

# **Pastoralists are Proficient in Cultivating Positive Social Relationships: Case of the Turkana in Northwestern Kenya**

**Itaru Ohta\***  
**Center for African Area Studies**  
**Kyoto University**

## **Abstract**

Negative images of African pastoral peoples are widely circulated in both the academic literature and the mass media: they stick to their traditional customs; they are violent and war-like; they bring about desertification by overgrazing; they are poor and are often the victims of drought and famine, among others. This article strives to reverse these biased images by demonstrating that the Turkana of northwestern Kenya are neither conservative nor exclusionary toward outsiders. On the contrary, they have a propensity of working on others tirelessly in the face-to-face communication to create and maintain positive social relationships.

This article focuses on their relationships with the Kakuma refugee camp which was established in 1992. The camp accommodated more than 95,000 refugees in 2005 at its height. Most of the refugees come from Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia, and they are complete strangers to the Turkana. However, the Turkana and the refugees created economic and social relationships that are mutually beneficial, and the relationships became vital for the survival of both parties. It is noteworthy that their relationships were created spontaneously by the people themselves, demonstrating that they have great and innovative potential to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances. This case study shows that we should pay keen attention to the innovative potential that people have, and re-evaluate these indigenous (local) potential in order to seek the ways to turn the potential to practical use for their development.

**Key words:** Pastoralists, Social Relations, Refugees, Northern Kenya  
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## **Introduction**

Negative images of African pastoral peoples prevail in both the academic literature and the mass media. Consider these examples:

Pastoral peoples live in very exclusive societies, stick to their traditional customs, and have conservative reactions to the outside world. They attach much value to their own ways and are arrogant toward anyone from outside their societies. They are violent and war-like, a trait that leads to their

traditional practice of cattle rustling. Because they need livestock not only to fulfill economic goals but also to accomplish social and religious purposes, they keep as many livestock as possible, a practice that leads to environmental degradation. At the same time, they are very poor and are often the victims of drought and famine. They constantly seek food assistance from outside because their indigenous production system cannot cope with natural hazards. All of these features of pastoral peoples show that they are quite irrational.

Of course, all of these portraits are extremely biased; anyone who has experienced

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\*Corresponding author: Itaru Ohta, Center for African Area Studies, Kyoto University, Japan.  
Email: ohta@jambo.africa.kyoto-u.ac.jp

life with African pastoral peoples knows that they are one-sided. Sandford (1983) criticized these negative images by naming them as "Mainstream view" 25 years ago. However, they are still widely circulated as representing the essential elements of pastoral societies. To make matters worse, these images exert great influences on the planning and implementation of development projects by governmental and international agencies. As a result, pastoral societies are further marginalized, and they suffer added losses due to their minority status (cf. Fratkin & Mearns, 2003). Regrettably, social and cultural anthropologists who have conducted research among these societies have also been guilty of contributing to these negative images.

This article strives to reverse these images by demonstrating that the Turkana pastoralists are neither conservative nor exclusionary toward outsiders. On the contrary, they have a propensity of working on others tirelessly in the face-to-face communication to create and maintain positive social relationships.

The Turkana land lies in arid savanna and semi-desert in northwestern Kenya. The incentive to invest in this area is minimal because of its low productivity, and the Turkana people have historically been neglected by the development efforts of both colonial and current governments. In a sense, it is true that the Turkana sustain a "traditional" way of life that is not profoundly affected by modernization. This situation, however, cannot be properly comprehended without taking the above-mentioned historical factors into consideration. Although the Turkana seem to be "backward," they are not essentially conservative, nor do they resist change. It is also true that they frequently engage in livestock rustling, but to have a proper understanding of this practice, one must take into account the influx of small arms from neighboring countries (Uganda, Sudan, and Somalia) as well as the failure of state policies.

This paper focuses on the Turkana's relationships with the Kakuma refugee camp, which is located about 120 km from Lodwar, the capital of Turkana District. The camp was established in 1992, and it accommodated more than 95,000 refugees in 2005 at its height. Most of the refugees are Sudanese, and the population of the camp decreased after the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in January 2005. Large amounts of money, materials, and human resources have been invested in the camp, and it has become a place that functions as a large town. Sixteen years have passed since the camp's establishment, and it has exerted profound influences on the lives of the local Turkana people. For example, its surrounding vegetation was heavily damaged as it was utilized by the refugees for firewood and materials for house construction. The market economy has rapidly expanded, as the local Turkana take firewood, charcoal, milk, livestock, and other goods to the camp to sell. Security conditions are severely undermined because violent clashes have occurred between the Turkana and the refugees, as well as among the refugees.

