

## 1. Description

### 1.1 Name(s) of society, language, and language family:

The Batahira, Bathari (alternate names include: Batahari, Bathara), Afro-Asiatic, Semetic, South, South Arabian

### 1.2 ISO code (3 letter code from ethnologue.com):

bhm

### 1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

(23, 35 N 58, 30 E) Dhofar Governorate, coastal towns, from Al Jazeer to Shweymia.

### 1.4 Brief history:

Bathari is one of six pre-Islamic languages that form a group called Modern South Arabian languages. This group, which includes Soqotri, Mehri, Jibbali, Bathari, Harsusi and Hobyot, is spoken in parts of Oman particularly in Dhofar and south east of Yemen in Mahrah Governorate and Soqatra Island. Modern South Arabian languages belong to the southern branch of the western Semitic languages. The other Semitic languages grouped in this branch are the Semitic languages of Ethiopia and the extinct inscription languages, which are also called Epigraphic Old South Arabian languages.

### 1.5 Influence of missionaries/schools/governments/powerful neighbors:

Traditional cultural beliefs regarding the metaphysical still exist within Hamitic tribal culture although currently, the primary religion practiced by the Batahira is Sunni Islam, the largest branch of Islam. Sunni Muslims follow the teachings of the Quran and consider the first four caliphs to be the rightful successors of Muhammad. Their GSEC status is 0, which means there are no evangelical Christians or churches among this people group and there is no access to evangelical print, audio, visual or human resources.

### 1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

“Dhofar Governorate has a coastline that stretches for 560 km. It includes sandy beaches, rocky shores and cliffed areas. There are also groups of islands along this coast of which the Al-Halanyat group of islands are the largest in Oman. The entire coast is exposed to heavy wave action. There are also a number of rocky-gravel plain areas along this stretch of coast such as the ones seaward of Jabal Samhan and in the areas of Sharbitat, Shuwaymiyah and Hasik.

The coastline is characterized by a chain of mountains (e.g. Jabal Qamar, Jabal Samhan, Jabal Qara) interspersed by long sandy beaches, the longest of which extend from Raysut to Mirbat, broken only by a rocky outcrop at Taqah (Barratt, 1984). Raised terraces of gravel and rock border the sea at Sharbitat, the western end of Shuwaymiyah and intermittently from Hasik to Mirbat. Most of the coastline from Raysut to border with Yemen is cliffed or has steep mountains. There are many khawr areas along this coastline especially surround Salalah area.

Salalah plain is a gently sloping alluvial outward plain formed by the depositing of weathered material worked from the adjacent mountains (Anon., 1985b). Alluvial materials are deposited in a sequence manner, coarser materials near the mountain and finer materials towards the coast. Marbat plain lies adjacent to Salalah plain, but it differs

in its geomorphology. This plain is covered almost entirely by cemented alluvial terraces and heavily dissected metamorphic rock outcrops.

Dhofar is climatically different from the rest of Oman due to the effects of the monsoon rains, which occur between June and September. Temperature is moderate, rarely exceeding 30 °C. Dhofar divides naturally into three areas: the coastal plain, the mountains and the desert region.

The strongest winds of the year comes at the time of the southwest monsoon from July-September, and the Arabian Sea coast experiences the heaviest wave action during this period. The Gulf of Oman is more protected from large swells and waves year round compared to the Arabian Sea. There has been only limited research into currents along the coast of the country, but the Oman Meteorological Department has good hydrographical, as well as meteorological, modeling capability and has run detailed predictions for seasonal current patterns around the coast.”

### **1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density:**

Reference 1: Population size, mean village size, home range size, density: Bathari is spoken in Oman on the coast facing the al-Hallaniyyat Islands, previously called the Kuria Muria Islands. Bathari is closely related to Mehri. The number of tribe members is estimated at about 300 (Morris 1983:130). Not all of them speak Bathari; some of them speak only Mehri.

Reference 2: Another source suggests that the Batahira of Oman have a population of 1,230. They are part of the Rajasthan people cluster. This people group is found only in Oman. Their primary language is Bathari - (bhm).

## **2. Economy**

### **2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):**

Reference 1: Fishing, herding, and the cultivation of coconuts, papayas, bananas, and cereals were the principal occupations in Dhufar until recently.

Reference 2: The Bautahara is a still smaller tribe, primarily engaged in shark fishing, which they carry on in a primitive way, swimming on inflated skins.

