

Socio-Political Characteristics of Pastoral Nomadism: Flexibility among the Bodi (Mela-Me'en) in Southwest Ethiopia

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This paper intends to examine the characteristics of pastoral nomadism among the Bodi (Mela-Me'en) in southwest Ethiopia. Special attention will be paid into the interrelationship between their nomadic movement and socio-political factors. Their daily migrations, which are repeated very frequently, are closely related to the flexibility of their social networks while their yearly ones are related to inter-ethnic conflict.

Key words: Bodi, nomadism, herding camp, swidden, warfare.

1. INTRODUCTION

In this paper I intend to examine the context of Bodi pastoral movements in southwestern Ethiopia, and the finding will suggest that these movements mirror Bodi socio-political reality.

By no means is this a rejection of the hypothesis that pastoral peoples of necessity move in accordance with ecological conditions inasmuch as they have a symbiotic relationship with gregarious species of hoofed animals. Most pastoral groups, since they are living in grass and water-scarce dry lands, must compensate for land productivity with space. Thus the lower the productivity of flora within a given area-unit the more need there is for extended space for mobility; inversely, with higher plant productivity the Bodi can live in a proportionately smaller range of mobility. This is a self-evident principle since pastoralists are dependent upon grazing animals.

Most research until now concerning pastoral nomadism has treated patterns of nomadism as variations of such ecological conditions (e.g. Johnson 1969). These studies have practically exhausted all possible typologies of pastoral nomadism under various ecological conditions. However, are the pastoralists' movements regulated exclusively by particular ecological-economic conditions?

Research (e.g. by Baxter 1972; Irons 1974; Burnham 1975; Gulliver 1975; Elam 1979) has illustrated that pastoral nomadism responds to socio-political conditions as distinct from ecological and economic. The numerous instances brought out in this study underscore that Bodi nomadism cannot be interpreted simply with reference to ecological conditions.

What are these social and political constituents of nomadism? By examining pastoral nomad movements our intention is to depict in relief the social and political factors that pattern such movements. It is conceivable that the reason most pastoral peoples are

continually repeating their movements is because their social and cultural strategies are nurtured within this dynamic movement. Until now, this point has not been thoroughly pursued. Our inquiry into the Bodi, who live by their traditional rhythms without significant influence from the central government, can raise uniquely valuable perspectives on pastoral nomadism.

I have gathered a considerable amount of information by field observation in Bodi society and elsewhere concerning nomadism, though it is impossible to offer an all-inclusive general discussion here within a limited space. Instead I will refer to a number of relevant examples, such as analysis of a nomadic herding group centered on the *komorut*. While a *komorut* takes the role of priest at rain-making rituals, he also acts as a regional chief (*balabat*) for the Ethiopian government. However, the mere presence of a *komorut* does not imply an exceptional type of nomadism. While this group is unusual in formed a zone of movement more or less in the center of the region, in many other respects it shares characteristics with other pastoral herding groups. It is this *komorut*-centered pastoral herding group that reacts most sensitively to conflicts with neighboring peoples. First, we should clarify the concept of nomadism as treated in this discussion. Nomadism means moving about selectively, based on groups constituting the units of its society, to temporary living locations. Nomadism is carried on continuously within a territory occupied by the group. Therefore, this concept of nomadism could apply not only to pastoralists, but just as well to hunting and gathering peoples and even swidden farmers. The distinctive characteristic of pastoralism is that it is an existence based on a pattern of daily behavior in which domestic animals are taken out to graze and brought back again to the camp that same day. However, "moving" is not limited in meaning to "moving an abode" merely in terms of time and space; it implies a higher concept of nomadism.

Two levels of movement can be found not only within the Bodi people but in many herding societies. One is provisional movement, corresponding to what we call nomadism. Many of these movements are known as "seasonal migrations", but since this manner of expression calls to mind ecological adaptation, it is a term I choose not to use. The second level of movement is that which transcends preexisting territory. Of the latter, it is possible to identify two modes: one manifests from a finely accumulated tradition of nomadism spanning generations; the other is linked to a sudden incident, and these extra-territorial movements are not infrequently accompanied by clashes of one kind or another among groups holding territory where movements take place. We shall make a distinction between these two levels of movement by naming the former level "temporal movement" in contrast to the latter, which we shall call "historical movement"⁽¹⁾. For the Bodi both levels of movement can be expressed by the term *zigen*.

This paper treats only temporal movement, or nomadism. I have analyzed elsewhere their historical movement in relation to inter-ethnic conflict (Fukui 1994).

2. THE BODI⁽²⁾

The Bodi live on the plains east of the lower reaches of the Omo River, which flows through southwestern Ethiopia. East of the region inhabited by the Bodi is the Dime mountain range (highest peak: Mt. Smith at 2528 m) and inhabited by the Dime people, who engage in swidden agriculture. The Bodi practice swidden agriculture on the wooded western slope at an altitude of 800–1200 m in the western part of this mountainous region. The Bodi originally lived on the grassland at 500–800 m, but, by repeatedly attacking the Dime people to the east, the Bodi eventually extended their domain towards the highlands where the Dime live⁽³⁾.

The River Omo borders the Bodi to the west and north. The riverbank forest grows more and more densely as one travels north to south along this river. In addition to utilizing these riverbank forests for swidden farming, the Bodi also practice flooded cultivation.

For 15 km to the south stretches an expanse of uninhabited country bordered by the River Gura, reaching to the River Mara in the northernmost range of the Mursi people.

This zone forms a natural barrier between the Bodi and Mursi in times of conflict. The area hemmed between the eastern mountainous forest and the riverbank forest along the River Omo to the west and north is important to the Bodi for grazing. With a dominant species of acacia, this is a sparse savanna woodland and grassy plain⁽⁴⁾.

There are about 2500 Bodi living in this region of approximately 2000/km²; population density is about 1.25/km². "Bodi" is also used administratively. These Bodi distinguish themselves from other peoples by calling themselves *me'en*, or *meken*. *Me'en* (*Meken*) is the language (one of Surma languages) spoken by this group unit who have an acute "we consciousness". They are divided into seven sub-groups, namely the Mela, Chirim, Baiti, Bokol, K'asha, Gabiyo, and Nyomoni. These sub-groups share their "we consciousness" through the *me'en* language. Of these groups only the Mela and Chirim live in the eastern River Omo region, and are called "Bodi". The remaining five sub-groups live in the western and northern parts of the River Omo region and are collectively called Tishana.

The present study deals primarily with the Mela. The Mela raise mostly cattle and goats, as do the Chirim to the north. However, as noted previously, the Mela also engage in swidden agriculture on the side. In terms of subsistence economy perhaps it would be fair to say that stock-raising and agriculture are equally important. However, in a socio-cultural purview it is certainly not rash to state that livestock, especially cattle, is crucial in their society.

The Mela and Chirim differ considerably in aspects of clan composition and history. The history of the Mela is quite complicated, but when stated simply it has unfolded as follows. Proto-Mela and Kwegu originally inhabited the land that is presently occupied by the Mela. It is thought that 10 generations or about three hundred years ago, the clan of the present chief lineage and intimates came here from Sai near Maji in the western River Omo region to subjugate the indigenous inhabitants (Fukui 1994).

2.1. Three ecological zones and Bodi subsistence

As already outlined, Bodi lands can be divided into three ecological zones. First is the Dime secondary wooded mountainous land utilized for swidden agriculture. Woodland at an altitude between approximately 800–1200 m is cleared for cultivating sorghum and maize. During the peak of the dry season livestock follow a pattern of crossing over into the woodland in search of water and grass, roaming as high as 800–900 m, and returning to camp in the same day. There are almost no established livestock herding camps in this region. Only families owning just a few animals tend to live here. Nearly half of these have herding camps in the central plains (type 2), but it is primarily the women who take up residence in this area in order to devote themselves to the fields.