Refugee studies have concentrated on the refugee population as their first concern and focus, and there has been little academic research about the host population, although the necessity of the research on the host has been addressed long ago (Harrell-Bond, 1986; Chambers, 1986; Lassailly-Jacob, 1994). Refugee camps exert profound impacts on the host population in various aspects of their lives (e.g., Callamard, 1994; Chisholm, 1996; Whitaker, 1999; Waters, 1999). Some researchers (e.g. Aukot, 2003) have pointed out the negative effects of the Kakuma refugee camp on the local Turkana. The policy of managing refugee camps in a manner that has adverse effects on the local people should be reconsidered. The local Turkana, however, are not a monolithic group. Some Turkana, mostly those who are young and educated, have taken jobs with the United Nations High Commissioner for

Refugees and that agency's implementing partners. Many families manage a subsistence livelihood by selling firewood, milk, and other goods to the refugees and buying maize flour, sugar, oil, and tobacco in return. These diverse influences of the camp should be studied in detail.

This article deals with the social relationships between the local Turkana and the refugees. It touches on the violent clashes between them. However, both groups have also demonstrated their remarkable capacity for cultivating beneficial social relationships through conducting positive, face-to-face interactions. This article emphasizes this capability among both the Turkana and the refugees.

Most of these refugees come from Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia, and they are complete strangers to the Turkana. The Turkana are surrounded by other ethnic groups and therefore have had rich experiences interacting with non-Turkana people, although these groups lead a pastoral life similar to that of the Turkana, with language and culture that are not very distant. The Turkana have also had social relationships with outsiders such as missionaries, traders, government officials, and development workers, although their numbers have been small. The Turkana's encounter with the refugees, however, was an utterly different and new experience, because the refugees were so numerous and they had life experiences that were very different from those of the Turkana.

The Turkana and the refugees created mutually beneficial relationships, tirelessly working on each other, and the relationships became vital for the survival of both parties. It is noteworthy that their social relationships were not deliberately established by the managers of the refugee camp but were created spontaneously by the people themselves, demonstrating that the people have great and innovative potential to adapt to unfamiliar circumstances.

I have started anthropological researches in northwestern Turkana District in 1978, and

since 1991, I continued to visit there almost every year.

### **Background**

#### ***History of Kakuma Refugee Camp:***

The majority of refugees at Kakuma camp are Sudanese. In Sudan, armed conflict between the North and the South started before its independence in 1956. They made peace in 1972, but it was temporal and civil war started again in 1983. In May 1991, socialist government collapsed in Ethiopia, and the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) became in political power, which had been keeping cooperative relationship with Khartoum. Sudanese anti-governmental groups (e.g., Sudan People's Liberation Army: SPLA) which have been operating within Ethiopia were driven out, together with 150,000 refugees who have been living in Gambela area in southwestern Ethiopia. The army of Sudanese government found an opportunity to attack SPLA and refugees stayed in southeastern Sudan in March 1992, and SPLA lost its basis in Torit in July 1992.

In May and June 1992, Sudanese refugees who had fled from Gambela, and walked more than 400 km began to arrive in a border town, Lokichoggio, located in the northwestern corner of Kenya. UNHCR, with the help of the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) immediately set up a camp at Kakuma, and transferred the refugees from Lokichoggio. Because of the political change, Ethiopian refugees also poured into northern Kenya. At the almost same time, in January 1991, military forces overthrew the former government of Somalia, and many Somalis also took refuge into Kenya, mostly in northeastern and coastal areas.

UNHCR established 17 refugee camps in Kenya in early 1990s. But most of them are closed one by one, and now only two camps are remaining (Verdirame, 1999). One is Kakuma, which is the focus of this paper, and the other is Dadaab, which consists of neighboring three camps, but it is usually

counted as one camp. Kakuma camp is located in the northwestern corner of Kenya, while Dadaab is in the eastern part of Kenya. Both of them situate in dry and remote areas, where population density is low and the land is not privately owned. The Kenyan government selected these areas for refugee camps; because, for the one thing, it becomes easy to control the movement of refugees, and for the other, it becomes possible to isolate problematic refugee camps away from densely populated areas.

Some of the refugees went back to their original countries, but others are transferred to Kakuma. Figure 1 shows the changes of refugee population in Kenya. In 1993, there existed nearly 400,000 refugees. However, the number reduced drastically in 1995, and since then, the number of refugees did not change much. The refugee population in Dadaab was rather stable until 2005, and increased since 2006 because of political instability in Somalia. The population in Kakuma increased every year until 2003, because, when other camps were closed, some of the refugees were transferred to Kakuma. Then, the comprehensive peace agreement was signed between the Sudanese government and the southern Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) on 9 January 2005 in Nairobi, which brings an end to 21 years of civil war. In November 2006, the repatriation program was started and about 30,000 refugees have returned to Sudan by September 2008 (UNHCR Kakuma Sub-Office, 2008). However, because of the recent influx of Somali refugees into Kenya, UNHCR is to planning to transfer some of them from Dadaab to Kakuma (IRIN, 2009).