### **2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:**

Fish is abundant in SE Oman; the problem for traditional fisherman is never catching enough fish, but how to market the catch.

### **2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:**

The male tribal members of Southern Oman, including the Bathari, carry rifles. They use their leather belts as cartridge holders.

### **2.4 Food storage:**

### **2.5 Sexual division of production:**

### **2.6 Land tenure:**

### **2.7 Ceramics:**

### **2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:**

## **2.9 Food taboos:**

The words chicken and egg are, or at least were in 1929, taboo in Oman. Bertrand Thomas explains in the following passage:

“No man would dare in the presence of the Sultan, a Sheikh or 'Alim, mention these things by name. He would probably use *bandtal muedhdhin*, i.e. " daughters of the muezzin," for the former, and *rasas*, i.e. " bullets," for the latter, and the conventional idea of their vulgarity is shared by the Hamitic tribes. To prepare a lunch of chicken and eggs for a Qara Sheikh would inevitably cause offence.”

## **2.10 Canoes/watercraft?:**

Yes, for fishing shark.

“The Bautahara is a still smaller tribe, primarily engaged in shark fishing, which they carry on in a primitive way, swimming on inflated skins.”

## **3. Anthropometry**

### **3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):**

Reference 1: This is a description of a Bathari man given by Bertrand Thomas during a Royal British Expedition:

“He appeared to be a very low type, though his complexion was comparatively light brown for South-East Arabia; he had comparatively straight hair and high cheek-bones. A greater local antiquity is allowed to the despised Bautahara, who were once largely pastoral, than to any other local tribe save the Shahara.”

Reference 2: According to Bertrand Thomas's observations the Southern Omani tribesmen, on average, were 64' inches tall and grew less facial hair than the typical male from Arab descent.

“Capt. Thomas's measurements of heads proved that the Southern Arabs differed from the Hamitic peoples of Africa and also from the Arabs of Northern Arabia in having skulls, which were short and wide. The width of the heads of Southern Arabs was between 80 percent and 90 percent of the length. The Southern Arabs were distinctly and highly round-headed-or brachycephalic. Hamitic peoples and the Badawin (Arab) type of Northern and North-Western Arabia were usually long-headed or dolichocephalic. Thus Capt. Thomas's observations confirmed the data collected by Professor C. G. Seligman fourteen years ago that the people of Southern Arabia are round headed or brachycephalic. Although the Southern Arabs, who were of low stature, the men being usually about 64 inches in height - showed certain Hamitic traits in their features, yet these were overshadowed by others which proclaimed an affinity to the Caucasian or white stock of mankind. They were less fully bearded than the Northern Arab and yet more so than among Hamites. In some respects the South Arabian type bridged the difference between Semite and Hamite.”

### **3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):**

## **4. Life History, mating, marriage**

### **4.1 Age at menarche (f):**

#### **4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):**

#### **4.3 Completed family size (m and f):**

#### **4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):**

#### **4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):**

#### **4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:**

#### **4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:**

#### **4.8 Bride purchase (price), bride service, dowry?:**

#### **4.9 Inheritance patterns:**

In the following passage, Bertrand Thomas describes the inheritance patterns that he observed among the Hamitic tribes of Southern Oman:

“The usual law of *Muhammadan* inheritance, which is inviolable in other parts of Arabia, is not here observed. By that law a man's estate, after meeting of debts, is divided up into shares—a daughter receives one share, a son two shares, and the wives one-eighth of the estate. Where there are no sons, the paternal uncle, or in the case of there being none, the paternal male cousins, receive the son's share. Amongst the southern borderland tribes, Al Kathir, etc., the debts on a man's estate may not take up more than one-third of it. Of the remaining two-thirds of it, one-fourth goes to the wife that has borne children, one-eighth to the wife that has not borne children and the remainder goes to the children. But where it differs from Sharia law is that if there is no son and less than three daughters, the deceased's brother is entitled to only a daughter's share, and if there are three or more daughters, they take the whole of it, and paternal male relations get nothing.”