The second type of ecological zone is the central grazing savanna between the eastern mountainous secondary woodlands and the riverbank forests of the River Omo. The Hana River, the Gura River to the south, and their tributaries flow through this area, but since perennial flows are limited most people have to rely upon wells dug out of the riverbed as a source of water in dry season. Swidden farming is also carried out among the forests hugging the banks of these rivers, and cleared sections are used for grazing pasture during the dry season. Most of the central plain is grassy, with Gramineae interspersed here and there by acacia, tamarind and so on. This is the primary pasture land for grazing animals. The present focus is upon the herding camps that are found on this grassy plain.

The third ecological type covers an area of flooded fields and riverbank forests along the River Omo. Here the Bodi are mostly engaged in small-scale flooded cultivation and swidden agriculture, and in a part of the cleared riverbank forest herding camps are formed. The River Omo is some 50–100 m wide and flows abundantly all year. At the River Omo in the north of the Bodi region it is possible to walk across the river in the dry season, otherwise it is generally not feasible to cross without a dugout canoe.

Only the flooded fields are passed on as hereditary rights through the patrilineal line. Consequently, in the case of an outsider using this land, a part of what is harvested is handed over to the landholder by prior arrangement. Mostly sorghum and maize are harvested from the flooded and swidden fields. The first person to clear a riverbank forest

and highland secondary forests by converting them into swidden fields retains the rights to continued use, but by giving advance notice it is possible for anyone to gain access.

Excluding Bodi who possess only a few livestock, herding camps form upon the central plain lands, and swidden settlements establish themselves in the highland and riverbank forests. For the most part, men live in the herding camps, while women stay in the swidden settlements, and it is the women who do more commuting. Although herding camps are composed of males as a rule, there are women in residence at all times despite any membership fluctuations, with the exception of youth herding groups.

It is important to note that the Bodi have two types of migration. Generally, one type is the regular migration of herding camps for periods of several months. The second type is that of the swidden settlements which relocate principally every two years. This second type is similarly temporal, but it is called *olman* (pl. *olmana*) as distinct from the first type, known as *tui* (pl. *ori*). The present paper is concerned with the migrations of *ori* consisting of several *tui*. Here I will refer to the *ori* as a herding camp.

2.2. Seasons and subsistence rhythm

Climatic data to establish the seasons of Bodi territories unfortunately does not exist beyond temperature readings taken by myself. The amount of precipitation is especially important, inferences from vegetation suggesting something within the annual range of 500 to 700 mm. What follows is an outline of a year-long sketch of the seasons based on the seasonal perspective of the Bodi.

Starting with December, there is hardly any rainfall, this being the beginning of the dry season (*kuis*). Grass dries up in no time at all, becoming fuel for bush fires. The major effect of bush fires is to allow the introduction of new grass growth. Even during the period of the three-month dry season, from December until the end of February, rain accompanied by thunder and heavy winds falls in showers lasting 30 to 60 minutes several times a month at best, more frequently toward the end of the dry season. However frugal the moisture, the grasses of this scorched earth respond sensitively to the fire heat by sending up new shoots. Young shoots up to 10–20 cm are given the name *mer*, and are an important source of grazing during the dry season.

Bush fires sweep across the entire Bodi region. It must be kept in mind that these fires are not random outbreaks, but are part of a definite design. The Bodi are familiar with the grass species and their germinating conditions in each region. Especially during the dry season the Bodi artificially manipulate ecological conditions in a way that allows their animals to graze with ease. I was harshly scolded with "Here is not a place for burning at this time!" when I tried to set light to some dry grass. The Bodi carefully consider how to nurture maximum productivity of the pasture grasses that require the meager dry season rainfall⁽⁵⁾.

By March, the time span shortens between explosive showers accompanied by lightning and strong winds, and thick, heavy rain clouds congregate over the Bodi region. Rain may fall at any moment without warning. The transition to this rainy season is called *kokoba*. Seeding of the swidden fields is conducted during *kokoba*. Dry riverbeds gradually become moist, and before we were aware of it standing water was becoming evident, and a swollen river appeared after a heavy rainfall.

It is now around mid-April, and the rainy season is under way. Grasses grow thick, and grazing time and distances are greatly reduced. In the swidden fields there is weeding to do and rites to drive away insects and other pests; time is increasingly given to defending against harmful animals, but there are no special terms in the Bodi language for this. There is a brief dry season in August, the period for harvesting grains from the swidden fields.

By September intermittent rains have returned. This period, called *lebhen*, is the time for cultivating grains in flooded fields. These grains are then harvested in December, *logur* in the Bodi language. It is the beginning of the dry season. Clouds are fewer and fewer, the air becomes dry, and the grass turns yellow. With this, we are back at the dry season proper (*kuis*). For these pastoral people the season during January and February is the most

severe. This is when they demonstrate ecological resourcefulness to the utmost by artificially manipulating fires to enhance vegetation growth and herd management.

2.3. Social space

The smallest unit of social space formed around a given Bodi individual is the dwelling (*kes*), which is grass-thatched and round. Ordinarily it consists of a mother and children. Siblings of the same mother are called *kes konang* ("same one house"), expressing a very strong bond.

There is an enclosure, called *tui*, around this dwelling, within which are provided pens and an open area for the animals. The *tui* is the smallest social unit among the Bodi, basically consisting of a husband, a wife (or more than one), and their children. The concept of *tui* expresses a compound, with a dwelling house, animals' pens and an open area surrounded by a fence made from thorn trees. But this is not all. Like the Japanese concept of *ie*, it expresses a communal group or lineage principled on the patrilineal line. The Bodi greatly fear extinction of their *tui*. Thus the *tui* connotes both the material compound, which is destroyed each time the group move, and the patrilineal line, which is the fundamental social unit.

When grouped together a number of *tui* are called *ori*. Bodi try to avoid by all means possible existing simply as a solitary *tui* separated from others, preferring instead to gather a number of *tui*, if possible an ideal even number, to form an *ori*. An *ori* settlement is horseshoe-shaped, with the entrances of each *tui* facing a single tree planted in the center of an open communal space; the open end of an *ori* faces east without exception. This expresses the Bodi world-view where east corresponds to life and west to death.

The head of the *ori*, called "the owner of *ori*", is selected in advance to fulfill this position, and for him the Bodi construct a *tui* in the center of the compound. Thus, the head of the *ori* is not necessarily a fixed position. He is chosen, by open participation, based on criteria such as his clan, age, popularity, and so on. Since the *ori* is a domestic communal herding group (herding animals of each *tui* communally), the *ori* disintegrates to an extent where human and animal needs can be fulfilled. Such divergence and convergence is a part of daily life.

When two *ori* are built adjacent to one another, such a joint settlement is called *gangu*. Generally, *gangu* are formed in anticipation of a ritual. In this situation, two moieties assemble. Every Bodi member will belong to either the *komo* or the *koruo* moiety, based on descent, and marriages are normally conducted between both of these groups. *Komo* is the "superior" group since it furnishes the priestly order.

An area where numerous *ori* or *gangu* are gathered is called *bore*. This corresponds to territory, and involves two levels. One is a common territory where a number of *ori* groups occasionally graze their herds. This territory represents a zone of everyday movement. The other level is a concept referring to the region that encompasses a number of these everyday grazing grounds. On this scale the Bodi, or the Me'en of the eastern part of the River Omo, are largely associated with three territories. These are Chirim in the north, Hana in the central region, and Gura in the south. As mentioned earlier, Hana and Gura are perceived as a sub-group of the Mela, as against the northern Chirim. Although the Chirim speak the same Me'en language, they are one of the enemies of the Mela (Fukui 1994), yet they do have relations by intermarriage, and daily transit between them is not unusual. However, the Mela and Chirim do not share the same nomadic territory as long as the situation is not in any sense an emergency. I will focus on herding groups, in particular the chief (*komorut*) in the Hana area of Mela.

