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A STUDY OF SOCIAL ORGANISATION IN CERTAIN VILLAGES IN WEST KHURĀSĀN, IRAN, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KINSHIP AND AGRICULTURAL ACTIVITIES

BY

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF

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JULY 1975

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A Study of Social Organisation in Certain Villages in West Khurāsān, Iran, with special reference to Kinship and Agricultural Activities.

Abstract

Eleven villages were studied, having from 3 to 559 inhabitants. Their semi-desert environment has a history of political insecurity. Agriculture depends upon irrigation.

Land ownership varies between large-scale and peasant proprietors, the former employing share-croppers. Land utilization is restricted by techniques, environmental conditions and conflicts between landowners. Only large-scale owners maintain qanāts; lack of maintenance can produce poverty and settlement decline. Cultivation practices and crop-division vary between villages. Prosperity differs between oxen-owning and oxen-less share-croppers; high job-mobility among the latter expresses dissatisfaction with working conditions. Marx's concept of alienation is useful in examining the landlord-peasant relationship. Land Reform requires careful management to be effective.

The nuclear family, occasionally extending over three generations, is the basis of kinship structure. After marriage a new household is formed in stages.

Patrilineages are small and unnamed, but agnates are united by common religious status and agnatic support can have political importance. Women have no descent status. The kinship network provides friendship, hospitality, monetary aid and marriage-partners for its members. Over a third of the population examined married kin. Endogamy within the patrilineage is a descent structure. Bride-price is distinct from an insurance specified in the marriage-contract, the latter sum could prevent marriage dissolution. Marriage stability is related to the degree of kin between partners, co-residence at the time of marriage, and whether the marriage is a first union.

Certain aspects of religious ceremonies, particularly those commemorating the death of Ḥusayn, express problems in other social institutions. Magical beliefs and sorcery practices attempt to explain and control irrational events.

Within the two social classes rank is differentiated by a number of factors. Village administration is effected by informal power.

Redfield's concept of folk-culture is not an accurate description of Iranian village society.



The main qal'eh of Ḥusaynābād

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NB. These colour prints are taken from 8 mm. film.

PREFACE

The fieldwork for this thesis was made possible by a Hayter Fellowship in Anthropology in the Department of Geography, University of Durham. I am most grateful to Professors W.B.Fisher and H.Bowen-Jones, of the Department of Geography, University of Durham, and of the Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham, for the opportunity to carry out research, for their advice, and for use of the extensive facilities of the Department of Geography.

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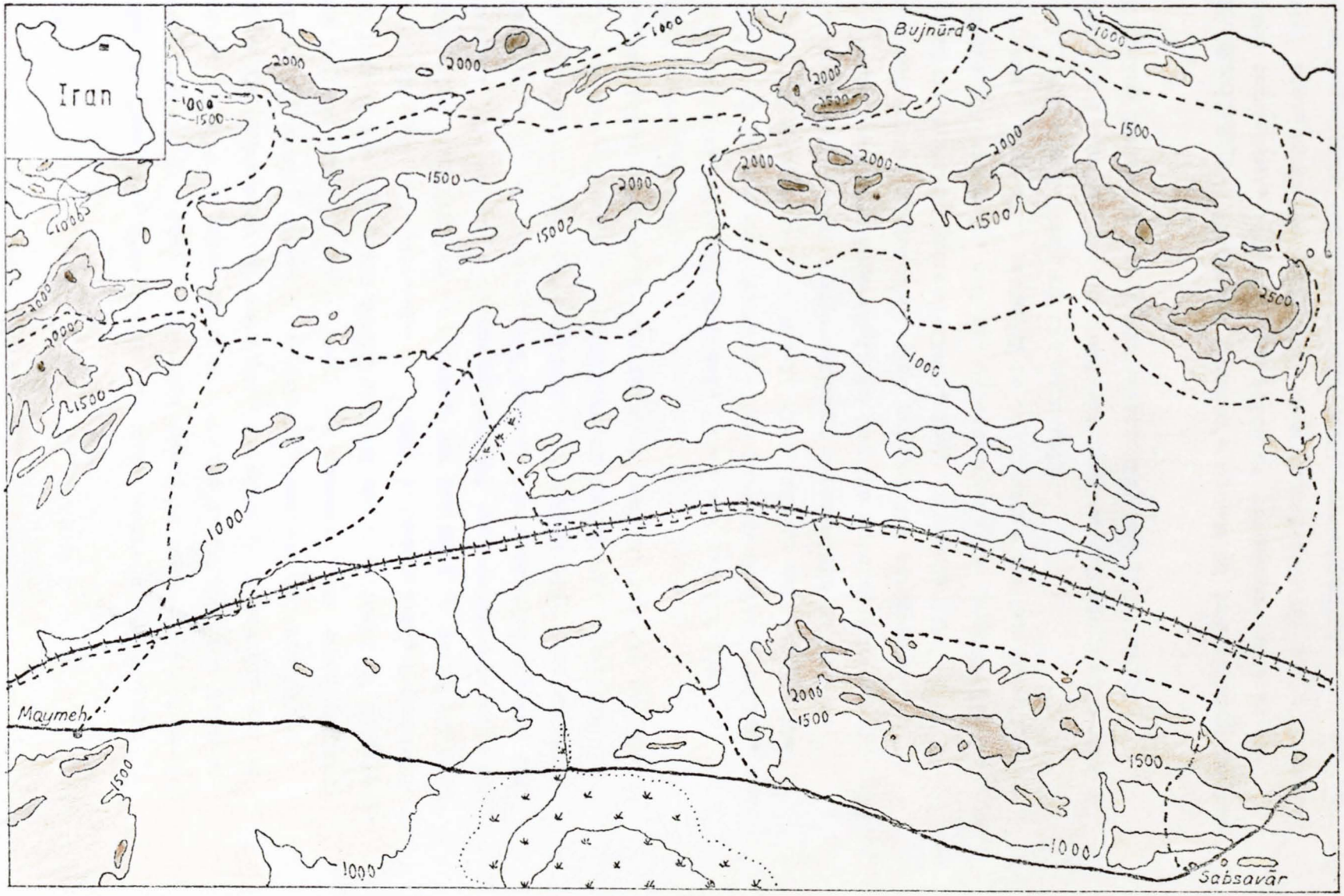
I am grateful to David Stronach, M.A., F.S.A., for his hospitality at the British Institute for Persian Studies, Tehrān, and for use of its facilities. I should also like to acknowledge the assistance of many members of Government departments in Tehrān.

It would have been impossible to combine writing this thesis with domestic and family responsibilities without the co-operation and support of my husband Terence Holmes, Esq. I should like to acknowledge all his help, and his assistance in the preparation of maps and diagrams. I am also grateful to Joy Travers for her care in correcting the final draft of the manuscript.

Finally I should like to thank the Iranian villagers with whom I stayed during fieldwork for their hospitality and friendship.

Note on Orthography. Professor Lambton's system of transliteration has been used throughout, with the exception of two place-names in the fieldwork area, when the zammeh has been transliterated as 'o' instead of 'u' as being more consistent with local pronunciation.

Map 1 : Fieldwork Area



CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

This thesis will attempt to analyse the social structure of village life in the north-western part of the province of Khurāsān, in Iran. Khurāsān itself covers a large area in the north and east of Iran. The 1966 National Census of Population and Housing gives the population of Iran as 25,323,064,[1] excluding the migrant tribespeople who numbered about 3,000,000.[2] Of these 25,323,064 persons 15,284,677, or 61.26%,[3] lived in rural areas, that is, in settlements with a population of less than 5,000. Therefore, although this thesis necessarily studies only a very small fraction of the population of Iran, that fraction does represent the way of life of the majority.

Fieldwork was carried out in an administrative area or baksh of the district of Bujnūrd within the area shown in map 1. The administrative centre of the area was a town of some 3,000 inhabitants which will be referred to as Bakshahr. Most of the other settlements in the area were extremely small so that, to obtain a comprehensive picture of village life, more than one village was studied. Since, initially, the writer's freedom of movement within the baksh was restricted, it was not possible to examine the

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1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a. National Census of Population and Housing, 1966. Tehrān: Plan Organisation, Iran Statistical Centre; as quoted by Firoozi, F. 1970. Iranian Census 1956 and 1966; A Comparative Analysis. Middle East Journal, vol.24, no.2, p.220.

2. Firoozi, F. 1970, op.cit., p.226.

3. Ibid., p.221.

villages on a sample basis. Villages were not spread evenly throughout the baksh but were clustered together in groups. Two of these groups were studied, containing six and five villages respectively. The economy of all the villages was based on agriculture and at the time of fieldwork most of the land was cultivated by sharecroppers. Many landlords also owned flocks, kept in other parts of the baksh, and these were only studied in so far as they interracted with agriculture. Enquiries about agriculture were carried out in all eleven villages; enquiries about kinship, marriage and other activities were concentrated in the larger group. One village in this group, which will be referred to as Ḥusaynābād, was selected for intensive study because it was larger than the rest. Although it is not necessary to preserve the anonymity of all the villages, three have been re-named. Before they are described in more detail a summary of the physical geography and history of the region will be given as background information.

1. Physical Geography

The most comprehensive study of the geography of Iran is Volume 1 of the Cambridge History of Iran, edited by W.B. Fisher.[1] A useful summary of the geography of

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1. Fisher, W.B. (ed.) 1968. The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.1. Cambridge University Press.

Khurāsān itself has been given by McLachlan and Spooner.[1]

The villages are in a flat plain some 80 miles long and 50 miles broad. The southward edge of the plain is a range of hills, running east-west, locally about 2,000 metres high, which separates the region from the Tehrān-Mashhad highway.[2] To the north and west the plain is hemmed in by the curve of the Elburz chain, where some peaks rise to over 4,000 metres to the east, but further away is the high chain of the Kopet Dāgh, and the mountains south of it. On a clear day these old high rocks are the limits of the visible horizon.

Locally the plain is broken up by many irregular smaller hills, running in the main east-west but with many variations, which effectively divide the villages into small local clusters in the plain, and give some scenic variety. The flatness of the plain is a result of the debris spread evenly across it[3] so that, characteristically, the hills rise sharply from it. The general altitude of the plain is around 1,000 metres.

Climate

To add to the description given in this section, some climatic data are presented in Table I. McLachlan and

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1. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963. A Preliminary Assessment of Potential Resources in Khorasan, Iran. Tehrān:Italconsult.
2. C.f. Fisher, W.B. 1968. Physical Geography. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I (ed.) W.B.Fisher, Cambridge University Press, pp.46-7.
3. For the geology of the region, see Morrison, A.V. 1968. Geology. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol I (ed.) W.B.Fisher, Cambridge University Press, pp.146-7.

Table I: Climatic Data

		Temperature °C [1]		Rain fall (mm.) [1]	Relative Humidity [2]		Cloud (Oktas) [2]		No. of days of [2]			
		Max.	Min.		03 GMT	01 GMT	03 GMT	09 GMT	Air frost	Snow &/or sleet	Thunder	Fog
Station I	Jan.	6.4	-2.0	12.9	81	57	4	4	30	4	-	1
	Feb.	9.6	-1.0	14.6	83	53	4	4	28	8	-	-
	Mar.	13.6	2.6	25.7	72	41	5	5	9	-	1	-
	Apr.	20.7	8.6	24.6	55	27	4	4	-	-	6	-
	May.	26.1	12.8	18.4	58	32	4	5	-	-	-	-
	Jun.	30.0	16.9	4.8	66	29	2	2	-	-	-	-
	Jly.	32.1	19.6	2.8	54	27	3	3	-	-	-	-
	Aug.	31.2	18.8	0.3	54	28	2	3	-	-	-	-
	Sep.	27.7	14.7	4.7	56	28	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Oct.	21.6	8.7	5.9	64	31	2	2	-	-	-	-
	Nov.	14.8	3.1	9.9	76	45	4	5	8	4	-	-
	Dec.	7.9	-0.6	10.1	79	48	4	4	26	-	-	-
	Year	20.1	8.5	134.7	67	37	3	3	101	16	7	1
Station II	Jan.	9.8	-1.9	26.9	87	58	3	4	25	2	-	2
	Feb.	13.2	0.4	18.0	84	66	3	4	26	-	-	-
	Mar.	16.8	4.0	36.6	78	46	4	5	9	-	3	-
	Apr.	24.4	9.4	23.0	64	30	3	3	-	-	3	-
	May.	29.3	14.1	16.9	49	27	3	4	-	-	2	-
	Jun.	34.8	18.2	4.6	34	20	1	1	-	-	3	-
	Jul.	37.6	21.9	0.4	35	22	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Aug.	36.5	19.5	0.0	36	22	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Sep.	32.6	14.3	0.0	47	23	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Oct.	25.9	8.4	5.1	47	23	1	1	-	-	-	-
	Nov.	16.0	1.5	14.6	67	38	3	3	12	1	-	-
	Dec.	10.0	-1.5	16.8	85	52	3	4	29	3	-	1
	Year	23.9	9.0	162.9	59	35	2	3	101	6	11	3

1. From: Ganji, M.H. 1968. Climate. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.1 (ed.) W.B.Fisher, Cambridge University Press, pp.248-9.

2. From: Iran, Imperial Government of. 1960. Meteorological Yearbook of Iran, 1959. Tehrān: Ministry of Roads, Iranian Meteorological Department, Climatological Branch.

Spooner give an excellent description of the main features of the climate of Khurāsān.[1]

Climatically the year is divisible into two halves: the summer period from April to September inclusive, and the winter period from October to March. The change from one to the other is extremely rapid.

The winter is dominated by the great high-pressure system of Central Asia, prevailing conditions are therefore anticyclonic in type· Snow falls, the weather is generally cold and dry and usually very calm, especially in the mornings. This weather can be interrupted by an anticyclonic surge from high latitudes bringing violent winds, low temperatures and blizzards of driving snow: dangerous conditions for animal and human life. For the maintenance of livelihood the more important interruptions to the calms are the eastward movements of depressions over and from the Mediterranean at this season, which brings to northern Khurāsān its main supply of rain.

This rain persists into spring, which is therefore the wettest season, because the rainfall coincides with the melting of the snows. The combinations may be a threat to the structure of the qanāts, the underground seepage channels which are essential to agriculture. The summer season is also the dry season, because the weather is mainly controlled by the great low-pressure system of

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1. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., pp.4-8

Central Asia and the sea winds, by the time they reach the area, are warm and dry. Hence there is little change from day to day: cloudlessness, a continuous bright sun, low humidity and virtually no rainfall.

Most of the winds in Khurāsān come from the north-west in winter and from the north-east in summer.[1] However, a special feature of the summer climate is a wind from the north-west, the 'wind of 100 days', which is caused by air circulation round the main low pressure centre of the monsoonal system. In the region studied the gusts tended to come from the north-east, perhaps because it was more sheltered by hills to the west. The gusts are said to reach a velocity of 70 m.p.h., and although the clouds of soil and grit they bring are a considerable nuisance, they bring the temperature down so that the periods of greatest heat do not endure for long.

In his description of the climate of the plateau area of Iran, Ganji has emphasised that prevailing dryness is one of its fundamental features.[2] In general the precipitation is seasonal in incidence, intensely variable from year to year, and small in quantity.[3] All these factors are critical in the consideration of agricultural activity.

Three major factors, dune systems, features of erosion and salinity, arise from the character of the climate and in

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1. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.6.
2. Ganji, M.H. 1968, op.cit., p.237.
3. Ibid., pp.236-50. See also McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., pp.5-6

turn add to the over-all state of aridity. Erosion has had especially serious effects.[1]

This dryness goes with a remarkable clarity of atmosphere. Altitude and the continentality of the region cause large diurnal temperature changes which in summer bring most welcome relief from the unclouded sunshine, while the dew brings some benefit to agriculture.

Soils

Dewan and Famouri have described the soils typical of the Iranian plateau,[2] and McLachlan and Spooner have given further details of the soils of Khurāsān.[3] In general in plateau Iran organic 'living' soil is rare, due to a combination of climatic and biotic factors. There is little organic matter in the soil, 0.1-0.2% in the surface horizon. Acidity is rarely marked, reaction tends to be slightly alkaline.[4] Salinity, as well as aridity, imposes severe restriction on agriculture.[5]

Vegetation and Wild Animals.

The natural vegetation of the region is low scrub of

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1. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.8.
2. Dewan, M.I. & Famouri, J. 1968. Soils. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I (ed.) W.B.Fisher, Cambridge University Press, pp.256-7.
3. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1953, op.cit., p.8.
4. Dewan, M.I. & Famouri, J. 1968, op.cit., p.256.
5. McLachlan, K. & Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.8.

camel-thorn and some leguminous plants. It is scanty and soon becomes brown as summer sets in. The hills support a pasturage all the year round for hardy domestic animals. The only wild beasts of importance are wolf and gazelle; the former is dangerous to humans and the latter forages on growing crops. But the dry climate prevents the flourishing of most troublesome insects.

2. Human Geography

Administration

The villages had few administrative links with Mashhad, the capital of Khurāsān, and those with Bujnūrd, the shahrestān or district centre, were mainly judicial. There were closer ties with Bakshahr, the local administrative centre, and from which gendarmerie were posted when necessary. Bakshahr also had a medical centre, primary schools for both sexes, a secondary school for boys and was planning one for girls. At the time of fieldwork the villages had none of these, the chief complaint by the villagers against the administration was the lack of medical facilities.

Communication

The pass through the hills to the main Tehrān-Mashhad highway was not easy for wheeled traffic. In consequence the route was of little importance in the daily lives of the villages. The most important route of communication was the Tehrān-Mashhad railway which ran through the immediate valley in which the larger group of villages was situated. The station which served Bakshahr was nearly

40Km. from it, connection between the two was effected by lorry. This station was only 2 Km. from Ḥusaynābād, and there was another settlement, for railway personnel, beside the station itself. This had educational and medical facilities which, however, were for the use of station personnel only. Lack of means prevented the villagers from using the railway frequently, and in the normal course of events they had little contact with the station and its services.

Ḥusaynābād and its adjoining villages was, of course, atypical of the villages in the region studied because of its proximity to the railway. In the baksh as a whole, and in the district of which it was a part, communication was provided by privately owned and operated lorries, one of which ran between Bakshahr and its station, passing through Ḥusaynābād. In the absence of any government-organised transport these lorries rendered a vital service. They travelled distances up to a day's journey from Bakshahr; Bujnūrd could be reached in this time. Every large group of villages was visited by one of these lorries every few days. Villagers went to Bakshahr (from Ḥusaynābād the fare was 25p.) mainly in order to consult the doctor; they might also go to attend the major religious festivals. Those goods required in everyday life, but not produced in the immediate locality, were brought into the villages from the more distant towns by the shopkeepers, who therefore did a considerable amount of travelling. If villagers required special items such as wedding goods, they also travelled to towns like Bujnūrd, this being the major reason

for such an excursion. Villagers also travelled to Bujnūrd or other towns in the vicinity if they felt that the medical treatment at Bakshahr was inadequate. Less frequently they might go to Mashhad or even Tehrān for this purpose. In the autumn, when the money from the harvest was in, they might go to these places for recreation. However, it should be emphasised that such major journeys were seldom made, most villagers undertaking them less than once a year.

It will be noticed that Bakshahr itself was not a shopping centre, although it was only about 35Km. away from both groups of villages studied. This was because the road which reached it from the main Tehrān-Mashhad highway was suitable only for strong lorries, and for those only in good weather. Hence trucks reached the town only at the rate of one or two a week, so that its range of goods was small. From Bakshahr the railway was accessible by truck in a couple of hours, and the private service operated almost daily, but again local conditions made the road extremely difficult, especially in bad weather. Bakshahr, with its population of over 3,000, was badly served for communications. However, within the baksh, the historic ties of the villages were with Bakshahr, the ties with the more distant towns having become important more recently, as the villagers had come increasingly to desire the goods obtainable there.

As well as these journeys by lorry the people also visited the other settlements which were within their immediate area. The men more usually went for matters

connected with their work, staying as long as was necessary, the women to visit friends and relatives, returning the same day. Ḥusaynābād was the only village within its group within walking distance of the others which had a bath, shops and a carpenter. People therefore came to it for these services from other villages. There was no organised system of transport between the villages in a local group, people travelling on foot or, more rarely, by donkey.

There was therefore a frequent coming-and-going within the local clusters of villages, especially those which were no more than an hour's walk of each other. In general, the people moved around a great deal within their immediate area, but seldom travelled outside it.

Other forms of communication should also be mentioned. A telephone at the railway was the only one in the baksh; even Bakshahr did not have one although it had a telegraph. Very few of the villagers were literate, but there were two small radios in Ḥusaynābād, and a garbled version of important events heard on broadcasts soon circulated round the villages.

Settlement Size and Dispersion

The geography of settlement in Iran has been discussed by de Planhole[1]. The population of the 10 inhabited

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1. de Planhole, X. 1968. The Geography of Settlement, in The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I (ed.) W.B. Fisher, Cambridge University Press, pp.409-67

villages surveyed is given in Table II. Knowing that a National Census was to be taken in 1966, the population of all the villages was not counted during fieldwork in 1964-5. However, the tally of those villages which were counted during fieldwork was found to be very close to the subsequent Census enumeration. For example, in 1964, according to the fieldwork count, Ḥusaynābād had a population of 319, which agrees well with the Census figure of 323. So, in order to show the population of all the inhabited villages surveyed, the Census figures have been given as being a very close approximation to their populations in 1964-5. Two exceptions should be noted. During fieldwork Kilāteh Nādir was observed to be inhabited and its population counted, while Ja'farābād, which was close by, was cultivated but uninhabited. The Census, however, records the former village as being uninhabited and the latter as being habited. The fieldwork and Census figures are so close that it is clear that, between fieldwork and the taking of the Census, either the population of Kilātah Nādir moved to Ja'farābād or a slight error occurred in the Census enumeration of village names. In the following Table, therefore, the figures for Kilāteh Nādir appear in the Census under Ja'farābād, and the latter village is omitted. The other exception concerns Kilāteh ʿAlī Golī, which does not appear in the Census at all, and for which the population figures used are those recorded during fieldwork.

Table II: Population of Survey Villages[1]

Village name	No. persons	No. families
Jo'abāt	559	117
Ḥusaynābād	323	73
Gārmiteh	124	24
Kilāteh Jān	46	7
Deh Kūchik*	44	8
Gholām Ābād	43	8
Burj Āqā	41	7
Deh Nou*	22	5
Kilāteh Nādir	14	3
Kilāteh ʿAlī Golī	3	1
Total	1,218	253
Average	121.8	25.3

*Village pseudonym

Table III_A shows the population structure of Ḥusaynābād in 1964. In the 1966 National Census of Population and Housing the baksh in which fieldwork was carried out was enumerated as part of the shahrestān (district) of Bujnūrd, the total population of which is reported as 193,231. Of this, 31,248 were resident in Bujnūrd City, and 6,891 were unsettled.[2] This leaves 155,092 as being the population

1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a. National Census of Population and Housing, 1966. Tehrān: Plan Organisation, Iran Statistical Centre. Village Gazetteer, Vol.3. Khurāsān Ostān, Bujnūrd Shahrestān.

2. Ibid., Statistical Centre, Vol.C.III, p.11.

Table IIIa: Population of Ḥusaynābād, 1964

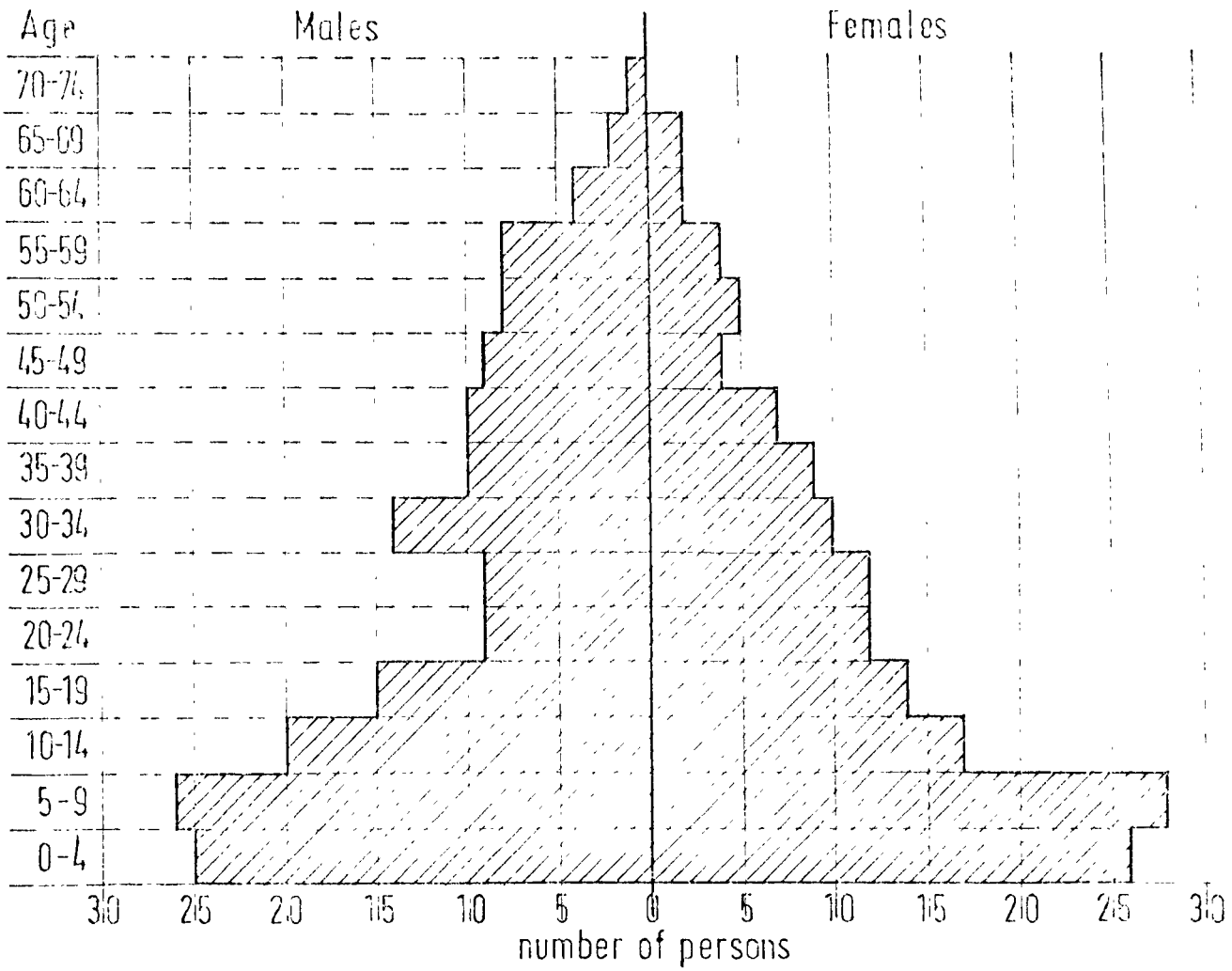


Table IIIb: Population of Rural Area of Bujnūrd Shahrestān, 1966



of the rural area of the shahrestān. An age pyramid for this population has been constructed from the Census data, and is given in Table III_B, so that the population of Ḥusaynābād can be compared with that of the whole rural area of which it was a part.

