

THE CAMEL TRUST SYSTEM IN THE RENDILLE SOCIETY OF NORTHERN KENYA

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ABSTRACT This paper is concerned with the camel trust system (*maal* system) in the Rendille society. I will present some case material in this regard, and then analyze the fundamental characteristics of this system. Consequently, I will show that it is a system of usufruct right, based on balanced reciprocity, which works through the unity of a father with his first son. On a higher level, it works within the structural framework which has been set up by the more corporate groups of patrilineal parallel close agnates and clansmen within the descent groups.

Key Words: The Rendille; Camel trust system; Primogeniture; Solidarity of descent groups; Clanship; Balanced reciprocity.

INTRODUCTION

Among the pastoral societies of East Africa, livestock are used not only for subsistence, as food, transportation and as raw material, but also for social exchange through which societal relations are bound or regulated. They are slaughtered as sacrificial animals to connect human affairs to the spiritual world as well as kept for personal and aesthetic purpose. Herders identify themselves with certain kinds of livestock and strive to maintain their well-being through the livestock. It is a universal culture among pastoral societies that herders set a high value on livestock.

However, when certain livestock are transferred between persons, one recognizes that the breadth of one's decision-making is different from society to society because the motives and occasions for livestock transfer and the type of livestock involved are bound by social conventions.

The Rendille live in an area of some 50,000 km² in the southern part of Marsabit District, situated in northern Kenya. Their way of life is herding, mainly rearing single-humped camels and small stock (goats and sheep), but also rearing cattle and donkeys. They frequently transfer these livestock among each other in order to maintain their well-being. The Rendille language is classified into the Somali branch of the East Cushitic Family. The Rendille population is estimated to be about 20,000 persons.

Whereas the Rendille have four forms of transaction, namely, donation, exchange, loan, and trust, they treat only camels as trust property, which are disposed of and manipulated under the complex rules of a trust system. This system is closely related to the framework of social structure. Unlike other types of livestock, camels are managed as if they were vested with societal value rather than

with anonymous monetary value. Certainly this trust system is originated from the wisdom for maintaining the Rendille communal society and living with camels in the harsh dry land. Also it works socially to maintain the well-being of the Rendille who identify themselves as the herders of the plain.

In this paper, I describe the practices and rules of the camel trust system (*maal* system). Then, I will clarify the fundamental characteristics of this system with reference to social structure.

THE FRAMEWORK OF RENDILLE SOCIETY

The Rendille are classified into three regional groups: the Rendille proper, the *Ariaal* Rendille and the *Odola* Rendille. Especially, the Rendille proper exemplify a socio-cultural organization which is structured by both the clan-system and the age-system. The Rendille clan-system is composed of nine patrilineal clans, each of whom is consolidated by the ideology of patrilineal continuity and that of incorporation of aliens. The Rendille proper are the core group of the so-called Rendille. In this paper, unless otherwise noted, I will refer to the Rendille proper as simply the Rendille. Also, most of the material which I present here have been collected during my stay in the settlements and herding camps of the *Tupcha* clan which is one of the nine clans of the Rendille proper.

1. The Nine-Clan System

The Rendille descent groups are patrilineal (Table 1). The basic unit of descent groups is a clan (*yaf*), which is an exogamous unit. There are nine clans, out of which five clans constitute the western moiety (*belesi bahai*) and the remaining four clans constitute the eastern moiety (*belesi beri*). Clans are sub-divided into 2 to 6 sub-clans (*khod*), and sub-clans are sub-divided into 5 to 30 lineage groups.

Each clan is a basic unit not only for both performing ritual ceremonies and participating in community-wide politics of the whole Rendille, but also for managing the settlements and demarcating the exogamous boundaries. A settlement includes 30 families with 134 residents on average, and within the settlement site, 33 portable huts on average are arranged roughly in a circle. It is comprised of mainly homogeneous sub-clansmen and a small number of either the different sub-clansmen within the same clan or their affines, whereas clansmen disperse over 2 to 5 settlements (Sato, 1980; 1992).

The descent groups are referred to with the color terms describing camels (*duhi-gaala*) at the level of sub-clan. These color terms are derived from white camel (*gaali-dahan*), red camel (*gaali-guuden*), light brown camel (*gaali-eidimo*), black camel (*gaali-daayan*) and dark brown camel (*gaali-boran*). But, the *Uiyam* clan and the *Iligera* sub-clan of the *Salle* clan have no camel color term.

Such color terms are used to denote the sub-clansmen instead of the names of the sub-clan. For example, the *Orbora* sub-clansmen of the *Tupcha* clan are referred to as "the people of the black camel (*dodi-gaali-daayan*).” Also, it is thought to be more desirable that any sub-clansmen should sacrifice the camel of the same col-

Table 1. The names of the trust camel and the color terms which are affiliated with the descent groups of the Rendille proper.

Clan	Sub-clan	Affiliation to camel color	Lineage group	Name of the trust camel	
Western moiety					
1.Dupsai	1.Wambire	white	Wambire Dabaren etc.	jille donma	
	2.Buriar	red	Buriar etc.	hariir	
	3.Dohore	red	Dohore etc.	kasse	
			Ogorjeb	haga	
			Hajufre	irar	
	4.Guddere	light brown	Guddere etc.	irima	
	5.Furguda	light brown	Arandide etc.	hajer	
			Fure etc.	galidah	
	2.Nahagan	6.Milgichan	black	Danburo etc. Bore etc.	hanraf chalgi
		1.Machan	white	Machan	haile
2.Dulolo		white	Dulolo etc.	banto	
3.Galigorobure		white	Galigorobure	siicho	
			Mirkarkona etc.	alidowa	
3.Matarba	1.Galikidere	white	Araboi	santere	
			Eidimore etc.	afiera	
			Galikidere etc.	atire	
			Kaato	lilimokku	
			Feecha etc.	dinta	
4.Rengumo	1.Ongon	white	Harabore etc.	dore	
			Galigure	lontire	
			Arbere etc.	biffe	
5.Uiyam	1.Basseri	non	Intore	rigacho	
			Jaale etc.	solauen	
			Farogan	kunmal	
			Adiaro etc.	afiera	
2.Galhaile	non	Labahayo	orsoma		
		Galmagal etc.	botire		
Eastern moiety					
1.Salle	1.Nebei	white	Erwas etc.	heirre	
			Danmal	neibicha	
			Istor	haiyo	
			Ore etc.	malkeera	
			Kimogol etc.	malen	
			Buro etc.	galgura	
4.Gabanaio	5.Galoleiyo	black brown	Eisingalaja etc.	yabalgai	
			Obeire etc.	likisam	
			Jalle etc.	rufso	
			Sandap etc.	orogal	
2.Urwen	1.Jalle	light brown	Ikimire	yahache	
			Aligere	kopire	
			Siramo etc.	siicho	
3.Galdeilen	3.Tiltiile	light brown	Dohe	golofai	
			Keere etc.	sunkeera	
			Galora etc.	denmal	
4.Tupcha	1.Orbora	red	Matacho etc.	ore	
			Gallale etc.	guuto	
			Galfure	nefre	
2.Deere	light brown	Lehemologo etc.	muglan		