Another spatial unit, even larger than the *bore*, is called *ba*. *Ba* is also used as an abstract name for land, and denotes a territory when pre-fixed to a personal name. If you say "*ba de Tugoronyi*" (the name of the ancestor of chiefs who subjugated the lands of the present-day Mela), this names the region containing Hana and Gura. If you say "*ba de Me'enuni*", this indicates all lands where Me'en is spoken. There are also instances when the word *eri* is used instead of *ba*. For example, when one says, "*Hana o Gura ga eri te Melani*" (Hana and Gura is the land of Mela), it is possible to interchange "*ba*" with "*eri*". However, judging

from other examples in usage, in contrast to *ba*, which refers abstractly to “lands”, the meaning of *eri* seems to be far more limited, denoting a domain or territory.

The concept encompassing Mela and Chirim is called Bodi elsewhere, but the Bodi say “*Me'enuni bonda*”, meaning the Me'en of this side of the River Omo. On the other hand, they call the Me'en living on the west side of the River Omo, the Tishana, “*Me'enuni bonduka*” (Me'en of the opposite shore). These Me'en groups speak virtually the same language and make affinal relations by intermarriage. However, Tishana who come to Mela land frequently find themselves an object of contempt since, in addition to their “inferior” descent, they primarily engage in swidden agriculture in the eastern mountains and own few cattle.

Besides the Me'en there are the “other peoples”. In the Bodi region there are the Kwegu people living along the River Omo; the southern pastoral Mursi; the Hamar, who are somewhat removed to the southeast; and then the Su, which is an inclusive term referring to the agricultural groups of the mountainous regions who have a separate language. The Mursi in particular speak a language of the Surma and share as much as 50% of basic vocabulary (Bender 1971), but they are the common enemy of the Bodi, or Mela, and the Chirim. Conversely, the southeastern Hamar clan speak an Omotic language and are a common enemy of the Bodi and Mursi⁽⁶⁾.

Beyond these groupings, the peoples administering the Bodi at the national level of Ethiopian government are called *Gaama*. Even though *Gaama* sometimes participate in arbitration of the incessant inter-ethnic warfare, their involvement has been recently becoming more effective insofar as the influence of (authoritarian) *Gaama* concerns Bodi society.

2.4. Classification of land

The land where the Bodi live is classified in extreme detail, and to each classification unit are attached various place-names. It is possible to count as many as 200 place-names in the Hana region, so for the whole Bodi area the number may reach around four or five hundred. Since the land inhabited by Bodi (Mela and Chirim) is an area of about 2000 km², an individually named place is found every four or five square kilometers. To be sure, when walking through Bodi land not twenty minutes elapse before arriving at another location with its own unique place-name. It is safe to estimate that a place-name exists within a parcel of land every four to five kilometers. Depending upon the place, names may occur even more frequently. I intend to make a separate detailed analysis in the Hana region, but for the time being simply draw attention to the context for place-names⁽⁷⁾.

It is proposed that the loci of Bodi migrations are set out on the basis of these place-names, and that the place-names are endowed with significance connected to occasions for migration. For a child to become an adult she or he is naturally educated about many things, but these place-names are among the most important acquisitions. For example, of the place called Bansaro: what are its geographic features? where can one obtain water? is the water dirty or not? are there any taboos? For a member of the Bodi these are matters of basic common sense. Otherwise, they cannot graze the animals or migrate, and they could not survive upon these lands.

To indicate an important site within a territory the name of a part of human anatomy is used, for instance, *kengo*, which expresses “stomach”, and *kurietch*, for “navel”. These are found in each *komorut*'s respective domain. First, the place that corresponds to “navel” is the river where water can always be obtained. However, the River Omo, which flows through and beyond southwestern Ethiopia of which Bodi lands are a part, is not entirely within the limits of “navel”. The land that corresponds to “stomach” is a location that is situated around water and is most suitable for cultivation and grazing.

In addition to *kuley*, the “stomach” and “belly button” in a domain's interior, there are several places that are sacred or tabooed. When going to draw water from a place where ancestral spirits (*k'oroch*) dwell, it is feared that a child soon to be born will be blind or stupid. Land is also chosen for the performance of rituals. Occasions for rain-making are especially critical, and the new year ritual is performed only after the group have moved to

a location that is appropriate for the ritual. Furthermore, there is a specified location for each clan. Since this is tied to the clan's history, there may even be discrepancies with the Bodi domain based on clan, but they do not indicate exclusivity among the clans' migrations. Above all, the specific rituals connected with the clan are performed once the concerned clan members have moved to the correct location.

In this way, locations that have been assigned a place-name become materially and conceptually distinct from any other. Each location is individualized and migration destinations are decided within this context.

2.5. Political influences

It was mentioned above that Bodi lands can be broadly divided into three geographical regions. From north to south these are the Chirim, Hana, and Gura regions. In each of these regions there may be from one to three chiefs known as *komorut*. While the *komorut* performs religious services, especially rain-making rituals, he is critically involved in decision-making at key moments of intra-regional politics. This assumes a council of senior elders, for without their support the *komorut* would lose power. Presently among the Chirim there are three chiefs, one for Hana, and two among Gura, each presiding over a region. However, as the result of having come through a historical process (clan formation and place of origin) that differs from both the Hana and Gura, the Chirim are not homogeneous with the other two peoples in several respects, even though they share the same language and culture.

For example, the Hana and Gura have a term expressing the whole of their respective regions, but this is not found among the Chirim. Focusing upon the Mela living in the Hana region, we will now look broadly at their history and political framework. The proto-Mela who were living here consisted of three clans and lived midway between the Bodi and southern Mursi of today. From the west a clan of the current chiefdom and his followers came to conquer and assimilate the proto-Mela. These were the ancestors, 10 generations ago, of the present *komorut* (Fukui 1994). Some time later, however, five generations ago, there was fighting among the *komorut*'s offspring, and the one who moved south in order to live in what is now Gura is today one of the Gura *komoruts*. Another of the Gura *komoruts* maintains a clan of the indigenous proto-Mela. Among the Gura there is one more latent *komorut*, who belongs to the same clan as the Hana chief but differs by lineage and movement pattern. Unlike the other *komoruts*, he is not recognized as a current *komorut* with a specific given name signifying his domain.

This *komorut* migrates within one domain together with *koruo* moiety supporters from each of the other clans. Even if the herding camps they have formed are disparate, on ritual occasions they will merge to form a herding camp (in this case *gangu*). In the case of Hana, they are divided into several, based on power relations, within the domain of a single *komorut*.

These power relations emerge with striking clarity at times such as the election of a new *komorut*. Since being qualified to become the new *komorut* means being the eldest son of the mother of each of the four specified clans, fighting among them occurs frequently. At the time of the present *komorut*'s election Hana supporters were divided between four candidates. Migration ranges often correspond to these power relations.

3. THE STRUCTURE OF PASTORAL HERDING GROUPS

3.1. Two types of nomadic herding groups

Groups that jointly conduct same-day return grazing of animals for a certain period are here called "nomadic herding groups". A group that forms a temporary settlement is called a "herding camp". Regardless of who owns which animals, a certain number of animals are managed within the *tui* (compound) where the daily milking and blood-letting are carried out, and daily grazing is conducted cooperatively by a number of neighboring *tui*.

Every morning the headmen of each *tui* gather to discuss and decide that day's grazing

location and watering site. From among the *tui* headmen gathered one is selected and entrusted with herd management for that day. Calves are generally left to children up to 12 or 13 years of age. In addition to the children, there are times when the elderly also play an important role in grazing the animals. However, most *tui* graze their cattle and goats at separate locations. In this paper I intend to analyze nomadic herding groups that are formed around the cattle⁽⁸⁾.

