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Family and Daily Life : An Ethnography of the Datoga Pastoralists in Mangola (1)

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Family and Daily Life

—An Ethnography of the Datoga Pastoralists in Mangola (1)

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The Datoga are a pastoralist people living in the various regions of Northern Tanzania, and having an estimated population of about 30,000. Since the early 1940's, the Mangola region, located on the eastern shore of Lake Eyasi in the western part of the Mbulu District, has been an area of settlement for Datoga who migrated there from the Dongobesh area to the east. The society of the Datoga of Mangola reflects the course of their historical migrations, and is made up of the principal Datoga sub-groups such as the Bajūta, Darorajēga, Gisamijanga, Rotigenga, Barabaiga, etc. The majority group consists of the Bajūta and its offshoot, the Darorajēga.

From February, 1962 to March, 1964, I lived among the Datoga of Mangola and carried out continuous research on their culture and society. The report presented here is an ethnological description based on the results of that research. I have already reported on such topics as the migrations and distribution of Datoga groups, cattle brands, locality groups, etc. This report, together with the previous ones, constitutes one part of the Datoga ethnography.

The principal purpose of this report is to bring about an understanding of Datoga family life mainly through a description of two interrelated aspects of life in the homestead: namely, human relations and modes of daily activity. Due to editorial circumstances, this description will be presented in two parts. For the understanding of the social base of Datoga daily life, I have described a family as a social organization in association with the relationship between kinship and affines. As in the case of other East African pastoralists, the Datoga homestead is integrated through the agnatic descent system. Nevertheless, the inter-family relations and inter-lineage relations with the woman as intermediary constitute one of the most important functions of family life.

One of the main purpose of this ethnological description is to throw light on the woman's role in an agnatic descent group, and to describe human relations on the level of behavioral patterns. To this I have added a description of customs associated with infants and young children.

In Part Two I intend to describe customs associated with the Datoga stages of life after early childhood, as well as living space in the homestead with emphasis on daily life and roles.

INTRODUCTION

1. Object and Method

From February, 1962 to June, 1964, I had the opportunity to carry out field research on the society and culture of the Datoga pastoralists inhabiting the Mangola area in northern Tanzania. In this article, I shall attempt to describe the daily life of the Datoga family, based on the results of that research.

Several reports of research connected with the Datoga family have already been published: Wilson [1952:53], who was the first to investigate the Barabaiga, a Datoga subgroup, does not provide a detailed account of family life. Klima [1970], who studied the Barabaiga ten years after Wilson, described the Datoga family with wider scope from the point of view of his cultural anthropology. There are Umesao's and

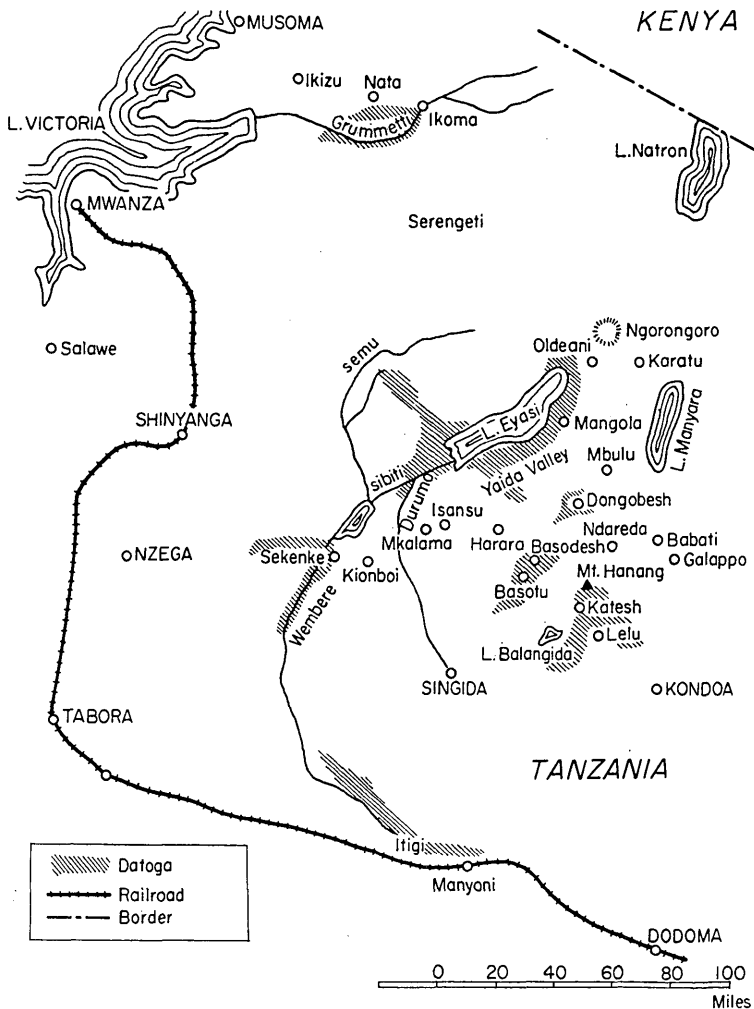


Figure 1. Datoga in Northern Tanzania.

my reports on the family of the Datoga group in Mangola. In the report of Umesao [1969], there is a description of the relationship between the herd organization and the family. In my own article [1972] I described the reciprocal relationship between family and cattle. These reports, however, did not have the intensive description of the Datoga family activity in the homestead as their immediate object. Research on the daily life of the Datoga was carried out by Ishige [1968], who did a case study of one household; that investigation, however, had as its direct purpose the comparison of the life styles of four ethnic groups in the Mangola area, and was not concerned with providing a description within the Datoga socio-cultural context.

For the most part, the family life of the Datoga can be investigated concretely by observing the various day-by-day activities of the family members within their living space. These activities are indicative of both the family life style and the human relationships or role systems. The purpose of this report is to present a clear account of Datoga family life on these two interrelated levels. Together with my previously published articles, this account is intended as a contribution to the study of Datoga ethnography in Mangola.

2. Materials

Since 1964, when I completed my field study, I have had the opportunity to visit the Mangola region on several occasions. While in 1965 there was no noticeable change in their life style, I was especially impressed in December, 1966, by the large transformation in the mode of settlement caused by the influence of the promotion of a new agricultural village formation called *kijiji ya Ujamaa* in Swahili. A large number of people had moved to concentrated communities, where they lived in peasant-type houses.

Strictly speaking, the materials used in writing this article describe the life of the Datoga in the Mangola region up until 1966.

Mangola is a comparatively recent area of settlement for the Datoga, who began to move into the region in the 1940's. Historically speaking, the Datoga were originally divided into several sub-tribes who moved about in all regions of the huge area of northern Tanzania. In another article I have provided a more detailed discussion of the historical migration process of the Datoga clan of Mangola, which is one of the mixed groups deriving from these sub-tribes [TOMIKAWA 1968]. While it can be said that the basic forms of family culture are the same among all the Datoga, there are small differences in details such as household objects and kinship address terms, according to the route of migration.

The materials used for this report were obtained in the course of my investigation of families whose ancestors belonged to sub-tribes such as the Bajūta, Gisamijanga, Darorajēga, Rotigenga, etc., who came from Dongobesh. These people share similar life styles, and may be said to comprise the majority of the Mangola pastoralists.

3. Environment of Family Life

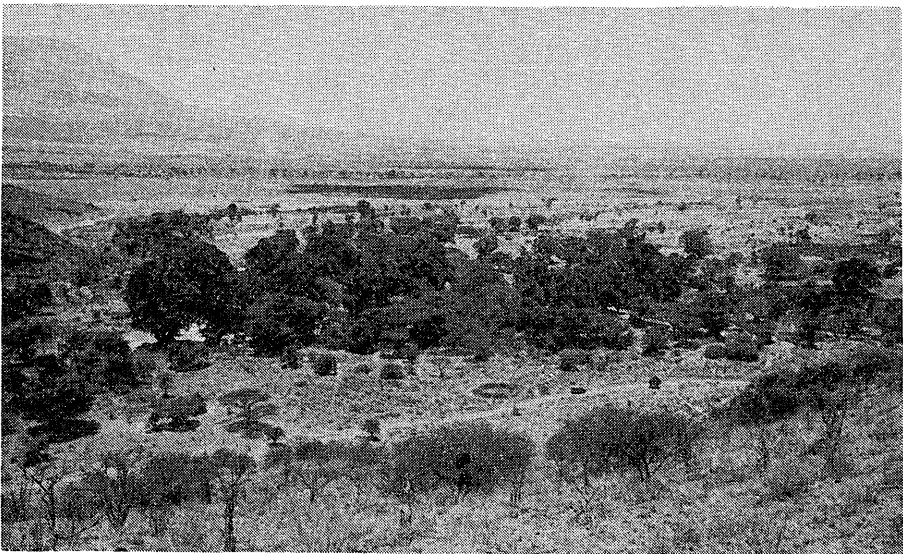
The seasons, which influence the family life cycle of the Mangola pastoralists,

comprise the first aspect of natural environment. The rainy season (*muweda*) and dry season (*gaida*) are marked off by these people according to the first and last rainfalls. The exact times of these occurrences differ from year to year, but for the most part the rainy season lasts from November to May, and the dry season from June to October. At Ghangdenda, where I stayed from 1961 to 1963, the rainfall measured during three rainy seasons was found to be 300–500 mm.

The Balai River, which flows through the Mangola area in a southwesterly direction and empties into Lake Eyasi, dries up in the middle of the dry season. The Datoga families, which are scattered through the grasslands to the east and west of the Balai River, obtain a year-round water supply for themselves and their animals from springs, especially the Ghangdenda spring and the stream that flows from it. If we take the Ghangdenda spring as an example, the distance from the homesteads to the spring ranges from about 2 kilometers to about 6 kilometers.

In the region watered by the Balai River, the wooded riverbanks present a continuous forest scene. The Datoga families, however, live in an area where one can see Savannah scenery with grasslands, scrub, and forests. Since the latter are few in number, however, the daily wood supply must be obtained from outer areas a fair distance away.

The distance from one homestead to another ranges from about 1.5 kilometers to about 6 kilometers. Although the daily family life is carried on within these dispersed and independent homesteads, the neighbourhood group cannot be ignored as a factor of the immediate social environment. In not a few cases, moreover, families have relatives living in their own neighbourhood. In another article I have already given a detailed account of the Datoga neighbourhood with regard to its composition and the function of reciprocal cooperation [TOMIKAWA 1968].



Photograph 1. Mangola in dry season.