No. indicates the descent seniority. Rendille camel color : white (*dahan*), red (*guuden*), light brown (*eidimo*), black brown (*boran*), and black (*daayanj*).

or as that of his sub-clan. For example, the *Orbora* sub-clansmen of the *Tupcha* clan are expected to sacrifice the male calf-camels of the black color.

Usually the Rendille have a very short genealogical memory. They know their ancestors no more than 2 or 3 generations prior to themselves. They can neither trace the genealogical relation to the common ancestor for their clan nor sub-clan. Nevertheless, their folk tales express the ideology of patrilineality, that they have maintained the patrilineal continuity from the first ancestor, and the ideology of incorporating aliens, that either the first ancestor or his descendants gathered and incorporated aliens into their own groups. Thus, a clan or sub-clan is composed mainly of those persons who share the ideology of patrilineality and former aliens who were incorporated in the past.

Each member of a clan or sub-clan has both personal name and a family name. The male members succeed to the family name, whereas the female members use their husband's family name instead of their native family name upon marriage. Moreover, no family name is ever coincident with that of the clan. However, some family names coincide with the name of the sub-clan or the lineage group.

II. Age-System

Females are categorized into two age-grades: girlhood and womanhood. Upon marriage, their age-grade shifts from girlhood to womanhood, whereas they are never organized into any age-set. The bridegroom goes to his bride's home to solemnize the wedding ceremony. In the morning of the wedding, the bride is circumcised in her mother's hut.

Males are categorized into three age-grades: boyhood, youth and elderhood. Furthermore, the elderhood is sub-categorized into four sub-grades: junior-, middle-, senior- and retired-sub-grade, each of which is equivalent to an age-set (Sato, 1984).

From birth to circumcision, males are classified as being in boyhood. The order of boys to be initiated into an age-set is prescribed by (1) the biological age (at least age twelve), (2) the seniority between brothers, where the younger brother cannot be enrolled into an age-set ahead of his elder brother, and (3) the age-set linkage between a father and his sons, where a son should be enrolled into at least the third age-set below that of the father at the earliest. Accordingly, among sons, the first son (the eldest son of the chief-wife) usually belongs to the third age-set below that of his father, and the remaining sons accordingly belong to the further lower-ranking age-sets.

The circumcision ceremony is performed all over Rendilleland once every 14 years. Eligible boys are collectively circumcised in the settlement. In the first year after circumcision, the name-giving ceremony (*gaal-gurme*) is performed in order to close the enrollment into the age-set and to give it a formal name. The initiates are, at the same time, invested with membership in the youth age-grade. In the eleventh year after circumcision, the representative youths from each of nine clans come together to perform the marriage-opening ceremony (*nabo*) in the bush. Within three years after this ceremony, all the youths are pressed to marry and thus join the junior-elderhood. As a new age-set is organized every 14 years, elders

move up to the next sub-grade within the elderhood.

LEGAL OWNERSHIP OF CAMELS

I. Primogeniture System

In the Rendille society, only males are vested with the legal ownership of camels, and females are excluded. The agnates of a family exercise the legal management of family camels. Upon a father's death, his first son not only succeeds to the patrimony, but also inherits the camels. When a man dies without any son, his eldest brother takes away all the legacy camels. Most of a man's legacy camels are retained within his first son's family herd and not dispersed to the junior sons. In other words, according to this primogeniture system, the first son successively retains the large part of the family camels through generations.

The unity of a father with his first son is publicly expressed not only in terms of patrimony and primogeniture of legacy camels, but also in terms of other social events. First, no father gives any camel to his first son during his lifetime. Secondly, the first son succeeds to his father's ritual stick (*gumo*) which symbolizes the status of the first son. That is to say, soon after he is born, the first son is given this stick by his father. And upon marriage, he takes the stick from his mother's hut and places it at the back of his new hut.

Thirdly, the first son obtains the qualification to offer milk (*sadah*) to the God only after the father's death. In the settlement, every evening, the family head offers a cup of milk to the God at the entrance of his chief-wife's hut and prays for the well-being of the Rendille and livestock. All the junior sons start to perform this ritual soon after marriage even if their father is alive. But the first son is forbidden to do so until his father dies. Fourthly, the first son takes over the preparation of the sacrifice feast (*sorio*). After the first son has married, the father ceases to sacrifice animals in his chief-wife's hut.

II. Obligatory and Voluntary Transfer of Camels

The camels are classified as either the personal camel (*alal*) or the trust camel (*maal*). The man who keeps his personal camel is literally vested with its ownership and can dispose of it as he pleases. All male camels are categorized as personal camels, whereas female camels are categorized into either personal camels or trust camels. Trust camels are legally treated in accordance to the trust system. Trust camels are those female camels which are entrusted to other Rendille. The trustee is not vested with ownership, but holds just the usufruct rights to the milk, blood, and male offspring.

In general, the occasions for camel transfers fall within two contexts. First, camels are involved in the family-developmental-cycle. Camels are obligatorily transferred upon a birth, tooth extraction, circumcision, death of parents, marriage (bridewealth and dowry) or as an allocation to a co-wife. Second, camels are voluntarily transferred regardless of family-developmental-cycle either as a pledge

of friendship or as a form of self-assertion.

Any camel which is transferred is distinguished between the personal camel and the trust camel. There is a typical situation where a man is pressed to donate his personal female camel to another. A boy can take advantage of the circumcision ceremony to make an open request for personal female camel (*ayuti-handi*: female camel of circumcision) from his close relatives. On this occasion, if the boy is an eldest son, he is entitled to at least one female camel from his mother's eldest brother. Other sons are entitled to at least one female camel from his father.