Two types of cattle nomadic herding groups can be observed. The first type is based upon a household of a husband, often a number of his wives, and their children. The second type consists of a group of bachelor youths. Let us call the former "family nomadic herding groups" and the latter "youth nomadic herding groups". Another obvious difference between these two types of groups is noticed in the composition and ownership of their respective herds. Herd composition among the former emphasizes the cows and their calves, principally with one bull, while the herds of the latter primarily consist of oxen and young cattle. Further, among *tui* of the former group based on such polygamous households, the proportion of cattle under ownership of the husband is large; in contrast, most of the cattle in youth nomadic herding groups are owned by their relatives, the youths themselves holding a relatively small portion of cattle ownership. The youth groups do not cook grains or beef. Milk and blood, occasional beef and cooked beef are all that they obtain for themselves on a daily basis. Differences between these two types of nomadic herding groups also appear in their ways of moving, as we shall point out below.

For the most part, though, both groups exhibit common settlements and residence placements, and both refer to a residence as *tui* and a settlement as *ori*. Whenever a specific *tui* is indicated, it is called by a compound word, with the name of either the husband or the husband's father attached, whereas in the case of a youth group the *tui* is named by attaching the name of its eldest male. Furthermore, be it a familial group or a youth group, whenever referring to a specific *ori* (herding camp) the name of the owner occupying the center area of the *tui* complex is used, expressed as "owning the *ori*'s communal space (*bal*)". There is a strong tendency to choose a person who belongs to the clan of *komo* moiety, but in a situation where the complex is composed only of members belonging to the same moiety, it is decided by clan, age, popularity, judgment, and so forth. However, divergences and convergences of the *tui*, the most basic unit of Bodi society, are turbulent, so these conditions do not always necessarily apply.

3.2. Herding camp movements

To an observer, the impetus to relocate on a certain day seems to arise out of thin air. There are times when a relocation is anticipated, but the decision is made in the early hours on the day of the move. Within the camp, women of one or two *tui* suddenly gather up household goods and tools early that morning, while the men drive the cattle out and evacuate the camp. Usually those who leave camp while the rest remain did not agree on some issue with the others in the camp. They suddenly break out of the former communal camp and head for some other location. Or, it may be that those who evacuated were not able to notify the others by early morning, and if an observer is not attached to the *tui* the move is a complete surprise. The evacuator merge with another preexisting camp somewhere, or they get together with comrades to open a completely new camp in the bush.

Sometimes things happen in reverse. In other words, a number of *tui* may evacuate as a group, while only one *tui* receives no contact at all concerning the move. Even then, though I was attached to the groups that moved, there was no notification until just before they moved. It could be that the decision to move came immediately before the action, perhaps related to climatic conditions for that day, or on receipt of some new information.

Such situations are not at all uncommon. Of course, there are also instances in which the existing herding camp moves as one body and forms a consistent herding camp at their new location, with the original group structure intact; as well as instances where they merge with a new *tui* from somewhere else to form a herding camp. With the *tui* as the basic unit of society, the constant shifting and rearranging of herding camps can be truly

bewildering, and I intend to conduct a more detailed investigation at another time. For now I will concern myself with selecting only the most salient examples.

The locations to which the Bodi move have a place-name and the name of a conspicuous tree, faithfully transmitted within the group. On the morning of departure, women bustle about getting together belongings and tools, wrap up hides, load them onto the animals and depart. Belongings do not exceed an amount that the women living in the *tui* can load onto the animals. They set to work packing and preparing to move at dusk, with the one or two hours of light that remain after they have finished milking. The men are solely responsible for impedimenta and important items of the *tui* at large. Impedimenta include bows and arrows used for blood-letting, bells and other ornaments, flutes made of horn and tusk, game boards, flags made of cattle hide, and so forth. As long as there is no emergency, men and women need not mobilize together.

Upon arriving at their destination they gather around a single tree. Males place on and beneath the tree objects that they have brought. For their part, the women set the *tui* belongings down a short distance from the tree and wait for the ritual. This one tree becomes the center of the herding camp's communal ground and a gathering place for men at night. The ritual starts after they have made a fire. The camp chief can make fire easily by rubbing two blackened twigs together. The fire is kept alive in the camp until put out when the camp moves again. Group members of the newly formed herding camp, especially women and children, receive purification by having their head and hands and feet rubbed by the *komorut* with a mixture of dirt and coffee. Following this each have their bodies sprayed with a special sour milk used for rituals. Holding the sour milk, the *komorut* faces the herd of cattle, sprays them, and prays for prosperity at this new location. These rituals, which take place at each successive location, however, appear to have a number of variations specifically based on cultural particulars.

3.3. Herding camp formation

The physical formation of *tui* into a herding camp unfolds from the initial placement of the entrance to the chief's compound. The camp is designed to face east, toward the tree in the center (Fig. 1). When this is established in order to put up the enclosures around each *tui*, the men cut down trees from the immediate vicinity and make fences with them. At the same time some of the trees within the *tui* are left standing and pruned. Building the animal pens and later constructing the dwellings are women's work. For the construction of their own living quarters women collect an assortment of trees and grasses from the surrounding area. These dwellings will be mostly completed and livable within a

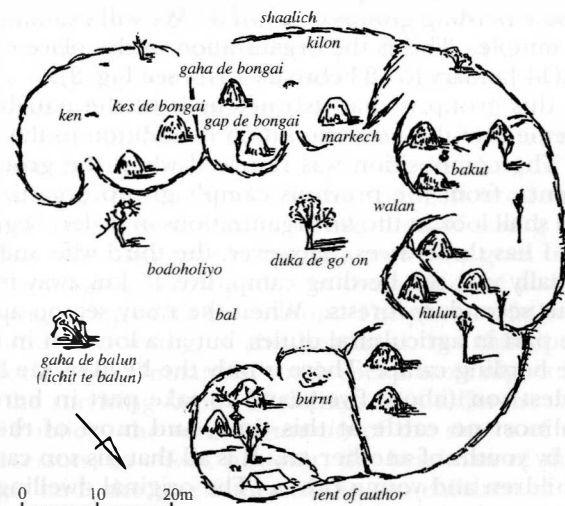


Fig. 1. Composition of a herding camp

day or two. The form of the dwelling will differ depending upon how long they anticipate staying in the location, though it is usually of a simple bowl-shaped design made of thatch. Herding camps rarely build mud-walled dwellings, an exception being made if there is the prospect of an unusually lengthy stay of at least three months or so.

The communal ground filling the center of the *ori* is designed to face eastward, and as a custom there are three sites designated within. One is the above-mentioned tree in the center of the open area, the place where men have their meals and socialize. The second is where men gather in the morning, have breakfast, and discuss their plans for the day's grazing site. The third is a place with shade where men during the peak hours of the afternoon, or sick or wounded cattle can take a rest. This shade is created artificially from cut trees. Without fail small fires are made in the morning and evening next to the respective trees. The communal ground is called the *bal*. It is the common space for the men of the herding camp. The chief of the camp at that time is the owner of this communal ground for the duration of their stay.

Inside the *tui*, in the center, there is a place for burning dung. This is the "navel" of the *tui*, and an elder who dies during the period of residence at the camp site will be buried here. This "navel" is called *ken*. Women gather dry dung until the cattle return from grazing in the evening, then just as the cattle are returning they set fire to the dung. The ashes are put in a place furthest away from the opening of the *tui*. This area is the *tui*'s "stomach". On entering a herding camp, on the right of center is the abode of the wife of the eldest male, while the dwelling to the left of the *komorut*'s is for the second wife. The right side is consistently preferential. A stove is usually constructed of three stones in a triangle placed in the center of the dwelling, although on occasion it may even be set up outside.

The number and shape of calves' stalls and enclosures are determined by the age and number of calves. Trees that remain inside the *tui* are used especially for hanging up the cattle impedimenta. For example, items such as ornaments and milking utensils are suspended here.

The herding camp, made thus in the shape of a horseshoe, has the *tui* of the *komorut* as the owner of the open area placed in the innermost position with the other *tui* arranged on either side. The order of this arrangement of the *tui* is decided each time a herding camp is constructed, and the Bodi have excellent recollection of the configuration of each and every herding camp. The ends of the horseshoe-shaped *ori* are called *k'erech*, and *kien* refers to all that is arranged in between.