#### *Characteristics of the Kakuma Refugee Camp*

Table 1 shows refugee population of the Kakuma camp in July 2007, by their countries of origin. It contains a population of more than 62,000 from ten countries. According to the recommendation of UNHCR, large camps of over 20,000 people should be

avoided (UNHCR n.d.). This camp is three times larger than that. Almost 70% are Sudanese, but only few of them had contacts with the Turkana prior to the establishment of the camp. The second most are Somalis (18%) followed by the Ethiopians (7%). It is also clear from Table 1 that population of males are far greater than that of females. The camp occupies an area of about 2 km x 5 km, divided into eight zones for administrative purposes. It is not fenced. Refugees can go out of the camp, and the Turkana can enter the camp freely.

The majority of the refugees did not have any contact with the Turkana before they came to Kakuma. That is, the refugees and the Turkana hosts started their relationship as strangers to each other, sharing no linguistic, social and cultural backgrounds. In case of most refugee camps that were established near international borders in Africa, refugees and their hosts had been keeping close relationships before the camps were established. They sometimes belonged to the same ethnic group speaking the same language. They shared the same cultural background and kept close social relationships with each other, having kinship relationships (Hansen, 1993; Leach, 1992; Lassailly-Jacobs, 1994; Kok, 1989; Merckx, 2000; Horst, 2001, 2006). In this respect, Kakuma refugee camp is unique.

The camp is not simply a refugee settlement but a "town" (De Montclos & Kagwanja, 2000; Kurimoto, 2001). It has many such infrastructures as a hospital, clinics, schools, vocational centers, churches, and mosques. At shopping centers, there are many kiosks, butcheries, restaurants, bars, satellite TV and video theatres, etc. Bicycle taxis are busily passing the roads in the camp, carrying customers on their back seat. It is very active economically, and as we shall see later, the camp provides various opportunities of cash-earning for the Turkana. Having more than 62,000 populations, the passers-by in the camp are

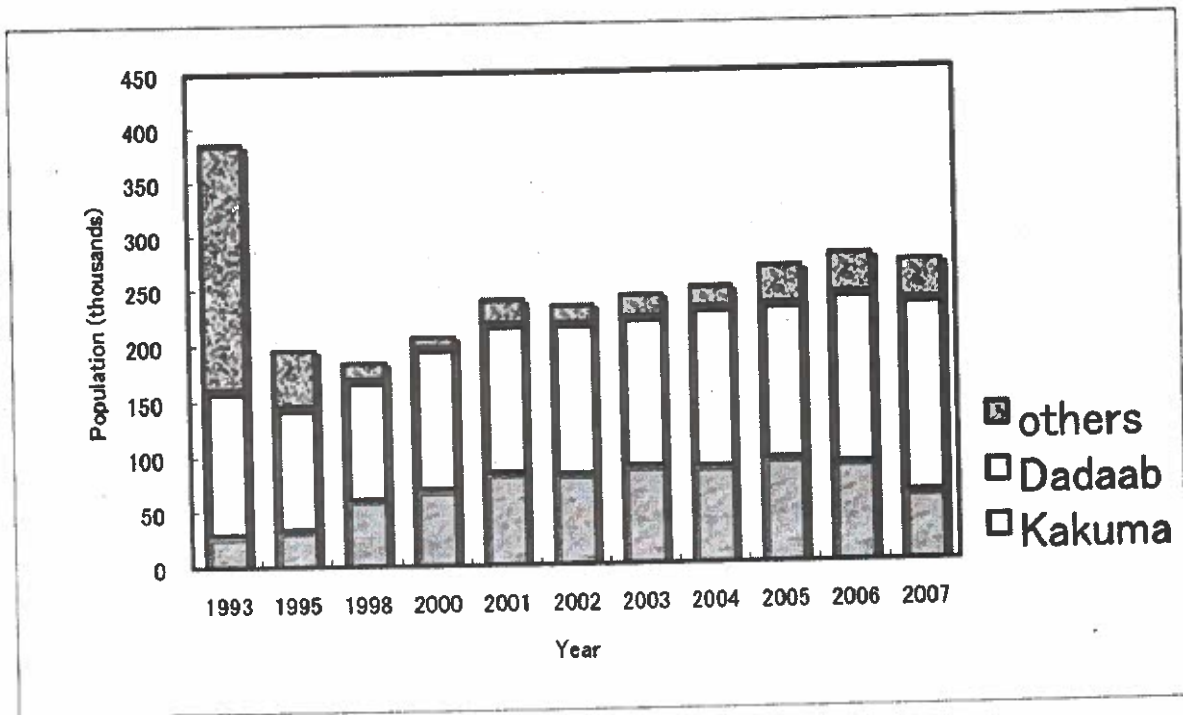


Figure 1: Changes of Refugee Population in Kenya  
 (Sources: UNHCR, 1993, 1995, 1998, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007)

strangers with one another. These economic and social situations were entirely unfamiliar to the Turkana.