Upon marriage, the groom has to pay with eight personal camels (four male camels and four female camels) as bridewealth (*guno*) to the bride's close kins. Of the eight camels, bride's mother's eldest brother has the priority to receive two camels (one of each sex), her mother, one male camel, and her brothers, the remaining five camels (two male camels and three female camels). Moreover, the bride's eldest brother is expected to give one female camel out of his sister's bridewealth to his father's brother's first son.

At the death of a father, the first son who succeeds to the patrimony has to allocate one personal female camel (*ayuti-time*; female camel of hair) to each of his brothers and one male camel to his married eldest sister. At the death of a mother, her eldest son has to allocate one personal female camel (*ayuti-time*) to each of his full-brothers and one male camel to his married eldest full-sister.

Within a polygyneous family, a co-wife (a wife who is not the chief-wife) who has given birth to a son is to be given three to seven female camels (*ayuti-diri*: female camel of the pot) and one to seven male camels as allocated property from her husband during his lifetime. In this case, a husband consults with his chief-wife and her eldest son (or his first son) and decides the number of camels and the appropriate date of allocation. When a husband dies without any allocation to his co-wife, she will be allocated camels from his first son upon dividing the father's legacy. After the mother's death, not only this kind of allocated camels, but also her dowry camels (*ayuti-urp*; female camel of milk-bucket) are legally managed by her eldest son.

The killer of an enemy is entitled to one personal female camel (*ayuti-magah*: female camel of name) from the close agnates in reward for his exploits. If he is the eldest son, he will be donated one personal female camel by his mother's eldest brother, whereas the junior sons will be receive one from the eldest brother.

Certain categories of kindred are involved in the prescriptive donation of personal female camels on the basis of generalized reciprocity (Sahlins, 1972). Such categories are the ego's family (father and brother), sister's family (sister's husband and his first son), wife's elementary kins (wife's parents, wife's brother and wife's mother's eldest brother), patrilateral parallel close agnates (father's brother, and his first son), and matrilateral cross agnates (mother's eldest brother, and his first son). The persons who fall into one of these five categories of kinship are pressed to transfer their personal female camels to their close relatives, and only then can be regarded as the effective kindreds.

The constituent kinships of effective kindreds are interconnected and structured through three axis relations. The first is the father-to-son relation within the family, where either the father or his first son transfers his personal female camels to his

junior sons. The second is the relation between the first sons of patrilineal parallel close agnates. The third is the relation of a mother's eldest brother to a sister's eldest son. These three axis relations are interconnected through the first sons within the kindred group.

There are so-called "auspicious (*munya*) female camels" in Rendille society, those personal female camels which a father had donated to his close relatives. They are referred to by the phrase, "Nobody should hurt any auspicious camel because it is the gift which people donate for the sake of mutual affection, that is printed on their heart and that is held in each other's hands." This phrase suggests that auspicious camels are regarded as the embodiment of shared auspice, for affectionate human relations are thought of as auspice.

Therefore, the following actions are strictly prohibited. The first son is prohibited from confiscating auspicious camels the father donated to the junior sons and the sister's sons during his lifetime, from ignoring the father's will, and from confiscating the female camels which the father donated to his wife's close kinsmen as bridewealth. These prohibited actions are likened to "stabbing with a thornbush (*oto*)."

Among the kinship relations through which auspicious camels are to be transferred, the father-to-son relation and the conjugal relation are the axis relations of the polygyneous family. The relation between a sister's eldest son and the mother's eldest brother is the axis relation for keeping the marriage alliance between both parents' home. The relation between a brother's first son and the father's eldest brother is the axis relation for keeping the inter-family alliance within the patrilineal descent group. Consequently, it may be said that the auspicious camels symbolize the solidarity of the family, marriage alliance and patrilineal descent group.

In contrast with the obligatory donation of personal female camels, most of the trust camels are voluntarily transferred, mostly regardless of the family-developmental-cycle. In general, camels are transferred through four forms of transaction: donation, exchange, loan, and trust. Donation occurs when one transfers his personal camel to another for no direct return. Exchange occurs when one transfers his personal camel to another for a direct return. Loan occurs when one transfers his personal camel to another on condition that the transferred camel itself would be returned according to a prescribed convention. Trust occurs when camel is entrusted to someone to be legally managed under the rules of the trust system.

These four forms of transaction are the formal classifications. In fact, one form of transaction can turn into another, depending on the relative degree of solidarity between the giver and recipient and the circumstances of transaction.

(1) Sometimes, the Rendille adopt a calf-camel in order to ensure milk from the foster mother-camel. When one requests one calf-camel from another for the purpose of adoption, the latter usually gives the former either one male calf as a personal camel or one female calf as a trust camel. But I came across a case where one female calf was donated as a personal camel for the purpose of adoption.

[Case 1]

Alakent's husband (*A*) is the first son of the Heibor family, *Gobanai* sub-clan, *Salle* clan. His father gave his personal female camel to his wife's eldest brother (*B*) to supplement bridewealth for his second marriage.

On one occasion after the death of *A*'s father, *A*'s infant camel died. So, *A* needed one infant camel to be adopted by the mother camel. Upon *A*'s request, *B* gave *A* one infant female camel as a personal camel.

There is a general saying that only trust camels should be transferred to non-relatives; "*eti-ieren alal malasiicho, maal alasiicha.*" According to common practice, one donates one's personal camel to the person who shares a strong sense of solidarity with oneself. The recipient of the personal camel is apt to feel greatly indebted. Someday, if the former requires aid from the latter, the latter will donate the former his personal camel in return for the past favor. Such a transaction is made through moral reciprocity. There is a saying that a personal camel traces its footmarks: "*alal labatis islabatan.*" Moreover, the donation of personal camels binds not only the dyadic relation between the persons concerned, but also their sons.

(2) A lactating female camel is temporarily loaned. Such a female camel is temporarily lent out to someone for the duration of lactation, and soon after the lactation has stopped, the borrower has to return it to the lender. This is "the temporary loan of female camel in milk [*kharasime*]." But, there was a case where such a female camel was lent out and then became a trust camel.

