

1. Description

1.1 Name of society, language, and language family:

- Gogo, Gogo, Niger-Congo (1)
- The Gogo language can be divided into 3 dialects: Nyambwa (West Gogo), Nyaugogo (Central Gogo), and Tumba (East Gogo). (2)

1.2 ISO code: 639-3: gog

1.3 Location:

- The Gogo tribe can be found around 34-37 degrees E longitude and 5.5-6.5 degrees S latitude. (3, map before page 1)
- The Gogo live in the in the central Tanganyika region of Tanzania, a country on the coast of Southeast Africa. They often refer to this area as Ugogo. (3)

1.4 Brief history:

- Those that would become known as the Gogo tribe came to Ugogo around A.D. 1300. The area was inhabited by a few other groups, such as the Wang'omvia and the Wamakala, but not many lived there, because the region is dry and arid, thus poor for agriculture. These foreign tribes migrated likely migrated because they faced "disruption and disorder in their homes" (3 p.43) The newcomers assimilated into the culture of those that had been there, and thus became Gogo (3).
- The Gogo spent many years at war with the neighboring Maasai and Wahehe tribes. Eventually, war with the Europeans came to the coast. The Germans made war until they defeated the Africans. The Germans would go on to force the Gogo and other tribes to pay taxes, as well as construct railroads and buildings. When the first World War ended, the English government created a school for the children of the chiefs from each chiefdom (3).

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

- Missionaries and schools have greatly increased literacy. Missionaries have also spread Christianity and Islam in the Gogo tribe (3).
- "From the late 1920s colonial administrators created hierarchical chiefships—hence centralized authority—where there had been none before. The Tanzanian government abolished all chiefships in 1962 and gathered Gogo into cooperative villages in the early 1970s" (5).

1.6 Ecology:

- Since they live in an arid environment in which rainfall can be sparse and erratic, the Gogo rely on raising large herds of cows and goats (which are the primary means of gathering wealth), as well as drought-resistant agriculture, in which the most important crops are corn, millet, and sorghum (5).

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

- Population size is around 1,440,000 (1). Villages can be "composed of anything up to 50 or so homesteads" and there is high residential mobility (7 p2).
- Average population of ritual areas is about 3,000 people (8 p134).

2. Economy

2.1 Main carbohydrate staple(s):

- *Ugali*, a thick mass of corn and sorghum, is the preferred staple carbohydrate of central Tanzania (4). Another important crop to the Gogo is millet (5).

2.2 Main protein-lipid sources:

- The Gogo tribe likely gets most of its protein and lipids from the meat and milk of the goats, cows, and sheep they herd, as semi-pastoralists (8 p134).

2.3 Weapons:

- Mainly spears and knives (3 p116). The Gogo also use bows for ceremonial purposes (3).

2.4 Food storage:

- Not found

2.5 Sexual division of production:

- The heaviest physical labor is generally relegated to men and lighter tasks to women. Few women work with machines and other highly valued productive assets. In children, girls often shoulder a greater work load than boys, a pattern that often repeats as children grow into adulthood (4).

2.6 Land tenure:

- The Gogo tribe exhibits high residential mobility. Land is not inherited and can't really be said to be owned. (7 p2).

2.7 Ceramics:

- Not found

2.8 Specified (prescribed or procured) sharing patterns:

- Sons share cattle with their father until they marry or move out on their own (7).

2.9 Food Taboos:

- Not found

2.10 Canoes/Watercraft?

- Probably very few if any; the Gogo don't live near any bodies of water (3 map before page 1).

3. Anthropometry

3.1 Mean adult height: (m and f)

- Not found

3.2 Mean adult weight: (m and f)

- Not found

4. Life history, mating, marriage

4.1 Age at menarche:

- 11-14 years (6 p435).

4.2 Age at first birth: (m and f)

- Not found

4.3 Completed family size:

- Average Gogo household size is about 11 (9).

4.4 Inter-birth-interval:

- Not found

4.5 Age first marriage:

- Women are considered marriageable as soon as their puberty rites are over, which begin soon after menarche. Men are considered marriageable as soon as they have healed from their circumcision, which can take place anywhere between ages 11 and 20; the typical age of circumcision is decreasing with time (6 p435).