As stated previously, in the area studied, villages were grouped in spatial clusters which were usually separated by low hills. Within any clusters no settlement was more than 4Km. distance from at least one other: the larger villages tended to be within a short distance of 3-4 other villages rather than 1-2. Villages were sited where the water from a qanāt came out, and the distances between them represents the spatial availability of water, or at least represents the extent to which the available supply was exploited. But the actual size of any village was the result of the interplay of a number of factors. Of these, the most important was that a cluster of villages usually held no more households than the available water-resources could support. The exceptions were almost all villages with transient families. In summer some landlords resided in their villages, and in winter numbers might be swollen by herdsmen down from the hills for pasturage. Itinerant tradesmen and people visiting village residents would also alter its numbers so that at any one time a village almost invariably had some transients in it. A minor exception in the area were those villages near the railway, because a few of its workers preferred living in the agricultural villages adjoining the line than in the station settlement. Some people lived in the settlement associated with one

qanāt while the men went to work daily upon the lands of another; in most cases this was either they lived where their landlord had provided them with a house, or because they were attracted by the amenities of a larger village. This was why Ja'farābād, although cultivated, was uninhabited, and was also the chief reason for the growth of Ḥusaynābād, in which lived the workers upon four separate qanāts. Despite these reservations it can be said that the size of any village was directly related to the supply from its water-resources.

Village Perceptions of Space and Time

Evans-Pritchard has shown that an understanding of this part of a people's perceptions is essential for an understanding of their social relations.[1]

In Ḥusaynābād the names, sizes and distances of the nearby villages were known, and perceived as a unit under the direction of Bakshahr: villages which belong to other baksh were distinguished. This identification reflects not so much the administrative system (itself of quite recent origin) but the ties of origin and continued association with the town. Villages belonging to separate baksh were also described as being spatially much further, although this was not always the case.

Perception of the world beyond the baksh differed sharply between the sexes. There was, of course, a great range of understanding from individual to individual,

1. Evans - Pritchard, E.E. 1940. The Nuer. Oxford; Clarendon Press, pp.94-108.

especially in a society undergoing rapid social change and integration with the world beyond the village, so that it is difficult to give an 'average' village perception of the rest of Iran. But, in general, it is true to say that the women were far less knowledgeable of the further ranges of the administration than the men, especially those men who had done their Army service. To give the extremes: an elderly woman described Tehrān as a foreign city, and had not heard of 'Iran', while a youngish man, who had been in the Army, named correctly the administrative hierachy. To both sexes, the region outside the plain and its small local hills was amorphous and its cities of doubtful location. The exceptions were Tehrān, known as the capital of Iran, and Mashhad, itself called Khurāsān and thus known to be associated with the region. These were known to be at opposite ends of the railway line, so there is the question as to how much its proximity had changed the villagers' perception of its two extremes.

The village perception of the time-scale is also important. Having learned the official Iranian calendar, it was some time before I realised that the villagers used a different system. In the villages the year is divided into two periods of six months: from the Iranian New Year (about March 21st) until six months thence is the hot period, the time of work, and the other half of the year is described as cold, the period of leisure. The change from one to the other takes place with some important events: the beginning of spring is marked by Nou Ruz and its attendant festivities, and the summer/autumn change is when many

marriages are planned for, when preparations for the next agricultural season begin, and when a landlord and his peasants mutually review their contracts. The general division of the year is given in Table lV.

Although there are in fact only seven names for the periods of the year, the villagers thought of it as divided into equal months. Each month was reckoned by the moon, but was nevertheless said to last for 30 days, since the first and the last days of the moon were reckoned as inclusive. This inconsistency is perhaps an attempt to cope with the government reckoning, which was known through contact with the government administration to consist of periods of at least 30 days each, even though the names of those periods were not known. A further complication is that the lunar year is also the religious year, another major system of reckoning. According to the villagers' viewpoint, therefore, the New Year advances by 10 days each year, adjusted by the government because its year is longer, and so the religious events become moved around.

That this system is inconsistent represents some important features of the relationship of the village with the government. The villagers depended upon the administration from the capital, just as their calendrical reckoning would be quite innaccurate unless 'corrected' by the government. Likewise, it was their system which they perceived as the correct one.

In reckoning events years were numbered in round figures: the names of the periods were used rather than the concept of 'month', and weeks were known but not used.

Table IV: Village Calendar

Period in Iranian calendar (Approx) a)	Village name (1)	Duration of (1)	Activities (agricultural) in (1) b)	Weather in (1) c)	English equivlents (approx.)
Farvadīn Ordibehest Khordād	Bahār	3 months	Cotton prepared	getting warmer	end March-end June
Tīr Mordād Shahrīvar	Tamūz	3 months	Cutting Threshing	Hot	end June-end Sept.
Mehr	Mūzon	1 month	Sowing, Watering	beginning of cooler weather	end Sept-end Oct.
Abān	Ghōse	1 month	"		end Oct-end Nov.
Āzar	Aghrab	1 month	No work	Cold	end Nov-end Dec.
Daī Bahman	Khelāl	2 months	Work within home-repairing Equip. etc.	Cold	end Dec-end Feb.
Esfand	'Ayd	1 month	Cultivation begins	beginning of warmer weather	end Feb-end March.

Notes:-

a): Names not known in Ḥusaynābād

b): i.e. in answer to the question "What do you do in this period?"

c): i.e. in answer to the question "What is the weather like then?"

Coming events were reckoned as so many days ahead. The numbers were not used exactly; they described the relationship of the future event to the activities relevant to it in the present. The longest interval in the future is that of 50-60 days, and few events were arranged beyond this. As the event approached it was described as 20 days hence and its imminence was more felt. Necessary preparations were begun when it was described as 3-4 days away, and then it would occur tomorrow or today. This system was adequate for most purposes, although occasionally, between different villages, discrepancies in reckoning did occur.

3. History

Sunderland has described the prehistory of man in Iran.[1] The archeological evidence of early settlement in the region studied has not yet been excavated, so its early history is unknown. A history of Iran is not relevant to the present study; however, a summary of the history of Khurāsān is not entirely a compromise between a local and a national one, since the fortunes of the province have frequently differed from those of the nation.

The general history of Iran has been written by Sykes,[2] among many other authors, and his work has been mainly used

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1. Sunderland, E. 1968. Early Man in Iran. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I.(ed.) W.B.Fisher. Cambridge University Press, pp.345-408.

2. Sykes, Sir P. 1921. A History of Persia. 2nd ed., Vol.2. London: MacMillan & Co.

for this summary. Malcolm's work is also useful.[1] The initial history of Khurāsān, under the Achamenian, Parthian and Sassanian dynasties, which together lasted from the sixth century B.C. until the fifth century A.D., seems to have been most peaceful. But the subsequent invasions of the Huns in the early part of the fifth century began a long period of insecurity which only ended in the recent past, during which the province was repeatedly conquered and ruined by looting, the destruction of crops, and the taking of prisoners for ransom.

The Arab conquest of Iran in the seventh century failed to subdue Khurāsān, which was the scene of repeated rebellions against the new rule, one of which, under the Abbasids, succeeded in changing the government.[2] In an effort to secure peace in the province, Caliph Ma'mūn appointed Imām Riẓā as his successor, because Khurāsān had always supported the claims of the descendants of the Prophet to the Caliphate. Unfortunately, Imām Riẓā died in Mashhad in 818,[3] but his shrine brought fame to Khurāsān.

Then followed a series of invaders, of whom the most important were the Samanids in the tenth century, the Ghaznavids in the eleventh century, and the Seljūks who

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1. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829. The History of Persia from the Most Early Period to the Present Time. 2 vols. London: John Murray.
2. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., pp.52-9.
3. Ibid., P.73.

ruled until the twelfth century.[1] The Mongols devastated the country in the thirteenth century,[2] but the Timurids, who conquered them in the fourteenth century,[3] established a more peaceful rule until they were defeated by the Uzbegs in the sixteenth century.[4]

The Uzbegs were raiders rather than rulers, and caused a great deal of chaos in Khurāsān in the sixteenth century.[5] Eventually they were defeated by the great Ṣafavid monarch Shāh 'Abbās the Great,[6] who ruled from 1586-1628. As well as subduing the insurgent forces he built up the importance of Mashhad as the national Iranian shrine by making it a focus for pilgrimage.[7] This brought prosperity to Khurāsān and helped to unite the province, which had so often seceded from the crown, into the national life of Iran. After the death of Shāh 'Abbās the Uzbegs resumed their raiding of Khurāsān;[8] to add to those troubles came the Afghān invasion of 1722.[9] This was put down, not without

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1. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., pp.84-112
2. Ibid., pp.152-175.
3. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.1, p.292.
4. Sykes, Sir P. 1921., op.cit., pp.198-122.
5. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.1, p.332.
6. Ibid., pp.346-7.
7. Ibid., pp.347-50. See also Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.226.
8. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.1, pp.382-412.
9. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.318.

difficulty, and Nādir Shāh emerged as the new Iranian ruler.[1] He built up a vast empire, conquering India and taking its wealth, and made Mashhad his capital.[2] After his death in 1747 Khurāsān lapsed into chaos.[3] The Uzbegs raided again.[4] Peace was restored by the Qājār ruler Āqā Muḥammad Khān, who subdued Khurāsān in 1796.[5] The province was now re-united to the Iranian throne and has not since seceded for any length of time.

This brief history cannot do justice to the number and effect of the repeated invasions of Khurāsān. Commenting on the downfall of the Ghaznavids, Malcolm said that it:

> "presents an uninteresting and disgusting detail of petty wars, rebellions and massacres"[6]

which, with few exceptions, might serve for the history of Khurāsān.

The Qājār rule did not end the disturbances of the province.[7] Khurāsān was previously larger than it is now, and during the nineteenth century the Russians began their advance southwards over Iranian territory. This worried the British, in case the overland route to India via Afghanistan should become affected;[8] so from the end of the

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1. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.343.
2. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.2, pp.11-13. See also Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.367.
3. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.367 and Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.2, p.129.
4. Sykes, Sir P.1921, op.cit., p.370.
5. Malcolm, Sir J. 1829, op.cit., Vol.2, p.194.
6. Ibid., p.220.
7. Ibid., pp.138-9 for an excellent summary of the history of Khurāsān and of this period in particular.
8. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.300.

eighteenth century many Englishmen came to Khurāsān to assess the state of affairs. The history of the province is supplemented by the records of these indefatigable writer-travellers, among whom were Forster (1783-4),[1] Connolly (1830),[2] Burnes (1830-2),[3] Fraser (1821-2 and 1834),[4] Ferrier (1845),[5] Clerk (1860),[6] Eastwick (1860),[7] Bellew (1872),[8] Marsh (1872),[9] Baker (1873),[10] O'Donovan

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1. Forster, G.1798. A Journey from Bengal to England, through the Northern part of India, Kashmire, Afghanistan and Persia, and into Russia, by the Caspian Sea. Vol.2. London.
2. Connolly, A.1834. Journey to the North of India, overland from England, through Russia, Persia and Affghanistan. 2 vols. London: Richard Bentley.
3. Burnes, Sir A.1834. Travels into Bokhara: being the account of a journey from India to Cabool, Tartary and Persia. 3 vols. London: John Murray.
4. Fraser, J.B. 1825. Narrative of a Journey into Khorasan in the Years 1821 and 1822. London: Longmans.

   1838. A Winter's Journey from Constantinople to Tehran. Vol.2. London: Richard Bentley.
5. Ferrier, J.P. 1856. Caravan Journeys and Wanderings in Persia, Afghanistan, Turkistan and Beloochistan. (trans.) W. Jesse, (ed.) H.D. Seymore. London: John Murray.
6. Clerk, Capt.C. 1861. Notes in Persia, Khorassan and Afghanistan. Journal of the Royal Geographical Society. Vol. 31, pp.37-65.
7. Eastwick, E.B. 1864. Journal of a Diplomat's Three Years' Residence in Persia. Vol.2. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
8. Bellew, H.W. 1874. From the Indus to the Tigris. A Narrative of a Journey through the Countries of Balochistan, Afghanistan, Khorassan and Iran, in 1872. London: Trubner & Co.
9. Marsh, Capt. H.C. 1877. A Ride through Islam: being a Journey through Persia and Afghanistan, via Meshed, Herat and Kandahar. London: Tinsley Bros.
10. Baker, Col.V. 1876. Clouds in the East: Travels and Adventures on the Perso - Turkoman frontier. London: Chatto & Windus.

(1880-1),[1] and Curzon (1890),[2] (the dates refer to the time of the journey).

From these writers it is clear that Iranian sovereignty existed only in the four largest cities in Khurāsān.[3] The rest of the province was divided among the petty Kurdish Chiefs who were descendants of those settled in Khurāsān by Shāh 'Abbās to guard the border. The countryside was devastated by the raids of Turkomān tribesmen, who would come southwards from the plain between the Gurgān and Attruck rivers, to raid the villages of northern Khurāsān and the pilgrim caravans bound for Mashhad passing through them. The destruction caused by these raiders, and the pilgrims' fear of them, is the most frequent theme in the travellers' accounts. They describe, often vividly, the ruined villages and the desolate landscapes which the raiders left behind. Among all the travellers' tales one image stands out: that of Fraser's description of villages near Bujnūrd left deserted by plunder, with their corn all standing ready for harvest.[4]

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1. O'Donovan, E. 1882. The Merv Oasis: travels and adventures east of the Caspian.. including five months residence among the Tekkes of Merv. Vol.1. London: Smith, Elder & Co.
2. Curzon, G.N.,Lord Marquis Curzon of Kedleston. 1892. Persia and the Persian Question. 2 vols. London: Longmans, Green & Co.
3. Kinneir, J. MacDonald. 1813. A Geographical Memoir of the British Empire.London: John Murray, p.183. See also Fraser, J.B. 1838. op.cit., pp.322-30.
4. Fraser, J.B. 1838, op.cit., p.321.

The chief object of the raiders was to secure prisoners for ransom, and in this they often succeeded. Many of the travellers record interviews with former captives, and the raids must have been frequent because they had occurred within a short time of many of the journeys mentioned. The absence of personnel, and the shifts to obtain ransom money, must have caused considerable dislocation to the social and economic life of the region. It is quite clear from the travellers that these disturbances would not have existed if the central government had taken positive action.[1] In the absence of this the rule of the Kurdish chiefs could have been beneficial who, instead of preventing the inroads of the Turkomān raiders, preferred to receive a portion of their booty for taking no action against them.[2] These raids have been emphasized because the most dangerous part of the caravan route lay immediately south of the area studied, and the Turkomān must therefore have passed through it on their raiding forays. So the travellers' descriptions of plundered villages must apply to the antecedents of the settlements in which fieldwork was carried out.

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1. Baker, Col.V.1876, op.cit.,p.220; Bellew, H.W.1874, op.cit., p.387; Conolly, A. 1834, op.cit.,pp.287-8; Eastwick,E.B. 1864, op.cit.,p.216; Ferrier, J.P. 1856, op.cit.,p.91; Fraser, J.B. 1838, op.cit., p.144; Forster, G.1798, op.cit., pp.178-9; Marsh, Capt. H.C.1877, op.cit., p.80. O'Donovan, E. 1882, op.cit., p.446.

2. Baker, Col.V. 1876, op.cit., p.291; Burnes, Sir A. 1834, op.cit., Vol.3. p.44; . Ferrier, J.P. 1856, op.cit., p.91; Fraser, J.B. 1838, op.cit., p.165.

The Qājār dynasty, then, had little influence in Khurāsān, whose history continued much as it had always been: the cities being officially annexed to the crown but in practice frequently rebelling against it.[1] It was the southward advance of the Russians to their present boundary which ended the miseries of this period. They gradually overcame the Turkomān, finally defeating them in 1881,[2] and the Russian advance was welcomed in Khurāsān because it brought civil peace. In 1890 Curzon spoke of the Turkomān raids as things of the past.[3]

Nāsir ud-Dīn Shāh, who ruled from 1848-1896, was aware of the miseries of Khurāsān, and contributed to the establishment of peace by reducing the power of the Kurdish chiefs. However, his assasination led to another period of political insurgence. The causes were: the inability of the weaker Qājārs to retain control of the province, the political difficulties which led to the granting of the Constitution in 1906, and the increasing Anglo-Russian influence, which culminated in the treaty of 1907 under which Khurāsān, while still part of the Iranian crown's land, was assigned with the rest of the north and

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1. Sykes, Sir P, 1921, op.cit., pp.303-24.
2. Ibid., p.358.
3. Curzon, G.N. 1892, op.cit., Vol.2., p.278.

east of the country to the Russian zone of influence and to Russian trade.[1]

Despite her neutrality, Iran became an area of fighting in the first World War. The Russian troops and local forces under Russian command in the north were withdrawn after the Russian revolution, and replaced in that area by troops under British command. By this time the central government was, once again, no longer able to maintain order and security. Robbery and tribal lawlessness re-appeared, while the occupation itself contributed to the general insecurity and chaos.[2]

In 1918 and 1919 the Russians agreed to leave Iran alone, and in 1920 the British troops withdrew from Khurāsān.[3] The local insecurity did not diminish, and the Turkomān on the border, now Russian subjects, took to raiding again. But in 1921 a new era began when Riẓā Shāh took over the government and immediately set about restoring internal order. Insurgence in the provinces was suppressed by arms, negotiations, and all other available means; government forces were sent against rebellious groups, one of which was in Khurāsān. By 1925 the countryside was reasonable quiet, although highway robbery continued.[4] In general the 1921-41

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1. Sykes, Sir P. 1921, op.cit., p.410.
2. Upton, J.M. 1961., The History of Modern Iran: An Interpretation. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, pp.17-38. Also Banani, A. 1961. The Modernization of Iran, 1921-41. Stanford: Stanford University Press, p.35.
3. Upton, J.M. 1961, op.cit., p.43.
4. Ibid., p.47.

period brought peace if not prosperity to the rural areas, the latter being in part nullified by the heavy taxation. However, Upton, who is a valuable historian of this period, gives the reasons why government oppression was not resented by the peasantry.[1]

Iran became involved in the second World War by the Allied invasion of 1941. The Russian army occupied the whole of northern Iran, with no resistance from the Iranian troops, who fled as it advanced.[2] The troops established themselves round Mashhad and it was not until after the Tehrān Pact of 1943 that garrisons were placed in Nīshāpūr, and by 1944 there was a total of 4,000 Red Army personnel based on Qūchān alone. [3]

One of the objects of the Allied invasion was to establish a supply-route to Russia, and for this purpose two north-going road-links were set up in Khurāsān. These made the restoration of order and economic security more difficult, since the requirements of the Soviet transport troops had to be met. Skrine, the British Consul at Mashhad during this period, mentions the difficulties of the peasants who, although they did not have to work for the Russians, had to cope with the absence of the transport upon which the rural economy depended. Rebellions broke out

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1. Upton, J.M. 1961, op.cit., p.64.
2. Skrine, Sir C. 1962. World War in Iran. London: Constable. pp.77-78.
3. Ibid., p.202.

in three districts, but as the rebels were undisciplined and poorly equipped they were put down without much trouble.[1]

There were two further civil difficulties: a shortage of bread and an abundance of brigands, the former being caused by the hoarding of grain prompted by inflation and general insecurity complicated by administrative corruption.[2] However, Khurāsān was a food-surplus area, and fortunately the harvests were good in this period. The outbreak of brigandage was more unfortunate because the province had been peaceful since 1925, and it was some years more before it became so again. The contrast with the nineteenth century was not the existence of this problem, but that efforts were made to eliminate it. Towards the end of the war the rise of the Tudeh party created another problem, and in August 1945 Iranian Army officers led a rebellion in West Khurāsān which seemed designed to coincide with the Tudeh coup at Tabrīz, but was not nearly so effective. This was due to the skill of ʿAlī Mansour, who was then governor-general of Khurasan, and who is praised by Skrine for his able administration during these difficulties.[3]

In 1946, the war being over, the Russian troops left Mashhad. The written history of the post-war period is concentrated upon those affairs which were directed from

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1. Skrine, Sir C. 1962. World War in Iran. London: Constable, pp.108-137.
2. Ibid., pp.116-136.
3. Ibid., p.111 and pp.213-218.

the capital, with which, as local security was established the history of Khurāsān has become increasingly identified.

No brief account can summarize with any precision Khurāsān's turbulent history. Other regions of Iran, notably the tribal areas, have also seceded from the crown whenever the central government has been weak. Khurāsān is atypical when compared with the rest of Iran in that it has often been the scene of rebellions which have spread elsewhere. It has also been unique in the strength of its religious fervour and the frequency with which it was invaded.

The weakness of the political links of Khurāsān to the central government can be explained to a great extent by geographical factors. Distance from the capital made administration and military control of the province more difficult. These factors favoured the invaders already attracted by the naturally fertile land, the proximity of the trade route and the absence of a difficult physical barrier. Geographical features have led to social factors which also tend to extreme provincialism. These include: cultural isolation, and the heterogenous population which itself was a result of the disturbed conditions. Progress and integration have been hindered, in the last century by the sentiments against the Qājārs as a foreign dynasty coming from the west, and in this century by the strong religious reactionary element, produced by the guardianship of the shrine at Mashhad, in which to some extent the whole province is involved.

It is unlikely that this isolation will continue.

Modern means of transport, and communication, and the possible use of modern military weapons, have brought Khurāsān closer to the capital. Although it is not suggested that the forces of social change and Westernization will make it identical with the other provinces of Iran they will probably reduce its dissimilarities.

History of Ḥusaynābād and Deh Nou.

It will be appreciated that no village in northern Khurāsān is likely to have a history of continuous settlement over a long period of time. Nevertheless the archeological features show that rural settlements have existed through the past. For example, a burial-ground near Ḥusaynābād yields seventeenth-century Islamic pottery, but neither the place nor its neighbours are marked on the maps of the nineteenth-century travellers. In the early years of this century a wealthy landlord bought four derelict qanāts from their several petty owners, repaired them and re-built the settlement. This block purchase associated the four qanāts together for the first time and was the reason for the present size of the village, although the original purchase had long since been re-sold into multiple ownership. By contrast, the qanāt and settlement of Deh Nou had been built only twelve years prior to fieldwork by their first and only owner, Sayyid Riẓā. The tiny, isolated hamlet had an unfavourable climate and was 8Km. distance from the facilities of Ḥusaynābād. The histories of the other

settlements visited were diverse again, which may be, in part, a reflection of the troubled history of the region.

4. Comparative Literature

Village life in the Middle East is becoming extensively documented. Louise Sweet's 1969 bibliography of Middle East ethnology gives a useful summary of the most important of such studies undertaken in the Levant area up to that date.[1] The present study is therefore an addition to the growing body of literature dealing with small agricultural communities in the Middle East.

Patai has written a valuable general introduction to the sociology of the Middle East.[2] Among the many other general works on the area, those by Doreen Warriner[3] and Baer[4] should be mentioned as providing background information of value to the present study. The collection of essays edited by S.N. Fisher,[5] particularly those by

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1. Sweet, L. 1969. A Survey of Middle East Ethnology. Middle East Journal, Vol.23, No.2, pp.221-32.
2. Patai, R. 1967. Golden River to Golden Road. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
3. Warriner, D. 1948. Land and Poverty in the Middle East. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
4. Baer, G. 1964. Population and Society in the Arab East. (trans:) Hanna Szöke. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
5. Fisher, S.N. (ed.) 1955. Social Forces in the Middle East. Ithaca, New York, Cornell University Press.

Crary,[1] and Speiser[2] are especially relevant to the student of village communities in the Middle East. Although it is not specifically concerned with this area, Goldschmidt and Kunkel's analysis of 46 peasant communities selected from various parts of the world should also be mentioned as providing analytic ideas comparable to those in studies of the Middle East.[3]

Tannous was perhaps the pioneer of sociological studies of specific rural communities. In particular he has shown how the structure of a Lebanese village contributes to its cohesiveness.[4] There have been other studies of Lebanese villages, notably those by Gulick of the village of Al-Munsif,[5] which are perhaps especially

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1. Crary, D.D. 1955. The Villager. In Social Forces in the Middle East.(ed.) S.N. Fisher. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, pp.43-59.
2. Speiser, E.A.1955. Cultural Factors in Social Dynamics in the Near East. In Social Forces in the Middle East.(ed.) S.N.Fisher. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, pp.1-22.
3. Goldschmidt, W. & Kunkel, Evalyn J. 1971. The Structure of the Peasant Family. American Anthropologist, Vol.73, part 5, pp.1058-1076.
4. Tannous, A.I. 1949. The Village in the National Life of the Lebanon. Middle East Journal, Vol. 3, No.2, pp.151-63.
5. Gulick, J. 1953. The Lebanese Village: An Introduction. American Anthropologist, Vol.55, part 3, pp.367-72.

   ——— 1954. Conservation and Change in a Lebanese Village. Middle East Journal, Vol.8, No.3, pp.295-307.

   ——— 1955. Social and Cultural Change in a Lebanese Village. Viking Fund Papers in Anthropology, No. 21. New York: Wenner-Gren Foundation.

useful as showing different patterns of behaviour occurring in the same community and some of the effects of social change. Peters has emphasized the importance of social class in determining the structure of Lebanese cummunity life,[1] a point which is often sacrificed in studies of rural life to the emphasis upon the patrilineal family as the basis of social structure. This study is also relevant because, like the present work, it concerns a Shī'ī community. The works of Williams[2] and of Ann Fuller in the Lebanon should also be mentioned.[3]

In a shorter work, Ayoub has studied a Druze Arab village in the Lebanon, mentioning in particular that community disputes were usually settled internally, it being unusual for contestants to take cases to court.[4] Khuri has described the effect of emigration upon the structure of family life in Lebanese villages.[5]

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1. Peters, E.L. 1963. Aspects of Rank and Status among Muslims in a Lebanese Village. In Mediterranean Countrymen (ed.) J.Pitt-Rivers. London: Mouton & Co., pp.160-200.
2. Williams, H. & J. 1965. The Extended Family as a Vehicle of Culture Change. Human Organization, Vol.24, pp.59-64.
3. Fuller, Ann. 1961. Buarij: Portrait of a Lebanese Mountain Village. Harvard Centre for Middle East Studies, Monograph No.6. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
4. Ayoub, V.F. 1965. Conflict and Social Re-organisation in a Lebanese Village. Human Organisation, Vol.24, pp.11-17.
5. Khuri, F.I. 1969. The Changing Class Structure in the Lebanon. Middle East Journal. Vol.23, part I, pp.29-44.