[Case 2]

In 1985 Yelowa Galfure (*Tupcha* clan) borrowed one lactating female camel and its infant male as *kharasime* from Sanget who was his daughter's husband. Later, in 1987, this female camel gave birth to a female infant. In 1988, his second daughter milked this camel for her own family.

Sanget made a loan of one female camel and its two offspring. But, he hesitated to make Yelowa return all of them to him because Yelowa was his father-in-law. Sanget thought hard about this matter. He had two choices. One choice was that he would give Yelowa the mother camel as a trust camel, but make him return the two offspring. Another choice was that he would entrust one female offspring to Yelowa, but make him return the mother camel and its male calf.

According to common practice, the loan camel in milk that bears a calf in the borrower's pen will no longer be treated as a loan camel but as a trust camel.

(3) There are female camels that are called "*dor*" (lucky female camel). Lucky female camels are only transferred as trust camels and never transferred as personal camels.

The *Hajufre* family (*Buriar* sub-clan, *Dupsai* clan), *Galikideere* family (*Galikideere* sub-clan, *Matarba* clan) and *Guduro* family (*Galileiyo* sub-clan, *Salle* clan) exclusively possess *dor* camels with special stories of how they acquired such camels, how they treated them specially and put special marks on them. The owner of *dor* camels are regarded as the possessors of luck (*eti-iben-habo*) and have to continue special treatment of them. A special milk-bucket is used for milking them

Table 2. The exchange rate* of livestock within the Rendille society.

Age and sex	Types of livestock			
	Camel	Cattle	Donkey	Goat & sheep
Female				
adult	30	30	15	2
adolescent	12	12	8-10	1
juvenile	12	12	12	-
Male				
uncastrated adult	12	12	9	3
castrated adult	12	12	9	3
adolescent (nc.)	7	7	7	1
juvenile	3	3	3	-

* : Individual livestock is calculated by number of adolescent goat or sheep.

nc. : non-castrated.

and care is taken never to pollute the milk bucket with blood. Lucky camels can be transferred only as trust camels, neither exchanged for male camels nor paid as bridewealth. The holders (or trustees) who were entrusted the lucky camels have to treat the camels specially as their owners do.

(4) Sometimes a transaction will be canceled after many years. The Rendille have a standardized exchange rate for one type of livestock for another (Table 2). For example, one head of heifer camel is equivalent to either one head of heifer cattle or 12 heads of adolescent small stock. Also, one female calf of either camel or cattle is exchangeable for one ox-camel or ox. This exchange rate is applicable to neither the transactions with livestock dealers nor at a livestock market, (because here, the transactions are made on the basis of mutual negotiation), but applicable only to transactions within the communal Rendille society.

There were two cases (Case 3 & 4) where the exchange was claimed to be canceled after 16 or 19 years.

[Case 3]

In 1952, Meruchi Galwap of the *Tupcha* clan gave one heifer camel to Sugoi Eisingabana of the same clan in exchange for one ox-camel. By 1968, the offspring of that female camel bore nine female offspring in Eisingabana's family herd.

At that time, Meruchi visited Sugoi and asked him to return "his" camels. "I want to cancel the previous exchange and request you to return 'my' female camel [This connotes the female camel and its female offspring] because 'my' female camel has produced so many offspring."

Several meetings were held among the persons concerned, including their clansmen and the local officers of Marsabit District. It was concluded that Meruchi should have eight female camels returned from Sugoi but let Sugoi keep one female camel as his personal camel.

[Case 4]

This case resulted from both the unexpected growth of a herd and an exchange that was later deemed inequitable. In 1969, Naje Eisinharau (*Tupcha* clan) suffered during a serious drought, and exchanged his pregnant camel for 14 heads of small stock, 200 Kenyan shillings in cash and one 60 kg bag of maize flour offered by Nabogere Eisinwakaro (*Galoleiyo* sub-clan, *Salle* clan).

In 1988, 19 years after the transaction, Naje requested Nabogere for the cancellation of the previous transaction for the reason that the female camel from Naje bore 10 heads for Nabogere's family herd and that the previous transaction had been unfair because one cow-camel should be equal to 30 heads of small stock.

The Location Chief, requested by Naje to judge this case, inquired into the facts. He persuaded Naje to secure a favorable judgement from his clan elders (*Tupcha* clan). Presently (1988), Naje is busily engaged in acquiring clan consent.

These two cases show that an exchange can be contested and canceled even after 16 or 19 years. Case 3 occurred because the original owner claimed that his camel produced too many camels to make the transaction equitable. Case 4 saw a transaction contested for two reasons. The supplier claimed that his camel produced too many camels and that the previous transaction had been unfair. The former case was discussed by the persons concerned, including their clansmen and the local officers, and was resolved. The latter case was still pending in 1988.

These two cases show that either too many offspring born by an exchanged female camel or the subjective hindsight of unprofitability is sufficient for the original owner of a female camel to contest the previous transaction. Such appeals are approved of publicly. That is to say, the supplier of a personal female camel is so strongly influential that he can ask its recipient to cancel the previous transaction. The Rendille has an apt saying for this, that a personal camel is like a loosened tooth (because it cannot be pulled out easily); "*gaali-alale idiye ilahtikolokokute.*"

As mentioned above, personal camels are valued higher than trust camels and the camel owner can exercise very strong discretion. Close relatives, such as brothers-in-law, mother's brothers, and daughters' husbands, act in favor of each other's situations and donate their personal camels instead of trust camels or change loan camels into trust camels. Thus, the supplier of personal female camels exercises a strong discretion on deciding which kinds of camels will be transferred.

Not only as a commonly held idea, but also according to my statistical analysis (Sato, in press), female and male personal camels tend to be donated in relation with the family-developmental-cycle, while trust camels are transferred regardless of the family-developmental-cycle. Trust camels are apt to be transferred widely not only to the patrilateral distant agnates (clansmen excluding the father's brothers and their sons) and members of the nuclear family, but also to the classificatory relatives. So, it is notable that personal camels are donated among the effective kindred group, in contrast with the trust camels given to various kinds of social members.

THE CAMEL TRUST SYSTEM

In this chapter, I enumerate the fundamental rules of the camel trust system.

I. The Category of the Trust Camel

Trust camels are female camels entrusted to other persons. The trustee must treat both the entrusted female camel and its female offspring as trust camels. This practice is a lump-sum categorization of the female offspring of the uterine strain. The trustee is not vested with ownership of trust camels, but holds just the usufruct right, being able to have full disposal of milk, blood and male offspring from it.