In addition to the social groups the Datoga form among themselves, the Bantu agriculturalist and Iraqw agrico-pastoralist groups living in the vicinity must be included as part of the social environment affecting Datoga family life. If the case of Ghangdenda is again taken as an example, the closest distance between a Datoga and an Iraqw homestead was about 2 kilometers; in the case of the Datoga and the Bantu-speaking peoples, the closest distance was about 4 kilometers.

DATOGA HOUSEHOLD FORMATION

4. The Homestead (*ghēda*)

The Datoga word for 'homestead' is *ghēda* in the singular and *gālga* in the plural. The *ghēda* consists of a large, round, fenced-in compound containing houses for family members and enclosures for domestic animals. These houses are of two types: men's house (*hulānda*) and wife's house (*ghorīda* or *gēda*). An enclosure for fully grown cattle is called *muhalēda*, while one for small domestic animals is called *jabōda*.

The word *ghēda* refers to this form of dwelling in its entirety, as well as to the family living within it.

The expression *ghēda* Gete would mean 'the homestead of the man called

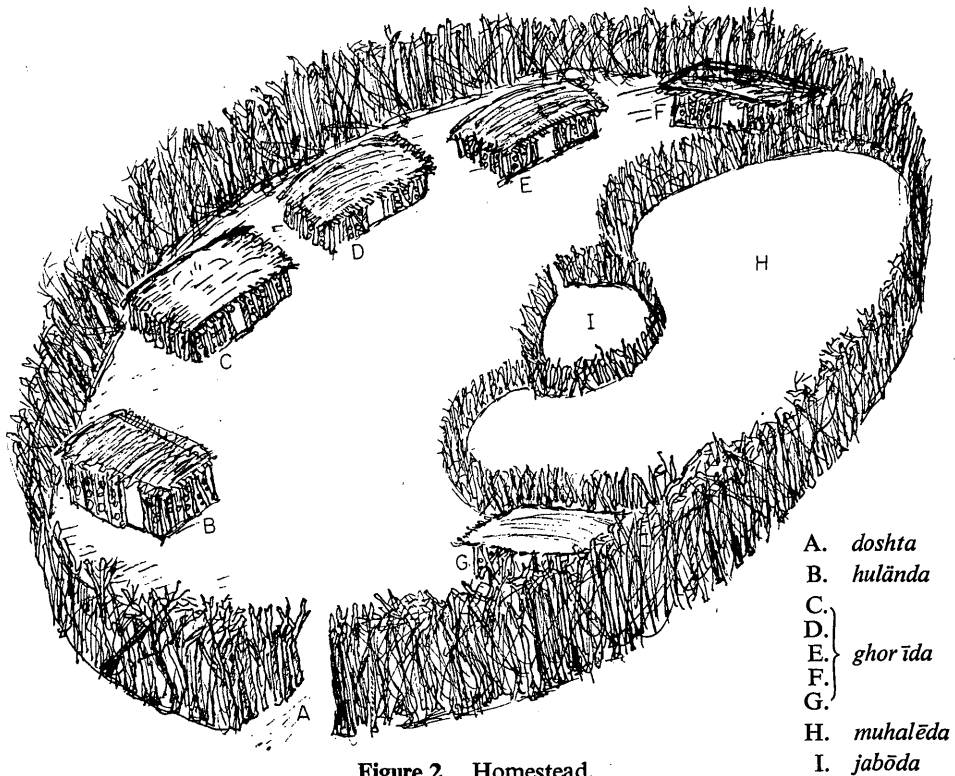


Figure 2. Homestead.

Gete'. If the son of this man were asked, "*Gibahi ghē banga?*" ('Of what household are you a member?', or 'What household are you from?'), he would answer, "*Gibayi ghē Gete*" ('I am a member of Gete's household'). The expression "*ghē Gete*" means 'the household of Gete', *ghē* being a form of the word *ghēda*.

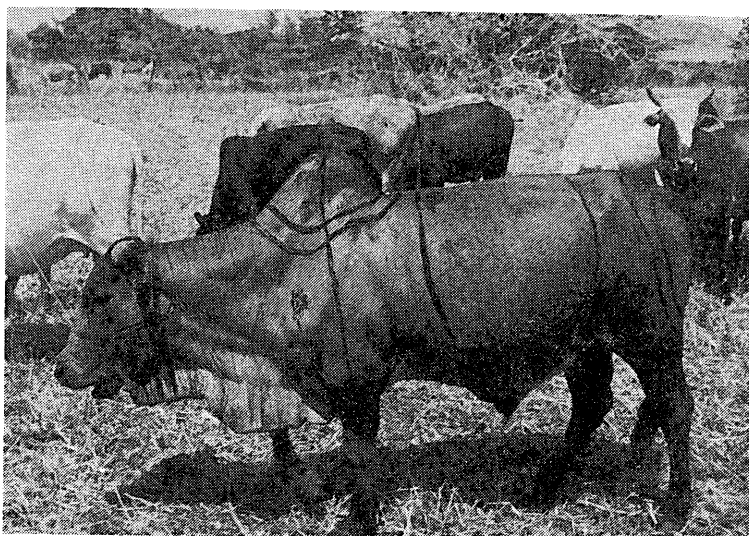
The family group (*ghēda*) is the smallest social unit within the Datoga pastoralist society, and is principally composed of one householder, his wife or wives, and his children. Occasionally his mother, brothers, sisters or other kin join them.

The Iraqw agrico-pastoralist householders in Mangola often divide their wives and children into two groups and maintain a second homestead in an area other than Mangola. This second group of family members centers its life around agricultural activities. For the Datoga, however, migration is carried out as a rule by having one complete household, that is, all the members of one *ghorīda* together with their livestock, move together to a new location. In this way, the *ghēda* does not become divided.

5. Domestic Animals

People (*bunēda*) and animals (*dugun*) live together within the living space of the *ghēda*. For the Datoga pastoralists, it is very difficult to eliminate domestic animals entirely from the image of *ghēda*, regardless of the sense in which the word is used.

The word *dugun* is a general term which includes four types of animals: cattle, goats, sheep and donkeys. The donkey (*digēda*) is used for transport purposes, while the other three types are production animals. Among these the cattle, which have by far the highest social and economic value, are traditionally considered by the pastoralist Datoga to be the most important domestic animals



Photograph 2. Datoga cow.

For the purpose of arranging pastoral duties, the animals are divided into three groups according to stage of growth.

The first group consists of fully grown cattle (*duga*, pl.) and those calves (*mäyda*, *muhōga*, pl.) which have entered their second year of life. These animals are grazed in faraway pastures, and are commonly referred to as a group by the word *duga*. Fully grown cattle at various stages of life, such as the bull (*jurukta*), the pregnant cow (*nyaburuda*), the lactating cow (*dēda gharēga*), the bullock (*guranēda*), the sterile cow (*senōda*), etc., are all included in this first group. Donkeys are pastured with this group as well.

The second group, which consists of animals pastured at medium distance from the homestead, includes calves in the last several months of their first year (*muhoga hau*), as well as adult goats and sheep. The latter two types are referred to collectively as *noga* (pl.). This second pasturing group is commonly called by the general terms *muhoga*, or *noga*.

The last group consists of calves under three months old (*muhoga manaj*, pl.), as well as kids and lambs, which are referred to collectively as *dayega manaj* (pl.). These animals are pastured close by the homestead.

Animals in the first pasturing group would be on a full grass diet, those in the second group on a grass diet (sheep and goats) or a milk and grass diet (calves), and those in the third group on a milk diet.

6. Datoga stages of Life

In the daily life within the *ghēda* (homestead), there is a concrete relationship between the above groups of domestic animals and each family member. The household organization differs, however, according to the stages of growth of the various family members. The Datoga have terms of appellation to differentiate each stage of growth within a person's lifetime.

1) *ghameyānda*: nursing infant

This word applies to babies in their first year or two of life, up to the time that they can be taken out of their mother's care.

2) *ghalsigechānda*: small child

This word indicates children from about two to four or five years old, who can walk alone and be away from their mothers.

Note: These terms for the earliest stages of life apply to both male and female children. When it is necessary to make a distinction, the words *balānda* (son) and *huda* (daughter) are used. From this point on, the stages of the male lifetime will be listed together first, followed by those of the female lifetime.

3) *balānda manaj*: young boy

This word applies to boys from about five or six to the time they are circumcised at about ten years or older.

4) *balānda murjew*: youth

This word applies to the adolescent boy from just after circumcision to the time he is ready to begin his career as a young herdsman and warrior.

5) *gharemanēda*: young man

The Datoga classification for young warriors covers a long period of time, from the age of seventeen or eighteen to the mid-thirties. In some cases this age group is further divided into the following: *gharemanēda manay* (s.), for a man in the earlier years, and *gharemanēda hau* (s.) for a man in the later years. Most of the former are as yet unmarried, while the latter are in many cases married with children.

6) *biktewanēda*: man in his prime (mature adult man)

Many men in their mid thirties or older can be called by this term, which refers to the head of a family who has his own *ghēda*.

7) *gwarugwēda*: elder (*gwaruga*, pl.)

Men in this category are heads of three-generation families, including their sons' wives and children living in the *ghēda*.

8) *gwarugwēda wosi*: patriarch (*gwaruga wosi*, pl.)

This term applies to men in the *gwarugwēda* age group who have reached the age of seventy or eighty years.

9) *huda manay*: young girl

This term refers to girl children from the age of six or seven to puberty (around ten years old).

10) *huda hau*: young unmarried woman

This word is used for young women who have reached puberty, up until the time of marriage.

11) *gatkōda*: wife

Within this category, the special term *malgwajanda* is used for a recently married woman who has not yet borne children.

12) *ghamata*: mother

When a woman has been married for some time and has children in the age groups of *balānda manay* or *huda manay*, it is considered fitting to refer to her as the mother of a certain person (*ghamata*) rather than as the wife of a certain person (*gatkōda*).

13) *haknochānda* (s.): old woman

This term applies after a woman has entered her sixties.

The above appellations are not based on exact age, but represent rather divisions providing an index of the position and role conceptions associated with growth and aging in Datoga society. Thus a differentiation is made between *gharemanēda* and *huda hau*, as members of the *girgwaghēda ghāremanga* (young men's council) and *girgwaghēda hawēga* (young women's council) respectively, and between *balānda manay* and *huda manay* (young boy and young girl).

The Datoga people tend not to be strongly conscious of these indices, and the child of a particular head of a household, especially a young child, would generally be referred to as *jefuda*. Similarly, if we take the example of a son of Gete, he would be referred to as *balānda* Gete, especially if he belonged to the age group of *balānda*, *gharemanēda* or *biktewanēda* (i.e. if he were past early childhood). The

daughter of Gete might be referred to as *huda* Gete, regardless of her age, and his wife could be called *gatmōda* Gete whether she belonged to the category of *gatmōda*, *malgwajānda*, *ghamata* or *haknochānda*.