**The Turkana**

About 300 thousands Turkana, Eastern-Nilotic speakers (Gregersen, 1977), live in northwestern Kenya. Most of them stay in the Turkana District. Average annual rainfall at Lodwar, the center of the District, is about 200 mm, although Lodwar is located in the most arid part of the area. Because of this dryness, agriculture is not extensively practiced. Most of the people keep five species of livestock, cattle, camels, goats, sheep, and donkeys, and lead a nomadic life depending on the distribution of both water and plants on which livestock feed.

However, the Turkana are now experiencing rapid social changes. As far as I know, the first big and drastic impacts arrived when they suffered from a severe drought in 1979-80. An emergency food aid was extended, and since then various developmental

projects were carried out, that had profound influences on the Turkana. A tarmac road reached Kakuma in 1988, and the amount of transportation of both people and commodities, as well as channels of information, increased considerably. Market economy, formal education, modern medical systems and national administration have been infiltrated to the Turkana society.

Kakuma was a small town of slightly more than 2,000 peoples in 1989, before the refugee camp was established (Government of Kenya, 1994). But its population increased drastically after the camp was established, and it has more than 9,000 in 1999 (Government of Kenya, 2001). Many traders came to Kakuma from central parts of Kenya and opened kiosks and restaurants, looking for business opportunities.

In order to comprehend the influences of the aid activities for refugees on the Turkana, the development of Lokichoggio town should be also taken into consideration. It used to be a small town and not regarded as a

*Table 1: Population of Refugees in Kakuma by Nationality, Gender and Age Groups (31 July 2007)*

Ctry of origin	Sex	0-4 yrs	5-17 yrs	18-26 yrs	27-59 yrs	>=60 yrs	Total	%
Sudan	F	2,741	6,961	3,222	5,499	410	18,833	30.3
	M	2,892	9,827	9,326	4,175	237	26,457	42.5
	T	5,633	16,788	12,548	9,674	647	45,290	72.8
Somalia	F	810	1,708	994	1,412	122	5,046	8.1
	M	876	1,926	1,243	1,673	95	5,813	9.3
	T	1,686	3,634	2,237	3,085	217	10,859	17.5
Ethiopia	F	197	363	404	454	9	1,427	2.3
	M	216	565	791	1,309	11	2,892	4.6
	T	413	928	1,195	1,763	20	4,319	6.9
DR Congo	F	47	100	62	66	5	280	0.5
	M	44	128	98	169	4	443	0.7
	T	91	228	160	235	9	723	1.2
Uganda	F	26	83	26	51	1	187	0.3
	M	35	82	53	95	3	268	0.4
	T	61	165	79	146	4	455	0.7
Rwanda	F	30	43	19	38		130	0.2
	M	26	50	36	74	1	187	0.3
	T	56	93	55	112	1	317	0.5
Burundi	F	10	26	18	22		76	0.1
	M	9	30	26	51		116	0.2
	T	19	56	44	73	0	192	0.3
Eritrea	F	1	5	1	10		17	0.0
	M	2	4	8	27		41	0.1
	T	3	9	9	37	0	58	0.1
Namibia	F							0.0
	M				1		1	0.0
	T				1		1	0.0
Tanzania	F							0.0
	M				1		1	0.0
	T				1		1	0.0
Grand totals	F	3,862	9,289	4,746	7,552	547	25,996	41.8
	M	4,100	12,612	11,581	7,575	351	36,219	58.2
	T	7,962	21,901	16,327	15,127	898	62,215	100
(%)		12.8	35.2	26.2	24.3	1.4	100.0	

Source: UNHCR Sub-Office Kakuma  
F: Female, M: Male, T: Total

“township” when the population census was done in 1989, but its population grew to more than 13,000 in 1999, because many international aid agencies have set up their offices in order to extend assistance to the

refugees and internally displaced people in southern Sudan.

The population in and around Kakuma and Lokichoggio increased again during 1999-2000. In these years, the Turkana suffered

from a very severe drought, combined with the insecurity caused by livestock raiding, and many fell into destitution. Although emergency food aid was started in 1999 throughout the District, many Turkana swarmed around Kakuma, sometimes traveling more than 100 km, and settled in the periphery of the town and the refugee camp.

It is not easy to estimate the Turkana population who are, to a greater or lesser extent, under the influence of the refugee-aid activities. The Turkana District is divided into three constituencies (North, Central and South), and if we assume that people in the Turkana North constituency are touched by the aid activities, its number is about 77,000 in 2001 (LWF, 2001). According to UNHCR, the local Turkana population in Kakuma urban area is estimated to be 35,145 (Silvia, 2002).

### **Multiple Relationships between the Turkana and Refugees**

#### ***Socio-Cultural Relationship***

***Insecurity and conflicts:*** When the camp was established in 1992, some of the Turkana were obliged to move their homesteads. Several perfunctory meetings were held to explain local Turkana about the construction of the refugee camp. UNHCR and Kenyan Administrative officers (District officers and Turkana chiefs) emphasized that the establishment of the camp was approved by the Kenyan Government, and that local people would also benefit from the camp because such equipments as clinics and boreholes would become available for them. Most of the Turkana men present at these meetings did not take any clear and strong objection to the plan, although some of them personally expressed anxiety to me about the arrival of strangers. Because the Turkana, as a pastoral people, do not claim exclusive territorial rights, they did not think that their land was confiscated by the refugee camp, or that they should be compensated for the land.