Among the Rendille, one ox-camel is exchangeable for one ox. Also, according to differential stages of growth, it is exchangeable for 3 to 12 heads of small stock. Furthermore, one ox-camel is exchangeable equivalently for one female calf-camel or one female calf. The female calf-camel which has been exchanged for one ox-camel is treated as a personal camel. Therefore, the holder of a trust camel can make a living by making efficient use of the male offspring either through sale or exchange for a personal female camel.

II. The Female Camel to Be Entrusted

When someone wants to obtain a trust camel he may ask for either the weaned calf-camel or the nulliparous heifer-camel which has never been milked. Usually, an infant camel is weaned from its mother one year after birth and heifers get pregnant four years after birth for the first time. So, the one-to-four year-old female camels are available as trust camels. However, nobody is prohibited from entrusting a pregnant or multiparous camel to somebody. When the trustor kindly guesses the trustee's need for one, sometimes he entrusts his female camel. In any case, the female camel to be entrusted is left to the trustor's discretion.

III. The Credit and Debt of the Trust Camel

The trustor of the camel regards the trustee as his reliable friend (*al*), and is regarded as a worthy man (*kamur*) by the trustee. The trustor keeps the credit (*amuru*) on the trustee and can press for the return of the trust camel.

On the other hand, the trustee is indebted (*mokku*) and has to return the camel to the trustor upon request. As long as any trust camel, including the original female and its female offspring, is alive, the first sons of both parties succeed to the credit and debt of their fathers through generations. It is said that the debt of a man does not disappear; "*mokkuti-inamki-lapp mababato.*"

IV. The Marking and Name of the Trust Camel

The trustor of camel has the trustee put a specific markings on the camels, and the trustee calls the trust camel with one of "the names of trust camel" which coincide with the trustor's descent group.

1. Camel Markings

A camel marking is composed of a brand and ear-marks. Branding is done with a hot iron. Most Rendille have a common brand mark at the level of either the sub-

clan or clan, although the two sub-clans, *Nebei* and *Gobore* of *Salle* clan, and the *Galfure* lineage group (*Orbora* sub-clan) of *Tupcha* clan do not have their own brands. The brand is the emblem of a descent group, and therefore an individual is prohibited from contriving a new brand.

An ear-mark is made by clipping part of the ear with a knife. The ear-mark is also the emblem of a descent group, and either the family or the lineage group uses a common ear-mark. The *Salle* clansmen have the privilege of using as ownership mark the ear-mark which is called "*nebei*" (well-being, peace and security). The *nebei* ear-mark is made by cutting off a semicircle on the top of the right ear. Other clansmen are prohibited from using it as their ownership mark.

The marking is done to the immature animals. Of the four days of the sacrifice feast (*sorio*), held four times a year, the first, second and fourth feast days bring "good luck for the camels," and marking occurs on these three days.

If a female camel unexpectedly becomes pregnant, its holder will not put any mark on it all its life. It is believed that, if someone violates this prohibition, this female camel either has a stillbirth or will become infertile.

Also, nobody is allowed to put a new mark on the camel with an existing mark. This deviant behavior is regarded as *bidir*. A person who does not observe mourning for his parents, who forcibly withdraws an auspicious female camel, or who manipulates witchcraft, is also regarded as *bidir*.

In case of *bidir* and an unexpected pregnancy before the marking, the holder must wait until the female camel bears and then put the correct mark on the newborn.

2. The Camel Name of the Same Uterine Strain

The Rendille distinguish the uterine name of the personal camel (*ayuti-mine*; hut, kind, and matri-line of female camels) from that of the trust camel (*ko*). The uterine names of personal camels refer to the individual physical characteristics and the means of procurement. The former is derived from the color-configurational, morphological and physiological characteristics of the individual camels, while the latter is derived from the types of livestock which were traded or exchanged for the female camel, the ethnic name of transactional partner and the place name of transaction, the name of ethnic groups and place of the camel raided, and the occasion of societal transaction.

But, the uterine names of trust camels are made on the basis of a completely different principle. As shown in Table 1, the names of trust camels are categorized at the level of the lineage group or sub-clan. The trustee of a camel uses "the name of the trust camel" which is associated with the descent group of the trustor, regardless of the individual characteristics and the circumstances of the acquisition. In other words, the trustee determines the name of the trust camel in accordance with the descent group of the trustor.

Even when the trustee is entrusted with two camels which come from two different uterine strains, he will refer to them with the same "name of the trust camel" which is associated with the trustor's descent group. Also, when the trustee is entrusted with two camels by two trustors who belong to the same descent group with a common name for a trust camel, he will call them with the same name. Con-

versely, when one holds a camel called "*guuto*," he had been "directly" (see below) entrusted with it by somebody of the *Gallale* lineage group (*Orbora* sub-clan, *Tupcha* clan). Strictly speaking, the name of the trust camel neither indicates the individual uterine strain of camels, nor the individual trustor. Rather, it indicates the name of the descent group of the trustor.

V. The Sublease (Sub-Trust) of Trust Camels

The trustee of a camel can sublease (or sub-trust) either the entrusted camel itself or its female offspring to a third person as a trust camel at his disposal. Here, I shall call the trustor who entrusted his personal female camel as the first trustor, and his immediate recipient as the first trustee. I shall define the relation of the first trustor to the first trustee as the first trust relation. Thus, the second trustee is defined as the recipient of the trust camel which is subleased by the first trustee. The first trustee can be called the second trustor to the second trustee. When either the female camel from the first trustor, or its offspring is subleased, a chain of trust relations is formed through the medium of trust camels. Along the chain of trust relations, any trustee must mark the trust camel as instructed by the first trustor. But all trustees must use "the name of trust camel" of their immediate trustors.

VI. The Credit and Debt, and the Avoidance Relation in the Sublease of the Trust Camel

The whole chain of trust relations is formed on the basis of the dyadic interpersonal relation between the trustor and his immediate trustee. For example, concerning a trust camel of the third trust relation, the third trustor (= the second trustee) directly exercises credit on his immediate trustee, and the third trustee (if this man subleases to somebody again, he will be the fourth trustor) is indebted to his immediate trustor.

However, if the first trustor wants to interfere with the third trust relation, first he must tell the first trustee (= the second trustor) of his intentions. Then, the first trustee informs the second trustee, with the latter informing the third trustee of the intention of the first trustor.

