

Questionnaire (put reference #:page # after each entry)

1. Description

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

- Name of society: Orma (6)
- Language: Orma (adopted the Latin script) (6)
- Alternative names: Uardai, Wadai, Warday, Galla (a politically incorrect term) (6)
- Language family: Afro-Asiatic, Cushitic, East, Oromo (6)

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

- orc

1.3 Location (latitude/longitude):

- Tana River District, Kenya (1, 110)
- also some settlements in Lamu District, to the east (2, 35)
- Latitude: 1°33'59.33"S, Longitude: 40°6'50.37"E (Google Earth)

1.4 Brief history:

- it is speculated that the greater Oromo expansion that began in 1537 in southwestern Ethiopia led to the Orma migration into northwestern Kenya (2, 35)
- Traditionally pastoral and nomadic, but are becoming increasingly market-oriented (1, 110)
- In recent years, have had to change economic and political systems due to switch from being nomadic to market-oriented (1, 110)

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

- transition to Islam in the 1920's (1, 111)
- in modern times, the government is attempting to have more control over the Orma population by appointing village leaders (2, 2)
- in the late 19th century, when under strong attack by Somali and Maasai neighbors, many Orma became refugees in Arab garrisons and Christian missionaries (2, 47)
- the British East Africa Company showed up in Lamu District in the early 20th century (2, 48)
- the conversion to Islam has introduced a spread of basic education in literacy and arithmetic (2, 62)
- the current national government prohibits the Orma from defending their territory militarily (2, 132)

1.6 Ecology (natural environment):

- seasonal droughts and flooding are common occurrences (2, 3)
- the environment is relatively lush compared to most of their East African pastoralists (2, 53)
- arid ecology (2, 129)

1.7 Population size, mean village size, home range size, density

- The Orma populate most of the Tana River District, Kenya, on the west bank of the Tana River, with heavy concentration also in the Tana River delta and some settlements in Lamu District to the east of Tana (2, 35)
- in 1952, the Orma population was estimated to be 4,228 (2, 49)
- number of households in 1987 was 119 (2, 115)
- low population density (2, 129)

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- only since the 1900's has any agriculture been practiced (2, 34)
- the Orma bartered for stock grain with their agricultural neighbors in times of stress (2, 49)

- maize flour and rice are major commodities (2, 95)

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- livestock (cattle, sheep, and goats) (1, 110)
- milk, although it is becoming more expensive as people shift to purchasing food from stores (2, 3)
- primarily cattle pastoralists, though there are a few goats and sheep; camels are totally absent (2, 34)
- milk was traditionally the staple food (2, 50)
- also consumed blood from livestock, hunted and gathered food, and occasionally (and only when necessary) a slaughtered sheep or goat (2, 50)

2.3 Weapons: Bow and arrow, blowguns?:

- spears were commonly imported, so they were probably commonly used (2, 42)
- iron tools such as swords, spears, and knives (5)

2.4 Food storage:

- store milk in leather bags (5)
- evidence suggests that, because of traditional nomadic lifestyle, not much food storage was possible

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- young men tend remote cattle camps where they care for most of the population's livestock (2, 85)

2.6 Land tenure:

- traditionally pastoral and nomadic, but new trend towards sedentary lifestyles and use commercial ranching (1, 110)
- clans are nonterritorial (1, 111)
- in the past, family herding cooperatives; an increasing trend in modern times towards "pure wage contract herding" (2, 2)
- land is held in common, stock is owned individually (2, 34)
- wells are owned by the individual who first dug the spot and his patrilineal descendants (2, 131)

2.7 Ceramics:

- basins, dishes, water jars, and vessels are made from pottery (5)

2.8 Specified (prescribed or proscribed) sharing patterns:

- in the past, rich nomadic stock owners used to share their surplus milk freely with poor neighbors, but this practice is currently becoming less common (2, 2)

2.9 Food taboos:

- due to Islamic influence, pork is sometimes not eaten (5)

2.10 Canoes/watercraft?

- arid ecology, so no large waterways; n/a

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height (m and f):

- no information found

3.2 Mean adult weight (m and f):

- mean weight per height for 1987 resident adult males (19+) in the market towns: 0.333
- mean weight per height for 1987 resident adult females (19+) in the market towns: 0.181
- mean weight per height for 1987 resident male children (2-18) in the market towns: 0.309
- mean weight per height for 1987 resident female children (2-18) in the market towns: 0.188

(2, 100)

4. Life History, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche (f):

- no information found

4.2 Age at first birth (m and f):

- no information found

4.3 Completed family size (m and f):

- mean household size in 1987 was 11.2 people (2, 82)

4.4 Inter-birth-interval (f):

- no information found

4.5 Age first marriage (m and f):

- no information found

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- traditionally, when bridewealth rates were high, divorce was virtually nonexistent (1, 114)

- rates of divorce have been on the rise (1, 115)

- rise of divorce rates follows decline in bridewealth (2, 150)