However, the emergence of the refugee camp undermined public security of this area

(Crisp, 2000; Jamal, 2000; Aukot, 2003). There occurred many violent conflicts not only among the refugees themselves, but also between the refugees and the local Turkana, especially in the first few years after the camp was established.

As I mentioned, the Kakuma camp has characteristics of a big "town," in which people should encounter unknown persons. The local Turkana have never experienced this situation before. Furthermore, the refugees are completely "cultural others" to the Turkana. Although they already have had experiences to associate with other ethnic groups, most of them were their neighboring peoples, and their culture and languages are more or less similar. For the Turkana, this was the first time to have close contacts with completely different people, with completely different culture, on a large scale.

The causes for the conflicts are multiple. The Turkana told me that the refugees have cut trees that were vital for the Turkana, that they have beaten Turkana children, that they have stolen livestock of the Turkana, and that they have killed many donkeys of the Turkana that roamed into the camp, etc. The Turkana are very prideful and sometimes take a provocative attitude even among themselves. It seems to me that many violent conflicts between the Turkana and the refugees flared up out of just trivial quarrels. For example, when I was walking in the camp together with Turkana friends of mine, they sometimes talked to the refugees abusively, saying that the refugees were thieves. Likewise, Turkana women with whom I was walking in the camp told me that we should be in a cohesive group because they were afraid of the refugees.

Many Turkana men have violent experiences with the refugees. I came across two cases in which the Turkana killed refugees. In one case that occurred in November 1993, a Turkana youth got sick. He complained that he lost all the strength of his body and could not even stand up. He said that about one month before, when he was walking

with several Turkana men, he had encountered a refugee man in the bush. According to the youth, the refugee was fighting with a Turkana child. They started fighting to rescue the child, and the Turkana men had beaten the refugee with sticks and killed him. At that time, the youth who got sick had been the first person to grapple with the refugee to throw him down on the ground. Turkana sometimes commit murders when they go for raiding livestock of neighboring ethnic groups. When it occurs, the murderers would get sick like the above-mentioned youth, and they must go through a special ritual of purifying themselves. The youth had conducted the same ritual and recovered. The Turkana said that his sickness had been really caused by his murder of the refugee.

Another case was in October 1994. When a young man in his twenties was herding goats, three refugees came and tried to steal a goat, according to the Turkana. The Turkana youth fought with them and hit one of them severely with a stick on the head. The injured person was quickly taken to Lokichoggio hospital. The Turkana youth was identified and arrested by the Kenyan police. But the case was settled locally. Several meetings were held by Turkana elders and representatives of refugees, and the Turkana youth's family paid 60 goats for compensation.

Traditionally, the murderer's family pays blood-price of livestock, called *ngibaren-lua-ekwori* (lit. livestock of contention [trouble, hostility, collision]) to the family of the victim. The amount of this payment is decided in the elders' meetings considering the solvency of the wrongdoer's family. However, the Turkana do not pay this compensation when they kill humans whom they regard to belong to other ethnic groups. In this case, they had no choice but to pay, because the Turkana youth was arrested by the police, which approved a local way of problem solution.

Some of the Turkana left Kakuma area avoiding insecurity, although many remained there because of economic advantages of the

refugee camp which I will discuss later. Trafficking of small arms, such as AK-47, is also a disturbing element. Many Sudanese refugees are soldiers of SPLA (the male population of the camp is far greater than that of females, see Table 1) and they sell small arms to the Turkana in exchange with livestock. Some of them allegedly engage in the livestock raiding together with the Turkana. Violent incidents between the Turkana and refugees, as well as among refugees themselves, caused social unrest among the Turkana, which led to the moral decline. Social insecurity is one of the most important risks that are caused by the establishment of the Kakuma refugee camp.

**Intermarriage and bond-friendship:** On the contrary, some Turkana and refugees developed close social relationship. As the Turkana started interacting with the refugees, they began to learn other languages, and became multi-lingual. They learned not only Swahili, which is a public language in Kenya, as well as in the camp, but also Arabic dialect, which is a common language in southern Sudan. It was the girls who became good at these languages first, because they had more opportunities to visit refugee camp to sell firewood, charcoal, building materials, and milk.

Some of them get married to refugees. In most cases, Turkana women are married to refugee men. I know only one reverse case, in which a Turkana man married a Sudanese woman. Majority of the marriages are without bridewealth transaction, which are not formal marriages for the Turkana (Ohta, 2007). Even among the Turkana themselves, it is very common that girls get into sexual relationships without bridewealth transaction. When a girl gets pregnant, the baby's biological father should pay a fixed amount of livestock to the girl's patrilineal family, and the baby belongs to this family.