7. Family Cycle

The Datoga family organization differs according to the stage of life of each member, and is determined with reference to the stage of life of the head of the household. Thus the family as a social institution appears not as a family organization at a fixed point in time, but rather as a family cycle in accordance with the stages of life of the head of the household.

At the time of my December, 1963 visit, I investigated the marital situations of the heads of 159 households, representing 68% of the total number of Datoga homesteads in Mangola. The results of that investigation showed ninety cases, or 57%, of men having one wife, and sixty-nine cases, or 43% with more than one wife. Of the latter, forty-eight had two wives, sixteen had three wives, four had four wives, and one had five wives. These figures do not include divorced wives, but wives who have died are included. A few of the monogamous heads of households, especially those of advanced age, would probably remain in the same situation; while the others, particularly those in the prime of life (*biktewanēda*), looked forward to becoming polygamous at a later stage. The various types of family in a particular time serve only to indicate each stage of the family cycle. The institutional function of *ghorīda* which links each stage, will be clarified in the family cycle.

Accordingly, I shall present here a model of each type of family organization, as determined by the stage of life of a particular head of a household. These models are based on a survey of thirty-two Datoga households in Mangola, comprising all the homesteads in three of the eleven neighbourhood groups, those of Ghangdenda, Gendarga and Jobaji. This survey should make it possible to arrive at an overall understanding of the Datoga family cycle. The examples here represent basic models taken from average patterns of development in each individual family history, with some modifications by the heads of households according to the Datoga system of values.

8. Establishment of the *ghēda*

The new householder leaves his father's *ghēda* taking with him his wife, two sons, a daughter, a younger brother and sister, his mother, and his domestic animals. From his father, he receives one bull (*jurukta*), and four pieces of equipment: a long, hooked pole (*magwalda*), an axe (*jumōda*), a branding iron (*mascheka*), and a ritual stick (*beyonēda*). If possible, he hopes to found his new *ghēda* in the neighbourhood of his father's *ghēda*. (See Figures 3, 4, 5, 6, 7)

The hooked pole (*magwalda*), about two meters long, is used for piling up branches of thorn trees to make the fence. The axe (*jumōda*) is used for cutting and shaving wood to build the house. The ritual stick (*beyonēda*), about two meters long with one end divided into a Y-shape, will be used in the circumcision ceremonies



Figure 3.

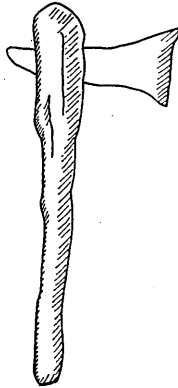


Figure 4.

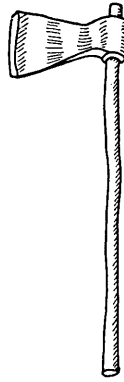


Figure 5.



Figure 6.



Figure 7.

Figure 3. A hooked pole (*magwalda*).

Figure 4. Traditional axe (*jumōda*).

Figure 5. Modern axe (*jumōda*).

Figure 6. Branding iron (*mascheka*), length, approximately 40 cm.

Figure 7. Ritual stick (*beyonēda*).

of his sons. (At the circumcision ceremony the head of the household leads the ritual gathering holding the stick in his hand.) The bull (*jurukta*) is to be used for increasing the cattle herd of the new *ghēda*. These presents from the father to the new householder symbolize the growth of the *ghēda*. His oldest son is an adolescent youth (*balānda murjew*) who is already circumcised (*masambarēda*) and one of his daughters is a young girl.

If his son is too young to manage the new *ghēda*, his younger brother who belongs to either the *gharemanēda manaj* or *balānda murjew* stage, or his younger sister who belongs to the *huda manaj* stage, will participate in the establishment of the new *ghēda*. The young man and the adolescent youth can be charged with pasturing the larger domestic animals. The young girls can care for the smaller animals and help with domestic chores.

The younger brother of the new householder is a young man in his late teens

or early twenties (*gharemanēda manay*), while his younger sister is an older child or a young adolescent (*huda manay*).

It is preferable for the family of the new householder to include at least one older youth (*balānda murjew*) or young man (*gharemanēda manay*), in order that he be freed from pasturing work and neighbourhood cooperative assistance duties. This situation is desirable because the head of the household is expected to participate in the various ritual ceremonies, the tribal council, the kin group and neighbourhood courts, and the honey wine drinking of the elders. It is not absolutely impossible, however, for a man in his late twenties or early thirties (*gharemanēda hau*), who has no children, to establish a new *ghēda* if he has his father's permission. This permission might be obtained only after the eldest son of the father has already established his own *ghēda*. It is not considered desirable for a man to establish a new *ghēda* when his family is still at an immature stage: for example, with his wife, brother, sister, and a child at the toddler stage, or with a very young sister and brother. Independent families of this type are therefore not numerous.

The last member of the new family is the new householder's natural mother, one of his father's co-wives, who is already an old woman (*haknochānda*). Her eldest son, the founder of the new *ghēda*, separates off from his father's household together with his younger brothers and sisters born of the same mother. Each of his half-brothers sets out in a similar fashion to establish a new branch of the family.

The younger brothers and sisters who accompany their elder brother will later leave his *ghēda*, the young men to start their own households, and the girls to marry.

While a young Datoga man (*gharemanēda*) is living in his father's *ghēda*, it is not easy for him to have more than one wife although he would like to do so. The new householder, however, is likely to take co-wives in addition to the senior wife as soon as possible.

With the help of the people in the neighbourhood, the new householder constructs the new *ghēda*. Within the fence (*hiligwanēda*), the residential space is divided by another fence into an area for cattle and an area for people. Two houses are constructed in the people's area: the mother's house (*ghorīda ghamata*), and the wife's house (*ghorīda gatmōda*).

9. Enlargement of the *ghēda*

The householder has reached his forties, the age level at which he can be properly referred to as an elder (*gwarugwēda*). He has two wives. The first-born son of the senior wife is now a young man (*gharemanēda manay*), and the junior wife has a small son and daughter. His *ghēda* now contains the mother's house (*ghorīda ghamata*), and the wives' houses (*ghorajēga gademuga* pl.), one each for the senior wife (*gatmōda hau*) and junior wife (*gatmōda manay*). If a younger full brother of the householder is a member of the *ghēda*, a house will be built for this brother's bride upon his marriage.

In addition to the word *ghorīda*, the word *gēda* is used to denote these women's houses, and both words are used in a sense that clearly differentiates them from the

homestead (*ghēda*) as a whole. In the same way that the homestead owned by a certain man is referred to using his name (e.g. *ghē Gete*), the houses can be indicated by expressions containing the names of their mistresses, the householder's mother and wives (e.g. *gē Mubeno*, *gē Nambay*, or *gē Udamayomda*).

While these women's names may be used directly by the husband and members of his family, other people must use discreet expressions. Thus a mother would be referred to with the word for mother (*ghamata*) plus the name of her eldest son or daughter: for example, *Ghamata Gete*, or *Ghamata Gidagawo*, or *Ghamata Udakoku*. If someone were to indicate a house and ask, "*gē banga?*" (Whose house is this?), the answer would be, "*Gē Ghamata Gete*" (It is the house of Gete's mother). The word *gē* is a form of the word *gēda*, in the same relationship as that of *ghē* and *ghēda*.

Just as the word *ghēda* expresses the conception of the group of people living within the homestead, so the word *gēda* indicates the group of people living in the house, as well as the actual house itself. The word *ghēda* represents a large family group headed by the male householder, while *gēda* represents a small family group headed by a woman.

If the young son of the senior wife were asked, "*gibahi gē banga?*" (Which *gēda* are you from), he would answer, "*gebahi genye Gidagawo*" (I am from Gidagawo's family), Gidagawo being the eldest son of the same mother. If Gidagawo were asked the same question, he would substitute the name of his younger brother. If the person asking the question were not able to identify the older or younger brother, the child would be obliged finally to use the name of his mother, the senior wife, by saying, "*gē* ___ (name of mother)". Normally, however, on being asked this question, children of the same mother answer using each other's names.

Children born and raised in the *ghēda* refer to each other as *balanda ghahenya* (son of our house) and *huda ghahenya* (daughter of our house) for males and females respectively. They refer to children of another *gēda*, however, with the expressions *balānda baba* (father's son) and *huda baba* (father's daughter).

According to the Datoga conception, people born and raised in the same house (*gēda*) are said to have come from one room (*ga agi*). The expression *ga* refers to their mother's private room within her house. In that room is the mother's bed, covered with cowhide, upon which the children symbolically consider themselves to have been born. The mother's room (*ga agi*) evidently represents the relationship among brothers and sisters born of the same mother.

These miniature families centering around the mothers are the small units that constitute the polygamous family of the enlarged *ghēda*. Furthermore, the small household within each woman's house joins with the others to form one large household, centering around one man, for the purposes of the collective life of the *ghēda*.

10. Climax of the *ghēda*

The householder is now an elder in his mid-fifties. His mother has died, but he has three wives, occupying three houses in the *ghēda*. Because these wives have

produced sons, an independent men's hut (*hulānda*) has been built. In addition, houses have been built for the wives of the two eldest sons of the senior wife. During this period, the family of the *ghēda* has reached the largest scale in its cycle, for it comprises three generations and a large number of members.

The head of the household has an increased social role outside the *ghēda*, as a member of the various councils (*girgwaghēda*) and ritual groups; on the other hand, however, he is freed from any physical labour within his *ghēda*. The young men share the work of running the *ghēda*, while the senior wife has the authority to assume leadership over the women when necessary. Her first-born son is now a member of the warrior age group (*gharemanēda*), in his late twenties or early thirties, with two wives. As his father's consultant, this son is in a position of strong influence over the young people of the *ghēda*. His own son is a youth (*balānda murjew*) who can be entrusted with pasturing duties. His younger sister, having married and left her father's *ghēda*, now has her own house (*ghorīda*) in her father-in-law's homestead, but his young daughter (*huda manay*) is old enough to help with the housework. He is already regarded as a man in his prime (*biktewanēda*), who could manage his own *ghēda* if he had his father's permission. When he leaves his father's *ghēda*, he will take with him his mother, his wives, and their children. His mother, an old woman (*haknochānda*) who has been able to see all her children married, will maintain her position within the *ghēda* of her eldest son.

The position of Datoga women within the *ghēda* is perpetuated through the mother and son relationship, rather than that of husband (*siyēda*) and wife (*gatmōda*). For this reason, a woman who has not been able to give birth to any sons is finally obliged to leave her husband's *ghēda* and join the household of one of her brothers (*orjēda*). In other words, she must return to the *ghēda* of a grown member of the small family group which had formerly emerged from the same mother's room (*ga*).