3.4. Structure of pastoral grazing groups

How are these nomadic herding groups organized? We will examine group organization using one particular example. This is the organization of the place called T'ola, during a very severe dry season (14 January to 18 February 1975; see Fig. 2).

What is clear from this group is that its nucleus is in the patrilineal descent group (*nganiya*). Another element of the *tui* composition in addition to this is affinity on the left side VI (*kokoï*) only. The composition was renewed when the group came to this new location. One difference from the previous camp's group organization is that III has separated from IV. We shall look at the *tui* organizations in order, beginning with I.

The headman of *tui* I has three wives. However, the third wife and her newborn child, although they occasionally visit the herding camp, live 15 km away in a swidden location within the mountainous secondary forests. When the rainy season approaches, the other two wives will also take part in agricultural duties, but at a location in the riverbank forests about 5 km west of the herding camp. There is only the head of the household (about 40 years old) and his oldest son (about five years) to take part in herding. However this headman possesses almost no cattle at this time, and most of the herding of young livestock is conducted by youths of another *tui*. It is all that his son can do to keep up with the other groups of children and young calves. The original dwelling of this wife burned down from a fire that was to the left of the doorway, so they moved to the present site.

The headman of *tui* II is the elder brother from the same father as the headman of *tui*

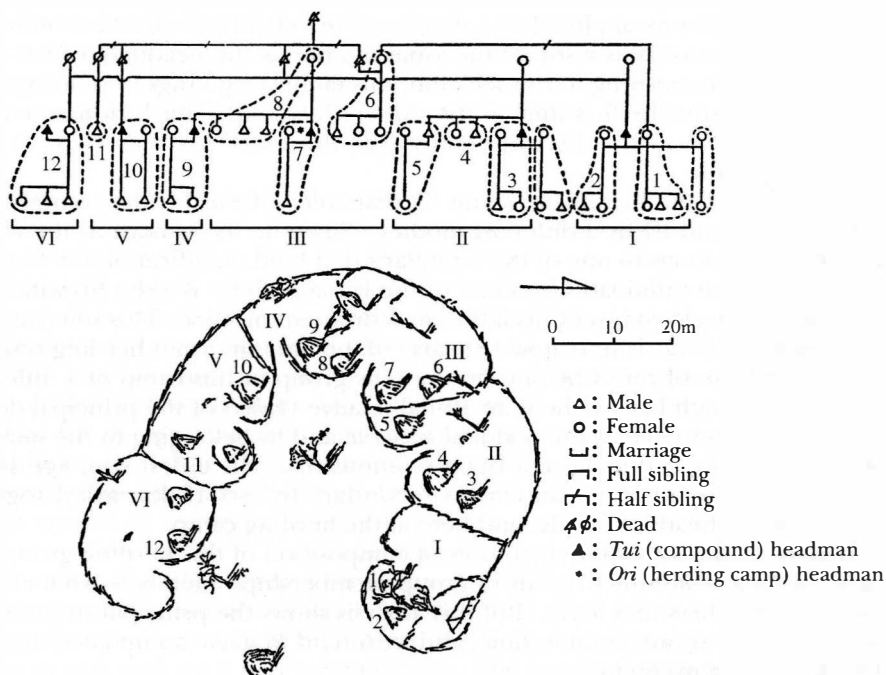


Fig. 2. Members living in a herding camp

III. His mother belongs to a clan of northern Chirim, so that his relationship is considered to be one step removed. However, he has an astute mind, and as an elder he holds a status essentially equal with his younger brother the headman of *tui* III. He has two wives: he is separated from one, and the second lives with him in the herding camp. The first lives with her relatives from her mother's side at a swidden site within the mountainous secondary forests. The second wife is a sibling of the same mother as the *komorut* but she rarely shows herself around the *tui*. She can usually be found at the swidden site in Chirim 15 km away, and for half of the period that he was in this herding camp even his children were off at the swidden settlement. He had just received a wife, had almost no cattle at this time, and had built his compound in the same *tui* as his married siblings. This headman's second younger brother and younger sister live in No. 4, and the younger brother spends most nights by the campfire in the open area of the *tui*. Most of the herding tasks in *tui* II are entrusted to male offspring who have turned 18. Herding is carried out by the whole camp collectively, so duties revolve every five days.

The owner of *tui* III (age 40; No. 7) is the *komorut* of the Hana region and headman of this *tui*. His eldest son is only four years old, so the herding of this *tui*'s cattle is the responsibility of the siblings of No. 8, who is the youngest brother of the same mother, although many times I have seen the *tui* headman himself taking charge of the herd. A male of this generation still takes part in herding and even goes out to take initiatives in warfare. Since he is now aging, participation in these kinds of activities will be limited to the comparatively young group of his generation. The physical father of the siblings of No. 8 is not the father, who died young, of this headman, but this does not show up in any differences in their social life. Unmarried youth spend most nights in the communal area. In house No. 6 live the surviving family of siblings by a different mother of the father of this *tui*'s headman. Publicly, the sons (*ngusunit*) of the sisters of the deceased husband have become his successors; in effect, however, the headman of this *tui* (No. 7) fills this role, it being said that he is the true father of the two children of the second one lower. The mother of No. 6 is suspected of an evil eye. This comes from her mother's side, so that her daughter is also treated as the inheritor of an evil eye. As a rule within the *tui*, No.

6 sows trouble; for example, when calves become sick it is usually the fault of No. 6.

The headman of IV is a son of the same mother as the headman of III. We mentioned above that before moving to this location, this family of siblings were living in the same *tui*, and split apart for the first time at the present location. This headman confided that the reason for this was his discontent towards the elder brother (No. 7) over a matter concerning cattle.

The father of the headman (about 35 years old) of *tui* V is the younger brother of the father of I, II and III by a different mother. Since he too is born as the eldest son of the mother who belongs to one of the four clans that hold qualification for *komorut*, he was put up as one of the candidates for chief of the Hana region. Besides his wife and children, V is joined by the eldest son of his father by a different mother. This son lost his parents and was raised in this *tui*, where, now 18 years old, he has important herding responsibilities.

The headman of *tui* VI belongs to the only group in this camp of a different patrilineal descent. Through his wife he is an affinal relative (*kokoï*) of the principal descent group of this herding camp. He is the regional *komorut*, and by belonging to the same age-set as the headman of No. 7 they have a deep relationship. His eldest son, age seven, lives in a swidden settlement in mountainous secondary forests 15 km away, together with the mother of this headman's wife, and here at the herding camp.

These six *tui* are the principal units of composition of this herding group, but this is not fixed, and there are fluctuations in group membership. Members from elsewhere may be added or members may leave. But this analysis shows the principal structure of a nomadic herding group at one point in time, and we intend to make an updated detailed analysis of their forms of movement.

Finally, we must insert the age and sex structure of the principal members we have been discussing. We used the following criteria for age structure by sex: less than six years is an age when labor is not expected; when about six years old children start being entrusted with watching over small domestic animals and infant calves; at about 12 or 13 there are occasionally instances when they herd cattle together with other youths; once they are 15 they take on the duties of herding cattle more or less equally with adults. Furthermore, when they have become of this age, they enter into a new age-set and assume possession of a specific bull for themselves (Fukui 1979). In addition, they can now join up exclusively with other youths to become an independent group and form herding camps, and even take an active part in warfare.

By the age of 25 or so most, though not all, have married. Males generally marry between the ages of 25 and 30, and women become brides between 15 and 20, but especially during the years just before and after the age of 20. The years between 25 and 50 are those of a productive married life. The opinions of those over 50 are often solicited in regard to regional politics, but politics at the camp level are left up to the group that also sits in control in times of conflict.

Men over the age of 50 give advice about warfare strategy and no longer take part in actual battles. In particular, elders in excess of 60 years do not participate in herding or conflict, and attain considerable power in regional politics. Not all members of this age-set are so limited, however; a few of these wise men are sought for their views as high-level advisors to the *komin*.