Rural communities in Egypt do not seem to have been as well documented as in other areas of the Middle East. Both Adams[1] and Lichtenstadter[2] have mentioned the cohesiveness of Egyptian family structure in uniting collateral units and retaining married sons within the parental groups.

A number of studies of village life have been undertaken in Jordan. Any social anthropologist is especially indebted to the detailed monographs of Hilma Grandqvist, on the village of Ar'tas.[3] Antoun has published a series of studies of Kufr al-Ma, a Transjordanian peasant community, in which he emphasizes the solidarity of the patrilineages and how the ideology of patrilineal descent and patrilineality is the dominant means by which

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1. Adams, J.B. 1957. Culture and Conflict in an Egyptian Family. American Anthropologist, Vol.59, part 2, pp.225-35.

2. Lichenstadter, I. 1952. An Arab-Egyptian Family. Middle East Journal, Vol.6, No.4, pp.379-99

3. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1931. Marriage Conditions in a Palestinian Village. Societas Scientiarum Fennica, Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum. Part I. Helsingfors.

   —— 1935. Ibid., Part II.

   —— 1965. Muslim Death and Burial: Arab customs and traditions studied in a village in Jordan. Commentationes Humanarum Litterarum, Vol. 34, No.1. Helsingfors.

political groups are distinguished.[1] One of the most interesting aspects of Lutfiyya's study of Baytīn, a Palestinian Jordanian village,[2] is his description of how many of the local customs were based on an ideology derived from Islām.

In Iraq, Salim has studied the village of ech-Chibayish in the marshes of the Euphrates delta,[3] which was inhabited both by sedentarized nomads and by native marsh-dwellers. This monograph is interesting not only because of its description of the interraction between the two groups but also because it contains detailed marriage statistics. Like Peters' work and the present study, it concerns a Shī'ī Muslim community. Sweet's monograph on

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1. Antoun, R.T. 1965. Conservation and Change in the Village Community: Human Organization, Vol.24, pp. 4-10.

   ——— 1967. Social Organization and the life cycle in an Arab Village: Ethnology, Vol.6, No.3, pp.294-306.

   ——— 1968. On the Modesty of Women in Arab Muslim villages. American Anthropologist, Vol. 70, part 4, pp.671-97.

   — ·-·— 1972. Arab Village: A Social Structural Study of a Transjordanian Peasant Community. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

2. Lutfiyya, A.M. 1966. Baytīn; a Jordanian Village. London and The Hague: Mouton & Co.

3. Salim, S.M. 1962. Marsh Dwellers of the Euphrates Delta. London School of Economics. Monographs on Social Anthropology. No. 23. University of London: Athlone Press.

the village of Tell Toqaan in Syria is also well-known,[1] and is relevant as a comparative study of an area where pastoralism and nomadism were combined.

Studies of rural communities have also been undertaken in Turkey. For social anthropologists, Stirling's work is particularly interesting, providing as it does analysis of social institutions as well as descriptions of local customs. His discussion of ranking is especially valuable.[2] Barbara Aswad has also analysed the material she collected in a village in the Al-Shiuk tribal group in Southern Turkey.[3] Most writers on the patrilineal systems of the Middle East have emphasised the importance of endogamy in maintaining the political strength of the agnatic unit. By contrast, Aswad shows that political strength is also derived from exogamy and polygyny, and that a unit in which endogamy is

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1. Sweet, Louise. 1960. Tell Toqaan: A Syrian Village. Museum of Anthropology, Anthropological Papers No.14. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

2. Stirling, A.P. 1953. Social Rank in a Turkish Village. British Journal of Sociology, Vol.IV, No.1, pp.33-44.

   —— 1963. The Domestic Cycle and the Distribution of Power in Turkish Villages. In Mediterranean Countrymen (ed.) J. Pitt-Rivers. London & The Hague: Mouton & Co., pp.203-213.

   —————— 1965. Turkish Village. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson.

3. Aswad, Barbara C. 1971. Property Control and Social Strategies: Settlers on a Middle Eastern Plain. Museum of Anthropology, Anthropological Papers No. 44. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

too predominant becomes weakened.

Shorter studies of rural communities in other areas of the Middle East should also be mentioned. Rosenfeld has described the structure of the nuclear family and the relationships between its members in Tu'ran, an Arab village in Israel,[1] and Goldberg has discussed the factors determining status in a community of Tripolitanian Jews in Israel.[2] Hansen has given details of female costume and veiling in Sâr, another Shī'ī village as indicating the conventions of decorous female behaviour which, on the whole, seem stricter than those observed in northern Khurāsān.[3]

In Iran itself, studies of rural life have concentrated almost entirely upon the nomadic tribes. Barth's work upon the Basseri is deservedly well-known.[4] More recent theses quoted by Sweet in her bibliography, include those by Tapper on the Shahsavan of Azerbayjan, by Brookes on the Bakhtiari, and by Irons on the Yomut Turkomān. Of the last-

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1. Rosenfeld, H. 1958a. Processes of Structural Change within the Arab village extended family. American Anthropologist.Vol.60, part 6, pp.1127-39.

   ——— 1968. Change, Barriers to Change, and Contradictions in the Arab Village Family. American Anthropologist, Vol.70, part 4, pp.732-52.

2. Goldberg, H. 1968. Elite Groups in Peasant Communities. American Anthropologist. Vol.70, part 4, pp.718-31.

3. Hansen, H.H. 1961. The pattern of women's seclusion and veiling in a Shi'a village. Folk, Vol.3,pp.23-42.

4. Barth, F. 1953. Principles of Social Organization in Southern Kurdistan. Etnografiske Museum, Bulletin Etnografiske, Vol.7. Oslo.

   1961. Nomads of South Persia. London: Allen & Unwin.

mentioned, Irons has published a most interesting preliminary study.[1] However, the nomadic tribes of Iran number only some 3,000,000 against a total settled population of over 25,000,000, so that the work of the social anthropologists, although extremely valuable, has neglected the way of life of the majority of the population. Alberts has written a lengthy, detailed ethnographic account of Davarābād,[2] a village to the south of Tehrān and there are some accounts of rural Iran written for the wider public of which those by Smith[3] and Miller[4] should be mentioned as providing some vivid cameos of village life. There are a number of reports on demographic and other statistical material from various Iranian villages, among which the work of Ajami should perhaps be mentioned as presenting some sociological data as well.[5] The value of statistical studies is not underestimated, nevertheless information on village life in Iran is still sparse.

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1. Irons, W. 1969. The Turkmen of Iran: A brief Research Report. Iranian Studies, Vol.2, No.1, pp.27-38.

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959. An Anthropological Community Study of an Iranian agricultural village. Ph.D.thesis, University of Wisconsin.

3. Smith, A. 1953. Blind White Fish in Persia. London: Allen & Unwin.

4. Miller, M. 1961. Bright Blue Beads: An American Family in Persia. Caldwell, Millspaugh, A.C.

5. Ajami, J. 1969. Social classes, family demographic characteristics and nobility in three Iranian villages. Sociologus Ruralis, Vol.9, No.1, pp.62-72.

This summary by no means includes all the recent studies of village life in the Middle East. There is more material on patrilineal descent and marriage patterns which will be discussed later. There is also a great deal of other factual material. On the whole, though, the literature on village life in the Middle East is mainly descriptive. There is seldom any conceptual analysis of the material so carefully presented. However, the theoretical background of the present study is that of social anthropology. The data from northern Khurâsân will be examined using the concepts of that discipline. This means that there will be references to studies of rural communities in areas outside the Middle East, but it is hoped that such references will help to understand the social structure of the chosen villages.

Social anthropologists have always found it useful to analyse the separate institutions of a society, such as descent, marriage and so forth, in terms of conceptual ideas about their structure, and this method will be followed here. The analysis of village life in northern Khurâsân will be approached as a series of implied questions, such as, by what means did the people till the soil? what crops were grown on it? who owned it? who worked it? how was the produce distributed? how was ownership acquired and what were the factors which limited agricultural production? Another series of questions deals with kinship in the broadest sense: how did the people describe the relationships between each other? whom did they describe as

their forbears and what was the relationship between the past and the present generations? which, of all the relationships which people have with each other, did these villagers single out as significant and for what purposes were these relationships employed? One can also ask, who married whom? and why? and what are the factors governing marriage choice and marriage stability? Other questions concern the religion of the communities, and others deal with social stratification.

Another series of questions deals with the relationship of the villages examined to each other, and to the wider society of which they were a part. English has exposed the fallacy of discussing Middle East societies as being divided into three parts, tribal, urban and village when each segment described is a self-contained system without connections between each segment. He points out that this generalization has affected scholarship in that, for any segment studied, its internal organization is of paramount concern and its integration into a larger regional unit de-emphasized or omitted. This viewpoint has been particularly prevalent in village studies, from which peasant communities appear as isolated and inward-looking entities with few external relations, which accords little with reality.[1]

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1. English, P.W. 1966. City and Village in Iran: Settlement and Economy in the Kirman Basin. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, pp. xvii-xviii.

This bias is also apparent in the present study, which deals only with small villages, and ignores the towns and the tribal groups in the region studied except insofar as they interracted with the villages. Nevertheless an attempt was made to form a general picture of village life. Each village has its idiosyncrasies, and it is impossible to distinguish these from features which are also typical of life elsewhere when only one is studied. It was in order to present this wider picture that more than one village was studied and, wherever possible, generalizations have been made on social organisation in the baksh as a whole. This, of course, is still only a fragment of the wider society, but it is hoped that this method minimized the distortion inevitable in single-village studies and made it possible to describe external as well as internal community relations.

CHAPTER II: AGRICULTURE

1. Types of Landownership.

Anyone who has been concerned with agricultural life in Iran is indebted to the works of Professor Ann Lambton.[1] Among other writers Beckett,[2] Bowen-Jones[3] and Dehbod[4] have described agriculture in Iran in much the same way as it was practised in the region studied. Since such excellent material already exists, duplication in the form of a general account of agriculture will be avoided as far as possible.

The vital significance of the qanāt to Iranian agriculture has been known since antiquity. Among contemporary studies that by Vahidi is perhaps particularly interesting. According to him, of the 16 billion cubic metres of water required annually for Iranian agriculture,

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953. Landlord and Peasant in Persia. Oxford University Press, for the Royal Institute of International Affairs. See also for example:

   ——— 1963. Some reflections on the Question of Rural Development and Land Reform in Iran. In CENTO Symposium on Rural Development 1963. Tehrān.

2. Beckett, P.H.T. 1957. Agriculture in Central Persia. Tropical Agriculture, vol.34, no.1, pp.9-28. Much of this description applies to agriculture and village life in the area studied in northern Khurāsān.

3. Bowen-Jones, H. 1968. Agriculture. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I,(ed.) W.B.Fisher. Cambridge University Press, pp.565-98.

4. Dehbod, A. 1963. Land Ownership and Use Conditions in Iran. In CENTO Symposium on Rural Development 1963, Tehrān.

9 billion cubic metres come from qanāts.[1] The legislation pertaining to water usage has been described by Ghahraman[2] and Lambton.[3] According to Lambton water cannot be bought or sold,[4] Ghahraman however states that the ownership of water is recognised by the Civil Code.[5] The actual methods of digging qanāts has been described by Cressey,[6] while Flower gives an example from Khurāsān.[7]

While the number of villages affected by Land Reform has been well-documented, it is more difficult to find information as to the distribution of land prior to the 1962 Land Reform Law.[8] McLachlan estimates that 33.8% of the cultivated land was held by owners with more than 100 hectares, and that this formed part of a total of 56% of

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1. Vahidi, M. 1968. Water and Irrigation in Iran. Tehrān: Plan Organization, Bureau of Information and Reports, p.35.

2. Ghahraman,F. 1968. Water Rights in Iran. Tehrān: Plan Organization, Economic Bureau.

3. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.187.

4. Ibid., p.210.

5. Ghahraman, F. 1968, op.cit., p.8.

6. Cressey, G.B. 1958. Qanats, Kurez and Foggoras. Geogr. Review, Vol. XLVIII, pp.27-44.

7. Flower, D.J. 1968. Water Use in North-Eastern Iran. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I. (ed.) W.B. Fisher. Cambridge University Press, p.601. See also Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.217.

8. c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.266.

the cultivated land which was owned by 1% of the population. Small-scale and peasant proprietors owned a further 10-12%[1] Dehbod says that prior to Land Reform 55% of Iran's land was owned in large holdings,[2] while Arfā has another set of estimates.[3]

In the region studied there were no very large-scale landowners. The owners of Ḥusaynābād fell into the lower bracket of large-scale proprietors. Although they preferred to describe themselves as khurdeh malik, meaning small-holders, rather than as arbāb, the term for large-scale owners, most of them were only khurdeh malik as Lambton distinguishes this category,[4] that is, in the sense of having scattered, rather than concentrated, holdings.

Villages such as Ḥusaynābād were usually jointly owned by a number of landlords among whom the agricultural land and the output from the qanāt or qanāts were divided. The villages were not divided into dāng as described by Beckett[5] among others. This term was not unknown but was, in the region and under that system of landholding, of no

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1. McLachlan, K. 1968. Land Reform in Iran. In The Cambridge History of Iran, Vol.I.(ed.) W.B.Fisher. Cambridge University Press, p.187.
2. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit. Presumably the reference is to 55% of the cultivated land in Iran.
3. Arfā, H. 1963. Land Reform in Iran. Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, Vol.50,part II, pp.132-3.
4. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.267.
5. Beckett, P.H.T. 1957, op.cit., p.18.

practical significance. For ownership purposes villages were thought of as divided into juft,[1] although this was not a single unit of land. Each landlord usually owned only one or two juft in each village, and most landlords owned juft in only two or three villages at the most. Qanāt maintenance was shared among the landlords in each village.

Thus the khurdeh malik appellation was not altogether innaccurate when compared with land-ownership in the rest of pre-Reform Iran. This type of ownership will be analysed as it was seen in the region studied.

The systems of landholding and landworking were characterised by diversity, no two villages being precisely alike. Diversity was apparent in four main fields: in the number and types of landlord, in the different combinations of these types in each of the villages, in the extent to which the owners of the land themselves took part in its cultivation, and in the different ratio of landlords to peasants between villages. Diversity also existed on another level, in the field of rural employments as a whole, in which agriculture was only a part. In an attempt to describe these variations in patterns of landholding the ownership and, where possible, the agricultural practices of eleven villages in the

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1. For a definition of juft see Lambton, A.K.S., 1953 op.cit., pp.4-5.

region were collected in detail. This information will be presented after a general account of land ownership in the Bakshahr region.

To begin with, agriculture should be placed in context among the diversity of rural employments. The 1966 Census of Iran has a detailed breakdown of employment in the shahrestān of which the region studied was a small part. The Census gives the total settled population of the shahrestān as 186,340, of which 17.3% were located in urban areas and 82.7% in the rural area.[1] Some 42,622, or 86.9% of men in the rural areas were described as being economically active,[2] of whom 35,539 were employed in the group which included agriculture, forestry, hunting and fishing.[3] The total population (both sexes) working in agriculture and animal husbandry was 41,420, of which 35,208 were field crop and vegetable growers.[4] This brief summary shows the greatest part of the working population of the sharestān as employed in field agriculture, no other group approaching it in size.

In the Bakshahr region itself the proportion employed as livestock workers was probably higher.In this region the ownership of land was in many respects subsidiary to the ownership of flocks[5] at least in the past.

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1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a National Census of Population and Housing, 1966.op.cit., Vol. CIII, p.k.
2. Ibid., p.m.
3. Ibid., p.43.
4. Ibid., p.41.
5. Spooner, B.J. 1965a. The Area of Jājarm in Western Khurāsān: IRAN, Vol.III, p.105.

Agriculture was seen as necessary to subsistence, but sheep and goats were the traditional investment for the man with some money to spare who wanted to make some more.

Although flocks were a first investment and also a most useful source of food, there would come a time when their owner would consider the purchase of land. This was partly because the flocks need land and water for grazing during the winter months when brought down from the hills, and this grazing would have to be hired if not already owned, and partly so that food could be grown more cheaply than bought for the animals, their herds, and the owners' family. With these considerations in mind a number of flock-owners in the region had bought some land soon after the political insecurity described earlier had abated, when prices were low, and then, as one of them expressed it, realized that they had found a good thing and that land was a profitable investment in its own right. Meanwhile, any landowners who had not previously had flocks would soon come to desire them, realizing that these could be grazed on their own land and would provide such commodities as meat and fat which were extremely expensive if bought.

In the Bakshahr region, therefore, if a man owned land he would almost certainly own flocks as well, and landlords emphasized that the two complemented each other, as well as being prudent on the eggs-in-a-basket principle. Owners of both emphasized that much depended on the preference of the individual as to which he made his major investment; land

brought a lower return than sheep, but sheep needed much more attention than land and carried a higher risk of total disaster. On the whole, despite the continued presence of flocks, more and more land was being bought and more qanāts renovated. The resources of the landlords covered by the survey, other than the lands therein, are shown in columns 19-23 in the table summarizing the survey material. (Table V)

Before describing land ownership in the region it is worth attempting to define what is meant by ownership. Lambton has summarized the provisions of the Civil Code with regard to land ownership.[1] In this context ownership means financial responsibility for shares in a qanāt, control over parts of village land and, usually, the employment of villagers to cultivate. Not all these aspects may be coterminous in the same individual. Financial responsibility for part of a qanāt may be shared between two or more men, whose farming lands may be quite separate. They may or may not employ separate dihqāns (sharecroppers) for the work. 'Ownership' is therefore a matter of context and for the moment it will be taken as'financial responsibility'.

In order to appreciate a detailed analysis of land ownership it will be necessary to summarize the system of landworking. In the region studied precipitation was insufficient for field crops, so that the water was collected by means of qanāt. The expense of even the

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.267.

maintenance of these meant that agriculture depended upon considerable financial investment or, in other words, it required the services of an entrepreneur. Until recently this essential function was fulfilled by the landlords. These were of varying wealth but nearly all, initially, had owned sufficient land to support several dihqāns. A landlord did not usually buy land as such, what he bought was a qanāt,or qanāts, or even part of a qanāt, and thereby gained the use of the appropriate share of its water and access to the agricultural land associated with it.[1] Land and water, in this region, were sold together, as Alberts describes for Davarābād;[2] the terms 'landownership' and 'waterownership' are interchangeable throughout.

In agricultural practice the land served by a qanāt was treated as a unit, separate from the lands of another qanāt, although on the ground there might be no apparent boundary between the lands associated with different qanāts. The cultivation lands of each qanāt were divided into two or three main blocks, corresponding to the system of the rotation of the crops.

Within these blocks all the land available for cultivation was divided into a number of strips, called zamīn, separated from each other by the channels which conveyed water to them.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.219-20.

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.238.

If a man owned part of a qanāt he therefore owned various zamīn in each of the main sections of its lands, and his dihqāns cultivated those zamīn, going between them as necessary. A number of farming techniques necessitated co-operation between two men, which was one of the reasons why dihqāns were usually hired in multiples of two. However, in each of the main sections of the farming land each dihqān would be allocated one or more zamīn which were specifically his responsibility, and from which he received the peasant's share of the harvest. The zamīn were therefore the basic agricultural unit for cultivation, for demaraction of land ownership on the ground, and for the allocation of responsibility between the dihqāns.

It is worth emphasizing that holdings in a village in this region were not divided among the landlords on the basis of units of land, but on the basis of unit of water.[1] The juft was basically a measure of employment, consisting of the amount of land that a pair of oxen could plough in a year, being 5-8 hectares,[2] and the two men normally needed to do the work thereon. The actual land of a juft consisted of a number of separate zamīn, often a considerable distance apart. But because the juft was a useful and convenient concept it was the unit for the allocation of land between the landlords. It is worth emphasizing that juft were worked independently of each

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.6-7.

2. Dehbad, A. 1963, op.cit., p.10.



Zamīn are carefully demarcated, even when they are uncultivated



The qanāt flows along the village street

other, so that a village with multiple ownership was no more than an accretion of independent juft units. Moreover, in villages such as Ḥusaynābād where multiple ownership was unequal, each juft would not receive the same amount of water, although a juft normally employed two men. (This is illustrated in Table VII). In such cases the juft were not equal sub-divisions of the productivity of the village as a whole, and the dihqāns' share of the crops could vary between them.

The water from the qanāt was given to the zamīn in rotation. Ideally, each amount of land received the same amount of water; if a man owned more of the water of a qanāt he owned more and wider zamīn. The shares in the qanāts which were bought and sold among the landowners were sold in time units of water referred to as sahm, and it was not possible to sell a sub-division of a sahm by itself, so that the rotation of the water would not be divided beyond what was practicable. In each qanāt the sahm, when added up, made up one cycle of the rotation of its water. The dihqāns knew this cycle, and rotated the flow of water from the qanāt between the zamīn, according to the amount owned by each landlord.

The lands divided into zamīn were most, but not all, of the lands associated with each qanāt. The water was also made available to enclosures where cattle-food was grown and sometimes to gardens of fruit-trees. These, if they occurred, were the concern of the landlords. Beside the walls of the settlements there were also vegetable plots, which were the prerogative of the dihqāns. There was also the land for the

settlement itself. Land, water and labour were not the total resources needed for cultivation, and there were also the oxen. The settlement itself included other animals as well and not all the adult men therein were necessarily share-cropping peasants. Village population is itemized in columns 37-45 in the table summarizing the survey material (Table V, p.65).

Diversity existed at this level. The division of the farming lands, the varieties of crops associated with them, the number of days in the rotation of the water-cycle and the number and size of the sahm which comprised it usually remained constant for each qanāt despite the fluctuations in its ownership. However, any or all of these factors might, and often did, vary from one qanāt to another,[1] even when they were adjacent and associated with the same settlement. This meant that if a man owned shares in more than one qanāt his dihqāns might have to cope with more than one cycle of cultivation and water-rotation which, it must be added, did not seem to cause much difficulty to them.

Landlords were unwilling to discuss the prices of qanāts, no doubt because they were wary of the assessments required by Land Reform. In Ḥusaynābād purchase originally meant that a share was acquired in each of its four qanāts. Until about 1940 the price of such a share was about £300,

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.219.

when three of the four qanāts were either unproductive or yielding little. By about 1952, through substantial repairs, the flows had increased and a share was worth about £600, and by 1965 the value had risen to £1,200. However, also by this time the Ḥusaynābād shares were no longer being sold as a block, and a share in the Ḥusaynābād qanāt itself cost about £300, for four hours of water. In Gārmiteh, where the water had not yet been divided below units of a day, the price of 24 hours of water was £2,500, which included gardens, and the appropriate qal'eh (courtyard) with its houses. The comparable price for Ḥusaynābād would have been £1,800, but this price was not all-inclusive and also Gārmiteh was much better maintained than Ḥusaynābād; above all, the price of a qanāt reflected its condition.[1]

In the region studied, patterns of ownership varied from entire villages owned by one man to villages in which half the inhabitants divided the whole of its water among them in tiny shares. (This diversity is illustrated in columns 6-18 of Table V). A wealthy man looking for agricultural investment might not necessarily wish to buy a whole qanāt, and one aspect of diversity was the variety of holdings owned by each landowner. Among the large-scale landowners, who are discussed as a class by Lambton,[2] the

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1. See Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.221. for comparable prices.

2. Ibid., pp.259-74.

majority held shares in a number of qanāts, in a variety of villages, in addition to their flocks. This was not only to share the financial risk involved, but was to some extent a reflection of its precarious nature. It was argued that if investment were made in a number of different qanāts one at least should be productive in any year, thus providing subsistence and some income, if not the money to spend on repairing the others. What was bought was also restricted by what was available, which might only be sundry shares in a number of qanāts even if the wish for a larger single investment were there. Thus even wealthy owners could hold an entire village or a small part in a number of these, although most large-scale owners tended to have all or a large part of one qanāt and some part in a few others. In general, then, among the large-scale owners extensive rather than intensive holdings were preferred, of both land and flocks, so that large areas of sparse cultivation and numbers of poorly-clad sheep were characteristic of the countryside thus controlled.

This diversity in the holdings of individuals was, to a lesser extent, apparent among the small-owners. Usually these were the children of grandchildren of a former large-scale owner whose estates had become fractionated by repeated sub-divisions. Thus even these might own an hour or two of water in a number of villages. These small-owners fell into two main categories, as Dehbod describes.[1]

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1. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.7.

Those who worked the land might have enough to support themselves by working on their own plot alone, or, as in most cases, they acquired enough for subsistence only by working their own plots and those of some of their relatives.[1] Sometimes in the poorer villages a man would cultivate his own plot and also be a dihqān to a landlord, as Arfā describes,[2] either to a wealthier owner in the same qanāt, or in another qanāt in which he was not part-owner. The relatives who received their share of the harvest from the family plot, but who did not cultivate it, were employed in a variety of ways,[3] sometimes in rural industry, or in chance-work, or sometimes as dihqāns, again either in their own qanāt or elsewhere. All these combinations were represented in the few villages studied. (The number of small-owners who were actually supported by their lands can be seen by comparing column 1 with columns 26 and 27 in Table V).

Owner-cultivators were not always descendants of a former large-scale landlord. There was another type of small-holding, again also represented, in which the small plots were the traditional structure of the village. These small-owners tended each to cultivate his own plot and to supplement his living in a variety of ways, as previously

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.282.
2. Arfā, H. 1963, op.cit., p.134.
3. c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.278.

described.

Both large-scale and small-scale owners could have kinsfolk who owned in the same qanāt, sometimes sub-division had been unequal and large-scale and small-scale owners in one qanāt were relatives. Obviously very large-scale owners were less likely to have co-owning relatives but, where small-holding was the result of sub-division, the small-owners tended to be relatives,[1] and a small-owner without kinsfolk among the other owners of the qanāt was a rare occurence. However, in villages where small-holding was the traditional pattern this was not nearly so identified with family groups, and owners without other owner-kin were common. The holdings of a family, particularly when the members each owned a lot, tended to remain constant, but the internal structure of both large-scale and small-scale family holdings seemed to be changing continuously, as their members bought and sold small numbers of shares among themselves.

Although Khurāsān is noted for its vaqf,[2] there was not much in the villages studied, and was almost invariably in the poorest villages where the yield for temporal purposes was unsufficient for subsistence.

Although most land was owned directly, a little of it

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1. Due to the Islamic sub-division of inherited land, for details see c.f.Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.203.

2. Ibid., p.234. For a discussion of the concept of vaqf see ibid., p.27 and pp.230-4

was rented between landlords.[1] There were two types of renting in local usage one, called musalamī, was where a certain monetary proportion of the harvest was paid in rent however good or bad the harvest, and the other, called 'ādī, was where the amount to be paid in rent had a top limit; if the harvest was so bad that this could not be met then the landlord took it all, and if the harvest was good then the rentee retained all the surplus. Renting was usually practised between brothers;[2] if one became impoverished he would sell his holding to a brother who would then rent it back to him; if the brother could not afford to buy, an outsider might do so and again rent it back to the original owner. In such circumstances the change in ownership changed nothing in the system of cultivation, the dihqāns 'moved with the water' and continued to cultivate the same zamīn, in the same way, as they had previously done, and the zamīn themselves, doubtless to confuse the enumerator, were still known by the name of the original owner, now the rentee.