There are cases where the first trustee is requested repayment from the first trustor, but he does not have any camel (to repay with) at hand. In such a case, the first trustee has the second trustee return one camel so that he can repay it to the first trustor. If the second trustee does not have any camel, he will inquire to the third trustee and have him return one camel, and he will return this camel to the first trustee. Finally, the first trustee will return this camel to the first trustor.

As mentioned above, in the whole chain of trust relations, the credit and debt in trust camel is fulfilled through the dyadic interpersonal relations. The first trustor always stands on the side of creditor, and the man who is at the end of the chain always stands on the side of the debtor. Then, the men in-between simultaneously stand on the side of the creditor to one, and stands on the side of the debtor to the other. The first trustor retains the ultimate credit, so he is regarded as the owner (*oyo*) of all the trust camels which are involved in the chain of trust relations. The

strength of his authority and claim is also expressed by the proverb that “the owner knows how to cut the stick [*ul geddi lakagocho, oyo agarta*].”

The following case shows how the owner of trust camel exercises his authority and how his decision is held in high regard by the public.

[Case 5]

Wario Halo and Aboran Gallale are members of the *Orbora* sub-clan of the *Tupcha* clan. Wario belongs to the *Orbora* lineage group, and Aboran belongs to the *Gallale* lineage group. These two men fought each other in 1969 in their youth at a water hole over the path for the watering camels. Wario hit Aboran on the head with a club. Early the following morning, Aboran led two female camels (one mother camel and its offspring) out from Wario's camel pen and put them in his own pen. These two camels had been entrusted to Wario by Galbowa, a patrilineal parallel cousin of Aboran.

When Wario found this out, he rushed to the camel pen of Aboran. They quarreled and beat each other with sticks. This fight was stopped by on-lookers, and meetings were held for a settlement by the elders for two days following the incident.

They concluded that whether or not these two camels were to be taken back to Wario's pen was up to Galbowa, the first trustor of these camels.

Galbowa decided to return the camels to Wario's pen, and he instructed Aboran to do so. But Aboran ignored his order. Inevitably, Galbowa himself took the camels to Wario's pen.

In this case, because Galbowa was a patrilineal parallel cousin of Aboran, he should have supported Aboran's action. But, Galbowa had been entrusted camels from two men who belonged to the same lineage group as Wario. If Galbowa should support Aboran, he would face imminent withdrawal of his camels by the trustors. Therefore, he supported Wario and settled this conflict.

There are some cases where the sublease of trust camels is avoided. When the first trustee and the first trustor belong to the same clan, but to different lineage groups, the former avoids subleasing the camel to the latter's patrilineal parallel close agnates (the father's brothers and their sons). When the first trustee and the first trustor belong to different clans, the former avoids subleasing the camel to any member of the latter's clan.

In the above two situations, the first trustee never subleases the trust camel to either the patrilineal parallel close agnates or the clansmen of the first trustor. Because of “the solidarity of brothers,” if he does, it will be hardly possible for the second trustor (the first trustee) to have his immediate trustee (the second trustee) repay the trust camel.

For the same reason, when the second trustor and the second trustee belong to different lineage groups (or clans) from the first trustor, the second trustor stubbornly opposes that the second trustee should sublease the camel to the patrilineal parallel close agnates (or clansmen) of the first trustor. Such actions are avoided, with the saying that the fat wrapping the stomach cannot be put into it; “*gemedi morris malakafoho*.”

For example, suppose *a* and *b* are the brothers of *S* family, and that *a* entrusts one camel to *d* of *P* family and in turn *d* subleases the camel to *e* of *Q* family. Furthermore, suppose *e* subleases the camel not to *a* himself, but *b* again.

In such a case, *a* makes a profit without doing anything because one of his trust

camels has been given back to his brother, *b*.

Suppose *d* demands the return of trust camel from *e*, and in turn the latter from *b*. If *b* rejects both *d*'s and *e*'s demands for repayment, the latter (*d* and *e*) cannot forcibly "withdraw" because it may happen that *a*, who is *b*'s brother, withdraws all of his trust camels from *d* and *e*.

Thus, *d* and *e* stand to lose their credit from *b*. Consequently, *d* foresees this situation and opposes stubbornly that *e* should sublease to *b*.

Along the whole chain of trust relations, the patrilineal parallel close agnates and the clansmen demarcate the boundary, and function like a semipermeable membrane in that those trust camels which have been once put out of their boundary cannot be brought back within the boundary through subleasing.

According to the kinship terminology of the Rendille, brothers and patrilineal parallel cousins are respectively "*walal*" and "*eelennie*" as a form of reference. But, both are called "*walal*" as a form of address. The term "*walal*" extends from the brothers to clansmen, and all clansmen are regarded as "brothers" except for the men of the father's generation as well as men of the children's generation. The strength of the solidarity of brothers is exaggerated by the saying that a brother's stick beats even the clansmen; "*usi-walale walal lakatuma*." And the strength of clan solidarity is also exaggerated by the saying that the words of the clan is like an unyielding mountain; "*yedi-yafe iddi hal, malakakolo*."

VII. The Exercise of Credit in Trust Camels

If the trustee is requested by the trustor to repay the trust camel, he can only repay with either one heifer-camel or one female calf-camel. In this case, multiparous camels are excluded. Furthermore, he only needs to repay one trust camel at a time for each demand for repayment.

When the trustor wants to make a request for repayment of the trust camel, he conventionally says "give me the guest female calf-camel!" And he calls the female camel with the original uterine name of its maternal ancestors belonging to his herd. The trustor calls the camel to be repaid "the guest female calf-camel" not only because it is cared for by others, but also because the category of the trust camel temporarily applies.

Normally, if a personal camel is given away as a trust camel between two brothers, their sons should refrain from making a request for repayment, but their grandsons could. This is expressed by the phrase that neither brother, nor patrilineal parallel cousins should impose (the credit and debt of) camels on each other; "*dodi isuledesse ichou eelennie gaal miskakolicho*."

When the trustee is entrusted with a camel by a man who is neither his patrilineal parallel close agnate nor his brother, he only has to repay one female camel to the trustor when he has three to four female offspring, and his son should repay one female camel in the next generation.