The 42 members of this nomadic herding group are evenly divided between men and women. Married members and small children under the age of six each account for about one-third of the total number. The remaining one-third are men and women from age six to 25 who assume regular duties of herding and stock management.

4. MOVEMENTS OF THE HERDING CAMP

What can be said about the movement range of the herding camp, and what kind of divergences and convergences occur over the course of repeated movement cycles? To begin with, I will track the movements of groups consisted in a herding camp formed around the previously discussed *komorut* of the Hana region over a roughly 32-month

period between December 1973 and July 1976. Next, I will trace back to the time of the new year ritual as clearly as memories permit, and outline the path of the herding camp from the previous generation. Our findings will be considered in light of a comparison made with the movements of the herding camp of the *komorut* of the southern Gura region.

4.1. Herding camp movements over 32 months

I first observed the Hana *komoru*'s herding camp in December 1973, at the start of the dry season in a place called Gabiyo (Fig. 3). On this occasion the author's period of stay for a preliminary field survey was merely three months, so an adequate account of membership composition could not be compiled. Later, beginning in January 1974 when I was able to settle down for more sustained observation, the group had already moved to Giya (2). This site had become "the place of the *komorut*", and they had established a *gangu* of two moieties in two adjacent *ori*. They came here in order to conduct the inauguration ritual for the new *komorut*. The *komo* moiety occupies the right sight of the *komorut*'s line, while on the left is the subordinate *koruo* moiety, with the common areas of both facing eastward, thus neatly representing their world-view.

However, their period of residence here lasted only a month before they moved to a place called Bansaro (3 in Fig. 3). This was because they had come into conflict with the Mursi. The conflict was directly triggered on 10 January 1974, when an elderly Mursi who had come to pick up relief commodities was killed by a Bodi while he was washing himself in the River Hana near my initial field site. Most of the Bodi in Hana converged to this location in Bansaro and took up a defensive posture. The herding camp formed here by 19 *tui* in all was like a bee's nest. Figure 3 shows only those *tui* co-occupying the same communal ground. There are only three other locations in the Hana region where herding camps were established. They spent the rainy season here, and then in October

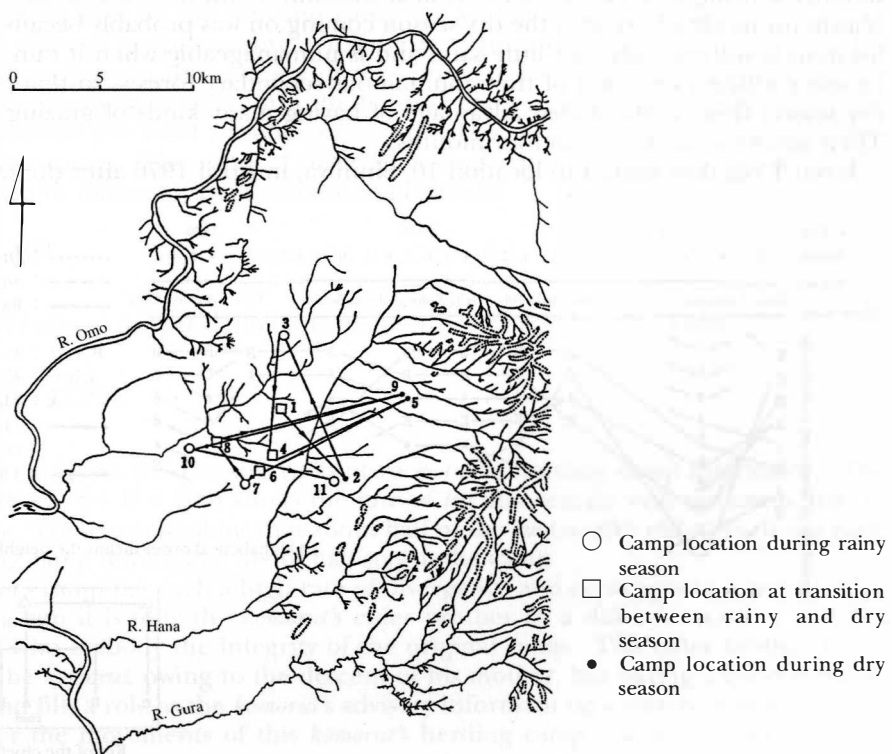


Fig. 3. Migrations of the chief's herding group (December 1973 – July 1976)

1974 near the end of the rainy season they moved to a site (4 in Fig. 3) called Jambuwana. At about this time killings and raids, which had been going on continuously for close to nine months, had finally ceased. The *tui* that had taken up concentrated defensive positions in three locations each went their separate ways.

Finally, only four *tui* moved to site 4 in Jambuwana together with the chief. Spending roughly three and a half months here, in the middle of January 1975, they then moved to site 5, T'ola, discussed before. It was here that, in addition to the chief's younger brother separating with his *tui*, *koruo* (a) (Fig. 4) was added.

However, they did not stay at this location for more than a month. Under the searing sun of the dry season they relocated to Della (Fig. 3). At Della the chief's parallel cousin from his father's side and his siblings of different mothers moved away, each to a different herding camp. Then the husband (b) of the younger sister of J of the clan of the same chief joined the grazing group here. In this way, when members are not of the same patrilineal descent group (*nganiya*), the relationship becomes one of just "neighbors" (*wolach*). Here they welcomed in the new year rituals (*ke'er*) and remained for about three months.

Next they moved to location 7, called Kolonga, a distance of only one kilometer. The rainy season had already begun while they were at location 6 and the grass was luxuriant. Membership composition at location 7 stayed the same as it was at location 6. Therefore the reason for moving would not have been based on ecological conditions such as water or grass. Since the membership composition was unchanged, quarreling within the camp is not a conceivable cause. Perhaps by attending to the new year ritual at location 6 they had in truth already ritually effected the move to the next new location. They remained here for approximately four months.

The next move was to location 8, a place called Selalin. In this case the distance moved was not in excess of 4 km. From here the chief's younger brother (E) of the same mother moved to another herding camp, leaving only four *tui*. These four stayed for about three months, moving to T'ola (location 9) near location 5 with the start of the dry season. The reason for moving here with the dry season coming on was probably because the soil at this location is volcanic ash with little sand and is unmanageable when it rains. Also, this is a location within easy travel of the mountainous secondary forests, so that even during the dry season there is the added advantage of having many kinds of grazing grasses nearby. Their stay here was for about four months.

From T'ola they moved to location 10, Shuniya, in April 1976 after the rainy season had

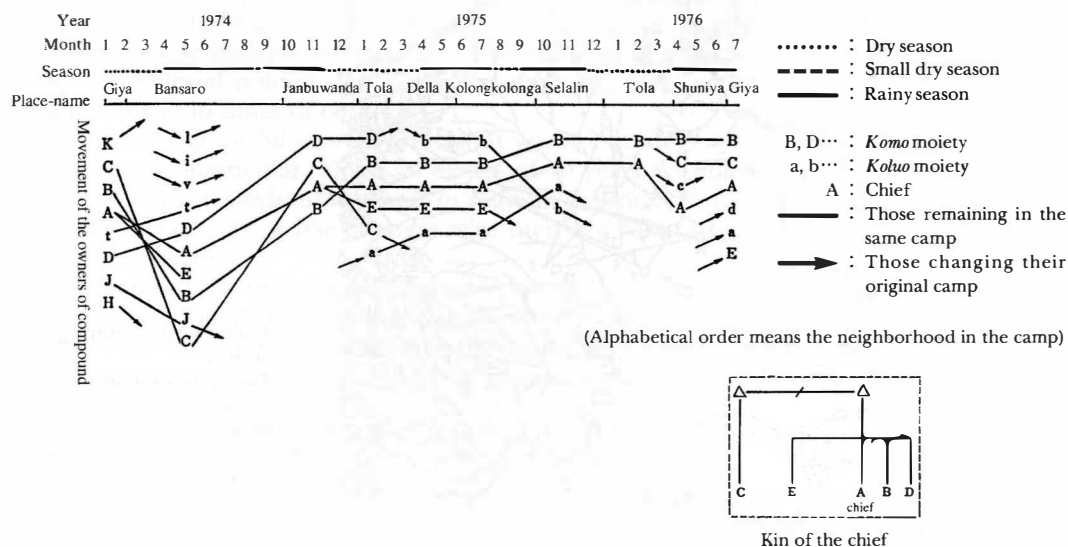


Fig. 4. Divergence and convergence of *tui* (compound) in the chief's herding camp

set in. Two *tui* were added at that time. One was the return of the chief's parallel cousin from his father's side, and the other was an entirely new addition belonging to a group of different descent (c). Or rather, it would be better to say that at this time A-B merged with the pre-existent C-(c) group. That the chief's *tui*, which always belongs in the center, was placed at the end in this camp tells us that he is not the owner of this camp's center area.