This diversity among landowners was represented in most of the qanāts studied in a variety of ways. Of the eleven villages surveyed, two were small ventures owned by one man each, four were villages in which the ownership was divided among large-scale landlords none of whom actually worked the land, three were almost entirely divided

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1. For a discussion of rentages, see c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.272 and pp.319-23.

2. For example, Sayyid Riẓā in Deh Nou gave his brother £50. a year on the 'ādí scale for the land he rented from him in Deh Kūchik.

among owner-cultivators, and two contained both large-scale and small-scale landlords, the latter often in service to the former which, according to Lambton, is unusual.[1] The only village which, at the time, had been subjected to Land Reform was in this last category: not all its water had been divided among the small-owners.

In the villages with mixed ownership, therefore, the dihqāns hired by the landlords to work their large plots might also be members of the small-holder family, whether or not the actual cultivators of the family holding, or they might be dihqāns from outside the family who again might own a little land elsewhere. Dihqāns who were also small-owners usually owned their own oxen, and the help they tendered to those relatives who worked the family plot usually consisted of lending these oxen.

The difference between the most prosperous and the poorest village was immediately apparent even to the most untrained eye. The most prosperous were those owned by small-holders working either for themselves or on their relatives' plots as well, but able to earn a comfortable living without having to become dihqāns to a non-relative.[2]

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.9.

2. See Ibid., pp.279-80 for a discussion of the comparative prosperity of the small-holder. See also Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.7. The latter especially confirms, in the main, the impressions of small-holding received during fieldwork.

The villages which had the most extensive agriculture, and which supported the greatest number of dihqāns in comparative comfort, were those owned by a few large-scale owners, able to afford the necessary qanāt maintenance. The most wretched villages were those owned almost entirely by members of one family unable to provide this maintenance, the more numerous the relatives, the less likely the availability of the maintenance, and the qanāt in consequence tended to produce little more than a trickle. Such villages and their owners were usually in circumstances far more miserable than those of a dihqān, even a dihqān without his own oxen.

The fourth aspect of diversity mentioned was that the ratio between landlords and peasants varied considerably from village to village. (This can be seen by comparing columns 1 and 35 in the Table V). It might be expected that the more landlords in a village the more peasants it would support, or, that the contrary would be true: that the effects of sub-division were such that the villages owned by fewer landlords would support the larger number of peasants. An attempt was made to find if there were some statistically significant relationship in the survey villages between the number of landlords in each village and the number of peasant families supported therein, using a straight line correlation coefficient fitted by the method of least squares. There was found to be no statistical relationship between the two factors, possibly because of the small size of the survey or, more probably, because multiple sub-division among landlords in family groups distorted the

number of the owners of a single village.

The eleven villages surveyed fell into two spatial groups, one centred on and including Ḥusaynābād, and the other on the further side of Bakshahr. They provided a good cross-section of landlordism and agriculture in the baksh. ranging from small to large villages, from poor to prosperous, from single to multiple ownership, and from isolated to easily accessible. The most prosperous seemed to be those with reasonable access to a road but set a few kilometres away from it.

Before the survey material is presented the concept of family groups of landlords requires expansion. It will be clear from the foregoing that the owners of any multiple-owned qanāt could consist of landlords who were also kinsfolk and others who were not. If an owner had no relatives in the village where his property was held he was classed as a single owner and, except for the perennial problem of sharing in qanāt maintenance, the administration of his holding was generally unaffected by the administration of the holdings of the other owners. When more than one member of a family owned shares in the water of a village the owners are called members of a family group, and these groups could be administered in one of two ways. In most instances the administration of his holding was the sole responsibility of each member of the family. His plots were demarcated separately on the ground, his dihqāns (if any) worked under his supervision, the harvest was divided by him and he received all the landlord's share. These can be called divided family groups, and were in the

majority. In practice, they operated in much the same way as did the single owners, except that their holdings were usually smaller, due to sub-division. Other differences were that they showed a greater range in their agricultural and administrative efficiency than did the single owners, and they maintained a variety of monetary transactions with theiragnates. In a few family groups, however, the holding can be described as undivided. Here the proportion of the total owned by each member of the family was known to all the persons in it, but was not represented by a corresponding partition of the working land. Its administration and/or working was directed or done by one, or possibly more, member of the family, not necessarily the most senior, by whose name the land unit was known. It was he who hired any necessary dihqāns, supervised qanāt repairs and so forth, and divided the various products after harvest, whether in cash or kind, among the family. This was usually done in proportions consistent with the number of hours that each owned, except that the rights of females were usually ignored, the amounts due to them being included in the total divided among the males, and that among the poorer family groups the rights of absentee males might also be placed at the disposal of those present.

The family groups in the survey were all divided, except where otherwise indicated. A complication in distinguishing between divided and undivided holdings arose when one family held both types. An example of this occurred in Husaynabad, where one family held undivided

Table 5

:operty Division and Population

in the Eleven Survey Villages.

Table V: Property Division and Population in the Eleven Survey Villages

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7		8		9	10		11		12		13		14		15		16		17		18
	Owners										**Their**							**Holdings**										
Village (• = pseudonym)	Ownership category	Total no owners (excluding vaqf)	No. single owners	No pers-ons in family groups	No family groups	No days in water cycle	No hours in water cycle	Total owned by single owners		Total owned by family groups		Hours held by vaqf	Range of holdings of single owners			Range of holdings of persons in family groups			Range of holdings of family groups			Average holding of single owners		Average holding of persons in family groups		Average holding of family groups	
								hours	mins	hours	mins		Largest hours mins		Smallest hours mins	Largest hours mins		Smallest hours mins	Largest hours mins		Smallest hours mins	hours	mins	hours	mins	hours	mins
Kilāteh 'Ali Goli	a	1	1	–	–	–	–	← all →		–	–	–	← all →			–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Deh Nou•	a	1	1	–	–	12	288	← all →		–	–	–	← all →			–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kilāteh Jān	e	9	4	5	1	14	336	180	–	156	–	–	72	–	36	–	48	–	6	–	← 156 →			45	–	14	24	–	–
Ja'farābād	b	9	2	7	3	12	288	108	–	180	–	–	72	–	36	–	36	–	36 iii	–	72	–	36	–	54	–	36 iii	–	50	–
Burj Āqā	d	11	1	10	2	12	288	48	–	240	–	–	← 48 →			48	–	6	–	201	–	39	–	48	–	24	–	120	–
Gārmiteh	b	13	3	10	3	12	288	108	–	156	–	24	48	–	12	–	24	–	6	–	60	–	24	–	36	–	15	10	52	–
Deh Kūchik•	b	14	–	14	3	15	360	–	–	348	–	12	–	–	–	–	105	–	10	–	240	–	20	–	–	–	24	20	116	–
Gholām Ābād	e	14	5	9	3	12	288	229	30 iv	58	30 v	–	96 iv	–	60 v	–	5 hr	18 min	each v	–	–	–	–	76 iv	–	5	18 v	–	–
Kilāteh Nādir	d	15	2	13	1	12	288	30	–	235	–	23	24	–	6	–	48	–	4	–	← 235 →			15	–	17	18	–	–
Husayn-ābād ganāts vi 1	c	18	4	14	3	12	288	88	40	199	20	–	40	40	13	20	48	–	10	20 iii	90	40	37	20	22	10	49	30 iii	66	27
2	c	17	4	13	3	12	288	38	–	250	–	–	16	–	4	–	48	30	7	–	100	–	58	–	9	30	19	15	83	20
3	c	16	4	12	3	12	288	68	20	220	–	–	21	20	13	20	48	–	5	20	90	40	37	20	17	–	18	20	73	20
4	c	15	5	10	3	12	288	104	40	183	20	–	40	40	13	20	48	–	5	20	90	40	21	20	26	56	18	20	61	7
Jorabāt	d	66	29	37	15	10	240	129	–	111	–	–	16	–	1	–	10	–	1 iii	–	22	–	1	–	4	24	3 iii	–	7	24

	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46
	Their Other Resources					**Means of Landworking**													**Village Residents**									
Village (• = pseudonym)	No owners with other farming land	No. of owners with sheep: Over 100	No. of owners with sheep: Under 100	No of small-holders in other employment: Agricultural	No of small-holders in other employment: Non-agricultural	No juft	No landlords (with dihgāns)	No peasant proprietors: Who work own+relatives' holdings	No peasant proprietors: Who work own holding only	No dingāns working village lands	No regular helpers used	No oxen used (2 per juft): Landlord owned	No oxen used (2 per juft): Landlord hired	No oxen used (2 per juft): Dihgān owned	Use of tractor by landlord: Owned	Use of tractor by landlord: Hired	No. of peasant families supported by village's agriculture: Wholly i	No. of peasant families supported by village's agriculture: Partially ii	Total no households	No landlords resident (including summer residents)	No. small-holders resident	No dihgāns resident	No khwushnishīn resident	No herders resident	No men employed in village services	No men resident but employed elsewhere: In agriculture	No men resident but employed elsewhere: In other work	1966 (census) no families in village vii
Kilāteh 'Ali Goli	1	1	–	–	–	1	1	–	–	1	1	2	–	–	–	–	2	*1	2	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	–	X
Deh Nou•	1	–	–	–	–	3	1	–	–	6	–	2	–	–	1	–	6	–	8	1	–	6	–	–	–	–	1	5
Kilāteh Jān	1	–	3	1	4	2	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	–	–	–	3	4	1	–	1	–	–	–	–	–	–	7
Ja'farābād	7	7	–	–	–	8	9	–	–	19	6	2	–	14	–	–	25	2	2	–	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	3
Burj Āqā	1	–	–	1	3	4	–	4	1	–	1	1	1	–	–	2	5	3	7	–	5	–	–	1	–	1	–	7
Gārmiteh	12	13	–	–	–	12	13	–	–	24	2	4	–	20	–	–	26	5	c 34	–	–	24	2	6	2	3	–	24
Deh Kūchik•	11	7	–	–	–	2	14	–	–	3	–	–	–	4	1	–	3	–	7	–	–	3	1	1	–	–	2	8
Gholām Ābād	3	2	1	7	2	5	3	–	11	8	–	4	2	4	1	–	13	–	9	–	11	8	–	–	–	–	–	8
Kilāteh Nādir	2	–	–	5	1	1	2	2	–	1	–	–	2	–	–	–	1	12	4	–	4	1	–	–	–	3	–	0
Husayn-ābād ganāts vi 1	16	11	2	–	3	↑	18	–	–	See ganāt 2									and note vi									
2	15	10	3	–	4	23	16	–	1	44	2	22	–	20	2	1	55	*7	74	4	1	44	5	4	11	2	8	73
3	16	11	2	–	3	↓	16	uncultivated																				
4	14	12	2	–	–		14	–	–	See ganāt 2									and note vi									
Jorabāt	15	–	16	26	11	–	5	6	58	3	4	8	?	–	–	?	c 28	51	c 120	1	47	3	–	10	?	21	–	117

Notes

i 'Wholly' supported by village agriculture means that most of a family's income comes from this. It does not preclude minor earnings from building, weaving, etc. This column also includes service workers such as shopkeepers, craftsmen, etc. who are supported by the landworking peasants.

ii 'Partially' supported by village agriculture means that most of a family's income derives from other sources

iii Indicates one undivided family group, when the holding, when calculating range and size of holdings, was treated as though owned by one individual

iv The amounts owned by landlords in this village

v The amounts distributed to the peasants by land-reform in this village.

vi 22 individuals own these 4 ganāts, the dihgāns work them all and reside at 2.

vii Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a National Census of Population and Housing, 1966 Village Gazetteer, vol 3. Khurāsān Ostān, Bujnūrd Shahrestān

* = a ganāt worker

Ownership categories

a = One owner

b = Large-scale owners

c = Large-scale and small-scale owners (non-cultivators)

d = Owner-cultivators (peasant proprietors)

e = Mixed b and d.

land on one of the qanāts but where its land on the other qanāts was divided among its members. In three instances an undivided plot has been treated for some purposes as though owned by one individual, where this has been more consistent with the division of the qanāt and with the management of the land.

2. Landownership and family structure

One of the causes of the diversities just described was that the amount of land held by one family varied considerably through time, and as an example of this the history of one of the landowning families of Ḥusaynābād will be described in detail. It will also serve to illustrate how the various characteristics of land ownership and management in the region could function in a particular instance.

Before beginning this discussion it should be noted that about 12 hours' water was reckoned to be the minimum holding for a landlord intending to farm in these four qanāts, since a holding of less than that could not support a sharecropper. The sahm for selling purposes was 4 hours in qanāt 2, the qanāt of the village of Ḥusaynābād, for the others it was 5 hours 20 minutes; that of qanāt 2 being less because of its smaller output. This is the landlords' explanation of this discrepancy; it is realized that it is not a logical one

When the children of the original single owner sold the qanāts of Ḥusaynābād they were bought by the heads of six families, in the following amounts:

Table VI: Water Ownership in Husaynābād, c.1949

Family	No. of sahm owned in each qanāt	Hrs. owned in each of qanāts 1, 3, 4 (5hr.20 min/sahm)	Hrs. owned in qanāt 2 (4 hrs/sahm)
A	21	112 hrs.	84 hrs.
B	7 (+14½ in qanat 2 only)	37 hrs. 20 mins.	100 hrs.
C	4	21 hrs. 20 mins.	16 hrs.
D	5	26 hrs. 40 mins.	20 hrs.
E	9	48 hrs.	36 hrs.
F	8	42 hrs. 40 mins.	32 hrs.
Total	54	288 hrs. (12 x 24 hr.days)	288 hrs. (12 x 24 hr.days)

(Somewhat simplified: owners held a little more in some qanāts, a little less in others)

The holdings of all the landlords in Husaynābād in 1965 is shown in Table VII, which shows the extent to which sub-division had occurred.

The B family, who lived locally, are a good example of the social capillarity possible in Iran. B's father and his partner began trading in about 1910, when they were both young, and with a capital said to be no more than £5. each. With this they bought a few camels, then cheap, and began carrying merchandise to and from Shāhrūd, in the era before this was done by motor transport. As they made money they continued to live frugally, which was emphasized as the key to their success. B's father died young, B continued the partnership. It soon became possible for them to buy property, which was entrusted to B as the partner was usually travelling with the caravans. B, however, registered all the purchases in his own name, because he foresaw that if they

Table VII: Water Ownership in Husaynābād in 1965

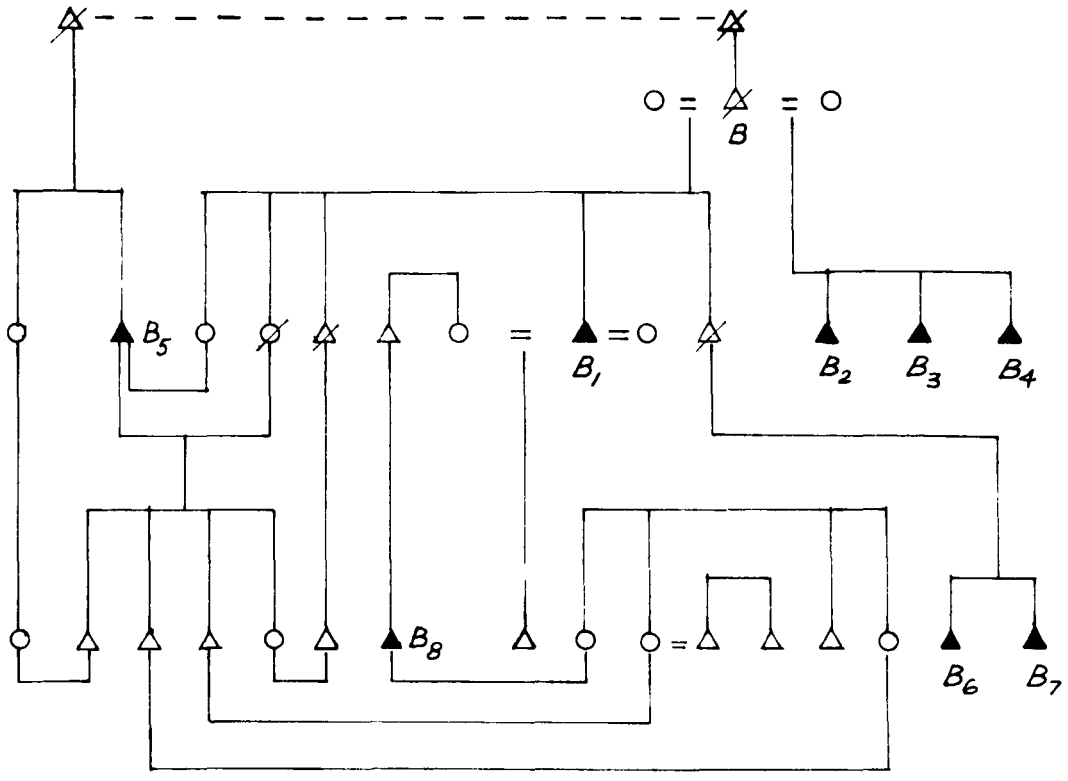
HOLDINGS ON QANĀTS

OWNER	1		2		3		4		TOTAL		No. juft owned	No. dihqāns employed
	hr.	min.	hr.	min.	hr.	min.	hr.	min.	hr.	min.		
A_1	35	35	26	30	35	35	35	35	133	15	2½	5
A_2	25	25	19	-	45	45	25	25	115	35	1½	3
A_4	20	20	+		+		+		20	20		
A_5	10	20	9	-	10	20	10	20	40	-	½	1
S	20	20	29	30	20	20	-		70	10	1	2
G	+		+		+		40	40	40	40	½	1*
B_1	37	20	30	-	16	0	5	20	88	40	2	4
B_2			14	-	5	20	5	20	24	40	1	2
B_4			14	-	5	20	5	20	24	40	½	1
B_5	Undivided holding		14	-	5	20	5	20	24	40	½	1
B_6			7	-	2	40	-		9	40		
B_7			7	-	2	40	-		9	40	1	2
B_8			12	-	-		-		12	-		
T	+		+		+		16	-	16	-		
C	21	-	16	-	21	20	21	20	80	-	2	4
D_1	13	-	10	-	13	20	13	20	50	-	1	2
D_2	13	-	8	-	13	20	13	20	48	-	1	2
E_1	21	-	16	-	21	20	21	20	80	-	4	6**
E_2	21	-	16	-	21	20	21	20	80	-		
F	48	-	36	-	48	-	48	-	180	-	4	7*
H	-	-	4	-		-		-	4	-	-	-
TOTAL	288	-	288	-	288	-	288	-	1152	-	23	44

* Indicates employment of one casual labourer when work demands.

The history of the B family is fairly representative of the other landowning families in Husaynābād during this period.

Diagram I : The B family



_ _ _ _ _ Partners

▲ = Property owner.

Note: The original partners were always spoken of as brothers, this is an example of an anomaly discussed in Chapter IV, Section 3.

were to be divided equitably between the partner and himself half would eventually go to his partner's only son while the other half would have to be divided among B's six sons. By the time B died, in about 1956, he had bought 2 days of water in Bakshahr itself, 3 days (14½ sahm) of qanāt 2 in Ḥusaynābād, and 9 days unevenly distributed in 3 other villages. His possessions included 500 camels, 2,000 sheep and goats, 50 donkeys, 7 mules, 2 horses, 10 milk-cows, 10 pairs of oxen, 2 large houses, 4 fruit-gardens, and about £5,000 in cash. None of this had been inherited. After his death his eldest son B, used the capital to make further purchases of land; 7 sahm in each of the 4 qanāts of Ḥusaynābād, which was offered up for sale about this time, 1 more day in Bakshahr and a total of 8 days in 3 other villages.

The partner had died first, and B's manipulations came to light. However, B_5 was illiterate and was without his father's personality and was unable to assert his rights against Hājjī B, as he had by then become, so B_5 received only a seventh share of the property, and B_1 also gave him only a seventh of what he had purchased.

The B family has somewhat declined from its splendid beginnings . B_1 retained control over the family holdings on qanāt 1, on the other qanāts of Ḥusaynābād the holdings were divided and almost immediately started to diminish. B_3 sold his qanāt 2 shares to B_1, and his qanāt 3 shares to B_8. This left him only with his portion of qanāt 4 and his share of the undivided family holding under B_1's management on qanāt 1. He disposed of the greater part of his

inheritance in land to pay for opium, to which he was formerly addicted. He lived very quietly in a village house upon which he had done most of the work himself. Eventually he had to sell his qanāt 4 shares as well.

B_8 also showed a certain recklessness in his affairs. In 1964 he bought a share in qanāt 2 from owner D for £300, and a year later sold it to a village shopkeeper for £200. On hearing of this second transaction D remarked that B_8 was a fool, but that both he and the shopkeeper had profited by it. B_8 had bought the worthless qanāt 3 holdings of his uncle B_3, but to pay for them he had to sell two of his inherited shares on qanāt 2, where, it will be recalled, his family's holding was greatest. He had, in fact, disposed of a valuable asset to gain extra cash and a holding in a derelict qanāt and his motives in doing so were much discussed. He was a part-owner and driver of a transport lorry, he himself said that, busy with this, he had no time to bother with farming. He bought a tape-recorder, and sold it again within a few months for half its value. His prestige diminished over these transactions, both landlord and peasant in Ḥusaynābād said that he was stupid to throw away in a few years what his grandfather had taken a lifetime to accumulate.

The disposal of their shares by B_3 and B_8 seems to have depended upon their personal characteristics rather than their economic positions, since the other members of the family were as prosperous as their shares permitted. However, as Ḥājjī B had foreseen, the repeated sub-divisions

were a barrier to economical management. The family were aware of this, and B_6, B_7 and B_8 pooled their resources on the divided lands of qanāts 2, 3 and 4 and shared a pair of dihqāns while B_4 and B_5 had a similar arrangement. Nevertheless, the first group ran into difficulties, and after repeated sellings of single shares to each other they sold out on qanāt 4 to an outsider, T. Even so, apart from B_1, the B family were the least prosperous of the Ḥusaynābād landlords, and their most profitable lands were still those under his direct control. B_1 was the only member of the family to increase his land holdings, and the process whereby he did this by buying up from his less able brothers was repeated in the other villages where the family held land.

In summary, the B family was undergoing some eclipse from a strong and respected position. As well as suffering from the vagaries of some of its male members, the family had been affected by B_1's daughter who had been involved in a major scandal. In addition, the cycle of rags-to-riches and back again was here unusually brief.

From this and other case histories it is possible to present some features of a general picture of water-ownership in this region. Lambton describes the present landowning class in Iran as being divisible into four main groups. First, there are those who have held land for several generations, second, there are the tribal khāns, third are the religious classes and fourth there are the relative newcomers to the class of landowners.[1] It will

1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.261.

be clear from the foregoing pages that all the landlords in the region studied belonged to the last group. Lambton further divides this group into three main classes: persons who have become landowners through holding office for other landlords as bailiff, or in government or military posts, or from merchandising.[1] Of the landowners in Bakshahr most had previously been merchants, some had been bailiffs, but only a few had become landowners from official government or military posts.

It will have become obvious that the acquisition of land was a widespread aim in Bakshahr society, to which a number of individuals devoted a lifetime of considerable effort. The motives behind these actions should therefore be explained. Lambton has said that, in Iranian society:

"power and money are ends in themselves"[2]

and these aims were pursued as relentlessly in Bakshahr as elsewhere in Iran. Now, in the remote region of the baksh, if a man wished to become a figure of importance within the local community investment in land and flocks was, on the whole, the only means whereby he could do so,[3] and since none of the estates was very large they were quickly sub-divided by Islamic inheritance laws,[4] so that personal status in the economic field was, on the whole, a

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953., op.cit., pp.261-2
2. Ibid., p.265.
3. c.f. Ibid., p.281
4. Ibid., p.203.

matter of personal achievement.

Iran is a country of social capillarity: the acquisition of wealth by an individual is not uncommon, but it takes time, skill and, one can add, a forceful personality. In the Bakshahr region, as has been mentioned, land was coming to equal flocks as a source of wealth. The usual sequence was for a man to start as a shopkeeper (perhaps financed initially by a wealthy father), to proceed to the careful management of herds, and only thereafter to the purchase of land. In the interests of accuracy it must be added that no landlord encountered or known of during fieldwork had acquired his wealth without indulging in some malpractice along the way. Such ventures usually occurred early in life, and by the time a man had achieved a considerable holding in land and high status in the community he had also become extremely respectable and outwardly devout. Power and money did purchase their desired aims, the wealthiest landowners were important figures in the structure of local politics.[1]

Land purchases, being the last of a series of investments, tended to be retained once acquired, and to remain under the direct control of the owner. Adult sons might manage parts of his estates for an old man, but accounts always had to be rendered to his satisfaction and the sons remained dependant upon his generosity for the greater part of their living expenses.[2] The estate was

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1. c. f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.265

2. c. f. Adams, J.B. 1957, op.cit., p.229, who also noted the continued dependance of a married son upon his father for subsistence in an Egyptian village.

rarely split immediately after his death, so that the undivided family groups were usually those only recently bereaved. Usually the estate remained under the control of the successor as head of the family for some 10-20 years; rarely the management of the estate was not divided until the third generation. Divisions, however, inevitably occurred, and usually sooner rather than later. These divisions were part of the general structure of landlordism in the area studied, and, now that the motives for land-acquisition have been explained, an attempt can be made to describe some of the outstanding features of this.

Landholding in this, and in other areas of Iran is characterised by an emphasis on extensive rather than intensive land use, on the reliance upon quantity rather than quality, and upon the repeated duplication of similar sorts of units rather than diversification by type.[1] These characteristics of large-scale ownership Lambton says are a rational institutional development arising out of Iranian history,[2] but as Bowen-Jones in discussing this explanation points out, they are also in many respects a rational environmental adjustment to the economic and geographical problems of agriculture. He describes the two effects of low agricultural yields, one is that revenue

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1. Bowen-Jones, H. 1968, op.cit., pp.567-8.

2. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.5-6.

must come from many small units, and the other is that land capability tends to become fixed, both of which guide production rationally towards extensiveness. Furthermore, the increase of productivity either extensively or intensively requires large capital investment, so that large-scale ownership is not merely a 'historical accident' but is in part at least a product of a rational resource-appraisal process.[1]

This excellent analysis explains many of the features of landlordism in the villages studied, in particular the size, repetitive and extensive character of the holdings. Bowen-Jones' explanation of these aspects of diversity is an explanation in economic terms, but the diversity can also be seen as part of a sociological process. In this society diversity stems from this function also, for it is a means whereby the fraternal tensions in the agnatic family can be resolved. The process by which these are worked out through the diversity of landlordism requires further elucidation.