Traditionally, for the first child, the genitor's family should pay 10 big animals (cattle, donkeys and camels) and 20 small animals (goats and sheep) to the girl's family.



For the second and thereafter, 1 big animal and 10 small animals should be paid. However, it is possible to give out small animals in place of big ones nowadays. When the genitor maintains close social relationships with the girl and her family members, this payment can be postponed quite bit of time. I know one Turkana man who got six children with a woman out of formal marriage, but he has finished paying only for the first born, and about half of the animals for the second.

When Turkana women got pregnant with refugees, the Turkana demanded this payment to the refugees. However, some refugees seemed to regard this custom unfair and unacceptable because the girl's partner would get nothing after the payment of compensation. There occurred a lot of conflicts over this payment, sometimes with physical violence, between the women's families and their refugee partners.

When such a trouble occurs, most refugees go to protection officers of UNHCR for advice. Some of them are really fearful that the Turkana might take strong measures. When the parties concerned cannot arrive at agreement about the payment, they look for the arbitration of the local Turkana chiefs. Both parties are called to the administrative office in Kakuma town to make an inquiry. After several meetings, adjudgement is made.

For example, I attended a series of meetings in September 2002, which were summoned by the Turkana chief of Kakuma Division. A Turkana girl has delivered a baby boy allegedly with an Ethiopian refugee in 1999. At the meetings, the girl, her parents, and a male relative of the parents attended from the girl's side, and the Ethiopian attended together with his friends and a protection officer of UNHCR. The Division chief, a sub-location chief, and several Turkana old men acted as mediators of this case. At the meetings, the protection officer tried to understand Turkana ways of settling disputes, and recommended the Ethiopian to comply with the custom. In the end, the Ethiopian paid 30,000 Kenyan Shillings to

the girl's parents, which was regarded as a payment of 30 goats.

One might question how far these marriage-like relationships can endure, because they are set up in such a situation of refugee camp that is not permanent but provisional. This is a difficult question because it has both positive and negative implications. Some of the refugees establish enduring social relationships both among the refugees and with the Turkana. But others feel that the life in the refugee camp is somehow transient, and make affairs with Turkana women in a transient passion. Some of the Turkana women who are living in town have sexual relationships with several men, receiving an unfavorable reputation that they are prostitutes. Although this condition was brought about not only because of refugees, but also it is an outcome of growing urban lifestyle in Kakuma, the existence of the refugee camp drastically accelerated this trend.

Another sociable relationship developed between the Turkana and refugees is "bond-friendship." It is also a customary practice among the Turkana, in which two individuals, together with family members of both sides, establish a close social relationship through the exchange of gifts. Starting from small gift-giving, such as tobacco, both parties repeatedly visit the partner's homestead, getting the partner to slaughter a goat or sheep, which is a typical way of giving a cordial reception. Going through this process, they eventually build up an interdependent relationship, which is very important for the Turkana (Gulliver, 1951; 1953).

The Turkana seemed to have no difficulties to apply this practice to the refugees. Most of these relationships were initiated by the Turkana women or youth who took such things as milk, firewood and goats to sell in the refugee camp. They repeatedly encountered and entered into conversation with specific refugees, and exchanged small gifts. Then they took their husbands or elderly persons to the camp to introduce them to their refugee friends. Then, they visited each

other's home repeatedly and given some gifts. The Turkana offered goats and sheep, as well as firewood and milk, to the refugees, and in return, the refugees gave rations, blankets, and cooking pots, etc. Some of the refugees helped Turkana partners inside the camp, to extend assistances to visit clinics and hospital, or to buy commodities.

### *Economic Relationship*

***Livestock trade and herding "contract":*** Prices of livestock went up, especially in the early stage of the camp. For example, the price of goats went up threefold between June 1992 and October 1993. For example, the price of a largest castrated goat rose from 500 to 1,500 Kenyan Shillings. After 1995, when Somali refugees were transferred from other camps in Kenya to Kakuma, demand for camel meat had increased, and price of camels went up. The price of castrated camel was about 10,000 in 1994, which rose to 25,000 in 2004 (1US\$=80 Kenyan Shillings approximately). The emergence of the refugee camp provided a big opportunity for the local Turkana to sell their livestock.

Some of the Turkana started to make a "contract" with refugees to look after refugees' livestock. Formally the refugees are prohibited to keep livestock, but some Sudanese, Somali, and Ethiopian refugees do possess it. The Kenyan police and administration officers turn a blind eye to it. The purpose of refugees to own livestock is not multiplying the herd. They buy the livestock from the Turkana and leave it in other Turkana's care for some period, then sell it to the butcheries in the camp. That is, they are brokers.

