

**‘Ni Fesheni tu’ – Just Fashion. Consumption of Beads and Beadwork in Tanzania**

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For more than a century beadwork has been playing a major role in Maasai life. European beads were adopted into the frame of Maasai culture to mark regional and age set identity through beadwork. A normative tradition allowed only limited innovations in beadwork following the cyclic change of age sets. Recent changes in the appropriation of beads in Tanzanian Maasailand suggest however that these rules might no longer be valid. The change in colour and pattern has been more drastic than ever turning beadwork into an ever changing multitude of forms: An abundant use of white beads is accompanied by the appropriation of commodified (‘traditional’) attire. This process of fashionisation is fostered and complemented by an increasing commodification of beadwork and an urban lifestyle adopted by many young Maasai. They make use of an iconographic repertoire fed by local as well as global sources. Acceleration, commodification and bricolage within the context of contemporary Tanzanian Maasai beadwork are signs of a dynamic globalisation and the creative use of its iconographic archives.