#### **4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:**

#### **4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:**

#### **4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):**

#### **4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these “other fathers” recognized?**

#### **4.14 What is the belief of the mother's role in procreation exactly? (e.g., “receptacle in which fetus grows”)**

#### **4.15 Is conception believed to be an incremental process (i.e., semen builds up over time)?**

#### **4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape:**

#### **4.17 Preferential category for spouse (e.g., cross cousin):**

#### **4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?:**

In Bathari culture women are married at a very young age and are expected to remain monogamous to their husband. Severe consequences are to be upheld if she is sexually unfaithful to her husband. Bertrand Thomas points this out in the following passage:

“Illegitimacy is almost unknown in spite of the greater freedom enjoyed. Early and universal marriage is the reason. Transgression for a girl is regarded differently

here than elsewhere in Arabia. In Oman an unmarried expectant mother, or a wife committing adultery, would on discovery be murdered by her father or brother-not by her husband. Nothing would be done to the man who had seduced her. Here the girl would be turned out of the tribe and have to fend for herself, and her male relations would wreak revenge on some female relation of the seducer if they could not pursue and wound him with a sword.”

**4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring:**

**4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?:**

**4.21 Adult sex ratio: number of adult males divided by number of (reproductive) females:**

**4.22 Evidence for couvades:**

**4.23 Different distinctions for potential fathers (e.g., lesser/younger vs. major/older):**

**4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?:**

**4.24 Joking relationships?:**

**4.25 Patterns of descent (e.g., bilateral, matrilineal) for certain rights, names or associations:**

**4.26 Incest avoidance rules:**

**4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?:**

There appears to be formality surrounding marriages in traditional South Arabian culture, however the ceremony is less celebratory than the ceremony surrounding male circumcision. The following is an excerpt from Betrand Thomas describes traditional South Arabian tribal marriages:

“Marriage in South Arabia requires a *gadhi*, but divorce does not. A man has only to tire of his wife and say *Talag* three times, whereupon she must betake herself to her father's house with no alimony beyond the original marriage price-wherefore she is a careful woman. If she is tired of him she must return his marriage portion, and her family the purchase price. It is a rule amongst them that a woman who has gone blind is never divorced. A really expensive bride may cost 20 cows, say 400 Maria Theresa dollars, but they can be much cheaper, ranging downwards to one cow or even 10 dollars. The groom and bride representative (father or brother) descend to the plain where a *gadhi* legalizes the marriage, and on returning, the women folk of the bride, preceded by men, conduct her to the cave of her spouse. The only cave furniture will be a small carpet bought for the occasion. The bridegroom will slaughter a couple of cows to make a feast and invite all to it, but beyond the men's *rabot* (a monotonous chant of the mountains) there is no dancing and joy-making such as characterize rites of circumcision.”

**4.28 In what way(s) does one get a name, change their name, and obtain another name?:**

**4.29 Is marriage usually (or preferred to be) within community or outside community? (m/f difference?):**

“The practice of consanguineous marriage has been the culturally preferred form of marriage in most Arab and the Middle Eastern countries, including Oman, but due to a paucity of population-based data in the past there is a dearth of information about its form and dynamics in Oman. Recent national-level surveys allow this gap to be filled. This

paper examines the prevalence, trends and determinants of consanguineous marriages in Oman using data from the 2000 Oman National Health Survey. The results indicate a very high prevalence of consanguineous marriage in Oman, as more than half (52%) of marriages are consanguineous. First cousin unions are the most common type of consanguineous unions, constituting 39% of all marriages and 75% of all consanguineous marriages. The study observed various patterns of consanguinity, some of them common with other Arab nations, and some unique in nature. Women's age at marriage, employment, place of childhood residence and geographical region appear to be significant determinants of consanguineous marriages. Consanguineous marriage shows a strong association with marital stability, early age at marriage and early-age childbearing. There has been no appreciable change in the prevalence of consanguineous unions in Oman over the last four decades despite massive socioeconomic development and modernization. However, recent marriage cohorts show slight declining trends. The results suggest that consanguinity is likely to remain stable in the future or decline at a slow rate.”

#### **4.30 Are marriages arranged? Who arranges (e.g., parents, close kin)?:**

The women of the Hamitic tribes of South Arabia are married very young and their fathers are the main decision makers of whom they marry and when. Bertrand Thomas provides further explanation in the following excerpt:

“Polygamous marriage and facile divorce are the same in South Arabia as elsewhere throughout the peninsula, but with this difference, that the " paternal cousin " has not here the same unquestioned right to the girl's hand as holds elsewhere. The father is the supreme arbiter. The girl is never consulted, at least on the first marriage, about her views on her spouse. In any case she is but a child. Early marriages in both sexes are usual, and instances where one party or the other has not yet reached the age of puberty are not rare, but that is no hindrance to marital relations.”