4.6 Proportion of marriages ending in divorce:

- Very small; 8.9% (6 p440)

4.7 Percent males polygynous, percent males married polygynously:

- A percentage wasn't found, but it's clear that most males are polygynous (7 p4-5)

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

- The bride price depends on the type of marriage, of which the Gogos have 3, called *Kubanya*, *Kupula*, and *Kupanga* (3 p106)
 - In *Kubanya*, the bridewealth usually adds up to a string of beads, *vidodo vidodo* (means 'little, little'; it is an unspecified gift demanded by the bride's family), a nanny goat, an additional goat if the boy had proposed before the new moon, an another goat if the boy and girl have never seen each other, a goat for the father's sister (if it applies), a goat for the mother, a goat for the grandmother of the bride (if it applies), a cow, and a total of 4 shillings (3 p107-108).
 - In *Kupula*, a man 'steals' the daughter of a man without his parent's permission. This is much less honorable. The payments here include one cow, one goat for having to look for their child, and one goat to be slaughtered and eaten (3 p109).

- *Kupanga* occurs when the boy moves into the home of the girl he loves and accepts employment without pay, without even eating the family's food, until he has permission to marry the girl. In this type of marriage, the parents make an agreement for the brideprice and its payment (3 p109).

4.9 Inheritance patterns:

- Traditionally, a child is instructed to follow the taboos and customs of his father's lineage, but his mother's taboos were not effective on him (3 p104).
- "The first child has the authority to rule all in the whole house. He is the one who inherits the house, and receives the *ipinde* (bow), and sits in the chair to take care of all his kinsmen who follow" (3 p104).

4.10 Parent-offspring interactions and conflicts:

- Parents are in charge of paying or receiving bridewealth and are important actors in the marriage ceremony (3).
- "Children as young as 3 or 4 learn to help parents with household and field chores" (4).
- Competition between a father and his mature sons for the control and use of livestock for bridewealth and subsistence frequently results in conflict and tension (7 p3).

4.11 Homosexual activities, social attitudes towards homosexuals:

- Not found

4.12 Patterns of exogamy:

- Exogamy is not a common practice among the Gogo. The general preference is to keep marriages between members of the same community (6 p440). However, endogamy is regarded as less important for people of higher social standing. (6 p441).

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

- Nothing I've read addresses this directly, but everything I've read about the birth ritual and the raising of children implies only one father, and I've never heard the mention of multiple fathers with respect to any individual in the Gogo tribe; it's safe to say paternity is not partible.

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

- The Gogo belief of the mother's role in procreation seems to be to give birth, and raise the offspring. That is to say, they seem to believe her role starts with the offspring's birth. They believe the mother is only "looking out for one person" until she actually gives birth (3 p103).

4.15 Is conception thought to be an incremental process?

- Gogo beliefs on conception were not found.

4.16 Occurrence of sexual coercion, rape:

- Not found

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

- Members of local community (6 p440).

4.18 Do females enjoy sexual freedoms?

- Traditionally, “beautiful young women” were respected, and “became paramours by exchanging husbands; they often exchanged wives because they were not very jealous” (3 p100).

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

- Not found

4.20 If mother dies, who raises children?

- Not found; however, if a woman dies while pregnant or in childbirth, a payment of one calf must be made to her family (3 p119). Since a married couple traditionally lives with the female’s parents after marriage, it may seem likely that the woman’s parents take care of the baby (3 p109).

4.21 Adult sexual ratio: number of males divided by number of females:

- Not found

4.22 Evidence for couvades:

- Couvades is not part of the birth ritual of the Gogo (3 p103).

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

- The Gogo tribe doesn’t seem very promiscuous; it seems that mothers typically know who the fathers of their babies are (3).

4.24 Kin avoidance and respect?

- Kin such as brothers and half-brothers often live together for long periods of time until something causes them to want to move out (7 p4).

