirwa nthi
37	Bubu tibwa kaguta
38	Kaba kurerwa umae nkuriki ya kuaga
39	Gutendera ti kugwaa
40	Rwego ruri matu

41	Njogu itiatagia ikinya riayo
42	Ng'ombe itithiragiria ingi nyaki
43	Nkoma ni mucau
44	Nkia iti maruru
45	Jukumawa juri jumwithi
46	Kagwitema gati ururu
47	Kuthekerwa ni antu ti kuriwa ni mbiti
48	Igo rithekagia itumo (gikuo)
49	Into bia arume biithagirwa biri iraando
50	Thina nita wonje; itumaga muntu akaa nkombo ya kiu.

X.IV ATTACHMENT

PHD TIME LOG 2023

S#	MONTH	ACTIVITY	DEADLINE	REMARKS
1	JANUARY 15 th -30 th	Draft 1 of Report Sketches Continue with paintings	Mid-March End of January On going	Done
2	FEBRUARY	20 complete paintings	End of February	Done
3	MARCH 10/3/23	Draft 1 sent to promoter Receive comments and corrections 10/3/23	DRAFT 1 CORRECTED	Done

4	MARCH 11/3/23	DRAFT 2, 3, 4 REPORT	On going	DONE
5	MARCH 23/3/23	Draft 5 without images and final	Corrected and sent back from the Promoter Prof. Łukasz Skąpski	Done
4	APRIL 1/4/23	PhD Report draft sent to promoter Prof. Łukasz Skąpski	15/4/23 Work on corrections and formatting of the report	20/4/23 Complete
5	MAY 1/5/23	Comments on the report	10/5/23 Received Corrections from Prof. Łukasz Skąpski	On going
6	JUNE 1/6/23	Preparations for the exhibition organized	Arrival to Poland Academy of Arts Szczecin	
7	JULY 13/7/2023 JULY 14/7/2023	Mounting of exhibition and opening for viewing	Academy of Arts Szczecin R+Gallery	

AUTHORS DECLARATION

I declare that this is my own original practice-based report and artworks that have not been shown before through exhibitions or as an academic discourse.

Signature:  DATE: 25th May 2023