After the senior wife moves to the *ghēda* of her eldest son, helping with the upbringing of her grandchildren becomes one of her principal roles. In the *ghēda* she has left, the householder's second wife, as her successor, assumes her authority and duties.

11. Dissolution of the *ghēda*

The head of the household is a patriarch (*gwarugwēda wosi*) in his late sixties or seventies. Only the house of his third wife is left in the *ghēda*. The families of his first and second wives have moved to the new homesteads of his sons. His third wife's eldest son, who is at the age level of a young warrior (*gharemanēda manay*), sleeps in the men's hut. During the daytime, the head of the household spends a good deal of his time in this hut. In order to make up for the labour shortage, his eldest son has given him one of his own sons, a teen-aged youth (*balānda murjew*), who is now a member of both households. According to the Datoga ideal, it is desirable for him to take a fourth wife and continue the enlargement of his *ghēda* if he has the financial means to do so, but in many cases this is impossible. In this

last period, the scale of family organization within the *ghēda* is similar to that of a household in its earliest stage.

When the head of the household dies, the funeral is held in the *ghēda*, and his grave (*bughēda*) is made there as well. After these affairs have been completed, the remaining family move out. If the son of the third wife is married, he establishes a new *ghēda* together with his mother, wife and children. The grandson who had been given to the householder by his eldest son returns to his father's homestead. With the death of the householder, his *ghēda* is dissolved and the cycle finished. In the homesteads of his sons, however, which have segmented off from his *ghēda*, the next generation of family cycles is in progress. The number of unilinear agnatic descent groups continues to increase by means of the segmentation of the *ghēda*.

KINSHIP RELATIONS AND FAMILY ORGANIZATION

12. Large Family Groups

While a father's homestead and the independent homesteads of his sons constitute separate households, these people share a strong consciousness of family solidarity as a result of frequent mutual cooperation. The separate family groups can be considered parts of a larger family. In actuality, it is not uncommon for them to be referred to together as the household of the father (*ghē* plus name of father). Even though the households of the sons are independent, their families are as yet immature; in other words, this type of *ghēda* does not enjoy the prestige of a household which has reached its climax.

The family groups of the father and his sons, together with the families of the father's brothers, constitute one large family. This large family is headed by the primogenitus, the eldest son of the senior wife of the previous patriarch. At its climax, this extended family comprises a three-generation household (*ghēda*).

These large (extended) family groups are composed of people having a common agnatic descent; in other words, they are said to constitute a minimal lineage group. Actually, a *ghēda* household at each stage in its cycle is often not only a polygamous compound family, but includes also other members such as the householder's mother, unmarried brothers and sisters, the wives and children of his dead brothers, his father's unmarried brothers and sisters, etc.

The household composed of a large number of kinsmen, which constitutes the *ghēda* at its climax, is itself the realization of the potential of minimal lineage.

It is my intention to discuss the Datoga kinship system in more detail in another report, but I wish here to call attention to kinship as an outer system which bears upon relationships among family members in the *ghēda*.

13. Lineage Segmentation

The principle of Datoga family composition is symbolized by the organization of their residential space, the *ghēda*. Wilson's discussion of this topic with regard

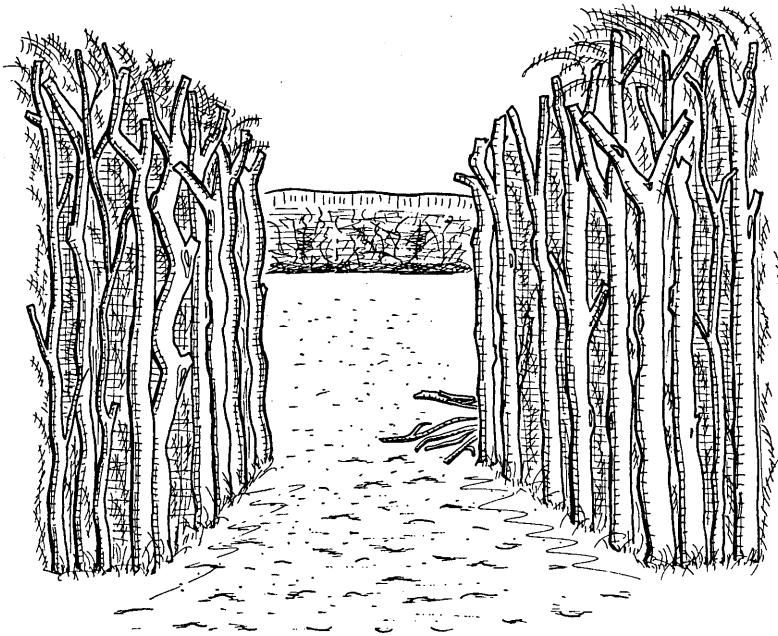


Figure 8. Gate area (*Doshta*).

to the Barabaiga homestead applies also to the other sub-tribes in the Mangola area: the Darorajega, Rotigenga, and Buradiga [Wilson 1953: 36–37].

There is a gate area (*doshta*) in the fence (*hiligwanda*) around the *ghēda*, which connects the inside with the outside. This gate area is the space through which people and animals enter and leave the *ghēda*. The word *doshta* also has the meaning of ‘clan’, the largest corporate group in Datoga society. This usage stems from the principle of unilinear agnatic descent, which gives rise in turn to the conception that the clan is a group of people who originated in one *ghēda* and came out through the same gateway (*doshta*). If someone were asked, “*Giban doshta?*” (What gate are you from?), he would answer with the name of the clan to which he belonged.

Often when two strangers meet on the road, they tell each other their sub-tribe (*emojiga*), clan (*doshta*) and father’s name. If a person were asked, “*aba Bajūta gibehi an doshta?*” (What is your clan within the *Bajūta* sub-tribe?), he would answer with the name of one of the clans within the *Bajūta* sub-tribe, such as *Dareṃṇajēga* or *Hirbaghambaway*. Some Datoga elders can usually recite the names of their male ancestors going back about eighteen generations. People belonging to the same clan have a clan court (*girgwaghēda doshta*), and exogamy is strictly enforced. In the past, marriage or sexual relations between members of the same clan was considered a serious violation of the incest taboo.

The Datoga conception of lineage segmentation is linked to the woman’s private room (*ga*) within her house (*ghorīda* or *gēda*). If someone is asked, “*gibana ga?*” or “*gebehi an ga?*” (Which room do you come from), he would give the name of his

ancestors of maximal lineage, going back seven to ten generations, of the same clan as himself, following the principle of agnatic descent. For example, one elder of the Daremɲajega clan of Bajūta answers the above question with the expression, "*gebayi gē Magena*" (I am of the family line of Magena). Magena was the elder son of the senior wife of Gidaguda. Similarly, another descendant of Gidaguda answers, "*gebayi gē Gemuray*". Gemuray was a son of the junior wife of Gidaguda. Again, the word *gē* indicates the woman's house (*gēda* or *ghorīda*). The word *gēda* refers also to *ga agi*, the group of children who were born of the same mother, in her private room (*ga*), and raised in the same house (*gēda*). Thus, the expressions *gē Magena* and *gē Gemuray* indicate the lineage groups consisting of people who trace their unilinear agnatic descent to one of the brothers of which the eldest was Magena or Gemuray respectively. In this way, the lineages at each level from maximal lineage to minimal lineage are segmented with the women as the segmental points.

These lineage groups are thus headed by a line of primogeniti (eldest sons directly descended from eldest sons).

It is important to note the significance of the mother in the context of the Datoga lineage system. The bed covered with cowhide, in the mother's private room, is the place where the husband approaches his wife. It is also the place where members of the husband's lineage group who have the same generation name as he are permitted to have sexual relations with his wife. Sexual intercourse in any place other than on the bed covered with cowhide is a serious violation against the normal standard, calling for trial and strict penalties. For unmarried girls, virginity is respected and considered desirable, but in reality there is some sexual activity among the young people. In these cases, coitus interruptus is generally practised, since pregnancy out of wedlock is considered extremely shameful. When pregnancy does occur, the father of the girl will usually try to marry her off before the fact becomes publicly known.

The specific *ghēda* to which a Datoga child belongs is determined by its birth within the mother's *ghorīda*, which is located in the *ghēda* of her husband or his father. The position of the child within the agnatic descent system, too, is determined in this way. For Datoga children, the place of father is held not by the genitor but by the pater.

As in the case of their neighbours, the agrico-pastoral Iraqw, the Datoga have the custom of ghost marriage, by which a dead man may be provided with a wife. While such marriages have now become quite rare, they still take place occasionally. The wife of the deceased man then conceives children by his brothers or closely related kinsmen. These children have all the rights and obligations that would accrue to the children of their mother's dead husband. Similarly, a widow who has at least one son goes to live in the homestead of her dead husband's brother and continues to have children. In this case, too, the children are considered to be the offspring of their mother's dead husband, and they maintain their status within his lineage. This type of father-child connection stands in marked contrast to the intimate relationship between a mother and her children, which is rooted in the fact that she

is their physiological mother, and reinforced by the social role expected of her. There is thus within the kinship consciousness a definite qualitative difference between the fact of being a child of their father's *ghēda* and the fact of being a member of their mother's *gēda* (*ghorīda*).

The descendants of each group of full brothers will branch out in the future to form new lineages. At that time, the position of political and ritual head of the lineage will be held by the eldest son of the senior wife whose husband was the first-born son in the direct line of first-born sons from an ancestor who was the eldest among his full brothers.

The descent hierarchy of the lineage organization in a certain time depth is reflected by the order of the sons within the family organization. On the last day of the funeral ceremony for a deceased elder (*gwarugwēda*), the first of his sons to climb to the top of the grave mound (*bughēda*) is the first-born son of his senior wife, to whom he has bequeathed most of his cattle. Looking down at the crowd of participants, this eldest son not only offers prayers to the heavens for the consolation of his father's spirit, but also declares that he himself has carried out the role of his father's chief cooperator. Next, the first-born son of the deceased elder's second wife climbs to the top of the mound, followed by the first-born son of the third wife.

The group of children in each *gēda* (*gaba ga agi*) are bound together through their common mother; and this bond is strengthened not only by the sharing of a social space within the homestead, but also from the outside as a result of the close relationship with the mother's kin.