When a trust camel is deemed to have passed menopause, the trustee returns this old female camel to the trustor. Then the latter slaughters it. This ritual is called "washing the female camel (*ayu aladikha*)."

It means not only that the female camel has accomplished a life as the trust camel, but also that the trust relation had

been well-kept. It is regarded as a happy event.

[Case 6]

Gikoorā Eisenharau and Machei Dirgil belong to the same clan (*Tupcha*), but to different sub-clans, *Orbora* and *Deere*, respectively. Gikoorā's father had entrusted one female camel to Machei's father in 1957.

This female camel first gave birth at age five (1961), and subsequently gave birth to eight offspring. But, when serial four copulations did not make her pregnant after 10th offspring in 1980, it was decided that this female was passed menopause. In 1983, Machei's mother, instead of her dead husband, returned this old female camel to Gikoorā's father. Machei kept three female offspring of this strain. Gikoorā, being the first son, slaughtered the old female in front of his hut within the settlement site.

The trustor of a camel is allowed to request for some small stock and clothes from his immediate trustee every two or three years, because he retains a latent credit in the trust camel. He can exercise this credit if he has a plausible cause, such as the collapse of the family herd from raiding or disaster, the shortage of camels in milk or auspicious female camels to be donated. But a trustor that makes frequent requests without a plausible need is abhorred. In some circumstances, the trust relation may be broken off by the trustee.

Thus, the trustor exercises his credit under some social restrictions. But, a trustor's request for repayment does have a strong compulsory power. If some serious breach occurs between the trustor and his trustee, the former can withdraw all of his trust camels. This action is called "compulsory withdrawal of the trust camel (to take away; *kabahacha*)."

In the following case, the first trustor tries to have one of his trustees repay the trust camel for the reason of his mother's death.

[Case 7]

Kuraro Gallale is the first son and is a member of the *Tupcha* clan. In 1962, he entrusted his personal camel to Erwas (*Nebei* sub-clan, *Salle* clan) who was his mother's brother's son. In turn, Erwas subleased one offspring of this entrusted camel to Ikimire (*Urwen* clan) who was the eldest brother of his second wife.

Kuraro had to donate his personal female camel to his younger brother, Inchorin, as the legacy of the mother who had died in 1988. He decided to have Erwas return one trust camel and donate it for the legacy. Thus, he told Inchorin of his intention. Accordingly, Inchorin visited Erwas and requested the repayment of trust camel. Although Erwas had kept two female camels at hand, unfortunately, he had not kept any young female camel suitable for repayment. He informed Inchorine that Ikimire who was the second trustee kept one cow-camel, one heifer-camel and one female calf-camel.

Inchorin, with Erwas's and Kuraro's consent, visited Ikimire to request one heifer-camel. Ikimire rejected Inchorin's request once, saying that he wanted to make sure of the intentions of the first trustor, Kuraro, and the second trustor, Erwas.

Upon hearing this, Kuraro sent someone to inform Ikimire that he hoped to have Ikimire repay one heifer-camel to Inchorin. Thus, Ikimire proposed to Inchorin, who had visited him again, that he could repay Inchorin with one female calf-camel instead of a heifer-camel. But Inchorin insisted on the heifer-camel because he needed it as his mother's legacy camel, and so rejected Ikimire's proposal.

When I left Rendille in November 1988, Inchorin was still waiting for Erwas to persuade Ikimire from the standpoint of the second trustor.

The demand by Kuraro and Inchorin holds a compulsory power because a mother's legacy camel is one of auspicious camels. Therefore, if Ikimire keeps on rejecting the request, they will be allowed to withdraw forcibly all the trust camels which are kept by Ikimire.

VIII. The Cancellation of Trust Relations

A trust relation may be canceled in the following three situations. Firstly, the cancellation of a trust relation is necessary upon the loss of the trust camel. This occurs when the trust camel disappears from all the trustees who take part in the chain of trust relations, either through raiding or death.

Secondly, there is the absence of the trustee's heir. In the chain of trust relations, if the trustee should fail to beget an heir, there would be no title-holder responsible for that trust relation. Thus, the first trustor withdraws forcibly all the trust camels from the trustee upon foreseeing such a situation.

Thirdly, there is the societal breach between the trustor and his trustee. In this case, the trustor forcibly withdraws all the trust camels from the trustee.

[Case 8]

Sereban Halo was the first son and a member of the *Tupcha* clan. His mother was a daughter of the Sahado family of the *Rengumo* clan. When she married around 1950, she was given one female camel as a dowry from her father. Her father had been entrusted some trust camels from a member of the Dohole family of the *Dupsai* clan. The camel he gave his daughter was one of them. Sereban, who was the eldest son, took charge of his mother's dowry camels. In 1984, he subleased one female calf-camel to Sugubure Galfure who belonged to the same clan as himself in order to reward his herding labor.

In 1982, an elder of the *Dupsai* clan beat one youth of the *Tupcha* clan. The incident led to repeated clashes among the youths of the both clans, with many casualties. Finally, this incident was settled through the intervention of the District Officers. But ill feelings lingered between both clans. Members of both clans exercised antagonistic compulsory withdrawal of the trust camels.

In 1986, a member of the Dohole family, from the a standpoint of the first trustor, tried to withdraw all the trust camels which Sereban and Sugubure had been keeping as the second and third trustees. At that time, Sereban and Sugubure kept at hand three trust camels (one cow-camel, one heifer-camel and one female calf-camel) and one trust camel (heifer-camel), respectively.

The eldest brother of Sereban's mother tried to arbitrate this difference between the Dohole and Sereban not only because he was the first trustee, but also because he had entrusted another camel to a man of the Dohole family. Ultimately, the withdrawal from Sereban did not occur, but withdrawal of the trust camel from Sugubure did.

Because the eldest brother of Sereban's mother had entrusted another camel to a Dohole, Sereban did not have to face the compulsory withdrawal of camels.

In regard with the compulsory withdrawal, I compiled 17 cases where the reasons were ascertained. Among the reasons for compulsory withdrawal, the majority was the strife between the persons concerned (10 cases). Second was where

the eldest brother exercised compulsory withdrawal from his younger brother because the younger brother had not obeyed his instructions for herd management (3 cases). The remaining 4 cases were caused by the following reasons:

- (1) The trustee rejected two consecutive requests for one small stock from the first trustor.
- (2) The second trustee concealed the fact that he had been entrusted with a trust camel by the first trustee, from the first trustor who had made two consecutive inquiries.
- (3) The family camels of the first trustor was reduced by raids.
- (4) The first trustor needed one personal camel to donate to his younger brother when his elder brother died.