4.24 Joking relationships?

- Yes. “Institutionalized joking relationships occur between several different categories of kin and affines and between categories of varying inclusiveness. Thus brothers-in-law, mothers’ brothers and sisters’ sons, and kinsmen of alternate generations are frequent categories between whom joking relationships exist; and localities, villages, clans, and peoples or ‘tribes’ may have joking relationships with one another, variously or simultaneously” (8 p133).

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

- Clan names are patrilineal; names of individuals are bilateral. (3)

4.26 Incest avoidance rules:

- Not found

4.27 Is there a formal marriage ceremony?

- In one type of Gogo marriage, called *Kubanya*, there is a formal ceremony. The other two types of marriage don’t involve a ceremony. They are *Kupula*, in which the daughter of a man is ‘stolen’ without the permission

of her parents (this type of marriage still involves some payment), and *Kupanga*, in which “the boy moves into the home of the girl he loves and accepts employment without pay, without even eating the family’s food, until he has permission to marry the girl. Late the parents arrive at an agreement so that the father of the boy can pay the bridewealth a little at a time. It will be his duty to work for his in-laws until all the wealth is paid” (3 p106).

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

- When an individual is born in to the Gogo tribe, they are given at least one name from each parent’s side of the family.

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

- For both males and females, marriage is strongly preferred within the community, with about 1/3 being between members of the same neighborhood, 2/3 being between people within a 5 mile radius, and 89% being between people that live within a 20 mile radius. This is the case for the Gogo because it “facilitates continuity and consistency between the network of status relations in which they and their kin were placed before their marriage and the status arrangements which are the result of the marriage” (6 p440).

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

- Some marriages are arranged by the parents; the rest are not arranged.

4.31 Evidence for conflicts of interest over who marries who:

- Not found.

Warfare/Homicide

4.14 Percent adult (male) deaths due to warfare:

- Not found, but must be insignificant; a strong sense of nationalism has been inspired in Tanzania, which has helped keep the country at peace for the last two decades, even while its neighbors have been involved in civil and cross-border wars (4).

4.15 Out-group vs. in-group cause of violent death:

- Not much violent death found.

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

- If a *mtemi* (a leader) becomes ill, he is to stay in indoors. If it is severe, two servants are sent in to care for him. If the *mtemi* dies of the illness, the two servants are to be strangled and buried with the *mtemi*.

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

- Neighboring societies include the Kimbu, Sandawe, Turu, Burungi, Unyanyembe, Ngulu, Kaguru, Sagara, Sangu, and Hehe tribes (10 pxvi).
- For many years, before the 20th century, the Gogo fought frequently with the Hehe as well as the Maasai (3p 44-46), but the Gogo have maintained peaceful relationships with everyone in recent years (4).

- The Gogo live in a very linguistically diverse country, Tanzania (4).

4.18 Cannibalism?

- No.

5. Socio-political organization and interaction

5.1 Mean local resident (village) group size:

- 3,000 (8 p134).

5.2 Mobility pattern: (seasonality)

- The mobility pattern of the Gogo is more based on climate conditions like rainfall than it is on seasons, per se.

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

- Wealth and status are largely determined by the amount of cattle one can accumulate; there is not much of a class system (3).
- The Gogo are broken up into many patrilineal clans, at the head of which is someone called a Mtemi (pl. Watemi). They don't have much hard power, but they derive their influence from tradition and respect. Other important members of society are elders, who make up the elder council. They can be called upon to make decisions (3).

5.4 Post marital residence:

- After a couple is married, they live with the bride's parents (3 p109).

5.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense)

- The Gogo are not very territorial; they migrate around a certain area, grow drought-resistant crops where they can, and don't get involved with violence often (3).

5.6 Social interaction divisions (age and sex)?

- Not found.

5.7 Special friendships/ joking relationships:

- Joking relationships can be found to some extent everywhere in Gogo society. They are most common among brothers and brothers-in-law (8).

5.8 Village and house organization:

- After a couple is married, they live with the bride's parents. However, each person has a separate field to cultivate. If a youth enjoys living with their parents, they may stay forever, but some want to leave and build their own house (3 p109).