Brothers tend to be identified with each other by the society outside the agnatic family to such an extent that the differences between individuals are ignored, and this is especially marked in land-holding families where the economic advantages of continued co-identification are obvious, with the almost predictable result that brothers may over-react against this joint image of themselves. Co-operation will continue in youth and early manhood,

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1. Bowen-Jones, H. 1968, op.cit., pp.582-3.

which period will usually coincide with the period immediately after the death of the original owner when the estate is not usually divided. But as his sons come to their middle years there is a real tendency for fission to occur between them, which will result in the estate being divided. This is the time when these sons will have the heaviest expenses for the education and support of their own growing families, which will include bride-price for future daughters-in-law. By then, too, they will have established their own positions in the social network that different abilities and inclinations permit, and will have different interests at stake when considering the control and disposal of assets. This is the time when the individual will maximise his estate if he is going to do so at all, since each wishes to have the maximum control of his affairs. Each, in short, ceases to consider the maximization of the interests of the family as a whole and comes to consider instead the maximization of his own. In these circumstances fission is most likely to occur, and it may often be accompanied by personal bitterness.

Brothers, therefore, tended to seek out different livelihoods for themselves, and they were in this sense fortunate in that the diverse pattern of landlordism and the structure of qanāt ownership provided them with a wide variety of opportunities through which they were able to express their differences to each other. Starting from originally identical inheritances each brother could and did create a new series of holdings: a different number of shares in different qanāts, other crops tried, a variety of

agricultural techniques attempted and, above all, each would have his own dihqāns. (These are, of course, minor variations within a theme rather than true diversification of type; the differences in estate thereby made seem unimportant outside their social context.)

The process of differentiation continued until it was rare for two brothers to possess identical holdings in all the qanāts in which they were owners, and flocks and other resources provided further sources of diversification. This process is illustrated in the case-history of the B family, and perhaps the repeated buying and selling of shares between brothers were, in part, expressing fluctuations in fraternal amity and discord. However, the undivided agnatic group had prestige and strength in local power-politics. Mindful of this, brothers preferred to sell their qanāt shares to each other, and a man had to obtain the consent of his brothers before selling to an outsider, in order to avoid pre-emption,[1] which might also be socially injurious. The ambivalence in the attitudes of brothers towards each other has been described elsewhere in this thesis as a conflict between the demands of the agnatic group in the field of descent and those of the family in the field of kinship. This ambivalence was acted out in spatial and practical matters, but was most obviously seen in the strips of land which were adjacent to each other and owned

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1. The right of a partner in immovable property to purchase that part of it which a co-partner wishes to sell to an outsider. See Lambton, A.K.S. 1953,op.cit., p.201.

by brothers, but which were demarcated and owned separately. Here the process of fraternal diversification was uniquely apparent. Whether or not any of the different estates acquired by each brother had any particular economic advantage is open to question. Bad seasons and the cost of qanāt repairs, both liable to be frequent, unexpected and devastating, tended to cancel out the advantages which might have appeared in any one investment, even assuming an equal economic prudence between brothers. On the whole the process of individual diversification yielded less in economic terms than the effort put into it would justify, which would again imply that the aims of the process were social as well as pecuniary.

The actual components of his estate which each brother eventually arrived at can be ascribed not only to his individual temperament but also to his position in the family order. Eldest sons identified themselves with their fathers more than the others did, and so were more likely to further the interests of the family holding. The original purchasers of land had seen it primarily as a source of income, as the means to personal status, without identifying themselves with it in any close sense. So, too, the elder brothers in a family tended to regard land as a financial asset with few personal connotations, and to possess in consequence the scattered but extensive holdings. This was true also of the most senior brother, who tended to gain more property than any of the others, possessing both the scattered holdings and also the greater part of the family plot, gained from his less able brothers. Younger brothers,

on the other hand, seemed to regard the family holding as a symbol of their personal oppression and to seek their own advancement elsewhere. They were more likely to sell their scattered holdings and, if going into land ownership, to spend all their inheritance on re-building a derelict qanāt or on starting a new one. They would throw themselves into this exploitation, spending vast sums on the channel, living beside it much of the time, building a little village and, as was customary, naming it after themselves.

Without exception, every small new kilāteh encountered during fieldwork had been started by a younger brother, who had thus literally made a name for himself, outside the fraternal bond.

Bowen-Jones' thesis that the repetition of similar units and an emphasis on quantity rather than quality is economically sensible is only true while economic activity remains the principal motive for agricultural practice. In the survey villages fission in land-holding families was all the more striking because it lessened productivity. For this there are many reasons. One depends on the materials used in irrigation. Vahidi says that the water-loss in the channels which convey water to the land from the qanāt is about 34% under good conditions, but in ordinary channels, that is, those which are dug from the earth and unlined, it can be 50-60%.[1] This fact was recognised locally, although

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1. Vahidi, M. 1968, op.cit., p.35.

less accurately.[1] When water can be conveyed to a series of adjacent zamīn for 24 hours or more each section can be left to water adequately, and the water-loss in the channel is obviously less than when the flow must be changed to a different direction every 12 hours or less. Thus the larger units of land are proportionately watered better than the smaller ones. Again, the maintenance of the qanāt and of equipment is more easily done by the person with the larger capital investment. If several men are in partnership each can look after different interests and management by one brother tends to disguise the weaknesses of the others.

Small-holders are generally less able to hang on after a bad season.[2] Productivity for the village as a whole may be weakened by division and subsequent selling, for there is no guarantee that the buyer of only a few hours of water will continue field agriculture.

Given the economic advantages of continued co-operation and the aims of the society at large it would be more logical to expect brothers to set aside their inevitably diverging interests in consideration of the greater wealth and power yielded from an undivided family estate. That they did not do so indicates how very strongly some younger brothers in particular had come to resent the expectation of fraternal unity and the deference to their elder brothers continually imposed upon them.

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1. It was a local expression that 1 hour of water in 12 hours of flow became lost in the water-channel.

2. c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.277.

This tendency to fission and lesser productivity stops at the point where a holding would become divided below a workable minimum, which was considered to be that amount of water which would support a share-cropper. Labour difficulties and high running costs made it unfeasible for a holding for field agriculture to be less than this. At this point the tendency to fission is reversed, and there is an attempt made to provide each male of the land-holding family with a workable minimum. Brothers who may be adult and dissident and who would otherwise split up their holdings try to continue sharing land and dihqāns when there is no other means whereby each can retain this. The desire to obtain a minimum holding is the motive behind a recurring theme in the case histories: the attempts by individuals to obtain more than their legal share of a holding for themselves and their heirs. It is another reason why brothers tend to sell their share in a qanāt to each other, or to another person owning shares in the same qanāt. This would also explain the customary exclusion of the daughters from any shares in immovable property. What Stirling describes of a Turkish village is true also of Bakshahr:

> "Daughters may be theoretically entitled, but their rights are unimportant, and should never be allowed to prevent a man from possessing enough land to care for a family".[1]

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.130.

The occasional grants of land to daughters marrying the FBS occur only when these will not work against the interest of the three-generation agnatic group.

There is, in short, a conflict between the demands of the law and those of minimum management of farming land, which will, in the last resort, be overcome by ignoring the former. What happens when the law is scrupulously observed can be seen among the small-owners and peasant proprietors.

Small-owners as a group are discussed by Lambton[1] and Dehbod,[2] among others. Dehbod equates the resident proprietors with the more prosperous one but this, in the experience of the survey, is an over-simplification. The division observed was not between resident and absentee proprietors for peasant proprietors who worked only the land that they owned themselves were a rarity. It was more common for some members of a small-holding family to work the land for all the owners, the rest of whom were employed elsewhere.[3] When, as in the minor holdings of Ḥusaynābād, the absentee owners were not related to the landworkers then, as Dehbod says, the condition of the land and workers alike was often poorer than that of the larger owners.[4] However, when the absentee proprietors were related to the land-workers then the latter could be extremely prosperous, though even here the corollary was not exact.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.275-82.
2. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., pp.6-7.
3. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.278.
4. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.7.

It might be thought that the explanation of this is simple: landworkers related to the landowners themselves own some of the land they farm, and thus have a far greater proportion of its yields. However, some landworking peasant proprietors were extremely poor, so prosperity does not depend upon residence, as Dehbod suggests, or upon the fact of landownership itself. Lambton, in debating this question, suggests that peasant-proprietors fare better than crop-sharers in more fertile areas, but worse in the poorer areas.[1] This may well be generally true, but it was noted during the survey that poor and wealthy peasant proprietor villages could be adjacent. A better explanation is found in the economic conditions of landownership as a whole.

Lambton has indicated that the natural conditions under which agriculture is carried out would seem to favour large landed proprietors,[2] so that where qanāt maintenance is extremely expensive peasant proprietorship is almost non-existant.[3] Conversely, since qanāt maintenance is extremely expensive, peasant and small proprietors cannot afford it, so that what determined their prosperity was the extent to which the qanāt continued to flow without it. When, as in Burj Āqā and Jo'abāt the qanāt had a good flow of water although work was never done on it, the advantages of peasant proprietorship were obvious. The owner-

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.279-80.
2. Ibid., p.280.
3. Ibid., p.275.

cultivators of Burj Āqā did not wear peasant clothes, their homes were whitewashed and contained such consumer goods as radios and formal tea-services, all of which were unknown in the dihqān houses of Ḥusaynābād barely a couple of miles away. More usefully, their diet was more varied and contained more animal protein and fresh fruit and vegetables. The standard of living was not quite as high in Jo'abāt, but it was still above that of the average dihqān. This village was the only one surveyed where small-holding was the traditional pattern and not the result of sub-division, and it is undoubtedly significant that this was also the only village in the survey which had some daym[1] cultivation. However, in places such as Kilāteh Jān and Kilāteh Nādir where, as is more usual, lack of maintenance had resulted in the qanāt flow being reduced to a mere trickle, the one or two members of the landowning family who remained to try to eke out an existence did so in the most miserable poverty. Diet and living conditions were well below those of the khwushnishīn[2] in the landlord villages, let alone those of the dihqāns.

Thus, contrary to what Dehbod says, resident peasant proprietors were not necessarily more prosperous than the dihqāns. What was striking about the peasant proprietors and small-owners was that they encompassed extremes of comparative affluence and near-destitution, while the dihqāns,

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1. Dry cultivation, i.e. non-irrigated.

2. Non-agricultural or otherwise employed village resident. See Dehbod, A. 1963. op.cit., p.9.

whatever the variations between them, occupied the middle of this scale of prosperity.

Other factors influenced the prosperity of peasant proprietors. Lambton says that their ownership of gardens, in addition to the arable land, usually aids their circumstances,[1] and the survey would seem to confirm this. However, the gardens were only useful in circumstances already favourable; in the poorer peasant-proprietor villages they were negligible.

Psychological factors are also important. Dehbod stresses the greater agricultural effort made by the villager when he owns his farming land.[2] Lambton confirms the greater self-assurance and consequent greater production of the peasant proprietor.[3] In the villages surveyed the confidence of the wealthier peasant proprietors was evident and undoubtedly stimulated his labours, but one can at least wonder whether this confidence would survive should the qanāt suddenly require expensive repairs. Whether the village would swiftly decline into the poverty and apathy of those served by ruined qanāts, or whether enough confidence would remain to inaugurate repairs, by borrowing if necessary, is open to question. When, under Land Reform, peasant proprietorship becomes the norm, this question will become increasingly important. At the time of the survey, peasant proprietorship required atypically favourable conditions to

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.278.

2. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.12.

3. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit. p.281. See also 1969a. Land Reform and Rural Co-operatives in Persia Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, vol.56, part III, p.254

be successful.

Peasant proprietorship differed as a class from the large-scale owners in one curious but important feature, the sharing-out of inheritance rights. It will be recalled that among the large-scale owners the rights of daughters were customarily ignored, but among the small-owners daughters were usually given their appropriate shares. The reason for this difference probably lies in the different motives for land-holding between the classes. For the large-scale owners land was a means to wealth and power, so that a man would be reluctant to give up even a small part of it, especially to a sister who was probably comfortably supported by her own husband. Among the small-owners, though, land-holding could be the principal means of basic subsistence, and under these circumstances a man would be reluctant to deprive his sister of what could be a useful addition to the scanty food resources of a peasant household.

In Kilāteh Nādir, for example, where the qanāt was ruined and the cultivation in consequence sparse, the harvest, however small, was scrupulously divided between the five brothers and six sisters (or their descendants) who owned almost all the village. In 1965, for example, a good year elsewhere in the region, the total wheat yield for the entire kilāteh was only 852 kilos, yet the owners divided it out on the principle that each day of the 12 in the village cycle received 72 kilos. (This would mean that each sister received 54 kilos and each brother 108 although, owing to the usual exchange of shares between siblings and the selling of a small part of the village to outsiders, the

amounts received by each sibling were slightly different from these.) What is important is that the amount due was always given, however small.

The principle that a sister's share should never endanger a man's ability to support his family was here ignored because the yield was so small that it could not have supported the brothers even if the sisters had been deprived, and in practice all but one of the family earned his living elsewhere. This sharing-out of an already small inheritance had one obvious disadvantage, in that it minimized any efforts likely to be made to repair a defective qanāt. On the whole, in this class, the effort was rarely made, derelict villages being purchased for relatively small sums by investing landlords.

The survey confirms Lambton's statement that in inadequate circumstances for small-holding the peasants will go to the towns,[1] but this is not confined to the small-holding class. Moreover, it has been assumed that changes in ownership have been taking place in a static social situation, but many changes have come recently to the Bakshahr region: political security, cotton and beet as cash-crops, the gradual and increasing influence of the attraction and values of the wider world and, more specifically, Land Reform. It is impossible to estimate whether the selling of qanāt shares had been accelerated by

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.278-9.

the last-named. Local opinion suggested that in this respect the prospects of urban employment had been at least equally effective, offsetting for some the greater value in farming brought about by cash crops and increased security.

The sons of wealthy landlords who left Bakshahr did not become members of the faceless crowds of the city. Having frequently received a secondary education, they may sell their inheritance to provide themselves with professional training and the necessary style of living to accompany it. At this level of qualification there is no surplus employment under rapid modernization. The small-owners who left the region usually went north to Gurgān, where factory work was available. Thus although over-employment remains a problem in Iran as a whole, the region did not seem to be adversely affected, perhaps because of its distance from the capital.

3. Qanāt Maintenance.

It will have become apparent that the necessity for irrigation dominated not only the system of agriculture but also many other spheres of life, so that it was one of the most important foundations of the social structure. An interesting example of this was found in the nomenclature of villages. A qanāt, once dug and working, was always given a name, usually that of the owner with the suffix "ābād",[1] and

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1. This is a place-suffix, but it is interesting to note that the local explanation was that it was a contraction of "Āb Āmad", meaning "water came". Thus Ḥusaynābād means, to its inhabitants, "Ḥusayn's water came"

a settlement, if then built, was referred to by the same name. Villages, in short, were called after qanāts, not the other way round, and this illustrates, in a minor way, the dependence of a village upon its supply of water.

The establishment of a qanāt does not end the problems of water supply. Qanāts are subject to natural disasters, but even without these they require major maintenance every five to ten years, and minor cleaning every year, if they are to supply a constant flow. The conditions of the 14 qanāts covered by the survey are compared in Table VIII.

While large-scale conclusions cannot be drawn from such a small survey, it is clear that, in the region studied, the real limitation to agriculture was not the presence of qanāts but their proper maintenance, and that much of the poverty of the region could be attributed to the poor condition of the average qanāt. Out of the total of 14 less than half yielded well, and while maintenance on a good qanāt shows prudence, it was not being done on those which needed it most.

Expense was not the only obstacle to qanāt maintenance. Another was the physical condition of the land itself, for very hard ground or soft sand added to the difficulties of excavation with primitive tools.[1] A second major obstacle was the unpleasant conditions of working in qanāts. The muqannīs[2] admitted to the difficulties brought about by the

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.220.

2. Muqannī = qanāt builder or worker.

Table VIII Qanāt Condition and Type of Ownership

Type of Ownership	No.of qanāt in this class	Condition of Qanat (i)					
		No. Good I	No.of peasant families wholly supported by these (ii)	No. Adequate II	No.of peasant families wholly supported by these (ii)	No. Poor III	No.of peasant families wholly supported by these (ii)
a) 1 Owner	2	1	6	1*	2	-	-
b) Large-scale owners only	3	2*	51	-	-	1	3
c) Large & small-scale owners (non-cultivation)	4	1*	(iii) 18	2**	(iii) 34	1	0
d) Owner Cultivators	3	1	5	1	28	1	1
e) Mixed large-scale and owner cultivators (b + d)	2	1*	13	-	-	1	3
Total	14	6	83	4	64	4	7

(----------55----------)

Notes to the table

(i) This can only be a subjective estimate, based upon observed output and upon whether, in the opinion of the dihqāns working it, the qanāt in question had been producing more or less water in the previous five years than at the time of observation. Thus although qanāt outputs can roughly be compared with each other, the final rating of a qanāt also depended on how it compared with itself.

(ii) From Table V. With a limited technology, the number of families a qanāt can support is a reasonably accurate measure of its output.

(iii) i.e. these 55 families worked these 3 qanāt jointly.

* indicates a qanāt where maintenance was very recent or in progress at time of fieldwork.

darkness, the fear of collapse, and the danger from snakes. Recruitment to the trade was not easy, despite high wages, and even trained muqannīs did not always stay in it. A third, and major, obstacle to qanāt maintenance was the inequality of resources between its owners. Repairs were never begun until all the owners of a qanāt had contributed their appropriate shares to the cost. This was one of the very few transactions in Iranian life where promissory payments were not sufficient and indicates how seriously it was regarded. Thus it happened frequently that a qanāt would stand dry because one or two of the owners could not afford to contribute while all the others had funds available and were anxious that the work should be done. Lack of maintenance produced a vicious circle, since it deprived the smaller owners of the very revenue from which they could finance repairs, while the larger owners, who were not hindering repairs, usually had other resources to draw upon. In effect, the major difficulty associated with qanāt repairs was that they depended upon the financial resources of the poorest, not the wealthiest, of their owners. This partially explains why work was not being done on those qanāt which needed it most.

Since landholding was prestigious, a poor landlord was unwilling to admit to his inability to contribute to maintenance. Under pressure from his fellow-owners he might sell his harvest in advance or borrow money in order to provide his share of the expenses, but he would defer such actions as long as possible, in this he was aided by the

ideals of his society. In theory the other partners could take the non-contributory one to court, but the concept of mutual trust which ideally existed between financial partners made it dishonourable for them to take such an action, and would give the defendant justifiable grounds for criticism of his partners. Moreover, as the landlords admitted, legal action would not necessarily coax any money out of the man; a more certain consequence was that considerable ill-feeling would be created and the partnership dissolved. It must be recalled also that a defecting partner was most likely an agnatic kinsman of at least some of the others, and was acquainted socially with the rest, which again made legal action seem "wrong", being socially disruptive. By contrast with these inhibitory feelings there was no acceptable social mechanism for co-ercing an unwilling landlord to pay his share. It might be said that in consequence of all this qanāts stood idle while landlords retained their social prestige, but to be fair it must be said that most landlords would much have preferred to see their dry qanāts become productive, and deplored the system in which they were enmeshed, which prevented them from being able to act effectively. In recent years land-reform had provided another excuse for the avoidance of repair payments, for the landlord who refused to contribute would say that he was frightened that if the qanāt were made productive its lands would then become liable to division.

Qanāt maintenance was further hindered by the size and nature of its expense. Work could not be carried out

piecemeal; it was necessary for a considerable amount to be spent, both in time and money, before any noticeable improvement in the flow took place. Wages were high, for a helper received about 25p. a day and a skilled muqannī 50-60p. a day, whereas the rate for a casual labourer was 20p a day. Various estimates on maintenance costs seemed somewhat exaggerated, and it is probably more realistic to examine the costs of maintenance work actually done, even if this was insufficient to bring the qanāt up to full productivity.

In 1964 £100-200 had been spent on qanāt repairs in Ja'farābād. In Gholām Ābād a muqannī was constantly employed, costing £35 a year, and a stone viaduct had been built for a difficult stretch of the qanāt, but in local opinion the flow was still not what would be preferred. An outcrop of rock at ʿAlī Golī created adverse working conditions, but the expenditure of at least £700-800 had turned a dry course into a productive, if small, one.

In normal circumstances qanāts required maintenance through the natural tendency of the underground passages to collapse in time. Occasionally this process was hastened by a natural disaster. In the winter of 1963 an exceptionally heavy snowfall piled up against the railway embankment near Ḥusaynābād and, on melting, caused the collapse of all four of its qanāts. It was estimated that about £5,000 would be needed to restore all the qanāts to full productivity. Up to and including the time of fieldwork (1964-5) some £2,000 had been spent, work having ceased because the poorer landlords could afford no more.

By this sum qanāt 4 had been restored almost to its full potential, and qanāts 1 and 2 had been induced to give an adequate flow which, however, in local opinion, fell significantly short of their previous outputs. Qanāt 3 remained a mere trickle, and its lands derelict. All the dihqāns employed on qanāt 3 had also been working the other lands of Ḥusaynābād, so none were thrown out of work, but the productivity of the village as a whole was obviously reduced considerably.

If a large-scale maintenance were not in progress, a qanāt usually received minor cleaning and repairs each year. In Ḥusaynābād this kept a muqannī employed almost constantly. This expense, at least, the minor landlords could afford since it cost about 4p a year for each hour of water owned. In Gholām Ābād cleaning cost each owner 25p, a year. Cleaning was not done regularly on the other owner-cultivator qanāts, nor on the derelict ones.

In concluding this section, some points should be emphasized. First, in the region studied, agriculture is carried out under marginal conditions. To own water is to control the resource upon which agriculture predominately depends, and which is extremely scarce. Second, once owned and controlled, the hold on this vital factor is precarious. Third, the test for viable land ownership is the ability to finance qanāt repairs and carry on agriculture during a lean year, or even two proximate ones. Fourth, agricultural productivity had increased in the region since the onset of political security, but the continuation of this trend depends upon the renovation of the poor qanāts.

4. Cultivation practices

A certain difficulty arises in describing the details of cultivation practices. It is that, to the social anthropologist, the chief interest of such information lies in what it reveals about the social relationships between the persons concerned. Moreover there already exists a growing body of literature on Iranian agriculture. Lambton, to name but one author, describes the agricultural calendar and cultivation methods in detail.[1] In consequence agricultural practices will only be detailed in so far as is necessary for an understanding of the sociological issues involved.

Land Division

The manner in which the agricultural lands of a qanāt were divided among its owners derived from two factors. The first was the necessity of the qanāt as a source of irrigation, which resulted in the pattern of strip-farming characteristic of almost all the villages observed. The second was the varying amounts of water held by the individual owners, which determined the size and distribution of the zamīn. The zamīn were usually grouped into three main blocks of agricultural land, corresponding to the three-yearly rotation of crops. Each owner held an equal number of zamīn in each block, but these were not all adjacent, so that the good land at the head of the qanāt and the less favourable land further away were shared

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.359-67.

equally. The size and distribution of zamīn were identical in villages of single or equal ownership. When ownership was unequal, as in Ḥusaynābād, size and distribution were unequal. This is shown in Map 2, which shows the ownership of the zamīn of part of the four qanāts of Ḥusaynābād.

Each zamīn was regarded as the sole property of its owner, and was referred to as his land, even when lying fallow. Since, as Lambton indicates, periodic redistribution of land is not usual in villages where ownership is based upon units of water,[1] a dihqān, if his employer remained unchanged, would cultivate the same zamīn for a number of years. In such cases the villagers might refer to the zamīn by the dihqān's name, and although this does not mean that they were confused as to the actual ownership it shows their awareness of the bond between a dihqān and the land he cultivated. The crops and management of each zamīn, within the main rotational cycle, were the concern only of its dihqān and owner. Access to each zamīn was, in normal circumstances, the sole prerogative of its dihqān, and the conceptual separation given to each was all the more striking in view of their proximity and sameness.

It is logical that the division of land should be thus strictly made known and upheld. The system of flood irrigation is wasteful of water,[2] so that the amount of land available for effective agriculture is scarce.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.7.

2. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.19.

MAP 2

LAND OWNERSHIP IN HUSAYNĀBĀD 1965

MAP 2: LAND OWNERSHIP IN ḤUSAYNĀBĀD 1965



Water Division

During each night the water from the qanāt was collected in a large pool built beside the village for this purpose. By morning there was a sufficient head of water to drive it along the village street and thence out on to the agricultural lands. This technique depended upon the fact that individual holdings in a qanāt were usually at least 24 hours. Owners with smaller holdings grouped themselves together into larger units so that their lands could be watered during the same day. Although the advantage of this method was that the villages did not need to support a mīrāb,[1] it is clear from Table VII that in a village of multiple holdings such as Ḥusaynābād it could not work accurately, and it was locally believed that it operated to the detriment of the small-owners.

Crops and Crop Rotation

According to Bowen-Jones, 12% of the land area of Iran is under sedentary agriculture of which less than 1/3 is under cultivation at any one time. Nevertheless, it was upon this that 75% (i.e. over 18 million) of the population of Iran directly depended.[2] Details of Iranian agriculture with respect to crop rotation, actual crops grown and yields obtained have been given for the Kirmān area and for Davarābād by Beckett[3] and Alberts[4] respectively. The 1966

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1. For a definition of this term, see Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.123-4.
2. Bowen-Jones, H. 1968, op.cit., pp.566-7.
3. Beckett, P.H.T. 1957, op.cit., pp.19-25.
4. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.305-53.

(i)

Table IX: land usage, etc. in survey villages[1]

Village (+ indicates pseudonym).	Wasteland: Cultiveable	Wasteland: non Cultiveable	Orchard	Fallow Land	Irrigated wheat	Irrigated barley	Natural pasture	Annual crops (i.e. alfalfa, etc.)	Non-irrigated barley	Horses & donkeys	Sheep & goats(ii)	Oxen	Total cows	Type of Ownership.
Deh Nou +	500	60	-	3	20	10	-	15	-	4	-	2	11	One owner (a)
Kilāteh Ján	10	8	-	-	4	3	3	3	-	8	400	4	4	Mixed (b) + (d)(e)
Ja'farābād	410	5	-	8	8	1	-	3	-	3	10	5	6	Large-scale owners (b)
Burj Āqā	200	50	-	25	18	1	-	-	-	10	1500	4	10	Owner-Cultivators (d)
Gārmiteh	150	125	-	100	100	25	-	9	-	30	500	24	50	Large-scale Owners (b)
Deh Kūchik +	250	20	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	5	170	6	15	Large-scale Owners (b)
Gholām Ābād	150	50	-	17	15	3	-	15	-	10	350	4	11	Mixed (b) + (d) (e)
Kilāteh Nādir				No information										
Husaynābād +(iii)	400	300	2	2	186	25	50	6	-	55	-	40	210	Large & small-scale owners (non cultivators)
Jo'abāt	250	50	-	75	18	5	-	4	5	40	1700	28	41	Owner-Cultivators (d)

Notes to the Table

i. In hectares.