4.7 Percent marriages polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- historically high rates of polygyny (1, 115)

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

- Bridewealth, in the form of cattle (1, 111)

- practices of marriage payments are declining (1, 112)

- there has been a recent trending switch from bridewealth to indirect dowry (1, 115)

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- patrilineal inheritance (2, 80)

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflict:

- While clan exogamy is in the interests of the elders, who gain alliances, it is not always in the interests of the youth, who may want to marry someone within the clan (1, 111)

- in modern times, young men are showing an increasing amount of disrespect for their fathers and elders, "to the point of selling off their elders' livestock without permission" (2, 2)

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- no information found

4.12 Pattern of exogamy (endogamy):

- traditionally practiced strict clan exogamy (1, 110)

- modern movement towards the acceptability of clan endogamy (1, 111)

4.13 What is the belief of the role of males in conception; is paternity partible? Are these "other fathers" recognized?

- no evidence of partible paternity

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

- no information found

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

- no evidence suggests this is present

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape

- one of three accepted marriage practices is 'forced' marriage, *buta*, where "the young man literally captures the girl in the bush and rapes her with the intent of forcing a marriage; while accepted, this is a rare practice (1, 111)

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

- "love marriages" are becoming a more common practice in modern times (1, 112)

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- no; since the culture's conversion to Islam in the 1920's, a strict emphasis is placed upon virgin marriage (1, 111)
- today, "women feel less ashamed of losing their virginity prior to marriage than was the case in the past" (1, 112)

4.19 Evidence of giving gifts to extramarital partners or extramarital offspring

- strong evidence that extramarital partners are generally not acknowledged/accepted

4.20 If mother dies, whose raises children?

- no specific information found, but because of patrilineal culture, implied that father's family raises children

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

- no information found

4.22 Evidence for couvades

- no information found

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

- generally only one father

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- in the past, young men showed a great deal of respect for their fathers and elders, but this is changing in modern times (2, 2)

4.24 Joking relationships?

- no information found

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

- wells are inherited patrilineally (2, 131)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules

- no specific rules mentioned

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- no specific information found, but presence of Islam suggests some type of formal marriage ceremony

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

- no information found

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

- clan exogamy (but are there multiple clans within a community?) (1, 111)

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

- arranged marriages are one of three accepted marriage practices (1, 111)

4.31 Evidence for conflict of interest over who marries who:

- While clan exogamy is in the interests of the elders, who gain alliances, it is not always in the interests of the youth, who may want to marry someone within the clan (1, 111)
- the youth use the support of the Koran, which allows intraclan and cousin marriages; the elders maintain that marriage within the clan is a bad thing (1, 113)

- the elders believe that clan exogamy functions to maintain political alliances and peace (1, 113)

Warfare/homicide

4.31 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- no specific number mentioned

4.32 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death:

- no specific causes mentioned; revenge upon raiders implied as one cause of violence

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

- expansion and defense of territory causes out-group killings and warfare (2)

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

- reported warfare with neighboring Maasai and Somali in the 1860's (2, 37)
- in the past, the Orma were very successful militarily, and conquered large tracts of new territory very rapidly and a long way from their original homeland in Ethiopia (2, 39)
- the Orma often either forced their neighbors to pay them tribute, or were forced to give tribute to their neighbors, depending on who was most successful militarily at the time (2, 40)
- the Orma are frequently described as fierce in historical records; Arab traders avoided moving through Orma territory for fear of being attacked (2, 40)
- the Orma have a long-standing hostile relationship with the Somali (2, 41)
- the Orma have had a very unstable relationship with their neighbors, the Pokomo's, especially in the 21st century (2, 56)
- the Kamba are another group of traditional enemies (2, 105)
- in present day, the national government prohibits the Orma from defending their territory militarily (2, 132)

4.35 Cannibalism?

- no cannibalism mentioned

5. Socio-Political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local residential (village) group size:

- no specific size mentioned, but evidence suggests that in the past, nomadic lifestyles would limit village/group size to a mobile number; present sedentary lifestyles imply growing village/group size

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality):

- traditionally pastoral nomads, but increasing trend towards sedentary ranching instead (1, 110)
- increased sedentarization (2, 2)

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

- traditionally, a council of village elders had political control over the group, but in modern times, the government appoints a chief to be in control (2, 2)

5.4 Post marital residence:

- traditionally lived in joint families, but there is a modern movement towards splitting up the joint family before the death of the father (1, 112)
- largely patrilocal (2, 34)

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense):

- nonterritorial (1, 111)
- land is held in common (2, 34)

5.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex):

- evidence of age-grade systems (probably in cycles of seven years) in the past, but have not been used for many years (2, 46)

5.7 Special friendships/joking relationships:

- hired herders (young men) are virtually adopted into the family and have a paternalistic relationship with the family for whom they herd; if the relationship is strong, the family pays bridewealth for the hired herder, and may send him on the hajj; this is seen as a father-son relationship (2, 121)