14. Mother's kin

Relationships with relatives by marriage who have been inserted into the (unilinear) agnatic descent group have the effect of complicating the roles of the household members. The husband is expected to respect and cooperate with his wife's father; there is a tendency also for a husband to develop a relaxed, close friendship with his wife's full brothers, especially the eldest. These men, who share the same generation name, often become neighbours or migrate together. The children of this husband and wife, however, are bound to their maternal grandfather (*ghambiya*) and his family (*ghē ghambiya*) by an intimacy in a different dimension from that which characterizes their father's relationship with these people. Within that family, too, these children share an especially intimate kinship-consciousness with their mother's full brothers, born in the same room (*ga*) as she, of the same mother (their maternal grandmother), and raised in the same *gēda*. The expression for a maternal uncle is *orjēda ghamiya* (son of maternal grandmother), the word for maternal grandmother being *ghamiya*. In the generation system of the social organization, a woman's sons and her full brothers occupy different positions; as sons emerging from the same maternal line, however, they are considered equals within the kinship organization. In this context, the mother's full brothers identify with their sisters' sons as members of the same group (*gaba ga agi*), i.e. as children emerging from the *gēda* where they themselves were born and raised. The father of these children is expected to address his wife's

brothers' wives with the address term "*ghamata manan*" (little mother), thus preserving the social distance appropriate to an outsider. His sons, however, are permitted to have sexual relations with wives of the brothers of their mother, who is one of their father's wives. Marriage between the descendents of the sons of a particular mother and the descendents of her full brothers is forbidden for four or five generations.

The bond between two clans through a woman, which is actualized in the kinship between her children and her full brothers, is extended back to the mother's mother (*ghamiya*). There is a blood relationship between the children of a particular *gēda* and the full brothers of their grandmother (*gē ghamiya*), who were born of the same mother and raised in the same *gēda* as she was. As in the case of the mother's full brothers (*ghē ghambiya*), these groups recognize the right to sexual intercourse with each other's wives (which, however, appears to be exercised on the individual level only when socially necessary), and marriage between their patrilinear descendants is forbidden. A Datoga man (*Datonyanda*), however, is bound more closely to his mother's brothers than to those of his maternal grandmother in a reciprocal relationship of financial and social cooperation.

On a youth's circumcision day, his mother's brother is obliged to carry out two duties. One of these is a promise to give him one cow. The other is to make him a pair of cowhide sandals using one knife, as a commemoration of this time when the youth becomes a young warrior (*gharemanēda*). The uncle presents the sandals

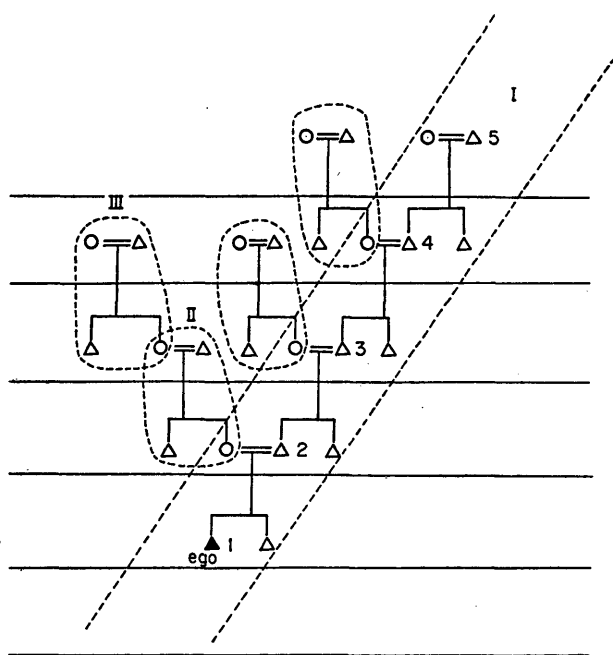


Figure 9. Interclan relations.

to his nephew just before the latter is taken to the place for circumcision in the middle of the forest. At the feast following the circumcision ceremony, the boy's maternal uncle and the people of his lineage are provided with a large calabash of the honey wine to which they are entitled, as well as a place in which to drink it.

The responsibility of a head of a household to care for the descendents of his full sisters sometimes manifests itself in his household organization. There are cases in Mangola where a householder's sister's unmarried sons and daughters, or even her daughter's sons, live with him in his *ghēda*. These children have joined their maternal grandfather's household (*ghē ghambiya*) or the household of a member of the group of siblings born to their maternal grandmother (*gē ghamiya*) due to circumstances such as poverty or dissolution of the patrilinear lineage, etc. Young men, who are rigorously controlled by their father as members of his *ghēda*, are often bound to their mother's brothers in a relationship marked by a strong sentiment of intimacy which differs from their sense of obligation toward their father. When the mother's brother is an elder, he performs the role of a benevolent protector who guards the privacy of his young nephews. From time to time one even finds cases where a young man breaks the tribal law by marrying a girl with a different generation name than his, and takes refuge with her in the *ghēda* of mother's brother. Because of this close relationship with the maternal uncles, then, half-brothers with the same father are differentiated from each other, and there is a further strengthening of the ties which bind together the group of full brothers (*gaba ga agi*) in each co-wife's *gēda* (the unit of *ghēda* organization).

Two lineages belonging to different clans are joined together with a woman as the intermediary. Even after her marriage, however, the members of her father's lineage try to continue to maintain their rights and responsibilities with regard to her and her children, referring to her as *huda ghahenya* (daughter of our family) and to her son as *balanda huda ghahenya* (son of a daughter of our family). In some instances, if a husband has committed a serious offense against the traditional customs and norms, his wife's father may take back his daughter and her children, keeping them in his own *ghēda* until justice has been carried out and the penalty paid. The interrelations between the husband's *ghēda* and that of his father-in-law are a complex combination of courteous tension and relaxed intimacy.

15. Donation of Cows

The domestic animals of a *ghēda* all belong nominally to the head of the household, and the ultimate responsibility for their care lies with him. Without his permission, not even one animal can be moved from the *ghēda*. With regard to the actual ownership rights, however, the herd is precisely divided among the male members of the *ghēda*. Even a little boy at the toddling stage (*ghalsigechānda*) has his own group of cattle within his father's or grandfather's herd. These groups of cattle are made up of donations from the boy's family and relatives.

When a Datoga boy reaches the stage of growth where he has his upper and lower incisors, his position within his family and lineage can be clearly ascertained

according to the donated cattle he possesses. His group of cattle is made up of donations from his father, his paternal grandfather, his father's married full and half brothers, his paternal grandfather's full brothers, his father's co-wives, his paternal grandmother, his maternal grandfather, his mother's married full brothers, his maternal grandmother's full brothers, his father's full sisters' husbands, etc. These donated cattle are considered "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) or "cattle for chewing" (*duga ghat-ghat*), and are differentiated from the other cattle in the father's or grandfather's corral (*duga muhalēda*). He is likely to receive up to two or three young cows from his father, and in most cases one young cow each from the members of his patrilineal lineage, his mother's kinsmen (*ghē ghambiya*), his maternal grandmother's kinsmen (*gē ghamiya*), and other members of his extended family. (For girls, the corresponding stage of growth is not marked by donations of cattle.)

In order to obtain these "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) for her son, a mother visits the homesteads of her own and her husband's kinsmen, often carrying the child, to arouse their sense of loyalty and obligation with regard to the kinship union and to ask for their donations of cattle. When these cattle are passing through the gateway (*doshta*) of the *ghēda* where the boy lives, he taps them lightly on their backs with his own herding stick, which his mother helps him hold in his hand. This ritualistic act, commemorating the occasion of the giving of cattle, expresses the confirmation of the boy's right of ownership towards these animals. The boy's father cannot exercise his authority over the "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) or their offspring.

The boy's cattle actually belong to his mother's *gēda*, and are added to the group of cattle under her supervision. This group of cattle consists of the dowry received from her patrilineal kin, as well as cows given to her as producers of milk for her children by her husband and members of his family such as his father, co-wives, married full brothers, and their co-wives.

From among the offspring of these cows distributed within the *ghēda*, the co-wives are expected to make donations to each other's children at each stage of growth. A woman must eventually lose all her cattle, dividing those given to her as a dowry among her own children, and redistributing those received in her husband's *ghēda* to the boys in the family, a process which accompanies the cycle of the *ghēda* as it grows and then dissolves. With regard to the cattle under her supervision, however, including those from her dowry, those received for providing milk for her children, and her sons' "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*), her husband cannot sell or exchange even one of these animals without her permission. As demonstrated by the reciprocal donations of cattle among the wives, each woman's *gēda* group is a small, independent household, and the herd of the *ghēda* as a whole actually consists of the sum of the individual groups of cattle attached to each *gēda*.

A boy's "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) constitute his basic property, and their numbers increase as they produce offspring. At his marriage, too, he again receives donations of cattle from his father, his father's full and half brothers, his father's co-wives, as well as from the members of the household of his maternal

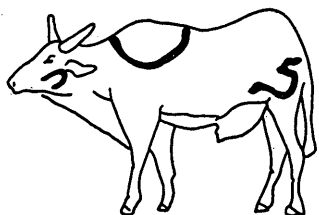


Figure 10. Cattle brands (*besta duga*).

grandfather (*ghē ghambiya*), including his mother's full brothers. The size of his own group of domestic animals grows along with the enlargement of his father's *ghēda*, until he approaches the stage of life when it is considered fitting for him to establish a new *ghēda* of his own—i.e. when he may be referred to as "*biktewanēda*", a man in the prime of life [TOMIKAWA 1972]. In his new *ghēda*, his "cattle for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) become his own "cattle of the corral" (*duga muhalēda*) in both name and reality, and are accommodated in his cattle enclosure together with the *duga geshadēda* of his sons.

The bodies of the cattle are branded with the signs of the clans of the donors, who are in a mutual relationship encompassing the cattle and their owners. The cattle of one *ghēda* are marked with three different brands: that of the paternal clan (*besta doshta*), that of the clan of the maternal grandfather (*besta ghē ghambiya*), and that of the clan of the maternal grandmother's full brothers (*besta gē ghamiya*). Thus, excluding the cattle marked with the brand of the paternal clan (*besta doshta*), the herd of one householder will carry the same combination of brands as those of his full brothers, but will differ from the herds of his father and half-brothers. The combination of brands on the cattle under a mother's daily supervision, which symbolizes the relationship between her children and her kinsmen, provides a means of differentiating among the groups of cattle belonging to each *gēda*.

The members of the Datoga family each have their place within the social relation symbolized by the gate (*doshta*), the mother's private room (*ga*), and the cattle enclosure (*muhalēda*), which are contained in the Datoga living space where people and animals dwell together.