5.9 Specialized village structures (men's houses):

- “In any homestead constructed, the first wing constructed runs in a line north-south, with the door on the west, and becomes the eastern wing of the completed homestead. All subsequent wings are built on to this at either end, running westwards from it. The eastern house is the senior one, and is occupied ideally by the homestead-head’s mother or, if she is dead, his senior wife” (7 p5).

5.10 Sleep in hammocks or on ground or elsewhere?

- Not found

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

- Every Gogo is part of one of about 85 patrilineal clans (3).

5.12 Trade:

- In Tanzania, the “most important commodities include cotton, fish and shrimp, coffee, cashew nuts, cloves (grown mainly on the offshore islands), tea, beans, precious stones, timber, sisal, sugar, pyrethrum, coconuts, and peanuts. Textiles, clothing, shoes, batteries, paper, and cement are examples of products commonly sold to neighboring countries. Throughout most of the country, however, production and marketing are severely constrained by very poor infrastructure, from roads and railroads to communication and power networks. During the socialist period, many products of inferior quality—from hardware to bicycles—were imported from China and other socialist countries. Today, a much wider variety of higher quality items from many countries around the world are available in shops and markets, although their high prices often prohibit all but the wealthy from purchasing them” (4).

5.13 Indications of social hierarchies:

- Elders have more prestige and influence (3).
- Watemi (leaders) have a more elaborate funeral process than other Gogo and enjoy more prestige and power (3 p110-111).

6. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion (RCR)

6. Time allocation to RCR:

- In traditional Gogo religion, the only time allocation to religion is the time used during the various ceremonies and rituals ranging everywhere from disease prevention to summoning rain (3).

6.1 Specialization (shamans and medicine):

- Some Gogo traditionally have been known as doctors and diviners. The Gogo believe there is a link between physical maladies and the spiritual realm, so a doctor/diviner is an important member of society (3).

6.2 Stimulants:

- The only stimulants I heard mention of with respect to the Gogo tribe were cigarettes. They’re often used at social gatherings.

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

- “After any Cigogo girl is married, and becomes pregnant, these steps are taken. When it finally becomes visible that she is pregnant and it is verified, she will wait for three months, and early in the fourth she will be brought a white cloth called *kumutumbiciza* (loin cloth). This cloth is worn around the womb every day until she gives birth. A ceremony for dressing her in this loin cloth is performed by the elder women along with other rituals at the start of a pregnancy. Usually the girl must give birth at her home, not her husband’s. When the child is born ... it is given two or more names, at least one from the father’s and one from the mother’s families. Then the newborn child is placed before ritual regalia from both families in total cooperation. The father of the mother gives his daughter one sheep or goat so that she can have fresh meat, but this is not necessary for those who are unable to make this gift. The hide of this goat is carefully prepared and adorned with finery. The mother carries the child in it. If a wife gives birth at her home and a man has not yet paid all the bridewealth, her elders will prevent her from leaving their home for her husband’s until the remainder of the bridewealth has been sent. Then the husband can carry home his wife and child” (3 p103).

6.4 Other rituals:

- Traditionally, when the Gogo are experiencing drought, they gather on a mountain or in another special place with one black sheep and one black cow, both of which are sacrificed after singing a specific ritual song. Then, a dark cotton cloth is presented the ritual leader, who can wear only black cloth during the ritual (3 p101).
- When there is a good harvest, a child is ritually circumcised, and cannot enter their houses until they have healed. Once they have, they enter their mother’s homes at night, and about midnight or one in the morning they wake their mothers; this is called *kulamusa* (to greet). During this time they make build ‘circumcision camps’ and are supposed to be visited by the spirits of the ancestors (3 p105)

6.5 Myths (creation):

- It is said that the Wang’omvia, a people group that was present in Ugogo before the bantu people, could change into lion, although this is only regarded as legend (3 p41).