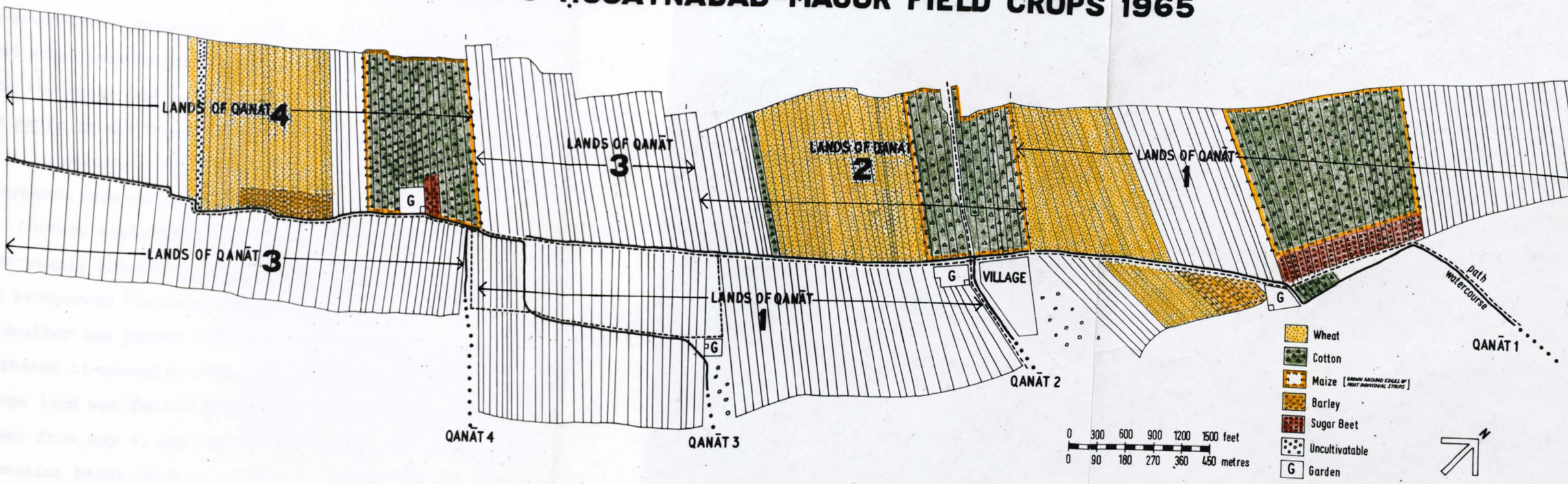
ii. The Census was taken in November, when the flocks had come down from their summer pasturage to the villages.

iii Since Kilāteh 'Alī Golī is not entered separately in the Census, it is assumed that its cultivation, etc. is included in that of Husaynābād.

1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a. National Census of Population and Housing, 1966 Tehrān: Plan Organization, Iran Statistical Centre. Village Gazetteer, vol.3. Khurāsān Ostān, Bujnūrd shahrestān.

MAP 3:
ḤUSAYNĀBĀD–
MAJOR FIELD
CROPS, 1965

MAP 3 : ḤUSAYNĀBĀD-MAJOR FIELD CROPS 1965



entirety in map 4. (p.102).

Two points emerge from these maps. One is that little of the land available for cultivation is actually used in any one year. The other is that the three-yearly rotation was only a rough guide to what was grown.

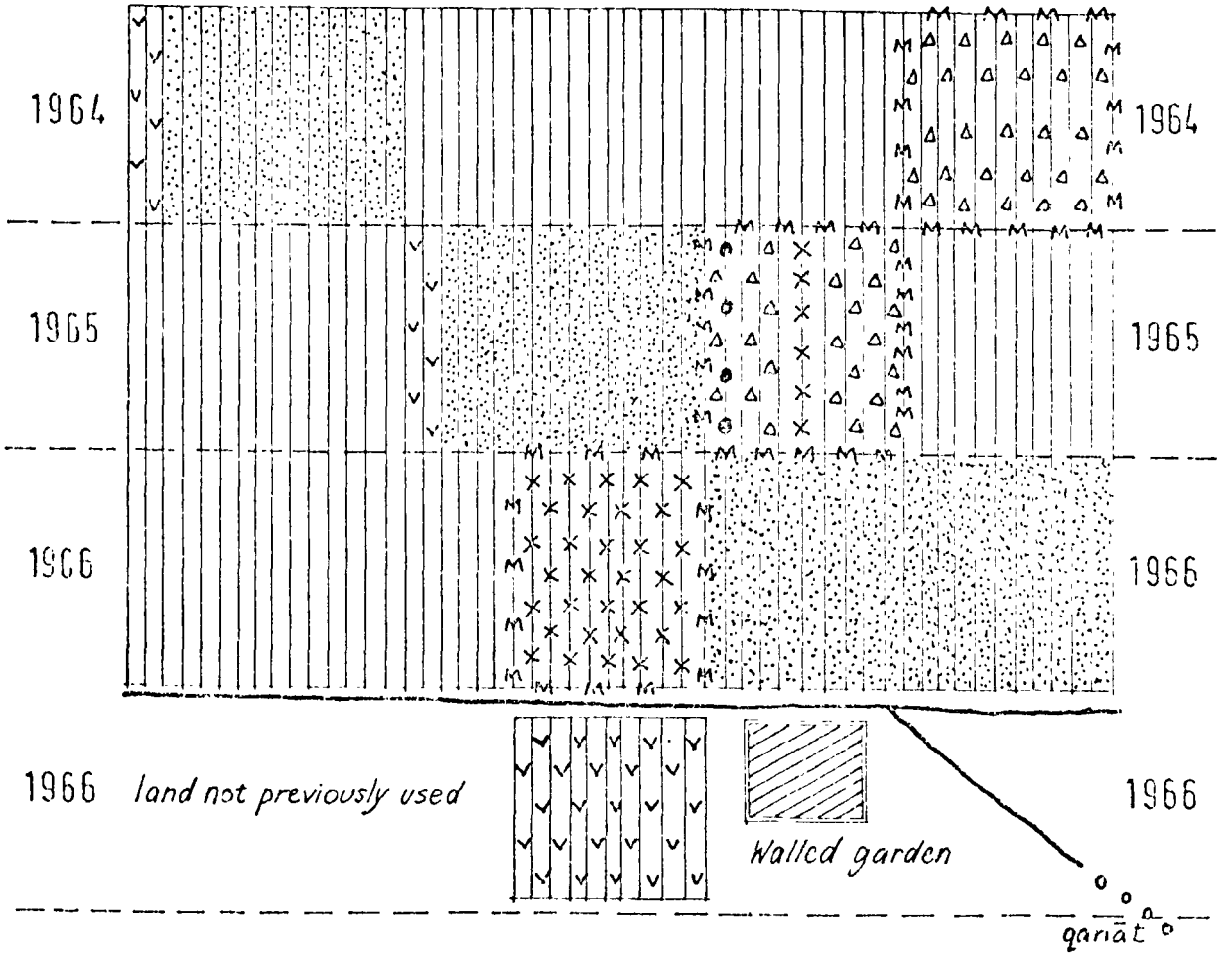
From a broad description of a three-yearly rotation of crops it would seem that 2/3 of the lands of a village should have been under cultivation at any one time, not 1/3 as Bowen-Jones suggests. However, even in those blocks of land which were being cultivated in any one year the flow from the qanāt had to be unusually abundant to enable all the zamīn in the block to be utilized. From map 3 and Table IX it is evident that less than 2/3 of the lands of Ḥusaynābād were cultivated in 1965.

Another explanation of Bowen-Jones's figure is that the three-yearly rotation was followed only in the larger and more prosperous villages such as Ḥusaynābād and Gārmiteh. In the smaller and poorer villages each block of cultivated land alternated bi-annually with its own ayish, so that half the village land was fallow each year. This, for example, as can be seen from map 4, was the system in Deh Nou, Sayyid Riẓā's explanation being that his land was unused to cultivation and could not be used intensively.

If it were possible to obtain, for each village, a ratio between the amount of land under sedentary agriculture and that part of it which was actually under cultivation each year, these ratios would differ widely from village to village, but if these were then averaged together the amount of land under cultivation in the survey area would probably

Map 4 : Crop Rotation in Deh Nou

(diagram, not to scale)



confirm the accuracy of Bowen-Jones's figure. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that, on the land, cultivation productivity varied to a striking degree from village to village.

Productivity

Sowing rate and yield ratios were difficult to obtain during fieldwork. Despite the impression given by the Census material, the crop figures for each village are only the summation of the independent juft therein, and the amount of land in a juft was not accurately known. Since it was not possible to draw up an accurate map of the land of a juft in each of the survey villages, they cannot be compared on the basis of relative productivities per area. The comparison of productivities is also difficult because they were calculated in a number of different ways, by hour of water, by land section and by weight of seed.[1] However, throughout most of the survey villages the most usual method of reckoning sowing-rate was by juft, and therefore, although they were not all equal in size, the most accurate method of comparing village productivities is to examine in detail a juft from each. (Table X, p.104).

It is realized that an accurate description of agriculture should include yields per land area for a sample village. It is not possible to present such data for Ḥusaynābād because only a few dihqāns were willing to give details of their crop yields, and since the juft were

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.343.

Table X: Comparison of productivity between a juft from each of the survey villages, in kilos[i]

Crop (1965) / Village (• = pseudonym)	Wheat[ii] Sown	Wheat Yield	Wheat Rate of Yield	Barley[iii] Sown	Barley Yield	Barley Rate of Yield	Cotton Sown	Cotton Yield	Cotton Rate of Yield	Maize[iii] Sown	Maize Yield	Maize Rate of Yield	Type of Ownership	Comment on Year's Yields[iv]	Qanāt Category
1 Kilāteh 'Alī Golī	100	150	x 1½	–	–	–	?	?	?	10	20	x 2	(a) One owner	Yields usually better, bad management of land in 1964	II
2. Deh Nou•	1,000	6,000	x 6	150	750	x 5	200	1300	x 7	100	1,000	x 10	(a) One owner	Average-to-good	I
3. Kilāteh Jān[v]	60	450	x 7½	–	–	–	9	75	x 8	–	–	–	(c) Mixed (b) & (d)	Better than average, considering poor condition of qanāt	III
4 Ja'farābād			No information available										(b) Large-scale owner.		I
5 Burj Āqā	720	5,445	x 8	?	no yield		180	1,500	x 8+	?	?	?	(d) Owner-cultivators	Average	I
6 Gārmiteh	900	5,250	x 6	?	?	?	150	900	x 6	?	?	?	(b) Large-scale owners	Slightly less than average	I
7. Deh Kūchik•	600	3,600	x 6	150	900	x 6	60	300	x 5	–	–	–	(b) Large-scale owners	Good By good management of land, considering poor condition of qanāt	III.
8 Gholam Ābād	1,050	6,000	x 6	100	600	x 6	–	"	–	–	–	–	(c) Mixed (b) and (d)	Average	I
9. Kilāteh Nādir	?	252	?	?	no yield		?	no yield		–	–	–	(d) Owner-cultivators	A more typical result than 3 or 7 from a poor qanāt	III
10 Ḥusaynābād•	700	3,900	x 5	150	600	x 4	90	450	x 5	15	15	x 1	(c) Large- and small-scale owners	Maize usually x 5, otherwise average	1 x I, 2 x II, 1 x III
11. Jo'abāt[vii]	96	1,200	x 12	?	?	?	36	750	x 20					Slightly less than average	II

i Major field crops only shown, garden produce unassessable. Information from dinqāns, landlords exaggerating yields

ii Cf Beckett, PHT 1957, op cit, p 2. In the Kirmān area wheat yields x 5 or x 7
Lambton, AKS 1953, op cit, pp 364-5, compares wheat yields in different areas

iii Quantities of maize and barley, where not grown for cash crops, not known with sufficient accuracy for comparison. Absence of maize indicates oxen hired or machinery owned or hired for landworking

iv Based on field observations over two seasons, and comments of land workers. 'Average' means average in their terms

v This juft supported only one peasant-owner.

vi The summer crop in this juft was alfalfa

vii Yield rates per 24 hours of water, as was reckoning system here. Explains feasibility here of very small holdings

dissimilar the material obtained cannot be used as fractional of the total village output. However, it is possible to give productivity data for Deh Nou. The year given is 1964, a bad season by local standards, but during the time of fieldwork in 1965, although the crops had been divided, Sayyid Riẓā had not yet totalled the yields for the entire kilāteh.

Table XI: Productivity of major field crops in Deh Nou 1964

Crop	Kilos sown (a)	Kilos sown per hectare (b)	No. Hectares (a ÷ b)	Kilos Yielded (c)	Kilos Yielded per hectare $\frac{c}{a \div b}$
Wheat	3,900	180	21.6 (i)	24,000	1,107.7 (ii)
Barley	600	180	3.33	3,000	900
Cotton	600	90	6.66	3,900	585.6
Alfalfa	No information		0.2633 (iii)	240	911.5

Notes

(i) This figure corresponds well with that in the Census, see Table IX. Admittedly the Census figure was probably supplied by Sayyid Riẓā himself, but a similar figure is obtained when the area under wheat is calculated from the amount sown per zamīn and the number thereof.

(ii) Beckett calculates that the wheat yield in the Kirmān area was 700-1,000 lb. grain per acre.[1] For the first figure, this gives a comparative yield of 1120 kilos of wheat per hectare.

(iii) This figure was obtained by measurement in the field.

Since, as has been explained,maize was not planted in a single area but around the cotton, its yield per hectare cannot be given. The yields of the smaller crops of vegetables and winter fodder cannot be given either because

1. Beckett, P.H.T. 1957, op.cit., p.21.

they were grown solely for home consumption, and in consequence did not enter the economic market. Nevertheless, they were useful in that they reduced expenditure that the peasant household would otherwise have had to make.

The system of agriculture did not seem to be very efficient in the sense that maximum use was not made of the available opportunities for improvement. Manure was not used systematically.[1] Although it was recognized that turning the flocks on to the stubble benefitted the soil they were not moved around systematically. Chemical fertilizer was not usually given to village lands. When the Deh Nou lands were first ploughed up Sayyid Riẓā had bought chemical fertilizer, but he had not continued to do so, even after the poor harvest of 1964, (although he could have afforded it, he had bought consumer goods instead.) As Bowen-Jones says, the practice of cultivating the land extensively rather than intensively mitigates against its improvement.[2]

Although the tools of agriculture were usually of the simplest, the sickle being customarily used for harvesting, the pitchfork for winnowing, and so on, machinery was being introduced more rapidly than fertilizers. Although dihqāns are reported to be suspicious of change,[3] those met during fieldwork generally welcomed the use of machinery as

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1. c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.362.
2. Bowen-Jones, H. 1968, op.cit., p.583.
3. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.396.

clearly saving their time and labour. Nevertheless machinery was still used in only a minority of juft.

Co-operation between dihqāns within the means at their disposal was not practised as widely as it could have been. In two of the survey villages, after each zamīn had been watered it was ploughed by all the oxen in the village, regardless of its ownership, so that the seed could be broadcast before the land became too dry to accept it. The advantages of this system were obvious, and there was no discernable reason why it was not practised elsewhere. However, examples of economic rationality could be found. Oxen were not kept in the poorest villages since it was cheaper for the peasants there to hire them than to buy food for them. In many instances without such economic rationality agriculture would have ceased to be viable.

It is easy to over-generalize an account of cultivation practices which vary so much between villages and seasons. However, bad seasons in Iran are not so infrequent that their conditions are unfamiliar,[1] being something to which agriculture is adjusted, irregularly but inevitably. Taking into account the availability of resources, each year's cultivation is probably planned on an ad hoc basis, though there are sufficient regularities from year to year to enable agriculture to be described as a system of customary practices.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.367.

5. Crop-division

Crop-division and contracts are discussed in detail by Lambton,[1] who says that in general, in Iran, the type of contract between the share-cropping peasant and his landlord depends upon which of the five factors necessary to agricultural production - land, water, seed, oxen and labour- are contributed by either party. Lambton goes on to say that this is little more than a theoretical abstraction.[2] It was certainly not always true in the area studied.

In the fieldwork area the terms of the labour-contract of share-cropping depended upon two main factors. The amount of the crop received by each party depended upon which of them owned the oxen used in cultivation and which crop the oxen were being used for. The other decisive factor in the labour-contract was that the actual method of the crop-division was decided by the original owner of each qanāt at the time of its inception, and thereafter remained unchanged despite alterations in qanāt ownership: "The custom of the qanāt", as the dihqāns referred to it. This meant that share-croppers in different villages, even if they owned the same number of the factors of productivity, did not necessarily receive the same proportions of the harvests therein. Thus crop-division was another aspect of the general diversity in agricultural affairs in the region. It is not proposed to give the actual crop-divisions for all of

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.306-16

2. Ibid., p.306.

the survey villages, merely to give examples of this diversity. Share-cropping alone will be described, since a system of rentages to peasants, such as Lambton describes,[1] was not observed in the region investigated.

Wheat

In all of the qanāt surveyed the first division made of the threshed and winnowed wheat meant that 1/10 of it was divided amongst those who had reaped it. The division of the rest depended in the first instance upon whether or not the seed was taken from it before the crop was divided. In Deh Nou, Deh Kūchik, and qanāts 2, 3 and 4 of Ḥusaynābād the seed was taken out before this main division. Thereafter the factors of production were considered as divisible into 4 parts. The land and water could command ½ of the wheat, the labour ¼, and the final ¼ was equivalent to the oxen : "the share of the cow" as it was called. Thus if the dihqān owned the oxen which had been used for ploughing and threshing he received ½ the grain, but if the oxen had been supplied by the landlord he received only ¼. If a tractor were used the landlord took the oxen share and paid all its expenses from what he received after division. Customary dues to the iron-worker, the carpenter, and so forth, were paid by the dihqān from his share.

In qanāt 1 of Ḥusaynābād the seed was taken before division, and the crop was then divided so that the landlord

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.319-25.

received 2/3 of the crop, while the remaining 1/3 was again halved so that the dihqān received 1/6 of the total and the final 1/6 also went to whichever of the parties owned the oxen. Here again the oxen-owning dihqān received twice as much of the harvest as he who owned none. Dues were again paid by the dihqān. This system was used in Gārmiteh, with the exception that the dues were paid by the landlord before the crop was divided.

In Gholām Ābād the division was described as being 5:2, which meant that the crop was divided into 5 parts, 3 of which went to the landlord, 1 to the dihqāns and 1 to the owner(s) of the oxen or to the tractor used in the juft investigated, and owned by the landlord. Dues and the share for the harvesters were taken out before the main division. In addition, at this preliminary stage, the landlord took 300 kilos of wheat as the wages of the tractor-driver. The landlord supplied the seed from his share after division. In this village, the driver's wage notwithstanding, crop division was based on the traditional five-fold Iranian system. All these divisions were made from the pile of wheat on the zamīn. In all the villages investigated the dihqāns were allowed to keep the grain received from the second and subsequent sievings of the straw.

Wheat Straw

In Deh Nou each dihqān received 300 kilos of wheat straw a year, the landlord taking the rest. The dihqāns used it to feed their milk-cows in winter. In Ḥusaynabād the straw was halved between the landlord and the oxen-owner, so that

the oxen-less dihqāns received none. They had to supplement the diet of their milk-cows by collecting weeds and greenstuffs from the rough pasturage. In Gārmiteh the straw was also halved between the landlord and the oxen-owners. However, an oxen-less dihqān here received a quarter of the total amount. In Gholām Ābād the wheat straw was divided 3:1:1 like the wheat itself.

Barley

The dihqāns used barley as an animal-feed. So did the landlords; however, for them, its main use was as a cash-crop. Barley and its straw were divided like the wheat, varying, with it, from qanāt to qanāt.

Cotton

In the region studied the division of cotton was more standardized. The seeds were not taken from the harvest, the landlord obtaining them from the ginning-factory. In describing the division of cotton it was explained that the production of wheat demanded that oxen be used for two processes, ploughing and threshing, but that in the cultivation of cotton they were only required for ploughing, so that the division of cotton took them less into account. In Deh Nou, Deh Kūchik, Gārmiteh and Ḥusaynābād if the peasant owned the oxen he received 1/3 of the crop, if the landlord owned them he received only 1/6. Again it should be noted that the oxen-owning peasant received twice as much as the oxen-less. In Gholām Ābād the cotton was divided like the grain, three parts to the landlord, one part to the dihqāns and the fifth part to whoever owned the

oxen. The cotton-seeds were an important part of the oxen's diet, and were expensive to buy, so they were not marketed. In a bad year the dihqāns might not be able to market any of the actual cotton after they had met their household requirements.

Maize

The variety grown was not that used for human consumption, so that it was grown only where oxen were used for cultivation. It consisted of two parts, the seed-head, which could be sold as a cash-crop, and the green stalks, which had no market value but which provided a major part of the diet of the oxen. The landlord supplied the seed from his share after division. In Deh Nou the crop was divided into six parts, the landlord taking 5 and the sixth being divided among the dihqāns. In Husaynābād the division was made on the same basis as for the cotton, that is, 2:1, with the difference that while 2/3 of the crop invariably went to the landlord, the remaining 1/3 went entirely to the owner of the oxen, so that, as for the wheat straw, the oxen-less dihqāns received none. In Gārmiteh and on those juft in Gholām Ābād where oxen were used the maize was divided as it was in Ḥusaynābād.

Alfalfa

Seed for this crop was taken out before division. In Deh Nou the remainder was divided into 4 parts, 3 going to the landlord and 1 being divided among the dihqāns. Neither party sold it, since it was mixed with wheat straw and used for fodder. In Gholām Ābād, where alfalfa was grown as a cash-crop instead of cotton, it was divided more generously,

2 parts going to the landlord and 1 being divided among his dihqāns. Since the winter price of alfalfa was high the dihqāns were pleased with it although it entailed a great deal of labour in the field.

Sugar-beet

This was divided like the cotton, in the qanāts where it was grown.

Cucumbers and Melons

These were grown on the zamīn allocated to cotton. Seed was supplied by the landlord, but this was not important since a small amount produced a sufficient harvest. Cucumbers or melons, being grown on the landowner's land, rightfully belonged to him, but in practice the dihqāns ate them all, and the landlord, if he happened to be around when they were ripe, might be lucky to receive a few. The exception to this was in Gholām Ābād, where melons were grown on a commercial basis and were divided 2:1.

Fruit-trees

Although the Bakshahr region was noted for its fruit it was commercially insignificant in the survey villages. There was no regular division of the fruit, although a landlord occasionally gave his dihqāns a little.

Milk-cows

The village diet was meagre indeed without dairy produce, which was also expensive to buy. Oxen-owning dihqāns usually owned a milk-cow or two; the workless khwushnishīn had none. In between fell the oxen-less dihqāns, to whom, if they did now own a cow, their landlord would usually give one to care for on the understanding that its produce would be divided equally between them. A

landlord whose milk-cows were looked after by his dihqāns did not use their produce for profit.

As a result of share-cropping, most of the commercial produce of a village was sent outside it and its value went to benefit non-residents. Very little was produced for sale within their community by the villagers themselves. In consequence a village was more a place to which goods were sold (via the village shop-keepers) than a place which sold its produce. It was not in any real sense a market, nor part of the area of one. This was the basic reason for its poverty, and of the inadequacy of its resources to meet its needs.

Dues and servitudes

The produce which a share-cropper received from the divisions previously described was not his total source of income. He also received customary dues and loans, and, as an offset, had to disimburse certain servitudes. These transactions were invariably paid in the form of fixed weights of wheat, their equivalent in money not being considered at any stage.

Cash itself was rare in village life; as an informant expressed it: "wheat, money, they're all the same here." Wheat was used as the medium of exchange because it was ubiquitous and because of its value as the principal source of food. In the peasant's life, at any rate, it did not reach a stage of having to be valued against money unless it was being borrowed, and even then interest could be calculated in terms of more wheat. In this way its value was retained, for if the peasant's share of the

harvest had been entirely exchanged for cash and that cash used to purchase necessities the villager would have lost to the middleman twice over. As it was, his debts with the local shopkeeper were valued at the wheat/money rate at the time when they were incurred, and were usually repaid in wheat. Lambton has emphasized the injustice of the system when a poor dihqān could find himself, in winter, borrowing at a high rate the same wheat with which, at a low rate, he had paid off his debts at harvest.[1] Nevertheless, the paying of dues and servitudes in kind in this type of society had an obvious economic rationality. The system invites comparison with the different levels of exchange found in the economic organization of Tikopia, where certain goods were always interchangeable with certain others, but not all goods could be valued against each other.[2] In the region studied in Iran simple foodstuffs: tea, sugar and the like, inexpensive clothing materials and cooking equipment - the contents of the average village shop - could be and were valued against wheat and against dairy produce. However, larger single items of debt, including bride-price, oxen and the repairs to qanāts, were invariably paid in cash and no wheat equivalent was accepted. The debtor had, if necessary, to sell wheat or other produce in order to acquire the money for these.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.380-1

2. Firth, R. 1939. Primitive Polynesian Economics. London: Routledge & Sons, Ltd., pp.337-51.

Nevertheless, the comparison with the economy of a primitive society should not be taken too far. Essentially the system was a monetary one, in the sense given by Weber,[1] in that all goods could potentially be valued against money. It was quite possible for goods and small debts to be paid for in cash, so that the two levels of exchange could in theory meet each other even if, in practice, they rarely did so. In the village community the economic organisation was based on money but disguised, as it were, for convenience, as exchange.

With this explanatory digression, the payment of dues and servitudes in kind can be understood. The personal servitudes due from peasant to landlord which Lambton describes[2] were, according to Dehbod,[3] abolished by decree in 1951. One of these was the right of a landlord to exact a varying number of days of free labour from his share-croppers. Occasional building and maintenance tasks clearly need to be done in an agricultural village and in recognition of these most landlords gave their dihqāns a building wage called takhirmān. It was emphasized that takhirmān was a recognition by the landlord of good work

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1. Weber, M. 1947. The Theory of Social and Economic Organisation. (trans. A.M. Henderson & Talcott Parsons.) Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, pp.174-5.

2. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.330-6

3. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.19.

done by the peasant during the previous year; the share-cropper had no absolute right to it and it could not be extracted by force, as it were, from him.

Another source of wheat was a share of the tenth part set aside to pay the cutters. Some might be obtained from gleaning. A third additional source was the taqāvī which, as Lambton describes,[1] was an interest-free advance made to the peasant to help him sustain himself through the winter without getting into debt. In the region studied it was only given to oxen-less dihqāns, oxen-owners were considered to receive enough without it. In fact it was only given by about half of those landlords who employed oxen-less men. Taqāvī is denounced by Lambton as tying the peasant to the soil, but where it was received it was highly valued. In Deh Nou, Sayyid Riẓā's attempt to abolish taqāvī was resented by his dihqāns as depriving them of a traditional, legitimate source of income, and at their instigation he had had to re-institute it. Taqāvī had another function: in a society where the conventional idiom of social exchange was evasive speech and avoidance of commitment,[2] the giving of taqāvī marked the establishment of a new landlord-peasant relationship.