When a woman gives birth to children, especially sons, it becomes possible for her to take charge of the cattle given to them, and to secure her position within her husband's homestead and lineage. The core of a wife's household or *gēda* group is her son, and when there are several sons it can be expected that in the future the new minimum lineage, of which she will be the segmental point, will be a prosperous one. In order to fulfill her wish, shared by her husband, for the birth of a son, a wife will often travel a large distance to seek out not only the Datoga medicine man but also famous traditional healers and magicomedicines of neighbouring ethnic groups. For the Datoga, as for other tribes, contacts with medicine men constitute a vital factor in promoting inter-tribal relations.

HUMAN RELATIONS IN THE HOMESTEAD

16. The Wife and her Husband's Family

The wife, who has joined the homestead of a member of a different clan, has a very special attitude towards her husband's father which expresses her status as a newcomer. In the presence of any of the male members of the *ghēda*, wives are expected to be taciturn and reserved, but towards the father-in-law they are exceptionally restrained, avoiding conversation and trying to preserve an atmosphere of silent courtesy. On occasions when it is impossible to avoid exchanging words, the woman remains at a distance, avoids meeting his eyes, looks towards a distant point, and answers him in a very low voice. For her to address him directly, on her own initiative, would be considered immodest behaviour on her part. This kind of avoidance can be observed in both parties. Even if the father-in-law is ill, for example, it is considered tabu for his son's wife to take his hand or help him sit up. The attitude of respect and avoidance is further evident from the fact that the use of the personal name, too, is considered tabu. Thus the wives must avoid saying the name of their father-in-law. Klima, in his research report on the Barabaiga, states that a wife avoids saying the personal names of her husband's deceased relatives. [KLIMA 1970: 73] This custom is ordinarily seen among the wives of the Bajūta and Gisamijanga sub-tribes in Mangola as well, but according to my observations these women avoid saying the personal name of their husband's living father in the same way as they do that of a deceased person.

This severe restriction even goes so far as to prohibit the use of the same word as the father-in-law's name in the ordinary conversation of the wives. For example, the wives of a son of a man called *Gidabashghēda* (*Gida* being a masculine name prefix, and *bash ghēda* meaning 'half-built homestead'), would substitute the word *ghorīda* (house) for *ghēda* in their conversation. Similarly, the daughters-in-law of a man called *Dumuy* (darkness, no good) would replace this word in their conversation with the word *waganati* (bad quality). This custom is not limited to a man's daughters-in-law, but extends to the wives of his descendants for three generations. This custom is an illustration of the discreet respect these women hold towards their husband's ancestors. It reflects also their fear of the evil of arbitrarily calling the dead spirits back from the underground world where people go when they die, according to the Datoga conception of life after death. When a new bride joins her husband's household, the necessary information on the family culture, including the ancestors' personal names to be avoided and their substitute words, is given to her by her mother-in-law.

The new bride knows that her good traditional manners may favourably influence the number of "cows for teeth" (*duga geshadēda*) presented to her sons by her father-in-law. Even in an enlarged *ghēda* housing three generations, when the elder (*gwarugwēda*) is sitting in front of the men's hut (*hulānda*) the many women that pass back and forth in front of him preserve the required silence and reticence which are characteristic of the daily atmosphere in the homestead.

In actuality, the inadvertent use of a word found in the name of the father-in-law or a deceased relative does occur occasionally in daily life. Carelessness with regard to this restriction is a phenomenon that often takes place gradually after a wife has given birth to a son, or especially more than one son, thus solidifying the formation of her own *gēda* group and ensuring her position within her husband's lineage group.

In the wife's attitude towards her mother-in-law, one does not see the extreme restraint and avoidance that characterize her relationship with her husband's father and paternal uncles. Although the bride is expected to learn the family customs from her mother-in-law, and to be respectfully obedient to her, their relationship is accompanied by a comfortable, easygoing atmosphere.

Those of the new wife's brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law who are young adults are members of the group of people having the same generation name, called *seigēda*, to which she belonged before she was married. Thus, if their temperaments are compatible, they are likely to have a friendly, jocular relationship. The wife must be restrained in her speech and manner even towards these young people, however, when she is away from the private living quarters and out in the open social spaces of the *ghēda* within view of other family members, especially her father-in-law and his brothers.

17. Mother and her Daughter's Husband

The middle-aged mother usually has a feeling of relaxed intimacy towards her daughters' husbands, who belong to clans different from that of her own husband. This feeling differs from her restrained attitude towards her father-in-law's younger brothers. The son-in-law, too, approaches his mother-in-law with a familiarity that is quite different from the scrupulously courteous manner he adopts with his father-in-law. When their dispositions are compatible, the intimacy between mother-in-law and son-in-law continues to grow as she protects him, entrusts him with the handling of her affairs outside the *ghēda*, and exchanges information with him. (It is not uncommon to hear of a mother giving advice and support to a young man regarding his marriage to her daughter, without the knowledge of the girl's father.)

The husband is aware that in the future the private room (*ga*) of his mother-in-law will be remembered symbolically by his wife's offspring and their descendants.

The friendly relationship of mother-in-law and son-in-law is sometimes reflected in the jocular exchanges between young men and their grandfather's youthful wife. For example, one of the young men might address her as *ghamata sikweju* (my wife's mother), to which she would laughingly answer by calling him *siedenyu* (my husband). (According to the principle of alternation, Datoga grandfathers and their grandchildren are classed together as having the same generation name; and the young men have the potential right to engage in sexual relations with their grandfather's young wife to whom they have no blood relationship. The relationship between them and her, therefore, tends to be one of relaxed familiarity.) In their

bantering, the youths express their friendliness towards her by making use of the quite different intimacy between a mother and her son-in-law.

The husband's relationship with his mother-in-law provides an emotional compensation for the mutual cautious tension that characterizes his relationship with his father-in-law.

18. Husband and Wife

The husband calls his wife by a different name than that by which she was known in her father's *ghēda*. On the day of *biuda anoga*, (the rite at her fiancé or bridegroom's *ghēda* during which she drinks the milk of the cow presented to her by his family, and is promised cattle donations) she is given the new name by which her husband and his brothers are to call her. Often this name is chosen by her husband's brothers' wives from among the names used within his lineage group for wives of men with the same generation name as his—i.e. men who have the right of sexual intercourse with each other's wives. These names clearly establish the positions of the women within their husbands' agnatic descent group. Some examples of this type of name are Remish, Jilona, Saydona, and Sagena. It is interesting to note that the meanings of these names often reflect particular characteristics observed in the women's personalities. For example, the name Jilona comes from the word '*jilonēda*', meaning 'shadow', which is also used to refer to the cool, shady areas under trees in the vicinity of the *ghēda*. Thus a woman might be given this name if she gives an impression of being a cool-headed, self-possessed person.

The husband, however, often calls his wife by a different name than the one given to her by his family. This name will be one of four possibilities: *Ghamata Rimbida*, *Ghamata Dakwēda*, *Ghamata Maschēda*, or *Ghamata Suruga*. The expressions 'Rimbida' 'Dakwēda', 'Maschēda' and 'Suruga' are examples of a type of euphemism used among the Datoga. According to the Datoga custom, the most formal way of addressing a married woman is to attach the name of her first child to the word for mother, '*ghamata*'. The expressions '*Ghamata Rimbida*' (mother of Rimbida) and the other three mentioned above are used for young wives who do not yet have children, and it can be said that these names are beautiful terms of respect which combine intimacy with courtesy. One additional expression, *Ghamata Malidadi*, is sometimes used for the same purpose, *Malidadi* being a Swahili word meaning a beautifully dressed person. If some of the above terms are already being used for other wives in the *ghēda*, the new wife will be given one of the remaining ones. It is quite acceptable to address a new bride with the same term of respect as that which had been used for her husband's mother, who belongs to a different generation.

These terms do not indicate the status of a woman within the *ghēda*, but are rather expressions of respect towards the newcomer which are used either to draw attention away from this status or to defer it for awhile. The new bride is addressed with this term not only by her husband but by other family members as well, including the daughters and small children of her co-wives. If her husband's *ghēda* is in its enlarged

period, this custom will be followed by all the family members, from her father-in-law, the person with whom she must be most careful to control herself, to her husband's junior wives and their children. Even after the birth of her first child of either sex, when she is no longer a new bride, her husband and his family may still continue to address her with this respectful term. The women in the enlarged *ghēda*, however, namely the householder's mother and his other wives, are likely to call the new wife by the name given to her by her husband at the *biuda anoga* rite, rather than by the term of respect.

Sons who have reached adolescence, those who have married, their wives and their children are shy and discreet about expressing their family relationship to the new bride; but they consider the term of respect to be somewhat childish and do not join in using it. Sons address their father's new wife with the expression "*Ghamata Manay*" (little mother), while her husband's brothers use the name given to her by her husband. When these people were young children, however, they addressed brides with the same term of respect as that used by the husband. If one of these young men uses this special name occasionally with regard to his father's or brother's new bride, she will be quite pleased. The independent, somewhat proud Datoga women are very partial to this particular custom.

The husband does not necessarily always address his wife with this indirect term of respect when they are alone in her private room (*ga*). In the social areas of the *ghēda*, however, he is careful to respect the insecurity and pride of this new member of the household, who has come from a different clan.

When a dissatisfied new bride runs off with one of her former boyfriends, the young men of her husband's lineage are obliged to go after her immediately. If she has not yet given birth to a son, her father or the eldest of her full brothers retains the authority to give her to another man in marriage. Until she gives birth to a son, the young wife who has even a minor grievance against her husband may run away to the homestead of her father or elder brother, either seriously or as a gesture. If her complaint is at all reasonable, the matter may result in a dispute between the two households. In most cases, the wife is sent back to her husband when he has paid some form of compensation, which can range from honey wine to a head of livestock.

When a woman becomes the intermediary figure linking two different lineages, a complex of tension and natural intimacy comes into being between the two family groups. The tension eases gradually as a result of the husband's continuous co-operation with his father-in-law's family and lineage, and the solidification of the wife's position as she gives birth to sons.

19. Husbands, Wives and Children

It is difficult to detect any evidence of a familial atmosphere among Datoga men and women when they are in the social areas of the *ghēda*. In these situations women are taciturn and restrained even towards their own husbands, and one does not receive the impression of a harmonious family circle. In the neighbourhoods close

to the dwellings of the agrico-pastoral Iraqw, there are a few Datoga young people who are attracted to the Iraqw family culture. These youths would tell me that unlike the Datoga, the Iraqw husbands, wives and children can be seen laughing together in their homesteads. It has been my observation in Mangola that in comparison to the Bantu agrico-pastoralists, the everyday atmosphere in the Iraqw households is closer to that of the Datoga. Furthermore, it is still customary for the behaviour of the Iraqw women to be influenced by the presence of elders in the family. Even so, the family atmospheres of the Iraqw and the Datoga provide sufficient contrast to impress the young people mentioned above, especially in the light of the close social relationship between the two tribes.