6.6 Cultural material (art, music, games):

- The Gogo share much of their material cultural with the Nilotic Baraguyu and the Maasai (5).
- Rainstones establish ritual precedence and authority within a defined territory (7 p2).
- The Gogo play a game called *naga*. “This game is played with one pit for a *msugara* or dwarf palm. The players compete as in soccer. Young men come from more than five miles around, meet in the middle, and strike the nut with stout sticks or clubs. Both sides try to keep the *naga* in their territory. If they are not strong it is driven to the other’s side, or past it. The next day they will try to retrieve it. With hard work they can return it to their home. This game is played in the evening beginning at four and lasting sometimes until seven at night” (3 p116).

6.7 Sex differences in RCR:

- Males of the Gogo tribe don’t celebrate a puberty rite (6 p434).
- Women perform a ritual called *Chahola* that is said to drive off cattle diseases. They drive the cattle for two days dressed as men (3 p116).
- Only men play *naga*, mentioned in 6.6 (3 p116).
- Men are buried on their right side, women on their left (7 p5).

6.8 Missionary effect:

- And increasing number of Gogo people have been converted to Christianity or Islam since the intervention of the Germans and others. Many of the old traditions and customs are being done away with because they are viewed as immoral or obsolete based on these new religions. This causes much strife between the elders and those who adopt new religion (3).

6.9 RCR revival:

- Not found.

6.10 Death and afterlife:

- In the traditional religion of the Gogo, spirits of ancestors are thought to effect the happenings in the living world (3).

6.11 Taboo of naming dead people?

- No.

6.12 Is there tekonymy?

- No. The children receive names from each parent's side of the family, and the parent's names aren't affected by the child's name (3 p103).

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

- Traditionally, Gogos believe that the spirits of ancestors play a significant role in the lives of the living. If a child is sick, they are taken to a doctor/diviner that will tell them that one of their ancestors wants a cow or a goat or what have you. The family will sacrifice whatever the doctor suggested, and if the child gets better soon after, it is thought that the ancestor was pleased. Lying, thieving, and other deception is thought to anger the ancestors, who then take retribution how they see fit. Leprosy and smallpox were thought to be sent from God as punishment for terrible sin, so those who contracted them were scorned and couldn't be buried (3).
- Increasingly, Gogo people are being converted to modern religions, namely Christianity and Islam (3).

7. Adornment

7.1 Body Paint:

- Not found.

7.2 Piercings:

- At about age six, Gogo children have their ears pierced at both the top and the bottom of the ear lobe (3).

7.3 Haircut:

- During girls' puberty rites, their heads are shave to represent their purification in preparation to become a marriageable woman (6 p439).

7.4 Scarification:

- “When a child is two months old, it is necessary to burn a mark on his forehead. This mark is called *lunindi* or *lulindi*. When a child has reached the age of six or more, his two lower teeth are pulled out. This mark is called *nhyende*. Also at this time holes are pierced in both the top and the bottom of the ear lobe. These are called *malomwa*” (3 p104-105).

7.5 Adornment:

- Most adornment I could find was used in ceremonies and rituals, so are listed under 7.6.

7.6 Ceremonial/Ritual adornment:

- During the rituals to summon rain, the ritual leader may wear only black cloth (3 p101).
- During the *Chahola* ritual, women dress as men with knives and spears. (3 p116).

7.7 Sex differences in adornment:

- Seem to be relatively minimal; the purpose of most adornments seems to be to identify one as a Gogo, not as a Gogo male or a Gogo female (3 p44, 104-105).

7.8 Missionary effect:

- Little to none.

7.9 Cultural revival in adornment:

- Not found.

8. Kinship systems

8.1 Sibling classification system:

Not found.

8.2 Sororate, levirate:

Not found.

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

Not found.

9. Other interesting cultural features:

1. Bantu-speaking people are thought to have migrated to Tanzania about the first century B.C. (4), but they did not occupy central Tanganyika, where the Gogo tribe is found, until about A.D. 1300 (3 pg8).
2. Cattle are never slaughtered solely for meat but are offered to spirits, and the meat is carefully distributed through networks of kinship and mutual assistance (5).

3. After a Gogo boy is circumcised and returns from the circumcision cape, he is supposed to have “gained intelligence.” He who fails to remember the “spirits of his ancestors” in that camp is scorned by the youth and elders, and his elders are shamed.

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