The relationship between the Turkana herdsmen and refugee brokers can be termed as "contract." The Turkana herdsmen's duty is as follows: they keep the animals, and when animals need to be slaughtered, they take them to the slaughtering place in the camp, slaughter and skin the animals. For this job, they are not paid in cash. They are given the hide of the animals that they have

been keeping, and certain parts of the meat. They can sell the hide after drying it. The price of goat skin is 100-120, while that of cattle is 500-700 Kenyan Shillings in 2004.

Although since old days, destitute Turkana sometimes put themselves under the protection of relatives or friends and worked as herders, it is a personal social relationship that makes this state possible. The herder might be given some animals subsequently, but there is no fixed amount of payment and the animals are given as gifts. On the contrary, what the Turkana get in return for taking care of refugees' livestock is fixed. The Turkana also complained to me that the refugee partners were stingy. This relationship of herding "contract" is a quite new phenomenon for the Turkana.

Many young Turkana men started the livestock trade, trying to make good use of the sudden rise of livestock price. They buy such commodities as beads adornments and clothes, and take them to remote areas to exchange with livestock. Then, they bring the livestock back and sell them in the refugee camp, earning the balance of the trade. Successful men, although they are not many, maintain a herd of goats and sheep which is consisted of only males near the camp, and sell them when they can obtain higher prices.

Because the refugee camp opened up every possibility of selling livestock, not only the market economy, but also commoditization of livestock permeates through the Turkana. They used to sell livestock when they need cash to pay hospital and school fees, to buy tobacco, maize flour, sugar, tea leaves, beads ornaments, etc. However, similar to other East African pastoralists, livestock were not a simple commodity for the Turkana. They were symbolic and inalienable assets of social and religious importance (Ohta, 2001). The emergence of the refugee camp exerted considerable influences to accelerate commoditization of livestock.

***Wage labor:*** The refugee camp provided opportunities of employment for the Turkana. Some Turkana who have higher

formal education got jobs in the offices of UNHCR and its implementing partners, such as LWF, Don-Bosco, International Rescue Committee, World Vision, etc. Others got various jobs, as drivers, night watchmen, gatekeepers, and part time construction workers, etc. However, the job market is not large enough to fulfill the expectation of young Turkana who have higher formal education, and they complain that they are discriminated by the members of other ethnic groups who favor fellow men to allocate vacancies.

I have no quantitative data on how the Turkana spend their salary. Some of the Turkana whom I know well got opportunity to work as night watchmen and construction workers. They were paid about 4,200 Kenya Shillings per month in 2000, which was quite a good salary, considering that the monthly salary of a primary school teacher can be between 2,250-8,000 Shillings.

One of them, in his middle thirties, worked for six months. He bought 15 goats and sheep spending about 15,000 Shillings, which were equivalent to 60% of his total salary. Some of the remaining money was given to relatives and friends, others were sent in buying food, tobacco, clothes, etc. and drinking alcohol.

In addition to the UNHCR and its IPs, the refugees themselves also employed the Turkana. Many refugees from Somalia and Ethiopia had enough money to start various businesses in the camp. Some opened kiosks that sell miscellaneous goods; others started vegetable shops, butcheries, restaurants and bars. Kakuma refugee camp turned out to be the biggest town in the area, which offered the local Turkana opportunities to be employed to do muscular labors. However, most of them got very little salary and, for them, it is difficult to save money to buy goats and sheep.

Some of the Turkana, mostly young boys and girls are hired as housekeepers. Their tasks are cleaning the compound, fetching water, bringing firewood, cooking, watering

trees, building fences and houses, etc. Most of them are living in their employers' houses, and some of them are registered as family members of employers and get free rations. For their work, they are given food, and paid such small wages as about 150 Kenyan Shillings per month.

I do not have any statistical data, but the local chief of Kakuma Division, as well as refugees, told me that about 10% of Sudanese households and more than 90% households from other countries are employing this kind of housekeepers. If we make a simple calculation, assuming that one household consists of five persons, and each household employs one Turkana, it follows that about 4,000 Turkana are employed as live-in housekeepers. The number of children doing this job could be more than this, because, when a boy or a girl is employed and stays with the refugees, his/her siblings often visit there and work together.

This exploitation of child labor drew the attention of the local administrators. The Chief declared that it was illegal to employ children, and that children should be sent back to schools. However, it is difficult to bring immediate effect on this problem, because it requires much effort to make a house search in the refugee camp. If this situation continues, it might exert considerable influences on the growth of children, consequently on the Turkana culture, although it is not easy to make an assessment in a short term.

***Petty trade by women:*** Turkana women take firewood, branches of trees for building materials, charcoal, sun-dried bricks and milk to sell in the refugee camp. The number of items that they deal with is not many, but now, this trade is very important for the livelihood of local Turkana.