The Datoga men and women consider it indiscreet to laugh or smile broadly in the social areas of the *ghēda*. When a husband leaves the men's hut to join his wife and children in her *ghorīda*, however, the family can enjoy laughing and talking together. During the daytime, one can often hear the sound of children's songs (*dumda jefuda*) coming from the *ghorīda*, sung by the mother and her small children; in the evening, songs of young girls (*dumda hawēga*) can be heard. For the Datoga, and especially for the women, the *ghēda* is a public space while the *ghorīda* (*gēda*) is a personal space. Thus the behaviour of the family members is influenced by their consciousness of whether they are in a public or a private place. The social scene of the *ghēda* as a whole is strictly regulated according to the kin or family relationships, social status and generation of the people who participate in it.

The *ghēda* at its climax is a union of several small households consisting of family members of three generations. For these people all the more, the *ghēda* is an impersonal social space shared by the small lineage group, or, as Wilson calls it, the effective minimum lineage group [WILSON 1953: 36-37].

The women in particular react to the situation by adopting a cautiously controlled attitude when in the common areas of the homestead.

The head of the household is expected to have the necessary intelligence and consideration to maintain the expansion and unity of his *ghēda* through the consolidation of the *gēda* groups in their differing stages of growth. In his relationships with his wives, it is important that he does not provide occasions for quarrels among them, as illustrated by the manner in which he takes his meals. It is the responsibility of the wife to provide meals for the members of her small household—her husband, children, and any relatives living with her—as well as their guests. The husband has the right to be served his meals at any of his wives' houses. Instead, however, he most often eats in the men's hut (*hūlānda*) with the other male family members, in which case each of his wives brings his food to him there. The husband takes care to eat some food from each wife's dish: even if he is almost full with what one wife has prepared, he will demonstrate his good attitude by leaving evidence of having eaten at least a little of each of the other wives' offerings. He does this out of consideration lest any partiality on his part arouse jealousy among his wives after the meal. The other male members of his *ghēda* follow his example in their mealtime conduct.

When one of the husband's calves or goats dies or is slaughtered (by strangulation), the wives hope to make themselves clothing with the skin. In order to ensure that these skins are equally distributed, he gives them to his wives according to a consistent order, which he makes clear to the members of the *ghēda*.

The fact that the Datoga husband's kinsmen with the same generation name as his have the potential right of sexual intercourse with his wives can in actuality be the source of a delicate problem. The men speak of this type of sexual intercourse as an institutional right, but it is not normally practiced as an overt realization of this right. A man does not receive the opportunity to sleep with his brother's wife by obtaining the brother's consent beforehand. On the contrary, he would approach the woman surreptitiously without his brother's knowledge, especially if the brother were older than himself. Even if the brother were aware of the situation, he would be expected to feign ignorance. Sexual intercourse under these circumstances is not considered a violation against the system, nor is it thought to evoke the anger of ancestral spirits or gods. This type of social situation, however, is not necessarily always without its ramifications. Among distantly related elders in particular, where intimacy is lacking, the discovery of this type of sexual relationship can sometimes lead to emotional conflicts in the mind of the husband.

The number of opportunities for sexual relations with the wives of kinsmen is further reduced by the unwillingness of the women themselves, who are prevented from being receptive by their own human relations. While a certain Datoga man was away on a journey, one of his wives, called Jironeda (meaning a person with a self-possessed personality), maintained his *ghēda* for two years without the help of his brothers, and did not become pregnant. After the husband came home, she bore him a son. While the husband did not consider this behaviour to be extraordinarily praiseworthy, he appreciated her prudent handling of the situation, and took satisfaction in the fact that she had conceived their son by him.

Sexual intercourse in the context of the kinship system gives rise to various types of mutual interference between the institutional realm and the psychology of individuals, according to the human relations in the particular *ghēda*.

20. Father and Sons

Among the Datoga it is customary for a father to have a special name by which his children address him. These names are decided upon in each homestead, and are chosen from among the names used for men of the same generation as the father, within the particular clan. These names are short and easy for children to pronounce: for example, Yeye, Gaka, Jaji, and Ditīda.

Within the homestead these names are not limited to men with children; unmarried young men are assigned names of this type in advance by their families, and the young children of their married brothers call them by these names. In some households, a mother may call her husband by the same name as that used by her children. Outside the homestead, these names may be used by the next generation



Photograph 3.
Protective charm (*majoda nonda*).



Photograph 4.
Datoga father and sons.

of young people in their lineage or neighbourhood, as a friendly, relaxed yet respectful form of address.

The sons of the household begin to call their father by this special name from the time they begin to talk, and they continue the custom even after they themselves become fathers. After they reach adolescence, however, their mode of behaviour towards their father becomes more distinctive. Early in the course of growth, these boys are taken out of their mothers' care and given experience in independent herding as well as in the cooperative life of the *ghēda*. Thus they take a growing interest in the idea of carrying out cattle production on their own. In this preparation process towards becoming a full-fledged cattle-herder, the Datoga youth tends to develop a self-reliant character.

Ordinarily the management of the *ghēda* depends almost entirely on the labour of the young men. Yet until these young men have married, seen their sons grow to adolescence, accumulated a large number of cattle, and finally achieved independence, their status is shadowed by a feeling of psychological instability. This feeling exists particularly among young men who are not first-born sons of senior

wives. To borrow the words of one Datoga youth, they feel "just like a hungry hyena wandering around in the forest".

While on the one hand, a father does not readily grant independence to the young men who are important workers in his growing household, they know, too, that the amount of inheritance they receive depends mainly on their father's consideration. In general, they must wait a fairly long time before they can become owners of new homesteads. The self-reliant, competitive personalities of the young men and their attitude of submission towards their fathers create a complex that often causes a tactfully restrained tension to exist between father and son. If a father fails to control his sons, they may suddenly disappear for awhile from the *ghēda* and secure their own freedom of action in another Datoga area of settlement. In this case, they are likely to go around visiting the homesteads of their relatives, such as their mother's full brothers or their full sisters' husbands, in order to receive help in fulfilling their own desires (for example, obtaining a wife, etc.).

To the young men employed in the *ghēda*, Datoga society offers the proud life of the warrior outside the *ghēda*. In a *ghēda* at its climax stage, it often happens that a young man is the same age as his father's young half-brother, i.e. one of his "fathers", although the two have different generation names. These two young men are likely to compete with each other when they go out on warriors' hunting expeditions in the forest for two or three days.¹⁾

In the recent past, there was a custom that young men could form an age group with their young "fathers" ("fathers" who were themselves youths) by carrying out a ritual act of running while holding grass from the earth. In this way, the inconsistency between age and generation status within the *ghēda* could be resolved outside in the young people's behavioral area by giving priority to the age factor.

As mentioned previously, the generation difference between a woman's sons and her full brothers, too, is negated in the context of their kinship relationship. There is thus a mutual opposition and interference between the Datoga social and kinship organizations. This opposition allows a person to have his own domain of personal, concrete human relations outside of the social order within his own *ghēda*.

LIFE STAGES AND ASSOCIATED CULTURE

The reflection of the social role that accompanies each stage of growth can be found in bodily mutilations, ornaments and dress. The Datoga rites of passage will be discussed in another article, but I wish here to describe some of the external manifestations of the stages of life.

21. Infancy

The future role expected of the newborn baby is apparent from the scene in the

1) It is there that one can find the remnants of the Datoga age-set system which Huntingford reported to be an as yet unanalyzed problem.

ghēda on the day he is born. Upon receiving news of the birth, the women of the neighbourhood bring calabashes of milk to the new mother's hut, and congratulate her with words of rejoicing and thanksgiving. The mother drinks the milk brought by these women instead of milk from her homestead.

If the new baby is a boy, the women speak the following words: "Someday this son (*balānda*) will become for us a warrior who leads the herd (*gharemanēda madēda duga*)." The word *gharemanēda* means 'warrior', *madēda* means 'front', and *duga* is the 'herd of cattle'. The young warrior, indicated by the word *gharemanēda*, is expected to walk at the head of the cattle herd to protect it from attacks by wild animals, and also to participate in battles with the Masai tribe.

If the new baby is a girl, the women say, "At the wedding day ceremony (*nyangida*) of this daughter (*huda*), we will fill our bellies with beef and honey." The word *nyangida* refers to a ceremony for the new bride in which only women may participate. The women who call on the new mother spend an entire day or night socializing in her hut. After the birth, there is a strong concern about protecting the baby from illness and evil magic.

From experience, parents are very apprehensive lest their babies die during the nursing period. In Mangola, infants often fall into critical condition due to the high fevers of malaria, chronic dyspepsy, etc. Babies thus undergo their first bodily mutilation immediately after the cutting of the umbilical cord. The parents shave the head of the newborn baby and use the tip of a burnt twig to make burn marks, called *besta nonda*, about the size of the tip of the little finger, in four places on the front of the scalp. Instead of carrying out this mutilation, however, many parents now make a protective charm consisting of a medicinal bag (*mushot*), a practice which became widespread in *Ghurus*, a former area of settlement. This medicinal bag is small enough to be hidden in an adult's fist, and is made from cowhide sewn with tendon thread. The bag contains a tiny insect called *huda barabanni*, which serves as a medicine (*majōda*) to protect the delicate infant against death. Another protective charm consists of three to six pieces of ostrich egg shell worn on a leather cord around the neck (*brungashagerōdu*).

Many Datoga children wear four or five of these medicinal bags on a cowhide

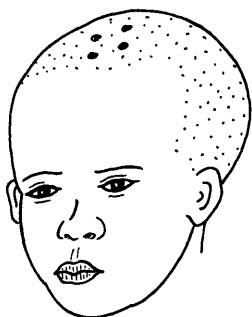


Figure 11. Buyu marks (*besta nonda*).

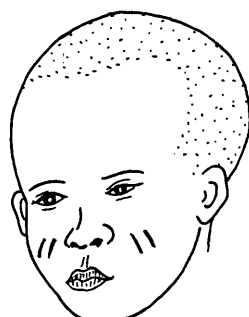


Figure 12. *Dabaka*.

string around their necks until the age of three or four years. Occasionally one sees these charms around the neck of an adult as well. Some infants have two vertical marks (*dabaka*) of about 0.5 centimeters scraped on each cheek with a small blade, at any time during the nursing period. The Datoga say only that as a result of this marking, the tears of a crying baby flow down more smoothly and are less likely to cause irritation.