The first trustor has the discretionary power over his trust camels. However, there is some ways to hold out against the compulsory withdrawal by the first trustor.

Case 5 occurred among the same clansmen. The patrilateral parallel cousin of the first trustor fought against the first trustee, and then, on the strength of the solidarity of brothers, took away two trust camels from him. Meanwhile, the first trustor had been entrusted with some camels by two men who belonged to the same lineage group as the first trustee. The first trustor returned two camels to the first trustee for fear that there would be a compulsory withdrawal of his entrusted camels.

Case 8 concerned different clans. The first trustor tried to withdraw all the trust camels the second and third trustees had kept at hand. The first trustee was the mother's eldest brother of the second trustee and at the same time had entrusted another camel to the first trustor. He tried to arbitrate the conflict between the first trustor and the second and third trustees. Consequently, the first trustor gave up withdrawal from the second trustee, but withdrew one trust camel from the third trustee. The second trustee got away successfully through the arbitration of his mother's eldest brother.

These two cases show that the trustee can keep the first trustor from exercising his compulsory withdrawal so long as either he or his close relative has an entrusted camel with the first trustor. So long as the trust relation is unilateral, the trustee is always in danger of the compulsory withdrawal by the first trustor. But, if he has established a bilateral trust relation with the first trustor, the trustee can escape the danger of compulsory withdrawal. If the trustee has either his close relative or his close friend entrust another camel to his first trustor, he can count on their support as an effective deterrence.

As mentioned above, the camel trust system works through the medium of the unity of a father with his first son. Whereas fundamentally it works on the basis of the favorable societal relations, it works together with the structural framework of the more corporate groups of patrilateral parallel close agnates and clansmen within the descent group.

Also, the camel trust system is the transfer system of the usufruct right of camels and may be regarded as a kind of trust system not only because the first trustor of camels is assured of ownership, but also because he is allowed to exercise stronger discretion by manipulating the trust camels through his trustees. In this case, the

trustees are only temporary holders without any recourse to final decision-making, and face the risk of intervention in the management of trust camels by the first trustor. Therefore, they must pay attention to the first trustor's actions.

CONCLUSION

For the Rendille, camels symbolize the well-being of the herding way of life as a whole. In this paper, I have shown some case studies highlighting the institutional aspects of the camel trust system. My analysis shows that the general transaction of camels is mutual-binding and is closely interrelated with the social structure.

The personal camels are donated to each other on the basis of generalized reciprocity, and vested with the social significance that defines the peculiarity and solidarity of effective kindreds. The reciprocal transaction of personal camels maintains and reinforces the internal structure of effective kindreds, structured by the unity of a father with his first son, the peculiar relation of a mother's eldest brother to a sister's eldest son, and the relation among the first sons within patrilineal parallel close agnates.

In contrast, trust camels are transferred widely among the social members, including the members who do not belong to the kindred group, and vested with the social significance that stands for individual and dyadic association (or friendship) on the basis of balanced reciprocity (Sahlins, 1972). In the context of legally managing trust camels, the group of patrilineal parallel close agnates and that of clansmen can be specified as the corporate group, and the solidarity of patrilineal parallel cousins and that of clansmen are emphasized.

Thus, there is a contrast between the legal disposal, reciprocity and the effective social category of personal camels and trust camels. However, both categories of camels are legally managed within the structural framework set up by effective kindred relations and patrilineal descent relations. Camels are not only legally managed in accordance to social structure, but also work to reinforce it.

The camel trust system (*maal* system) has attracted scholars who studied the Rendille society. Spencer (1973: 37-40) was the first, and described trust camels as "the shared beasts." Beaman (1981: 191, 201-205) described them as "the permanently borrowed camels." Schlee (1989: 56-59) described them as "loan camels."

These three scholars were correct to regard the *maal* system as a type of general loan system. The latter two scholars subdivided the loan system of camels into two types. One was the short-term loan camels, where one cow-camel was leased to someone for the period of one lactation only. The other was the long-term loan female camels, where one young female was loaned to someone, who in turn subleased either it or its female offspring to the third person. I make a sharp distinction between the two, and classify "short-term loan" as the temporary loan of the camel in milk, and "long-term loan" as the camel trust system.

The word "loan" is applicable when one camel in milk is furnished for temporary use to someone upon request on the condition that it shall be returned when the milk stops. However, the word "trust" is more applicable to the camel trust

system because the camel owner is confident enough of someone to give him the usufruct right of the camel to keep, use, or administer benefit. If the trustee fails to keep the confidence of the trustor, the latter can exercise the compulsory withdrawal of his trust camels. The three scholars misunderstand this point.

Spencer (1973: 38) stated that, "The original owner (or his inheritor) cannot assert an incontrovertible right to claim them (shared beasts) back from the borrower (or his inheritor). He in turn is bound by certain conventions." Beaman (1981: 202–203) concluded that, "The lender and his sons and grandsons retain a permanent right to ask for the return of any of the female offspring of the original camel, but should never ask for the return of the original one."

Schlee (1989) pointed out that the lender cannot use latent rights in animals of the *maal* herd unless he has a plausible need.

These three scholars concluded that in the camel trust system the first trustor has difficulty in exercising his ownership over the trust camel and that the system favors the trustee more than the trustor. Contrary to their conclusion, my study revealed that the first trustor frequently exercised compulsory withdrawal of his trust camels for various reasons, even against his brother. Apparently, the camel trust system favors the trustor more than the trustee.

Finally, all three scholars try to clarify the camel trust system from the viewpoint of cultural and economic significance. They (Spencer 1973, Beaman 1981, Schlee 1989), regarded the system as an economic system of mutual aid accompanied with the promotion of the first trustor's prestige. I don't think that the Rendille live by prestige alone. Their interpretation ignores the societal aspects of the legal management of the trust camels, and therefore is incomplete for an exact understanding of the camel trust system.

As stated previously, in contrast to the management of personal camels, the legal management of trust camels emphasizes the solidarity of the patrilineal descent group. Also, the trust system of camels creates and binds the dyadic associations among the general social relations. Thus, the camel trust system functions more actively within the socio-political domain than in the cultural domain.

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