After staying there for three months they moved on to the next location. At that time, despite A-B-C behaving collectively, (c) later was completely left on its own. We can perceive that there were complications between A-B-C and (c). This is the location called Giya (11 in Fig. 3), having the same name as (2). Here they were about to welcome in the new year rituals, but the author had to leave without actually witnessing it. At this location, on account of the ritual perhaps, there was an increase in people from one patrilineal descent, which had formed the same herding camp previously, and the camp also took on *tui* of two members from another *koruo* moiety.

4.2. The rate of divergence and convergence

We have just observed the movements of a herding camp formed around a *komorut*, and the shifting composition of *tui* owners, which are the basic components of the camp. In the period of 32 months from December 1973 to July 1976 the constitution of the herding camp changed 10 times, averaging a change about every three months. A short stay was not much more than a month, and a long stay was the period of nine months when they became involved in a state of war. If we measure the total distance of their 10 migrations by the lines drawn on the map we find that they moved only 70.3 km. The distances they moved range from 1 to 12 km, an average of 7 km. The radius of their total migration range is within 6 km, and even a high calculation would remain within 113 km².

When we look at the member composition of the herding camp over this period the only *tui* which remained absolutely unchanged over 10 locations-herding camps were the two *tui* A and B. By calculating the divergence and convergence ratio of the herding camp centered upon this *komorut*, we may hope to recognize characteristics of Bodi movements.

The fundamental unit of the herding camp, as we have stated all along, is the *tui* surrounded by a fence encompassing a residence, which includes stalls and pens for animals. Our focus is upon this concept of *tui*. Since we have highlighted a *komorut*, the sum total of movements of *tui* that form the herding camp of the Hana *komorut* can be S, and D can represent the total number of *tui* transfers, whether they be to or from a different herding camp. The ratio of divergence and convergence for each *tui* of the herding camp can be derived using the following formula:

$$R = \frac{D}{S + D} \times 100$$

Applying this formula to the preceding information, S = 25 and D = 23. Thus,

$$\frac{23}{25 + 23} \times 100 = 47.9\%.$$

This concretely expresses the transfer ratio of each *tui* in herding camp migrations. The inverse 52.1% ($I = S / S + D \times 100$) shows the rate of *tui* that remain with the camp, that is, the rate of unity. These results show that about half of the *tui* transfer either in or out each time the herding camp moves, and about half stay in the camp.

That a *komorut*'s camp has such a high rate of divergence and convergence is noteworthy, and in the long run it is only the *komorut*'s elder brother by a different mother and the *komorut* himself who embody the integrity of the original camp. This elder brother is not of the status to be *komorut*, owing to the descent of his mother, but having a good memory and a sharp mind fills a role as the *komorut*'s advisory informant on a variety of matters.

Scanning over the movements of this *komorut*'s herding camp, there is a clear contrast between the dry and rainy season movements, and movements are regulated by other

rituals, conflicts, and so forth. Conflict is especially decisive as a regulator of movement and camp condensity.

4.3. Herding camp movements in the Hana region at the time of the new year ritual

The Bodi generally conduct rituals for the new year. These rituals are called *ke'er* because *ke'er* is originally connected to a constellation period called the Pleiades. In this region the pleiades constellation sinks down in the west around March. The new year rituals are usually conducted about a month or two afterwards.

On the occasion of this ritual someone leads out one cow, which is sacrificed in the open area of the *komorut's* herding camp. Another major event is when men and women from the entire region gather near and dancing begins all around. Each year about April or June, the people brim with anticipation over when the ritual will take place. Bodi of the young crowd can remember who delivered a cattle of what colors and what pattern, as well as where it was sacrificed and where the dancing was held for the new year ritual of a given year. In this way they can count the years as far back as their memory allows. Although rare, a ritual may be called off when there has been some extraordinary incident, such as a major battle or a *komorut* being abducted by the government, but the arrangement of the herding camp planned for the new year ritual is engraved in their memories.

I traced year by year the locations of the *komorut's* herding camp at the time of the new year ritual. This information was collected from a sibling of the current *komorut* by a different mother, who had remarkably precise recollections of the *komoruts* for 20 years between 1955 and 1975, the camp arrangement of the acting *komorut* before 1955, and even of the owners of the *tui* which that were the units of each herding camp. His precision was in being able to respond promptly to a series of questions. He said that since 1963 the new year rituals had been performed in the communal area of the current *komorut's* camp, and before that these rituals were performed in the open area of the previous generation's *komorut*.

The place-name of the herding camps at each new year ritual were recorded, and the locations are shown in Fig. 5.

Looking at the map, there are three points of which we should take note. The first is that with the exceptions of 2 and 3 the movement range of the herding camp over 20 years is more or less standardized, fitting within a certain domain (5.5 km radius). Then we should notice that in 1974, which was the year that the current *komorut* formally assumed his position, the new year ritual was held at about the same site. Finally, we see 2 and 3 jutting out of the usual migration, and these represent responses to warfare with other tribes.

Point 3 is of particular interest to us as it illustrates how warfare regulates movement. According to the people of this camp, around 1965 a large contingent of Hamar people from the southeast attacked Bodi lands from the Mursi territory. Turton recorded the nature of the Hamar attack:

In May 1966 a large Hamar raiding party entered Mursi country. The Mursi scattered to the south and north, many taking their cattle as far as the River Hana in Bodi country. The raiders continued into Bodi country and were eventually repulsed, with heavy losses, by the Mursi and Bodi together (Turton 1979: 188).

This Hamar attack seems to have been severe, and the Bodi recall their dread. Though the Mursi had powerful firearms including hand grenades, as the attack wore on into territory not their own, fatigued and demoralized they fled in disorder, losing many lives. The Bodi and Mursi later established peaceful ties, but the relationship between Bodi and Mursi-Hamar has long been as opposing enemies (Fukui 1994).

Furthermore, according to Turton, some of the Mursi were grazing cattle on Bodi lands until around January of 1970. However, gradually the relationship between them became aggravated until fighting broke out. Turton says that sporadic scuffling continued, and by the end of 1970 it had developed into a large-scale war. This sort of warfare continued



Fig. 5. Location of herding camp at the time of the new year ritual (Hana region, 1955–1976)

intermittently until 1974. While the author was in residence they were regularly in an extraordinary state of alert, with a number of outbreaks.

That the *komorut*'s herding camps were in the northern section of Bodi territory for the 1969 and 1971 new year rituals, a far distance from the Mursi in the south, expresses a response to warfare with the Mursi.

4.4. Herding camp movements at the time of the new year rituals in the Gura region

What of the herding camp movements in Gura, south of Hana? Gura is in southern Hana, geographically close to enemies such as the Mursi and Hamar. We will track the movements of herding camps to their yearly new year ritual, based on information from the chief elder, approximately 65 years old, of the *koruo* moiety who joined his camp with the *komorut* of successive generations in the Gura region.