In addition to these protective practices, some infants undergo a type of mutilation having a very social significance. In this case, a small knife is used to mark both eyelids with several short, vertical cuts, which later become scars. This marking indicates the blood descendents of the clan of the most powerful Datoga medicine men (Daremñajēga), belonging to the Bajūta sub-tribe. The mutilation is carried out not only on the patrilinear descendents of the clan members, but also on the descendents of the clan members' daughters who have married members of other clans. This eyelid mutilation marking the blood descendents of the Daremñajēga is not limited to the Bajūta sub-tribe, but is found throughout all the Datoga sub-tribes in accordance with the marriage network of the Daremñajēga. Among the Datoga of Mangola, too, there are several people who carry the marking. The prevalence of this mutilation illustrates the powerful influence of the Daremñajēga in coordinating the dispersed sub-tribes.

For bodily decoration, the mother puts a single band (*girenga, girenyānda*) around the hips of her infant. This band usually consists of red or orange beads strung onto a rope made from a cow's tendon. Together with this hip band of beads, a baby sometimes receives a bracelet (*kijanja, kijanñajēga*), one of the most important Datoga ornaments, which is kept throughout a lifetime. These bracelets consist of a slender brass bar wrapped once around the wrist, and are made by the members of the Datoga blacksmith clan (Gidanghōdiga).

The Datoga infant is not given any clothing. The infant is sometimes held in the bosom of its mother or elder sister, and sometimes put onto the cowhide cover of the bed in the mother's room (*ga*). At night it sleeps with its mother or another female family member, who keeps it warm inside her long cotton cloth.

When the newborn baby is a boy, and thus a "son of the *ghēda*", he becomes the object of particular concern, and several rites are carried out for him in the *ghēda*. When this child cuts his first teeth, he receives cattle donations which mark the beginning of his life as a cattle herder.

The nursing baby is hardly ever separated from its mother's body. Even when she is grinding maize in her household area (*ghorīda*) or milking cows in the corral (*muhalēda*), her baby is with her, fixed to her back by her clothing or a leather sling (*amoroidu*). The leather sling, made of cowhide, measures about fifty centimeters in length and sixty centimeters in width, with wide flaps made at the top and bottom for additional sturdiness. The sling can be folded from the center to the left and right sides as well. Leather straps are attached to each of the four corners, the top two for fixing the sling to the shoulders, and the bottom two for tying around the waist, so that the sling fits closely above the hips. The mother places the baby into the space



Photograph 5. Datoga mother carrying baby with leather sling (*amoroidu*).

between the sling and her back in such a way that the child's head and feet protrude, and then ties the four straps together below her waist to fix the sling firmly in place.

When the mother goes on outings to nearby destinations, too, she always takes her baby with her. On these occasions, she puts the baby on her back and carries with her a milk calabash, as well as an important weapon for the protection of her child. This weapon is either a single poisoned iron arrow (*gachēda*) or a short knife (*shumghōda*). It is said that the arrow prevents the child from being bothered by tsetse flies; but these weapons, which have magical significance, are held at the mother's breast to safeguard the path of the infant against all kinds of other evils as well. The hope for a child at this stage of life is that it will survive in the face of the many illnesses and enemies that threaten it.

22. Early Childhood

As the child learns to walk by itself, it can venture outside the *ghorīda* (mother's hut) to toddle around within the *ghēda*, and soon broadens its living space to include the area in the immediate vicinity of its home. This child, who need no longer be carried in its mother's breast or on her back, is now referred to as *ghalsigechānda* (small child) rather than *ghameyānda* (infant).

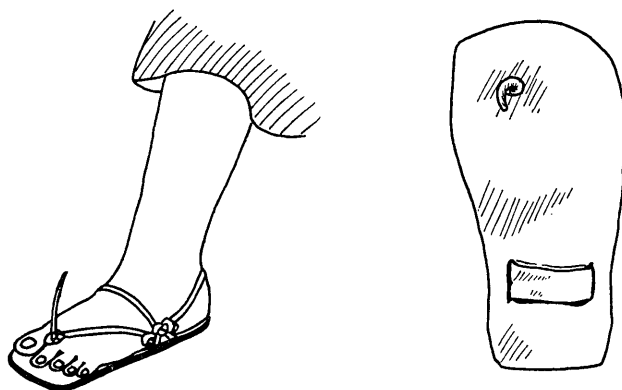


Figure 13. Thong sandal (*gewēda* or *gharōda*).

Small children who have started to walk around in the *ghēda* are given cowhide sandals (*gewēda* or *gharōda*) made by male family members using one knife. The traditional Datoga sandal is made in exactly the same manner for men, women and children. First, a piece of cowhide is cut out in the shape of the foot and used as the base. Next, knots are made in three places, one between the big toe and the second toe, and one on each side of the ankle. These knots are formed by piercing the base from the underside with leather cords, which are wound around several times and knotted. The three knots are connected to each other by soft leather thongs which fix the sandal firmly to the foot. Thus, the thong between the big toe and the second toe holds the sandal to the front part of the foot on one side, the middle thong passes across the instep, and the thong at the back secures the heel.

Children of this age usually have all their hair shaved off with a safety razor blade (*wembejānda*, from Swahili *wembe* meaning 'razor blade') bought by the parents at a local store (*duka* in Swahili). In the case of boys, a small tuft of hair (*budēga*) is sometimes left unshaved in the back or top part of the head for a decorative effect.

Girls of this age undergo clitoridectomy. The operation is performed by a

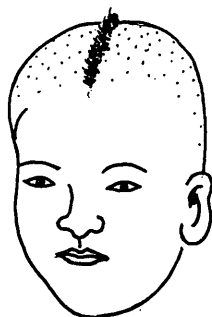


Figure 14. Tuft of hair (*budēga*).

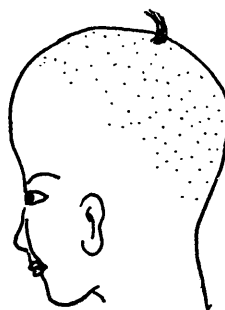
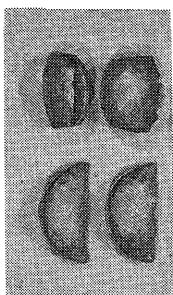


Figure 15. Tuft of hair (*budēga*).



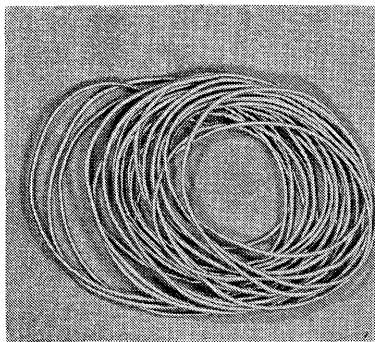
Photograph 6. Iron musical instrument.

specialist among the wives of the girl's relatives, using a safety razor blade or, if this is not available, a traditional knife called *masaniḡwēda*. Clitoridectomy takes place in the secrecy of the mother's room, without the knowledge even of the girl's father. Unlike a boy's circumcision, no ritual is associated with this event.

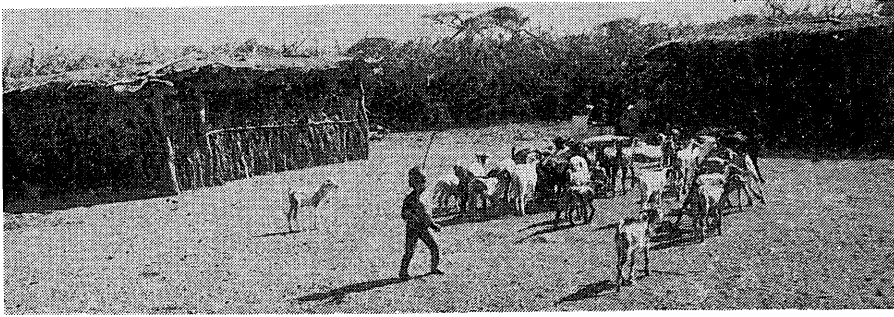
During this age period, the mother attaches a type of musical instrument to both of the child's ankles. These instruments, which have both a decorative and a practical function, consist of four or five small iron bells, or sometimes one large bell, held to the ankle by a grass rope. When the child walks, the sound of the bells indicates his whereabouts. Sometimes the elder sisters of the toddlers make use of the beautiful tone quality of these bells by attaching them to their own ankles when they go out to young people's dances.

Most children at the toddler stage walk around naked. When they are ready to start playing in the vicinity of the *ghēda* entranceway, they may be given a simple, short-sleeved blouse (*shatijānda* < *shati*, a Swahili word) obtained at a small local shop (*duka*), or a white cloth (*kitamba*, a Swahili word) covering the upper half of the body.

Bodily ornaments at this age are basically the same as those of the infant, but mothers who wish to do so often put a number of slender anklets on their toddlers. This ornament, called *manyamanyajānda* is made by twining an extremely thin copper wire with the hairs of a cow's or zebra's tail. The anklet is called *udodi* in Swahili, and the thin copper wire used in making it is sold in both the local shop



Photograph 7. Anklet (*udodi*).



Photograph 8. Toddling child driving baby animals.

(*duka*) and the cattle market (*nada* in Swahili). The making of these ankle bracelets requires a great deal of effort. Sometimes travelling craftsmen come to Mangola from Sukuma to collect orders from the housewives, and spend several days in their homesteads as they sell their products.

When small children wear ornaments such as necklaces, bracelets and anklets, these objects take the same basic forms as those worn by young men and women, with differences in size and number only. A small child is decorated according to his physical size as a little Datoga person (*Datonyānda*). When a young person, big or small, is called by an expression other than his or her personal name, the word *ori* (abbreviation of *orjēda*) is used for a son, and the word *huda* for a daughter.

When young children no longer need to be constantly with their mothers, they are entrusted chiefly to the care of the little girls who are their elder sisters. At this point, they begin to acquire a sense of the habits of the domestic animals they live with, as well as the distribution of roles among the household members.

The toddling child is given a stick with which to drive the baby animals about the courtyard. The young child's stick is much thinner and shorter than those of its elder sisters and brothers, but it is referred to with the same word *bayiga*, and is carved with a knife just as theirs are. In the small society within the *ghēda*, a particular concern for cattle is cultivated in the child from a very early age. Boys three or four years of age can sometimes be seen sitting in the shade of the trees near the gate playing with stones. (This type of play is called *ghorijeshta*). Gathering small stones from the ground, these children make a circle representing the *ghēda*, mark off half of it to be the corral (*muhalēda*), and amuse themselves by lining up row upon row of single pebbles as cattle. Among these cattle, which have personal names, their own cattle received when they cut their first teeth (*duga geshadēda*) are probably included.

A girl of this age spends a good part of the day with her mother. Play is combined with education as she watches her mother at work, imitates the actions, and helps in various small ways.

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