#### **4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:**

There appears to only intergroup marrying among the Bathari people. Bertrand Thomas states the following about this topic:

“They are held by their neighbors, with whom they cannot marry, to be of ignoble origin...”

### **Warfare/homicide**

#### **4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:**

#### **4.32 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death:**

The following is a quote from Bertrand Thomas's Royal British Expedition about violence among small Southern Omani tribes:

“... it is the custom to kill the free man and take captive the slave. In truth it would appear that the slave has a commercial value, and as such shares the privilege of the camel taken in the raid.”

#### **4.33 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing:**

Violence and killing can take place between tribes in Southern Oman especially while traveling. This has manifest through the taking of slaves and camels:

“...it is the custom to kill the free man and take captive the slave. In truth it would appear that the slave has a commercial value, and as such shares the privilege of the camel taken in the raid.”

#### **4.34 Number, diversity and relationship with neighboring societies (external relations):**

There appears to be five main traditional tribes in Southern Oman where the Bathara people live:

“The area in question stretches from Wadi Sarab (lat. 20° 10', long. 57° 45' E.) to Salala, the capital of Dhufar (lat. 17° 00', long. 54° 6' E.). This region forms the habitat of a group of five tribes, which it would appear are racially distinct from the Semitic Arab, and perhaps from one another, and they speak four separate dialects which are not understood by Arabs, and which have closer affinities with Ethiopic than with Arabic. The names of these tribes in the order in which I passed through them from east to west are Harasis, Bautahara; Mahra, Qara and Shahara, and, judging from their appearance, traditions and customs, I think there can be little doubt that they constitute a block of non-Arab tribes of great local antiquity; and I further assume, in the light of the facts which I shall set forth, certainly as regards the last-named four, that they are Hamitic. It would thus seem that their ethnological and linguistic affinities are at variance.”

#### **4.35 Cannibalism?:**

### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

#### **5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:**

The Bathari tribe in Southern Oman numbers about 200-300 people who live along the coast and sustain themselves by fishing.

#### **5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):**

The Batahri people are said to have been pastoralists in the past, but are now fisherman that have settled within a relatively permanent location.

#### **5.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):**

The Bathari people are tribal, being one of five tribes in Southern Oman.

#### **5.4 Post marital residence:**

#### **5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):**

#### **5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):**

There are political allegiances that create divisions between various Hamitic tribes.

#### **5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:**

#### **5.8 Village and house organization:**

Bertrand Thomas provides the following account regarding the ceremony surrounding housing amongst the Hamitic tribes of South Arabia:

“In the coastal plain itself, where man makes a house to shelter himself, the first thing he does is to hammer four nails into the respective corners of the house, which are supposed to keep out the *Evil Eye*. When completed he slaughters a lamb on the threshold as a sacrifice to his walls enduring- a sort of christening ceremony which we perform on ships with the cooler and more fragrant blood of the grape. The custom in Oman when a new house is finished is for the prospective occupant to slay a sheep on going in. He dabbles his hand in the pool of blood and smears the door-posts. This custom is also observed in the plain of the Dhufar during actual building operations. The meat is to be eaten by the builders and the blood is smeared indiscriminately over the walls. On the completion of the house, the incomer dashes two hens' eggs on the threshold, two on the stairway and two on the upstairs doorway.”

#### **5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):**

#### **5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?**

The Bathari people are 'pastoral cave dwellers and fisherman'.

#### **5.11 Social organization, clans, moieties, lineages, etc:**

#### **5.12 Trade:**

#### **5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?:**

### **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

#### **6.0 Time allocation to RCR:**

#### **6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):**

#### **6.2 Stimulants:**

#### **6.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal):**

There seems to be a very strong ritual tradition surrounding circumcision among the tribal peoples of Southern Oman. Bertrand Thomas provides the following description of such:

“Circumcision by these tribes is universal-the boy on approaching adolescence, sometimes after reaching it; the girl on the day of her birth or the second day. This system of adult-male and infant-female circumcision is the reverse of that employed in Oman, where the practice is infant-male circumcision (six years) and circumcision of the girl when approaching the age of ten. In both regions with the male the whole of the foreskin is removed, but as regards the female, while the Arabs of Oman merely incise the top of the clitoris the Hamitic tribes of the central south perform clitoridectomy. In Dhufar there are sometimes elaborate rites attending male circumcisions, and batches of youths undergo what is -a severe public test of their fortitude on the same day. Large numbers of men and women assemble around a large open space. On a rock in the center sits the boy of fifteen, a sword in hand. This sword, which has been blunted for the occasion, he throws into the air to catch it again in its descent, his palm clasping the naked blade. Before him sits the circumciser, an old man; behind him stands an unveiled virgin, usually a cousin or a sister, also sword in hand. She raises and lowers her sword

vertically, and at the bottom of the stroke strikes it quaveringly with the palm of her left hand. The stage is now set. The boy sits, his left hand outstretched palm upwards, waiting for the actual operation. This made, he has promptly to rise bleeding and run round the assembly raising and lowering his sword as if oblivious of pain, the girl running after him. He must complete the circuit three times without being caught by his fair pursuer, and his manliness will be judged by his performance. if he fails, he will be regarded as a weakling. Success is attended by singing, and firing of rifles.”

#### **6.4 Other rituals:**

The Hamitic tribes in Southern Oman, including the Bathari people, have a strong reverence for cows and use them for sacred funeral rituals. This is different from the rest of Oman’s peoples, who view the animal as unclean. The following passage by Bertrand Thomas provides strong insight into traditional Hamitic tribal funeral ritual and how it differs from the rest of Omani culture:

“The wife in these tribes may not betray grief on the death of her husband. Mothers, daughters and sisters may weep and raise their voices, and amongst the Qarathy let down their hair, beat their heads, and pour dust upon them; but in a wife it is held to be shameful publicly to show pain at the loss of her man, and she hides herself. The Mahri buries his dead without much ado. With the Qara it is a time for wholesale sacrifice, and on the death of a rich man his family will kill as many as ten cows, four or five camels and twenty sheep, the flesh being given to the poor. The cow is held in great esteem, and it is of interest that the virtue of slaughtering it at this time is held to be seven times greater than that of slaughtering a camel, though the camel is intrinsically the more valuable animal of the two. The sacrificial value of the camel and the sheep would appear to be the same. This special reverence for the cow is noticed in the custom governing its milking-it is a male prerogative. The Sheikh of the tribe will milk a cow, but it is held shameful for a woman to touch its udders, though she may water and tend it. Curiously enough, this reverence for the cow by the Hamitic tribes is completely reversed in the neighboring Arab tribes of Oman. There no man would demean himself to milk a cow; it is an undignified labor, fit only for women. Regarded almost as an unclean animal, the very word for it, buqara, is never to be used in polite society. The words chicken and egg suffer from a similar taboo in Oman, where no man would dare in the presence of the Sultan, a Sheikh or 'Alim, mention these things by name. He would probably use bandtal muedhdhin, i.e. " daughters of the muezzin," for the former, and rasas, i.e. " bullets," for the latter, and the conventional idea of their vulgarity is shared by the Hamitic tribes. To prepare a lunch of chicken and eggs for a Qara Sheikh would inevitably cause offence.

The burial of a slave in Central South Arabia is attended by much ceremonial, which may conceivably be Negroid in origin. A procession of slaves advances singing and playing drums. Men constitute the vanguard, then follow the musicians and corpse, and last of all come the women. Those of the vanguard dance, wearing over their knees a rattle called khish-khish, presumably an onomatopoeic word. Those in the body of the procession sing, and the ladies

behind take up the responses. After the burial everybody, male and female, dances frenziedly around the grave until tired, and the procession retires again with music and dancing, the participants happy in the belief that the departed will now rest unmolested by evil spirits.”

### **6.5 Myths (Creation):**

### **6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):**

### **6.7 Sex differences in RCR:**

The belief in witchcraft among the Hamitic tribes of Southern Oman is widespread. Typically it is older men who are suspected of being witches; sometimes they are killed upon these grounds. It is believed that these men could have in no way attained their old age without supernatural powers. Death is commonly attributed to witchcraft and therefor provides excuse for others to kill the practitioner of such.

### **6.8 Missionary effect:**

The Bathari GSEC status is 0, which means there are no evangelical Christians or churches among this people group and there is no access to evangelical print, audio, visual or human resources.