Lambton details the dues paid to local officials,[3] which were not so numerous in Bakshahr. Receipts and dues of wheat are given in Table XII.

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.382.
2. c.f. Barth, F. 1961, op.cit., pp.44-5.
3. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.335-9.

Table XII: Receipts and Dues of Wheat in Kilos

	Source	Kilos/year	Comment
Wheat received	Takhirmān	150	Plus a pair of shoes
	Cutting	120-180	
	Gleaning	40-120	Not always taken by ox-owners.
	Taqāvī	240	Not received by ox-owners.
Wheat given	Iron-worker	60	Per juft
	Carpenter	60	" "
	Crop-Watcher	50	" " (in Gārmiteh only)
	Mīrāb	180	" " (in Gholām Ābād only)
	Bathman	15; 3	Adult; Child
	Barber	9; 3	" " (men only)

Dues might be paid by the landlord or by the peasant, or before or after crop-division. Examples of crop-divisions and dues are given in Appendix A. Other servitudes also existed. The obligation to give the landlord a fowl and clarified butter when he visited had been abolished, but the custom remained. The dihqān's wife also supplied him with bread from her household baking. This giving of food has been much decried.[1] But since a landlord would be a guest when he visited the lands of others, and since there were no hotels or resthouses anywhere in the baksh, without such small presents he would be in the curious position of having to pay for his food only when he visited his own land and slept in his own qal'eh. The donations of food were a way of overcoming this anomaly, a variant on the custom of giving hospitality to all travellers.

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1. See, for example, Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.336.

It will have become clear that what a dihqān received from crop-divisions and dues varied greatly from qanāt to qanāt, and even from landlord to landlord, and it might be thought that the share-croppers would be continually changing their jobs in search of the most favourable terms. This was not so, because the vagaries of the seasons altered the peasants' receipts more than the various forms of crop-division.

6. The Landlord-peasant relationship

It will have been observed that the oxen-owning dihqān received considerably more of the crops than did the oxen-less. It is worth clarifying the difference between these two types of contracts before the landlord-peasant relationship is described in full.

Of the 44 share-croppers in Ḥusaynābād 7 owned both the oxen of a juft, 6 owned 1 ox only, and the remaining 31 were oxen-less. However, most of the oxen-owners had oxen-less men working with them, either in father-son partnerships or as helpers on yearly contract, so that in 11 of the village total of 23 juft the oxen were peasant-owned, the total number of men working on them being 19, while in the 12 juft where the landlord owned the oxen or used a tractor 23 oxen-less men were employed.

Despite the fact that oxen-owning share-croppers were noticeably more prosperous than those without them, those without did not strive to acquire oxen in the way one might expect. There were two reasons for this. One derived from the village idea that oxen took all of "the share of the cow"

to maintain them, which meant that the additional crops received by oxen-owners were not seen as inducements to acquire them. By concentrating his efforts upon his milk-cow, the oxen-less peasant improved his diet and received an additional income of £35-40 from the sale of its produce. He was improving the quality of his present life rather than planning for his future, but there was a certain rationality in his actions. The second reason was that the acquisition of oxen was not easy. They could be inherited, reared from a calf, or bought for about £40. The most important aid to oxen-ownership was a co-operative son who joined his father in the field, for the household would then receive all the dihqāns' share of the juft. Usually the acquisition of oxen took a few years of patient saving and self-denial, during which time debts had to be met, and the tendency to spend money on recreation and consumer goods avoided.

Occasionally oxen-owners were the heirs of peasant proprietors; less frequently they might acquire enough wealth to become landlords. Oxen-less men were usually the sons of other dihqāns or of khwushnishīn. They tended to be both younger and older than the oxen-owners, who were usually middle-aged.

The landlord-peasant relationship has much in common with the traditional type of legitimate authority which Weber describes.[1] In particular the legitimacy of the

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1. Weber, M. 1947, op.cit., pp.130-8.

share-cropping system was never disputed by either side involved in it. Broadly speaking, the landlord's right to divide the crops as he chose was never questioned. Ultimately, he had the right to be unfair, and if he were, his dihqāns did no more than grumble. Neither the system nor their attitude to it permitted anything else. It seemed that custom and the modifying effect of the proximity of other landlords fixed the various crop-divisions where they were. The interesting process by which a crop-division, fixed by its first owner for a qanāt, was thereafter regarded as immutable for all time, can be regarded as the same type of legal fiction by which, as Maine describes, English case-law is established.[1]

The legitimacy of the system, therefore, was a fundamental characteristic of the landlord-peasant relationship. It can be analysed in terms of what each side contributed to it, and what each side expected of it. It will be seen that difficulties in the relationship arose when the expectations of one side as to proper conduct in a particular situation were not the same as those of the other side therein.

To understand what a landlord expected of his share-cropper it must be remembered that, from his point of view, when he handed over his land, water, and usually his oxen

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1. Maine, Sir H. 1861. Ancient Law. Geoffrey Cumberlege, for Oxford University Press, pp.35-7.

as well to a dihqān he was entrusting him with very valuable assets, the products, often, of a lifetime's gain. So the attitude of a landlord to the factors of production was that he owned them, ought to control them, and permitted the dihqān to use them only in amounts carefully regulated, known and circumscribed. The aim of the landlord in landholding was to provide himself with an independent income from which to pursue aims in which land cultivation as such had little or no importance.[1] There was inevitably a tendency for the landlord to permit his dihqān only the minimum control over his assets, for fear that they might be exploited or misused, with the expectation that from these minimum allowances the maximum productivity would be coaxed. The general attitude of the landlords can be described as one of calculated permissiveness, the landlords not always being content with the amount of autonomy, which the share-croppers seemed to need, yet allowing them most of what they demanded in order to achieve efficient cultivation.

What, therefore, a landlord most looked for in a dihqān was honesty, and all the landlords interviewed drew a careful distinction between honesty and competence. Honesty meant that a dihqān had a regard for his employer's interests. The competent dihqān had more intelligence, and it was said, with some accuracy, that he would use this to cheat his employer rather than to work well. So the

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1. c.f. Sunderland, E. 1968. Pastoralism, Nomadism and the Social Anthropology of Iran. In The Cambridge History of Iran, vol.1(ed.) W.B. Fisher, Cambridge University Press, p.625.

landlords preferred an honest, if slow, dihqān to a quick and clever one because, in the long run, the return from the latter was probably less.

On his side the dihqān did not see the means entrusted to him as items of value in the same way as the landlord did. Share-cropping provided the oxen-less man in particular with very little. His life was not much above the struggle for mere existence, although proximity to a wealthier class and the mingled qualities of fatalism and hopeful enterprise with which he approached his work tended to make this struggle less apparent. These peasants lived above the level of subsistence in that actual starvation would occur only in extremely rare circumstances and a few comforts were possible. (However it should be remembered that in Western society no-one, however poor, spends money only on what are conventionally regarded as necessities).[1] Perhaps this level can be described as an adequate minimum, the means being quite adequate provided that the wants do not rise too high. In fact, it is difficult to talk of levels of subsistence in a system where debt was always a solution to scarce means.

Although the difficulties of his life originated in the inequalities of the share-cropping system itself, the dihqān did not see them in this way but tended to blame them on the conduct of his particular landlord. The landlord did indeed provide a great deal of what was

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1. Townsend, P. 1957. The Family Life of Old People. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. 1963, Penguin edition (abridged), p.178, and the other sources cited therein.

necessary for agricultural production and the hardship of the system lay not there but in that the dihqān did not receive very much, because his landlord wanted to receive as much as was possible. The dihqān, therefore, looked for generosity over and above the contract terms which the landlord, with his different interests, inevitably gave but rarely. Therefore the hardship of his life made the dihqān attempt to extract the maximum for his own benefit from the resources at his disposal, which aim did not necessarily mean the maximum pursuit of land cultivation. The landlord, on the other hand, expected the cultivation to be the dihqān's first interest. This difference in attitude over the priority of resources was the basis of the tensions in the landlord-peasant relationship and, to a considerable extent, since it was endemic to the situation itself, this difference was the basis of the relationship itself.

Perhaps the most important example of this difference was the attitude of landlords to their dihqāns' milk-cows, especially those owned by oxen-less men. Now it will have been observed that in Husaynabad the oxen-less men received no animal-feed from the crop-division. Consequently the effort that the dihqān devoted to milk-cows was seen to be in direct opposition to the pursuit of cultivation and his general duties as a dihqān. Furthermore the oxen-less dihqān was often accused (not entirely without justification) of giving some of the landlord's maize to his milk-cows while he was feeding his

landlord's oxen. Inevitably, the landlord resented the taking of the alfalfa, inevitably the dihqān either denied it or resented the resentment, and its implication that he was not entitled to seek a reasonable living for himself, or to take some reasonable perquisites, but should only do his job regardless of the quality of his life and almost regardless of what reward his work would bring.

This difference in attitude was also seen at many stages in the cultivation process. The growing of vegetables constitutes an example, especially the cultivation of cucumbers and melons among the field crops. The peasant tended to see this activity as a symbol of his right to a certain measure of free enterprise in his work, the landlord saw it as taking up land, water and time which should have been devoted to the crops which would provide him with his income. Both sides attached far more importance to this crop than its nutritional or economic value warranted. The concern over the principle at issue was linked to the fact that the provision of cucumbers or melons was a prestigious feature of hospitality. So the peasants felt that in resenting their cultivation of melons the landlords were implying that they had neither the right nor the capabilities to practice the social niceties - a serious accusation in Iran. Thus can the cultivation of a simple subsidiary crop be related to class conflicts and role identification in a society.

There were other moments in the agricultural cycle

when the interests of landlord and peasant did not co-incide. In particular the wheat harvest was a process so critical that one could expect problems of co-operation to arise. To some extent these occurred because harvesting was inefficient and slow. Since it was in the interests of everyone to get the wheat cut as soon as possible, if the landlord had many zamīn his steward or dihqān hired as harvest-helpers itinerants who travelled around at harvest-time especially for this work. However, when the landlord had only a few zamīn the men tried to cut them all themselves, so that they could keep all the wheat set aside for the cutters. Conflict arose in this situation if the landlord himself were present. In Deh Nou, for example, his dihqāns felt that Sayyid Riẓā hired too many helpers for the harvest. He did not mind who took the cutting-wage, being only pleased that the work was finished quickly, but his dihqāns, who only received 15 kilos from the cutting where they might have taken 50, could not see his point of view. In addition Sayyid Riẓā took upon himself the dihqān's normal prerogative of distributing the wheat among the cutters, which was much resented. The question of the number of cutters apart, a dihqān did not necessarily receive any more wheat by giving out the cutting-wage himself, but this act was conceptualized as part of his control of his zamīn, and the landlord's pre-emption of it was seen as depriving him of status, an attitude of which the landlord was quite unaware.

The landlord's presence also caused conflicts in Deh Nou over the gleaning. It was known that, according to the

Islamic faith, any poor person has the right to glean where he wishes, and the action had certain humiliating connotations attached to it. However, in the area studied, this right was restricted. Women and children could glean on those zamīn where their men (resident or migratory) were cutting, but were ordered off the others. In most villages the situation was amicable enough because everyone, including unaccompanied children, observed this rule. In Deh Nou, though, Sayyid Riẓā was conscious of his moral obligations, and there was a tendency for him to invite the tribespeople to glean anywhere but for his men to order them away. The situation became such that in 1965 some of the share-croppers' wives refused to go out and glean at all, refusing to humble themselves for the little they received when the gleaning was shared. The landlord laughed at their pride and ordered more tribeswomen to glean in their stead; again an uneasy situation was created. The dihqāns did not see how the landlord could prize his obligations under religion above their own welfare, and he could not understand that, from their point of view, he was depriving them of a customary perquisite.

The difference in priorities between landlord and peasant became more marked in the relationship between the owner and the oxen-less men, and this relationship will now be examined in greater detail. To begin with, it should be seen in the context of the pattern of village ownership as a whole. A correlation existed between large-scale owners and men who owned their own oxen. Of the 11 peasant-controlled juft in Ḥusaynābād 7 were in service to

E or F, the wealthiest owners in the village, while none of the poorest landlords employed oxen-owners. This can be stated in another way: that, on the whole, the most efficient landlords tended to employ the best labour available, and the inefficient tended to employ the worst. Over the years a process of continual job-changing was the means whereby the two extremes found each other out, so that each class of employer tended to have the quality of labour he "merited" although, at the lower end of the scale, it was not the quality that was best for his interests. One of the important results of this hierarchy was that competent workers tended to be further aided by having more land to work upon, while the disadvantages of the inefficient and oxen-less were further increased by the fact that they farmed less, and poorer-managed, land. It might be thought that apparent efficiency or otherwise was due to whether or not the dihqān worked a large holding but, in the field, the differences between the thorough and the lazy workers was apparent and corresponded, on the whole, to the landlords' order of ranking. The peasants were aware of the relative merits of different landlords, and would place them in roughly similar orders of merit. One interesting discrepancy was the peasant's tendency to rank his own landlord higher in the scale than did his fellows.

The difficulties of the oxen-less peasant were, therefore, partly aggravated by the type of worker he was and the type of owner he worked for. It was inevitable that he had less sympathy with the landlord's point of

view than did the oxen-owner, and that this would worsen the relationship between them. He received, from the various crop-divisions, barely enough for even a meagre livelihood, and it can be predicted that a worker in such circumstances will seek some compensatory means, both to increase his income and to express his dissatisfaction. The dissatisfaction of the oxen-less dihqān with the amount he received in the absence of any other channel through which to express it, could be manifest either in changing his employment or in complaints and small dishonesties in the job in which he was. It was a fact of village life that oxen-less men tended to change their employment more frequently than did oxen-owners. In 1964 there had been 45 share-croppers under yearly contract in Ḥusaynābād, of whom 13 changed their employer before the next season. Of these only 2 were oxen-owners, strangers to the area, and left the village altogether. Thus 28.9% of the village agricultural labour was mobile between one season and the next, which was not thought, locally, to be particularly remarkable.

Two points should be made. The first is that not all oxen-less labourers were involved in these constant labour-changes. Some men continued under the same landlord for many years, others changed their job every few years throughout their working life. Secondly, the oxen-owners changed rarely, and in general the lower down the scale of labour efficiency one went, the more frequently labour changes occurred. Since, in a pair of dihqāns, a landlord could employ one who stayed with him for years and one

whose place was constantly undergoing change, it would seem that the amount he received was not the only reason why a man changed his job. In fact there were three conditions favouring job mobility; small crop-returns, inefficiency, and whether or not what was received was seen as an adequate return by the dihqān concerned. The first of these, the amount he actually received, could obviously influence a man to move, and a good labourer would change his employer if his work-conditions deteriorated. However, mobility could also be caused by inefficiency, since the lazy worker would be unwilling to admit that he himself could be a cause of his small crop-returns. Instead he would blame the landlord and seek other employment, only to have the same cycle repeat itself. Thirdly, mobility depended on whether the share-cropper actually saw his portion as being inadequate, which did not necessarily depend on whether he received the same as the person next to him.

Within the landlord-peasant relationship, even when it was stable, there existed certain tendencies to dissolution, which were greater in the relationship with the oxen-less dihqān. One was based on the degree of trust in the relationship. The oxen-owners, working in their own interests, did not require close supervision, which trust they appreciated and which further stimulated their efforts. On the other hand the oxen-less men, owning fewer of the factors of production and receiving smaller returns in consequence, had less interest in working hard. Thus the landlords felt that in order to gain even minimum

productivity from their land the oxen-less men required close supervision, which created resentment and more disinclination to work hard. To some extent, therefore, two cycles were set up, one with the oxen-owning men in which the conditions of the relationship led to its continuance, and the other with the oxen-less in which the conditions of the relationship themselves tended to disrupt it.

The dissatisfaction of the oxen-less peasant with the amount he received could show itself either in changing his employment or in complaints and malpractices within the job he held. The first of these having been dealt with, the disturbances created within the relationship should now be elaborated. In an unsatisfactory situation the share-cropper could show his feelings in a variety of ways. The chief source of discontent, again as might be expected, came over the division of crops. The dihqān would accuse the landlord of having mixed in some straw with the wheat allotted to him, to make the pile appear larger, or complain that the landlord had given him less than his due. Since the latter complaint was made whether or not it could be substantiated by simple arithmetic it was clear that it voiced a more general feeling of dissatisfaction. Against these circumstances, real or imaginary, the peasant reacted in two main ways. One consisted of indulging in a series of petty malpractices calculated, it seemed, more to annoy than to deceive. Most of these have already been mentioned: the time and quality of the work put in, feeding milk-cows from the

landlord's maize, and paying of undue attention to his own vegetables. Actual dishonesty was not often a serious accusation. For the type of niggling arrangements the dihqān resorted to the landlords had a special word: they were more irritations than serious cheatings. It must be said that the men would sometimes admit that such quarrels were about anything, and that the particular dispute in hand was not the real issue. They knew that they were quick to take offence. The other main way in which a dihqān would express his irritations would be in a resentful attitude, unusual in a society where, even at village level, a fairly elaborate courtesy was the social idiom and rudeness was derided and despised. Requests were carried out with delay and with a show of imposition, the dihqāns were impolite and apparently offended in their replies to what seemed inoffensive questions. Sometimes it seemed that nothing between the two was ever done easily.

The situation was complicated by the fact that the landlords' charges against the shiftlessness of the men without oxen were not altogether groundless. Further, if a dihqān acquired his own cows this itself showed the landlord that he had some intelligence, foresight and capacity for hard work; a further inducement to allow him responsibility. The reverse was not necessarily true, since these qualities were not lacking among those of the oxen-less class, but, from the landlord's point of view, proof was lacking. In short, each dihqān was attributed with certain characteristics and capabilities of working

according to which economic class he belonged, and this assessment was made partly without regard to the true qualities of the person in question. It was to this extent that the relationship between landlord and peasant was carried out in terms of the personality each ascribed to the members of the social group of the other.

In summary, there was a tendency for the oxen-less peasant in particular and his landlord to be almost continually dissatisfied with each other. The origins of the dissatisfaction lay in the dihqān's conditions of employment, and the process of cultivation provided many occasions and matters upon which disagreement could occur. Because of the traditional nature of the system the peasant was unable to react against the conditions of employment themselves. Instead he reacted against the person whom he saw as the perpetrator of his wrongs by looking for faults which would justify a plea of unfair treatment and an excuse to leave his service.

Either these changes of employment provided a solution for dissatisfactions inherent in the system, or they provided an outlet for expressing annoyance with the system, without this outlet being in any way reformatory. Since, for a minority of peasants at any rate, employment changes were fairly frequent, it can be suspected that the outlet did not have many qualities of problem-solving attached to it. As a device whereby the landlords and peasants re-aligned themselves in the employment field so that the best men, eventually, ended up working for the better landlords, the changing of jobs did fulfill a

definite social function with a satisfactory conclusion, satisfactory in the sense that at this end of the scale no further re-alignments were necessary. At the lower end of the scale, where both landlords and peasants were unsatisfactory in the productive field, the labour re-alignments could not, and did not, provide satisfactory end-solutions to the dissatisfactions they were expressing. As an outlet of dissatisfied feelings alone they had a functional significance and utility, but the value of the provision of this function alone should not be overlooked.

In the use of accusations of unfairness as a focus, although not necessarily a cause, of discontent, there is perhaps a parallel to be drawn with accusations of witchcraft in more primitive societies. Evans-Pritchard was among the first of many authors to show that the frictions inevitable in the imperfect circumstances of daily life provided plenty of scope for accusations of witchcraft.[1] Other authors dealing with the social relationships between accuser and accused are cited by Middleton and Tait.[2] Evans-Pritchard in particular also shows that these accusations do not necessarily alter the social fabric against which the discontents are being expressed, but that they do form a means whereby these

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1. Evans-Pritchard, E.E.1950. Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande. Oxford University Press, p. 101.

2. Middleton, J. & Winter, E.H.1963. Introduction. In Witchcraft and Sorcery in East Africa (eds.) J. Middleton and E.H. Winter. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p.11.

dissatisfactions can, at least, be expressed, thereby dissipating and rendering less harmful tensions which, if allowed to build up, might disrupt the social life.[1] Such, perhaps, is the function of changes of employment in the society under consideration. Real animosity between landlord and peasant was rare, even between past employer and employee, the agricultural production did continue and, perhaps most curious of all, a high rate of job-turnover was accepted by either side both as an irritant to the smooth running of life and as an inevitable feature of it.

The relationship between landlord and oxen-less share-cropper was not always as acrimonious as might appear from the foregoing. Active co-operation between them could exist, and one example of this is worth giving. At the end of the 1964-65 agricultural season in Ḥusaynābād the two oxen-owning dihqāns who had been working for him left the service of A_5, who in their place hired one dihqān who had previously been a railway worker. Since the holding was left without oxen, A_5 proposed to buy some. The new dihqān pointed out that the holding was too small to support a juft, and that it would be a waste of land to cultivate the feed for it. He suggested that, instead, A_5 should give him the "share of the cow" out of which he, the dihqān, would hire machinery for ploughing and threshing as necessary. To this A_5 readily agreed as being obviously sensible economically. Both sides

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1. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1950, op.cit., p.112.

benefitted by it, the landlord by obtaining the maximum use of a small amount of land and the dihqān by receiving a larger share of the crops than he otherwise would have done. As Sunderland suggests,[1] Lambton's opinion on the lack of any co-operative feeling between landlord and peasant[2] is somewhat exaggerated.

In general, the landlord-peasant relationship existed for the contract, and had few extensions into those social relationships which lay outside the demands of the contract-roles. Although Sunderland says that landlords may help their dihqāns in their dealings with local officials,[3] little of this help was evident in the region studied. Probably the most customary, and useful, service performed by the landlord for his dihqān was the help given in obtaining a wife. Although this was usually arranged between families, if a man were very poor and had no family connections, conditions which made it more difficult for him to marry, a landlord might occasionally assist in negotiations.

A good landlord tried to arrange to discuss farming matters with his dihqān in an atmosphere of sociability, over the drinking of tea. The status of the pair in the contract situation was maintained by the dihqān always coming to visit the landlord: the landlords built their

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1. Sunderland, E. 1968, op.cit., p.626.

2. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.262.

3. Sunderland, E. 1968, op.cit., p.625.

houses in the villages for this purpose. For a landlord to go into a dihqān's house would imply a loss of respect which the landlord felt was an essential component of the relationship, and without which agricultural efficiency would deteriorate. So even Sayyid Rizā, who lived amongst his five or six dihqāns in a remote kilāteh, would stand at the door or inside a peasant's house when talking to him, but would never actually sit on the floor, even in the upper part of the room.

7. The Limitations of share-cropping.

The conflicts in the landlord-peasant relationship and the difficulties inherent in the share-cropper's existence can be seen as the results of what Marx has described as the process of alienation. Ollman's very useful account of this concept,[1] scattered as it is throughout the writings of Marx, will be used in the following analysis, which will attempt to determine to what extent the work of the Iranian dihqān can be described as alienated in the Marxian sense. This analysis will also, inevitably, discover to what extent the concept is useful as an analytic tool, and although it may seem a little strange at first to describe the share-cropping peasant, tied to the soil and working directly for his food and livelihood, as suffering from

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1. Ollman, B. 1971. Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society. Cambridge University Press.

Marxian alienation, yet it will be seen that in many respects his condition is similar to that which Marx outlines, and the causes which Marx gives of his condition to be those which exist in fact. As a proviso, it must be remembered that in such an analysis it is necessary, for the sake of clarity, to separate some processes which are, in life, related to each other.

Ollman summarizes Marx's concept of alienation by saying that it is a situation in which an essential tie has been broken between the individual and his life activity,[1] between man and the processes by which he is fulfilled as a man, and it has been broken by the conditions under which he works. There are four broad fields of these processes leading to fulfilment, four situations in which alienation occurs; productive activity, product, other men, and the species. The work of the share-cropping peasant will be examined in the light of these concepts to see if it corresponds to Marx's descriptions.

In being alienated from his productive activity Marx, according to Ollman's summary, meant that man was separated from his work in the sense that he played no part in deciding what to do or how to do it.[2] This is probably that aspect of the share-cropper's life which least corresponds to Marx's picture of working man. It is true

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1. Ollman, B. 1971, op.cit., pp.133-4.

2. Ibid., p.133.

that the dihqān is in service to the landlord, and that the activities of the one may be partly decided by the other, but they are also decided by expediency. In the rural agricultural society under consideration the growing of food is expedient for both landlord and peasant and, by and large, is the only, as well as the most obvious, form of work available. The necessity of the growing of food takes away much of the capitalist force from the landlord's control of productive activity, particularly that force of deciding whether or not the work should be done at all, and much of the character of the alienated worker's labour as belonging to someone else. Furthermore, when what the landlord demands does not correspond with what the dihqān wishes, the latter, as has been shown, tends to find ways of asserting his preferred work-tasks.

However, the dihqān's control over what he actually grows is also limited by the fact of landlordism. Although the growing of food is beneficial to both sides, precisely which crops are grown is decided by the landlord and, particularly in the matter of cash-crops, what he may decide to grow may not necessarily be of benefit to the peasant. The fact that, in the final instance, the landlord does not own land in order to promote agriculture will almost inevitably mean that there is some separation between what he wants and what is best for agriculture, and this self-interest cannot help but have some effect upon the fulfilment of the peasant's basic requirements. Putting it bluntly, and a little crudely, the peasant's interests are best served when, by co-incidence, they

happen to be the same as the landlord's, but apart from this circumstance the peasant has little or no means of promoting them. Although in a simple economy, the geographical conditions under which the peasant works impose their own limitations upon the choice of labour open to him, yet this is further restricted by the process of landlordism.

This takes care of the "what to do"; the "How to do it" is likewise peasant-determined. Indeed the allocation to him of this responsibility is that aspect of his life-work from which he is the least alienated, and this autonomy, and decrease in alienation, is aided by landlord absenteeism. Also, the agricultural work is, in its broad scope and by the nature of the activity, personally satisfying to the individual concerned in it, and the peasants themselves admitted their work to be so. Nevertheless, the way in which the peasant does his work is inevitably restricted by what that work is and by the means at his disposal to do it. The first, we have seen, is not fully determined by him, and neither is the second, for while the simple economy obviously imposes limitations upon the means of working, these will be further cramped by the tools which the landlord places at the peasant's disposal, and which will not necessarily be those needed for maximum efficiency. So here, too, the peasant is alienated, for he cannot work as he might wish when his tools are not of his choosing, and what is supplied may limit what he does. It is probably true to say that the means supplied are not fully adequate, so that the peasant's

ties to the simple economy are increased by the process of landlordism. For example, improvement in means is only possible when it co-incides with the landlord's interests. The peasant is alienated from the productive activity to the extent to which this is controlled by the structure of landlordism, although the restrictions imposed by the economic and geographical conditions themselves should not be overlooked.