He can recall herding camp locations for the new year rituals as far back as 1951, 25 years of migrating camp movements (Fig. 6). Two facts of significance stand out, both in common with what we noticed of the Hana example. The first is that the usual migration range remains strictly limited even over as long as 25 years. We also notice that twice, in 1964–65 and in 1972, the migration range protrudes far from the regular yearly pattern, when it moved 10 to 25 km north by straight distance calculation (actual distance is from 20 to 50 km). The two years where they fled north deviate from the Hana episodes in Fig. 6 by about a year. Inconsistency is inevitable among societies without written records. However, the northern "protrusions" in these two regions were caused by the same conditions.

According to this elder, it was 1963 when the Mursi attacked the Bodi and the Bodi moved their herding camp to the Chirim territory in the north. He says that at the following year's new year ritual (1964) a bull was sacrificed and all purified their bodies with its blood. At the next new year ritual in 1965, again in Chirim territory, he tells that a



Fig. 6. Location of herding camp at the time of the new year ritual (Gura region, 1951–1975)

bull was sacrificed and that in addition to the ritual there was dancing. In that year they moved the camp to the Gura region and from then on returned to the usual Gura migration range.

In 1972 the southern Mursi attacked the Bodi, and as a result the Bodi escaped into the interior of Hana territory. Furthermore, taken to account for the Bodi's incessant raids upon the Dime people and massacre of many, the Gura and Hana chiefs and other prominent figures were abducted and placed in a prison 200 km to the east. The previous generation's chief had died soon after being imprisoned, and they were unable to conduct the new year ritual for two years. A powerful candidate for the chiefship was inaugurated in 1975 as a formal *komorut* at the "navel" of Gura, Lugiya, following two years of no new year rituals.

5. SUMMARY AND OUTLOOK

5.1. Summary

We have investigated the structure of a Bodi herding camp centered upon the Mela *komorut* of the Hana region, and the divergences and convergences of a *tui* in continual movement as the basic structural unit of Bodi society. Then we analyzed their course of movement over a short period of 32 months and a long term of 20 to 25 years. We can summarize the results of our study as follows:

- A patrilineal descent group ideologically underlies the composition of the herding camp, so that at the most there is continuity to three generations.
- The rate of divergence and convergence over 32 months of migration was 47.9%. This indicates that about half of the *tui* that constitute a herding camp are entering or leaving each time they move.

- Among the Bodi the *komorut* has only an extremely limited political power over specific rituals. The divergences and convergences of the *tui* of a herding camp centered on a *komorut* testify to this. *Tui* are quite uninhibited about merging and separating. We can hypothesize that shifting between camps is influenced by cattle ownership and domicile relationships. These frictions do not engender a stratification between the *komorut* and other members, and that they are easily resolved is a function of divergences and convergences occasioned by relocations⁽⁹⁾. On the other hand, at the time of the new year ritual the chief and members of the same patrilineal descent group are likely to converge.
- The migration zone over 32 months does not exceed a radius of approximately 6 km. Migration frequency within this zone is once in three months, and the average distances of these moves is not more than 7 km. Even during the rainy season, when grass and water are expected to be plentiful, there may be times when there is a move after only one month, so it is difficult to explain their migrations as a reaction to ecological conditions.
- With regard to migrations that are linked to ritual occasions, it is more accurate to interpret migrations as the selection of a landmark reflecting a world-view rather than ecological conditions.
- Frequently occurring conflict among the Bodi exerts a major influence upon their migration and camp structure. In the extra-ordinary time of conflict most *tui* and camps consolidate, while in times of peace they are prone to disperse.
- The preceding point is easily understood when we examine migrations around the time of the new year ritual of the herding camps in both Hana and Gura regions over a span of 20 to 25 years. In other words, when peace prevails, even for a period of over 10 years, the migration zone is limited to a small area, while in times of conflict there occur migrations of a scale several times larger than usual. In other words, transgression outside a pre-established territory is allowed within a zone where groups can ally; in peacetime they promptly return to their original territory.

5.2. Outlook

Until now most research regarding the migrations of nomadic herders has been in the form of either typologies that posit adaptations to macro-ecological conditions, or geographical studies.

However, the migrations of the Bodi are very uniform despite marked macro-ecological conditions, altitude and seasonal differences, which makes it unhelpful to discuss their migrations on this level.

The usual migration zone is extremely limited. Henceforth if migrations are to be treated in a framework of ecological conditions then probably they must be dealt with by reference to micro-ecology rather than on a macro-level of altitude differences and seasonal change. The field of observation must come to the micro-ecological level, such as that of seed transferral and manipulation of specific plants chosen by herders as fodder for livestock. An interpretation of Bodi grazing patterns is untenable without an account of their manipulation of plants – they rely heavily on their folk ecological knowledge – and grazing patterns that have been repeated for several decades at least (actually probably much longer) within a restricted zone and virtually without any relationship to altitude or season. Random grazing makes the earth emaciate so suddenly. These are topics for subsequent research.

The second point is that even if it is provisionally possible to assert responses to micro-ecological conditions, we can also find numerous aspects of Bodi migrations that cannot be evaluated as being based solely on these conditions. For example, camp structure and divergences and convergences create flexibility to cope with frictions in human relations; selection of landmarks reflecting world-view and social grouping; then there are camps' organizational and spatial reactions in times of warfare. This point is exceedingly important for considering the movement of pastoral peoples. For it is not irrational to assume that a strategy that propagates flexibility in the camp in times of war is latent in the

nature of their mobility. This is the special nature of mobility⁽¹⁰⁾.

Researchers of pastoral mobility have failed to grasp their topic except within confines that are all too narrow. It is probable that there are social and political strategies inherent in pastoralists' mobility that outscale the capacity of our imaginations. As Burnham (1975: 359) points out, we must now re-perceive their mobility as a "principle of social structure". This requires research that is more systematic in regard to the process of landmark selection and the conditions involved⁽¹¹⁾.

Primarily, this paper has intended to analyze the structure of one herding camp as a concrete example. There are many other case studies at the author's disposal, but the present study has been an instance of a camp centered on a *komorut*. To follow up this study, I propose to compile further field studies in finer detail, and depict the characteristics of flexibility in a pastoral society.

NOTES

- (1) Tomikawa (1966) has attempted to say that the historical movements of the Datoga took place in a framework of relationships with neighboring peoples. My study shows that temporal movements, too, are often a response to relationships with neighboring peoples.
- (2) Fieldwork was undertaken with the assistance of two organizations in 1973-76. The first term in 1973-74 was part of a special project, The Special Fund for the Study of Language and Culture in the Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Fieldwork was made possible in 1975-76 by a Toyota Foundation First time Research Support Grant. Grateful acknowledgement is extended to them for providing funds that made the research possible. Since that time I have visited the Bodi several times, but the data in this paper are based on research done between 1973 and 1976.
- (3) Todd (1979), who conducted fieldwork among the Dime, emphasizes from the perspective of his Dime material that Bodi infiltration into Dime territory occurs as the result of repeated attacks by the Bodi.
- (4) A concise listing of flora in this region is not directly relevant to my present thesis. I intend to study elsewhere Bodi nomadism in relation to ecological conditions.
- (5) At some point I intend to analyze the Bodi's nomadic movement in combination with their management of vegetation, as mentioned before.
- (6) Concerning inter-ethnic relationships and conflict, see Fukui & Turton (1979) and Fukui & Markakis (1994).
- (7) The origin of place-names is often unclear.
- (8) The Bodi place much significance upon the extent to which one measures self-identity with cattle. Goats are seen as nothing more than objects existing for meat.
- (9) Baxter (1972) has written that even while witchcraft exists among pastoral peoples in eastern Africa, actual accusations are extremely rare. This alludes to a relationship between accusations and pastoral people's high mobility.
- (10) Irons (1974) touches upon some connections between conflict and mobility in the Yomut pastoralists of Turkey that are of great interest for our hypothesis.
- (11) In a recent review of work done on pastoral peoples, the Dyson-Hudsons (1980: 37) make an appeal for such systematic research concerning the mobility of pastoralists.

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