### **6.9 RCR revival:**

### **6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:**

The Hamitic tribal peoples of Southern Oman employ ritual traditions that include frantically singing and dancing as part of funeral procession in order to ensure that the dead can rest free from evil spirits.

### **6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?:**

### **6.12 Is there teknonymy?:**

### **6.13 Briefly describe religion (animism, ancestor worship, deism, magic, totems etc.):**

In traditional Omani society, illness, stress, and distress are attributed to natural factors, supernatural influences, or a combination of the two (Al-Adawi, 1993, Al-Busaidi, 2010).

## **7. Adornment**

### **7.1 Body paint:**

Reference 1: The use of indigo for smearing their bodies and impregnating their clothes is common to both sexes. It gives their faces a purple hue. There is a local dye from a tree called *huwair*, but much of the indigo comes from India. Indigo is in common use throughout South-West Arabia as far as Aden, more especially amongst the settled elements. (In Oman I remember it only in the Bani Ali-Bani Kalban area where it is grown.) A black dye used in tattooing their gums is derived from the coconut.

Reference 2: Women adorn their faces also with black paint: over eyebrows, round nostrils and a straight line to ears from nostrils, around edge of chin, black bands around throat, red lips, green brow. The Mahraladies also on special occasions paint their faces red. With the greenish dye subur they smear their faces indiscriminately, also their arms from the elbow downward; their legs from the knee downward, and the upper part of the breasts to the neck.

### **7.2 Piercings:**

The men often wear a single bangle above one elbow and a single earring, generally in the right ear. Girls throughout these tribes wear a nose-ring in the right nostril. When approaching puberty the edge of their ears is pierced in six or seven places from which charms or rings depend.

### **7.3 Haircut:**

Bertrand Thomas gives a thick ethnographic description of Southern Omani tribes' people traditional hairstyles in the following passage:

“The Qara women of Dhufar have a custom when young and almost invariably before marrying, of having a half-inch strip of hair with its attendant flesh shaved in a center-parting along the top of the head. The hair never grows again and sometimes the operation has fatal results. Shaving the hair around the forehead to show a large expanse of brow is another observance of feminine beauty. Throughout the whole of these tribes it is customary for a boy's hair to be cut short, except for a strip an inch wide, which is allowed to grow long down the center of the head--suggestive of a certain Hindu caste, or perhaps of the Horus-lock affected by young Egyptian princes in ancient times in honor of the god. Men either shave the upper lip wholly or leave the slightest suspicion of a moustache not more than an eighth of an inch wide; they shave the side face both downwards from the cheek-bone and upwards from the throat, leaving a slight beard around the edge of the jaw, but they never shave their chin-tuft, though sometimes it is trimmed with scissors. It would be shameful to shave it, for by it a man swears. The growth of face hair is not strong, but the chin-tuft is coarse. Male head hair is characteristically long and curly.... Men go bareheaded, except for a narrow leather thong called a mahfif, which is merely a coil wound round the widest part of the head nine times and resembles an Arab aqal.”

### **7.4 Scarification:**

#### **7.5 Adornment (beads, feathers, lip plates, etc.):**

Reference 1: Men in Hamitic tribal society do not tattoo themselves. However, many women have tattooing on their chins, marked with a short vertical line and dot on either side as well as bracelet-like designs around their wrists.

Reference 2: The use of indigo for smearing their bodies and impregnating their clothes is common to both sexes. It gives their faces a purple hue. There is a local dye from a tree called *huwair*, but much of the indigo comes from India. Indigo is in common use throughout South-West Arabia as far as Aden, more especially amongst the settled elements. (In Oman I remember it only in the Bani Ali-Bani Kalban area where it is grown.) A black dye used in tattooing their gums is derived from the coconut. This is used down through the center of the woman's hair parting, too. Anklets, affected by coastal women are not found amongst these tribes, but many bracelets and necklaces (mostly beads) and ear-rings; the men often wear a single bangle above one elbow and a single earring, generally in the right ear.

### **7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:**

On occasions of religious and other festivals, marriages, circumcisions, etc., people in Hamitic tribal society will paint their faces red, black, and green; generally with a line along the edge of the cheek, another under the cheek-bones, and one bridging the nose across the eyebrows.

### **7.7 Sex differences in adornment:**

Women will tattoo tribal markings on their chin; the men do not have tattoos.