5.8 Village and house organization:

- mean household size in 1987 was 11.2 (2, 83)

5.9 Specialized village structures (mens' houses):

- there is no piped water; wells are hand-dug each season in dry riverbeds and are the only source of water for most of the year (2, 35)

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- traditionally slept on animal skin/woven mats on the ground (5)

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

- clans (1, 110)
- family herding cooperatives (2, 2)
- groups were traditionally divided into moieties (2, 46)

5.12 Trade:

- large numbers of Orma derive the majority of their income from wage labor and trade, in addition to ranching livestock (1, 110)
- the Orma chief village elder traditionally played a lead role in long-distance trade; he was personally in control of all negotiations with outside traders (2, 39)
- the Orma did not traditionally depend on trade; it was useful when it was available, but the population was self-sufficient (2, 41)
- ivory and tobacco were very important trade commodities (2, 42)
- before the Oromo expansion, trade was an important practice in the Red Sea area; after the expansion, it decreased, mostly due to the Oromo practice of raiding (2, 42)
- cloth, tobacco, spears, beads, copper, iron, and other ornamentation items were commonly imported (2, 42)
- in the 1940's the primary trade items were cloth, sugar, tea, coffee beans, tobacco, and maize (2, 52)

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies?

- traditionally, the group of village elders had higher social status (2, 40)
- old, rich men usually had higher status (2, 150-153)

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6.0 Time allocation to RCR:

- no information found

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- prior to the conversion to Islam, religious leaders included *ragas* (prophets), *ayaantus* (time reckoners), and oral historians (5)

6.2 Stimulants:

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

- cattle were traditionally only slaughtered prior to imminent death or for ceremonial occasions (weddings, Islamic holidays, and funerals) (3, 283)

- traditionally, rites of passage were celebrated when males passed from one age grade to another (5)

6.4 Other rituals:

- following their conversion to Islam, the first Orma pilgrimages to Mecca took place in 1950 (2, 62)

6.5 Myths (Creation):

- prior to the conversion to Islam, believed that *Waaqa Tokkicha/Waaqa Guuracha* (the one god) created the world, and the people (5)

- believe that Waaqa first created water, then created the sky and then dry land from water. Then, Waaqa created a star for light, which created day and night. Using this light, Waaqa created all other plants and animals. (5)

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- traditionally, values were expressed through storytelling, poems, and proverbs (5)

- cultural heritage was also expressed in a large part through song and dance; almost every occasion had its own song/dance (5)

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- no information found

6.8 Missionary effect:

- the Orma converted to Islam in the 1920's (1, 111)

- conversion to Islam is thought to be the cause of the switch from bridewealth practices to indirect dowry practices (1, 116)

6.9 RCR revival:

- not really; evidence suggests that conversion to Islam has mostly replaced traditional religion

6.10 Death and afterlife beliefs:

- prior to the conversion to Islam, believed that after death, the deceased becomes a spirit (5)

- prior to the conversion to Islam, did not believe in heaven or hell; punishment for wrong-doing was acted during live (5)

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- no information found

6.12 Is there teknonymy?

- no information found

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

- prior to conversion to Islam, believed in the existence of ancestors' spirits; often contacted them through ceremonies (5)

7. Adornment

7.1 Body paint:

no information found

7.2 Piercings:

- no information found

7.3 Haircut:

- no information found

7.4 Scarification:

- no information found

- traditionally, a fairly radical form of female circumcision practiced (1, 117)

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

- no information found

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- no information found

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

= some men wear *woya*, which are toga-like robes, and some women wear *wandabiti*, skirts; also worn are leather or animal skin clothing, and some women's clothing is made out of cotton (5)

7.8 Missionary effect:

- Islamic influences have caused a decrease in rates of female circumcision (1, 117)

7.9 Types of clothing:

- some men wear *woya*, which are toga-like robes, and some women wear *wandabiti*, skirts; also worn are leather or animal skin clothing, and some women's clothing is made out of cotton (5)

- modern, Western clothing is also worn (5)

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

- practice an age grade system; children within the same-sex, same age-grade system undergo rites of passage together (5)

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

- traditionally, when Orma rates of bridewealth were high, they practiced levirate marriage (1, 114)

- rates of levirate marriages have been on the decline (1, 115)

8.3 Other notable kinship typology, especially cross-cousin (MBD/FZD) typology

(Crow/Hawaiian/Omaha etc.):

- none found

9. Other interesting cultural features (list them):

- elopement is the third accepted marriage practice; young women who want to run away with a man are often helped by older women, such as grandmothers; this practice usually occurs when the young woman is avoiding being married to an undesirable older man (1, 111)

- the elders believe that clan exogamy functions to maintain political alliances and peace (1, 113)

- Orma cattle are known to be less susceptible to trypanosomiasis than other breeds, and are studied by scientists from all over the world in the search for methods of controlling the disease (4, 2)

Numbered references

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