In order to secure the supply of firewood, UNHCR and its IPs invite tenders and make contracts with them. As we travel in north-western part of the Turkana District, we can see that firewood is piled up along the roads here and there, which local Turkana col-

lected, awaiting lorries of tenders. However, since the beginning of 2000, this system had begun to atrophy. Politicians and young elites of the Turkana formed an organization, named TERA (Turkana Environment and Resource Association), and demanded that all tendering and bidding of firewood should be channeled through them. They declared that, if UNHCR regulations, which require open and competitive bidding process, would be strictly applied, suppliers originating from outside Turkana District would dominate. They insisted that tendering and bidding should be restricted to the Turkana only, because the materials (firewood) are locally sourced in Turkana District. When UNHCR awarded contract of firewood supply to non-members of TERA, some members of TERA tried to block the lorries that were carrying firewood, and a Turkana woman died when Kenyan police interfered, on 12 July 2002. However, after the general election in December 2002, the former ruling party, KANU, lost its place, and TERA began to lose the support of Turkana people and it became inactive.

The amount of firewood supply of UNHCR to the refugees was not enough before this trouble has occurred, and refugees ought to buy it by themselves from the Turkana. But since the tender system had atrophied, distribution of firewood became to a standstill in the camp. This brought highly profitable situation for the local Turkana women to sell firewood to the refugees individually.

According to the chief of Kakuma location, County Council of Kakuma Division began to charge 5 to 10 Shillings for each sale of firewood around July 2004. A market place was established in the refugee camp where Turkana women should take and sell their firewood, although many women evade this supervision and continue to sell firewood individually.

It is strictly prohibited around the refugee camp, and it is very difficult for refugees to go out of camp to collect firewood. Turkana

women should walk sometimes more than 10 km to bring firewood. Others began to dig up stumps and roots of trees that died long ago. After digging up, they cut it into pieces, and take them to the camp to sell. Most of Turkana women have now their customers, to whom they take firewood directly. Other women sell their firewood to refugee traders, and the traders sell it again to the refugees dividing it into small units.

One woman can carry a bundle of firewood that she can sell at 50 Kenyan Shillings. According to the local Turkana, women never fail to sell the firewood in these days. With this money, she can buy, for example, maize flour of about 5 kg, which can satisfy 15 persons. I saw many Turkana women buying food, as well as tobacco etc., in the refugee camp after selling firewood.

According to RESCUE (Rational Energy Supply, Conservation, Utilization and Education), a UNHCR/GTZ household energy project in Dadaab area in Kenya, firewood consumption per day and per capita is 0.7 kg (Hoerz, 1995). Then, it follows that the Kakuma camp of 62,000 people consumes about 43.4 metric tons of firewood every day. If we make simple calculation again, assuming that all necessary firewood in the camp are brought by Turkana women, and that a woman carries 10 kg of firewood at a time, it follows that more than 4,300 women sell firewood daily in the camp. The Turkana say that it is easy to live on the sales of firewood nowadays.

In the early years after the camp was established, some of the firewood for the refugees were brought from outside the Turkana District by UNHCR. But nowadays, all of them are procured locally. Moreover, trees are cut to provide building materials of the refugees, as well as to supply charcoal to refugees and town dwellers. The vegetation around the camp is obviously destructed (Tachiiri & Ohta, 2004), which added fuel to the antagonistic feeling of the Turkana on the refugees, although this feeling is inconsistent with the fact that they are deriving a profit by

selling firewood, charcoal and building materials to the refugees.

### **Concluding Remarks: Self-assuredness of the Turkana**

In the establishment of personal and positive relationships with refugees, a certain unique style of the Turkana—an important element of the Turkana culture—plays the vital role. That is, they have a propensity of working on others tirelessly in the face-to-face communication, so to speak (Kitamura, 1997). They are relatively free from nervousness and hesitation that we usually feel when we associate with “cultural others.” The Turkana are self-assured and carry their way of doing things throughout, which is often regarded as arrogant by outsiders.

For example, they demanded me to behave just in the same ways as they do from the first day of my research. They talked to me tirelessly in Turkana language, which I didn't understand, in such a manner that they have never imagined somebody who do not know their language. Evans-Prichard left very impressive sentences in the introduction of his book, *The Nuer*. He wrote how the attitude of the Nuer was different from that of the Azande: “Among Azande I was compelled to live outside the community; among Nuer I was compelled to be a member of it. Azande treated me as a superior; Nuer as an equal.” (Evans-Pritchard, 1940: 15). The same applies aptly in my experiences among the Turkana.

They are self-confident and straightforward when they are engaged in the face-to-face interactions. I pointed out that many Turkana boys and girls are employed as live-in housekeepers, and that Turkana women are “married” to the refugees. It is this unique attitude of self-assuredness that makes it easy for them to make approaches and associate with “strangers.” Turkana's self-assuredness contributed to their building of personal relationships with the refugees. It is also important to emphasize that the relationship between the Turkana and refugees is not

formed only by the Turkana's extrovert attitude, but through their repeating mutual interactions.

Humanitarian interventions had never expected these mutual interactions. This case study shows that we should pay keen attention to the innovative potential that people have, and re-evaluate these indigenous (local) potential in order to seek the ways to turn the potential to practical use for their development.

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