### **7.8 Missionary effect:**

### **7.9 Types of clothing:**

Reference 1: Dress always consists of a short black skirt to the knees, a leather girdle around the waist, which is looped as a cartridge belt. They always walk with barefoot and bare legged, except when travelling over hot sand they will wear woolen sock, much like the Bedouin tradition.

Reference 2: The men wear a single sheet wound round to form a skirt short to the knees and then brought diagonally across their bodies and thrown over one shoulder; women a single loose- falling black gown usually green with age and black muslin head-wrap which falls about shoulders and neck; they are mostly unveiled.

## **8. Kinship systems**

### **8.1 Sibling classification system:**

### **8.2 Sororate, levirate:**

### **8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology (Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):**

## **9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):**

Bathari is spoken in Oman on the coast facing the al-Hallaniyyat Islands, previously called the Kuria Muria Islands. Bathari is closely related to Mehri. The number of tribe members is estimated at about 300 (Morris 1983:130). Not all of them speak Bathari; some of them speak only Mehri. The research carried out on this language is rather limited. The standard work on Bathari was written by B. Thomas (Thomas 1937), but should be treated with caution, as the transcription is sometimes misleading. More recently, M. Morris has published an article discussing a Bathari poem (Morris 1983). Some Bathari words are mentioned in Johnstone's Mehri Lexicon and Jibbali Lexicon.

# **Numbered References**

## **1. Description**

1.1 <http://www.ethnologue.com/family/17-2182>

1.2 <http://www.ethnologue.com/language/bhm>

1.3 <http://www.ethnologue.com/language/bhm>

1.4 Shibatani, M., & bin Makhshen, K. A. (2009). Nominalization in Soqotri, a South Arabian language of Yemen. *Endangered Languages: Contributions to Morphology and Morpho-Syntax*, 9-31.

1.5 <http://www.peoplegroups.org/Explore/groupdetails.aspx?peid=11874>

1.6 <http://raisaquaculture.net/uploads/media/Oman%20-%20Draft%202.doc>

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1.7 Reference 1: Donohue, M. Foundation for Endangered Languages.

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## **2. Economy**

2.1 Reference 1:

[http://www.jepeterson.net/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/Oman\\_Diverse\\_Society\\_Southern\\_Oman.pdf](http://www.jepeterson.net/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/Oman_Diverse_Society_Southern_Oman.pdf)

Reference 2: Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

2.2 Costa, Paolo M. *Proceedings of the Seminar for Arabian Studies* Vol. 18, Proceedings of the Twenty First SEMINAR FOR ARABIAN STUDIES held at Durham on 28th - 30th July 1987 (1988), pp. 3-13

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2.9 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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## **3. Anthropometry**

3.1 Reference 1: Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

Reference 2: Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

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## **4. Life History, mating, marriage**

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4.9 Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

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4.18 Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

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4.27 Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

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4.30 M. MAZHARUL ISLAM (2012). THE PRACTICE OF CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE IN OMAN: PREVALENCE, TRENDS AND DETERMINANTS. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 44, pp 571-594.

4.31

#### **Warfare/homicide**

4.31 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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#### **5. Socio-Political organization and interaction**

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5.8 Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

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5.10 Simeone-Senette, M. C. (1997). 17 The Modern South Arabian Languages. *The Semitic Languages*, 378.

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5.13

#### **6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)**

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6.4 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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6.7 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

6.8 <http://www.peoplegroups.org/Explore/groupdetails.aspx?peid=11874>

### 6.9

6.10 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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### 6.12

### 6.13

## 7. Adornment

7.1 Reference 1: Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

Reference 2: Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

7.2 Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

7.3 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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7.5 Reference 1: Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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7.6 Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

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7.9 Reference 1: Thomas, Bertram. "Among some unknown tribes of South Arabia." *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 59 (1929): 97-111.

Reference 2: Thomas, B. (1932). Anthropological observations in South Arabia. *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 62, 83-103.

## 8. Kinship systems

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### 8.2

8.3 M. MAZHARUL ISLAM (2012). THE PRACTICE OF CONSANGUINEOUS MARRIAGE IN OMAN: PREVALENCE, TRENDS AND DETERMINANTS. *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 44, pp 571-594.

## 9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

[http://www.ogmios.org/ogmios\\_files/105.htm](http://www.ogmios.org/ogmios_files/105.htm)