There are other aspects of alienated productive activity as described by Ollman which can be measured against the peasant's work. By the narrowing of his horizons it diminishes man's ability to improve himself,[1] both in terms of education as such and also by restricting the scope of his activities. This is undoubtedly true of the dihqan's lot, although the presence of considerable freedom of action in the work-situation, an idealistic and expressive religion and the precision given to conceptual thinking by two thousand years of culture and education in the wider society tend to prevent him from becoming quite the idiot of Marxian capitalism. Nor is the peasant the victim of industrial diseases to quite the same extent as Marx visualized the labourer's lot: by Western standards sanitary conditions are not much different for landlord and peasant, and these, rather than malnutrition as such, cause his diseases, so that the

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1. Ollman, B. 1971. Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society. Cambridge University Press. pp.138-9.

diseases are not, strictly speaking, products of the actual process by which the labourer does his work, they are not industrial deformities as such. The peasant's life is not separated from his work to the same extent as is that of the industrial worker in true capitalist labour; although the oxen-less peasant in particular may dislike and shun his labour yet he cannot be said to be alienated from it in the sense that he will always try to do as little of it as possible as does, according to Marx, the worker in the industrial society.[1] Though here, perhaps, in the degree to which he likes his work and the extent to which it is part of his life interests, Marx's concept accurately describes the difference in attitude to agriculture between the ox-owning and the oxen-less peasant.

As far as the process of productive activity goes, then, the dihqān in the society under consideration is not fully alienated in the Marxian sense. He remains involved, as a person, with the processes of work. However, this does not necessarily invalidate the concept of alienation as an analytic tool, for the peasant is unalienated where his activities do not conform to those of the Marxian model, which gives it a negative corroboration.

The second way in which, according to Marx, the worker is alienated is in being separated from the product itself, in that he has no control over what he needs for work, and no control over the ownership of the product.[6]

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1. Ollman, B. 1971, op.cit., p.140.

2. Ibid., pp.143-5.

This is certainly true of the share-cropper's existence. To take the first of these: control over what is needed for the work. The most important of the factors of production are land and water, and the final control of these is out of the peasant's hands in that they belong to the landlord. Although the peasant controls such land and water as are allotted to him these allocations are, from the point of view of the needs of landworking, almost arbitrary, and we have seen that the increasingly arbitrary nature of the allocation is one of the processes of landholding. So the dihqān cannot, in any major sense, direct the alignment of land and water in ways in which they will fundamentally alter and benefit his work, and therefore,ultimately, himself. In particular it has become obvious that the control of the flow of the qanāt is taken out of the peasant's hands, and that this control, in the sense of qanāt repairs and so forth, is subjected to pressures with which he has nothing to do and which also have nothing to do with the needs of landworking itself (although they may be partly due to the conditions under which it occurs). So the dihqān has no final control over the basic requirements of landworking, and in that sense can be said to be alienated from them, for this lack of final control causes him considerable inconvenience.

Moreover this concept clarifies the difference between the oxen-owning and the oxen-less peasant. The former contributes more of the factors of production to the productive activity, and in that sense can be said to be less alienated than the oxen-less. The

contribution made by his oxen to the process of agriculture increases the oxen-owner's control over it, and therefore his greater involvement with it, and therefore his greater rewards from it, both because of this involvement in terms of work-efficiency and because of the greater share of the crops he receives. The ox-less peasant, on the other hand, contributing nothing but his labour, becomes more alienated in the Marxian sense from the means of production, and this alienation separates his interests still further from involvement in the process of production, which further tends to decrease his rewards.

Thus the oxen-owning peasant has more control over the amount he receives than does the oxen-less, which in turn decreases his alienation. Nevertheless, in terms of the ultimate control of the destiny of the product, both the oxen-owner and the oxen-less are on an equal footing. Nowit is true that the share-cropper receives his product for his own immediate use, and is not in that sense alienated from it as is the factory-worker receiving a wage unrelated to the object he has been making or to the process in which he has been engaged; yet the amount of his product which the peasant receives is not related to any process which he can with ease control or - and this is more important - which he has an automatic right to control. He cannot demand how much of the crop will be his, nor has he the means to alter his share. In this sense, also, therefore, the peasant is alienated from the product, but the fact that he labours to produce his own food, which should decrease his alienation, is counteracted by the fact

that his control over this process is limited because it is up to the landlord to find more efficient means of production, the trying-out of higher-yielding seed and so forth. The peasant's control over the product is extremely limited. The arbitrary limitation on what he receives creates a further difference between the oxen-owning dihqān and the oxen-less. The former, receiving more of the products, acquires the means to make a wider choice as to their use. The latter, receiving a subsistence wage, if that, has only a limited choice as to what he can do with his produce, so that in this sense, too, he is alienated from the product of his work. The difficulties and discontents of the oxen-less dihqān's existence can be said to derive from his greater alienation from the ownership of the means of production together with its consequent deprivation of control of the products he works so hard for.

The peasant, therefore, is alienated from the means he requires in order to do his work, which includes the impulse given by necessity. We come now to the second characteristic of product alienation, which is alienation from product ownership, and in doing so reach the crux of the share-cropper's life and problems. The characteristic, above all, of such a life is that the share-croppers are separated from what becomes of the produce not necessarily because the greater part of it goes to the landlord but because, in doing so, it becomes subject entirely to his control. The landlord may spend the produce on paying for qanāt improvements and on machinery, or in building

better housing for his men, but again, he may not. The choice is his, and the relevant feature is that the peasant has no control over this choice, although the results may affect him severely. It need hardly be pointed out that what decides the landlord's choice are motives unconnected with agriculture as such, and are therefore not inevitably likely to benefit it. Further, the structure of landlordism in the particular areastudied tends to increase the landlord's unconcern as to whether or not the produce is used to promote productivity. A landlord who owns shares in several qanāt will, comparatively speaking, suffer less in his total income if one of them becomes derelict than will the landless peasant working on it, and this lack of hardship will reduce the landlord's impetus to make effective repairs. From the landlord's point of view owning shares in many qanāts may be a prudent device for ensuring his income; but it is less advantageous for the men working for him. Thus the loss of control of the product again means that the worker loses the means of producing it, which further increases his alienation, both from the product and from the means of production, just as Marx said it would.

The third broad way in which the worker is alienated is in his relationship with his fellow men. When the product of his labour goes to the landlord, the worker resents this, tending to become hostile to the person who takes.[1] The hostility of the peasant to his landlord has

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1. Ollman, B. 1971, op.cit., pp.148-50.

already been noted as a result of the contract conditions under which the peasant works. What Marx did is to show that this type of alienation is detrimental to the social fabric, to the sphere of personal relationships. The peasant does not control the means of production, the work-process or the product, yet it is his labour which, all the time, is involved in them. Because of the ambiguity resulting from such a situation he comes to feel, and to express, hostility to the person who, from his point of view, creates the ambiguity and forces upon him the separation of himself from his work. The saddest result of such alienation is that it reduces the possibility of co-operation between capitalist and worker or, in the circumstances herein studied, between landlord and peasant. Further, it has been seen that many of the difficulties arising between the pair came from the inability of each to see the point of view of the other in the work-process, which hindered their co-operation which, in its turn, is another form of this type of alienation.

The fourth way in which, according to Marx, the labour-process alienates the working man is to deprive him of job satisfaction and, in a broader sense, to separate him from his ability to fulfill all of his capacities as a human being; what Marx describes as species alienation.[1] In this aspect the share-cropping peasant does not entirely conform to Marxist ideal. Barth has said

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1. Ollman, B. 1971, op.cit., pp.151-3

that it is not necessary to assume that, because certain activities are of fundamental practical economic importance, they cannot also be vested with supreme ritual value.[1] Tilling the soil, in the peasant's life, is a deeply satisfying human occupation, and the process of harvesting, especially, combines ritual with practical necessity. In providing for the satisfaction of the need for food, the most fundamental of all human, and indeed of all animal, needs, the peasant is very far from being alienated. The peasant is only separated from the fulfilment provided by agriculture in that he cannot keep all of the produce he creates, and the extent to which he can keep his crops determines the extent to which he can work out his own salvation and fulfil himself as a man in whichever ways he chooses. This would be how Marx would see it and contains some elements of truth; however, he is restricted in other ways, for even if the share-cropper could keep all of his produce, he would still find limits upon his self-fulfilment. It would be limited by what agriculture would permit; he could not, for example, change his occupation as a means to self-fulfilment without losing the produce which gave him his freedom of choice in the first place. Thus the concept of the labour-process under capitalism as alienating a man from himself is not entirely demonstrated by the case of the peasant who keeps all his own produce; he would still suffer from

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1. Barth, F. 1961, op.cit., p.153.

species alienation. Nevertheless this concept again highlights the difference between the oxen-owning dihqān and the oxen-less. In terms of species alienation the former, in controlling more of his destiny, is less alienated from his self-fulfilment than the latter. Furthermore, Marx, in discussing this aspect of alienation, makes much use of the concept that in species alienation work becomes a means to stay alive rather than life an opportunity to work.[1] However, even the landholding peasant must work in order to stay alive;again, Marx's concept here is extremely idealistic. However it is possible to see that the harsher the conditions under which the peasant is employed, the more extreme are the forms of alienation previously described, and that these will inevitably lessen the quality of the life experienced, and lessen the opportunities for that life to be enjoyed.

Marx briefly admitted that the capitalist, too, suffered from alienation, and, indeed, was bound to do so if alienation be the result of a series of relationships.[2] The capitalist, according to this concept, is alienated from his fellow-men by his position as an owner. Because of this he is as much alienated from the product as is the labourer, since he uses it only to get profits; he is not concerned with the utility of the object itself, but becomes interested in other concerns, and he is alienated

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1. Ollman, B. 1971, op.cit., p.153.

2. Ibid., pp.154-6.

as a person because the process of employing labour dehumanizes him. To a considerable extent this aspect of alienation is also true of the structure of landlordism in the region studied. We have seen that the landlord, in pursuing agriculture as a business venture, was by this fact alienated from the needs of the peasant life, so that what he was prepared to give the peasant, both in quantity and range, was not the same as what that life required. It can be admitted - as Marx might not - that in the absence of any other mechanism for doing so, the landlords fulfilled a necessary function in the society under consideration by supplying money which was needed in such large sums that if it were left entirely to peasant initiative to supply it there would not be enough to eat. Even if this is admitted, the provision by the landlords of this need would not necessarily produce alienation in them if each had an economically rational approach to the disposal of his profits, making his primary aim the maintenance of their source. If, in practical (and hypothetical) terms he took a set amount of the profits from the produce for the maintenance of himself and his family, if necessary on a higher level than that of the peasants, as his reward for sustaining the risks of entrepreneurship, and used the rest to improve the land then much of his alienation would disappear. The landlord-peasant relationship would be improved in its profitability as a business enterprise, and in its practical arrangements, let alone in its more nebulous aspects as exemplified by the third type of alienation.

However, the landlord did not take this approach. Just as Marx described the process of owner alienation, so somehow the landlord, by the very act of taking the greater part of the produce without actually working for it, separated his interests from being primarily involved in the welfare of the enterprise. Instead he became caught up in the quest for a prestigious life-style, searching for conspicuous consumption as Veblen has described it,[1] which was itself entirely alienated from the source of the necessary money for it.

The process by which the landlord became separated from a primary interest in the welfare of the land and an economically rational attitude to the disposal of the produce seems sufficiently described by the concept of Marxian alienation to make this a fairly accurate model of the landlord's existence in that, true to the model, it was the process of land-ownership itself which resulted in these separations. The 'fit' of the model is not entirely precise, for many landlords remained deeply concerned about the land while pursuing expensive life-styles, but it contains important elements of truth. Nevertheless, Marx was accurate in that the taking of the profits resulted in the pursuit of luxurious spending in the takers and of the appearance in them of greed, cruelty and hypocrisy to the extent that the labourers were left without a proper livelihood.

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1. Veblen, T. 1917. The Theory of the Leisure Class. London: MacMillan, p.75.

In the foregoing analysis Marx's concept of alienation has been used as an analytic model, in the sense that Levi-Strauss has described the use of the model in social anthropology.[1] Marx's model was used because it was found to fit the data; other, non-Marxian models were examined but were found to be less accurate and useful. This does not imply that a non-Marxian explanation might not exist, indeed, it probably does. Nor is it implied that the solution to the problems of agriculture in the society studied was that which Marx saw necessary to remove alienation. The concept has been used as such, and it has been found, on the whole, to be considerably accurate in laying bare the social processes whose results are the system of landworking described. Further, although the model does not entirely represent an abstraction of the data, this lack of congruency occurs when the process of alienation is not to be found in the society under investigation, which endorses the validity of the use of the model. The model itself is extremely idealistic, for it can be doubted whether there ever has been a non-alienated man, in all the senses in which Marx used the term. Nevertheless, the accuracy of the model makes it useful. If the uneasy qualities in the landlord-peasant relationship be likened to the symptoms of a disease, it can be seen that these symptoms are similar to those which Marx describes as being the results of the process of alienation.

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1. Levi-Strauss, C. 1953. Social Structure. In Anthropology Today (ed.) A.L.Kroeber, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp.524-53.

8. Other work-relationships.

Some social relationships arising from agricultural practises have not yet been discussed. The most important of these is the relationship between dihqāns.

It will be recalled that, for convenience, agricultural work is organized in pairs of dihqāns but that, apart from the tasks necessitating their co-operation, the two farm quite separately. This was an over-simplification, for the degree to which a pair of dihqāns worked their zamīn as united or separated holdings depended on the presence or absence of a tie of descent between them.

Of the 44 dihqāns in service in Ḥusaynābād in 1965, 34 worked in pairs and of the remainder, 6 worked in two partnerships of 3, 1 farmed a holding too small to support a partner, and the other 3 preferred to work by themselves without a regular assistant, employing casual labour as required. There were therefore 19 partnerships, 8 of which were based on an agnatic relationship, 4 between father and son, 1 between grandfather and grandson, and 3 between brothers.

Both landlord and share-cropper considered that the partnership between father and son was the best possible. The advantages of such a partnership are obvious. It was likely to be stable over a number of years, the son eventually succeeding his father when the latter became too infirm to work. Ideally, the tensions that existed in the fraternal relationship did not exist in the paternal one. A man did not resent his father's authority as he did his brother's and since, therefore, he was willing to learn

from his father's experience, he would eventually become a proficient farmer. The help given by a son in acquiring oxen has already been mentioned, and it was said that, when the son married, the father would give him one of the team so that the son would receive half the share of the juft when the households eventually separated.

To some extent this village model represented reality. Of the 11 juft in Ḥusaynābād where the oxen were peasant-owned 5 were worked in father-son (or grandfather-grandson) partnerships. In one of these the son was absent from the village on army service, but his father had been careful to employ only a temporary worker in his place. In these paternal partnerships the zamīn were not apportioned between the two men. Both worked on all of them and the produce supplied the joint household which existed in all these instances, in which the son, if married, had remained within the senior family establishment. Moreover, this type of partnership tended to work for the larger landowners on the better zamīn, and therefore received more crops than the other villagers.

Thus the father-son partnership was clearly successful in economic terms at least. However, it seemed that the presence of the oxen was essential to the relationship. There were no father-son partnerships in which the oxen were landlord-owned. Fathers and sons were to be found among the ranks of the oxen-less workers but not as work-partners. This was because among the latter class the son felt himself to be held back by his father's poverty, and would separate himself from him in the sphere of work as

soon as he married, if not before, in order to attempt to improve his life. Putting it another way, the material benefits of oxen-ownership were the reason why these sons stayed in partnership with their fathers. It is interesting to note that Rosenfeld also found poverty to be a reason for the break-up of the joint family.[1]

However, the paternal partnership was not always stable. For example, in Ḥusaynābād the son of one oxen-owner had preferred to enter into ox-less service with another landlord rather than work with his father. This was because the son was the product of a previous marriage of his father's, and did not get on with his stepmother, and for this reason had separated his household as soon as he had married although his bride was very young. So it can be said that oxen retain a son in partnership with his father provided it was not threatened by adverse circumstances in other spheres of the relationship.

Brothers were also considered to make good partners, though less so, because of the greater tension between them, than father and son. Most of the brothers who were dihqāns in Ḥusaynābād did not work together, despite the three instances already mentioned. The criterion of possessing oxen did not seem to be essential here, for only one of these partnerships were oxen-owners. In all instances the brothers had established separate households

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1. Rosenfeld, H. 1958a, op.cit., p.1134.

and were allocated different zamīn so that the produce of the juft as a whole was not divided between them. Nevertheless the co-operation between the two was closer than between non-relatives, and the partnerships, again, tended to be stable over a number of years.

It is interesting to note that matrilateral cognates and affines seldom formed work-partnerships unless a second tie existed. For example, one dihqān in Gholām Ābād had married his MBD, and then worked in partnership with his uncle - cum - father-in-law. Apart from such circumstances it seemed that the work-partnership had to be agnatically based to be successful. This was probably because partnerships tended to be fragile, and to be viable between relatives needed to be bound strongly together by agnatic loyalty and respect for the welfare and prestige of the descent group. The more fragmented and individualistic loyalties of the kinship system did not seem sufficient to bind work-partners together. Partners who were matrilateral cognates or affines but not agnates would have loyalties to their agnates which could always override their loyalty to each other. It will be recalled that, among the landlords, ties of loyalty to the descent group were a major factor in keeping the family groups co-operating in landworking. A considerable amount of trust was necessary in both landowning and share-cropping partnerships, which, it seemed, could be based on agnatic loyalties or non-kinship associations, but not on those relationships between the two types.

Ḥusaynābād was atypical of the villages surveyed in

having more non-related share-cropping partnerships than those based on kinship. In Gārmiteh, for example, where 10 of the 12 pairs of oxen were dihqān-owned, 7 were in paternal partnership and 2 were jointly owned by 4 brothers. Those who worked on the juft with landlord-owned oxen were unrelated to each other, as were one other pair, who owned an ox each. Thus Gārmiteh and other villages bore out the partial correlation between ownership of oxen and the agnatic partnership seen in Ḥusaynābād.

In the majority of dihqān partnerships in Ḥusaynābād, those not based on a family tie, it was recognized that the pair should be as equal as possible in age, industry and character, for although they farmed separate zamīn the tasks on which they co-operated could influence the success of the crops. If one man did some work for another outside his normal duties, he was careful to return the hours rendered and, in partnerships where an ox-owner employed an oxen-less man, actual payment might be made. Both landlord and share-cropper felt that partners should be friendly but not on such intimate terms that they would conspire to steal from the landlord.

In general, the association between pairs of dihqāns was, like the landlord-peasant relationship, a business one. It could be re-inforced by the bonds of agnatic kinship, making it more likely to be successful financially, but success could be obtained without the additional relationship, although less frequently achieved. The fact that kinship criteria were important in agriculture should

not be surprising, for analysis separates out roles and relationships which in real life are interwoven and affect each other.

It will be obvious that since the work of one affected that of another in a partnership, inequality, such as occurred if one man were unusually lazy, could lead to friction. An uneasy relationship between dihqāns could, therefore, be a cause of job mobility. Nevertheless, incompatibility between working partners was very rarely a primary cause of dissolution. Curiously enough, one of its more frequent causes was quarrelling between the share-croppers' wives. The dihqāns of each landlord shared a common courtyard, to which, while their husbands were working, the women were confined by their domestic duties for the greater part of the day. In these circumstances women often developed fierce animosities towards each other, and a wife would not fail to report to her husband how she had been abused, when he came home. At least two dihqāns I knew had changed their jobs in order to move to another courtyard and so restore domestic harmony. This was not such a frequent cause of job mobility as was dissatisfaction with the landlord, but is another example of agricultural practices being affected by matters irrelevant to them.

The mobility of dihqāns from job to job was also connected to the idiom of mobility in the population of the baksh as a whole. Bakshahr, unable to support its population, was confined within its walls during troubled times, but when these subsided the population moved

outwards into the surrounding villages and countryside. Mobility was a habit imposed by the necessity of looking for work, and was justified by a peasant axiom that all villages were the same. This was not true, but should be understood as providing, to the mobile, a reasonable basis for their actions.

Other relationships in village life should be mentioned. Share-croppers who were neither partners nor relatives had little contact other than social with each other, even within quite small villages; and if such contact occurred in the sphere of work, it was almost always based on animosity. The great majority of the disputes between dihqāns originated in an accusation that one had taken water from the flow in the qanāt for more hours than was his due. At the height of the agricultural season in Ḥusaynābād, when the men were working extremely hard, such disputes occurred perhaps once a week. On one occasion a dihqān physically assaulted another for, he alleged, having taken two hours of the water, and succeeded in ripping the other's shirt before he was pulled off by onlookers. On another occasion an aggrieved dihqān shouted that he would take his revenge upon the other's wife.

Such incidents were unusual because adult men were supposed to be dignified and non-quarrelsome in their behaviour, and habitually most of them obeyed this norm. The depths of feelings aroused in these cases is shown by the fact that men acted in ways which would lead them to lose respect whose maintenance was normally one of the

strongest motivations guiding their behaviour, and can be understood because there was no suggestion that the water thus "stolen" would be returned.

The stewards appointed by the larger-scale landlords should also be mentioned. They were chosen for their honesty and long service: literacy, although an obvious advantage, was not as important. Landlord C had a dihqān who might seem the obvious choice for a steward. He came from a land-owning family, was a Sayyid, and owned his own oxen, but the landlord preferred to trust a village-born and oxen-less man because, unlike the Sayyid, he was known to be completely honest. This meant that he did not use any of the landlord's wheat, to which he alone held the barn key, for any purpose other than that which the landlord ordered, however much a shopkeeper, or the man in charge of qanāt maintenance, or the other dihqāns, might ask him to release some for sale. Occasionally a landlord would give his steward a little extra wheat, although, ostensibly, he received only as much as his dihqān partner, as payment for his extra responsibility. It was given "secretly", in an unsuccessful attempt to avoid antagonism from the other men.

The last major class of villagers not yet dealt with are the khwushnishin. Dehbod uses this term to describe all villagers not employed in agricultural work, including those in services, trade and the like.[1] In the region

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1. Dehbod, A. 1963, op.cit., p.9.

The wheat - harvest



The basic food - source is ready for reaping



The wheat is cut by sickle



And threshed by oxen

studied the use of the term was restricted to those who had no steady employment of any type, and will be used in that sense here.

The principal source of employment figures for the region is the 1966 National Census of Iran. The employment figures for the population of 10+ years in the rural area of the shahrestān are summarized in the following table:

Table XIII: Employment in Rural Area of Bujnūrd Shahrestān[1]

	Economically inactive Total	Economically active				Total pop.
		% Active	Unemployed	Employed	Total	
Male	-	86.9	1,421	42,622	44,043	50,667
Female	34,256	19.4	63	9,291	9,354	48,334
Both sexes	34,256	53.9	1,484	51,913	53,397	99,001

In 1964, in addition to the share-croppers and the 25 men who were railway or qanāt workers, or employed in services, there were 13 khwushnishīn in Ḥusaynābād. This gives a figure (agreeing with the Census) of 84.3% of men of working age who were economically active. However, many of the khwushnishīn (the elderly, for example) could reasonably be described as inactive economically and the absence of any males in this category in the Census requires some explanation. Firoozi has pointed out that the concept upon which the Census was administered was that all who were

1. Iran, Imperial Government of, 1968a. National Census of Population and Housing, 1966. op.cit., vol.CIII, p.45.

employed at any time during the 7 days preceding the enumerator's visit, plus the seasonally unemployed and those who were unemployed but seeking employment, were considered economically active. The economically inactive group consisted of homemakers, students and those unable to work.[1] In Ḥusaynābād (and throughout Bujnūrd shahrestān) this must have meant that an old man who helped a little in the fields at harvest-time, or a youth who had run an errand during the previous seven days, and even one elder who was almost completely paralyzed, were considered to be economically active, which is manifestly untrue. Putting it another way, despite the concept of economic activity used by the enumerators, economic inactivity existed in Ḥusaynābād in the persons of the khwushnishin, and in the other villages visited as well. More probable figures of rural employment are given by Mashayekhi, who based them upon material collected from a series of household surveys made independently of the Census. He deduced that, for all the rural area of Iran, the number of economically active persons compared with the total population of 10+ years was 46%.[2]

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1. Firoozi, F. 1970, op.cit., p.227.

2. Mashayekhi, R. 1966. Labour Force Data from Household Surveys in Iran. In CENTO Symposium on household surveys 1966, Dacca, East Pakistan, p.220. The survey upon which this article is based was done by the Data Collection Section of the General Department of Manpower Studies and Statistics, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Tehrān.

As might be expected the khwushnishīn of Husaynābād were even more mobile than the share-croppers in their search for work, and by 1965, four who had been in the village the previous year had left, although the only one of the four who was married had left his family behind. The khwushnishīn tended to be just too young to work, or just too old, or too quarrelsome. Three were opium addicts. Overall they were a group suffering from a variety of social and personality disabilities which placed them just below the ability of the poorest dihqāns under contract, with whom, as employers hired and fired from season to season, they occasionally exchanged personnel.

The lives of the khwushnishīn had a certain ephemeral quality, of which their mobility was only a part. The more active obtained their major needs through itinerant harvesting, but this did not provide them with enough to support a family during the rest of the year. They made what they could by casual labour in the fields and on building jobs in the village. They were always ready to perform small jobs and errands for visiting landlords, and a few older men made a little money from handicrafts. They did not seem to suffer from severe malnutrition, although they were probably hungry for part of the year. A former dihqān among them had had to sell his milk-cow in order to pay his debts at the village shop, which illustrates more than anything else the poverty and insecurity of their lives.

9. Budget

Landlord and peasant were alike in that they used the crops both for subsistence and to provide money to buy goods. However their priorities were different. The landlord was pleased to receive foods for subsistence but was more interested in the income from selling them, whereas the dihqān wanted to provide himself with asmuch as possible of what he and his family required from the land. The landlord wanted to sell produce to purchase other items; the peasant was loathe to do this.

The system of village credit should be explained first. Goods bought on credit were almost invariably paid for in kind at a later date. When cash was used, payment was made at the time of purchase, although wheat and dairy produce could also be used for purchasing items on the spot. Thus goods could be used both for immediate payment or payment deferred, but the use of cash was restricted to the former situation. Repayment in kind for goods bought on credit was usually made in wheat. This led to two types of interest, that for the purchase of wheat itself and that for the purchase of other goods.

Goods other than wheat were valued at their price when the villager took them from the shop and the shøpkeeper then charged 20% interest. The weight of wheat which then had to be given in settlement was calculated by valuing the total sum owing against the market price of wheat current at the time when the debt was settled. Since this was usually done after the harvest had been divided, when wheat prices were low in the local towns, the

villagers had to give comparatively large amounts of wheat to settle their debts and the interest thereon. Most villagers, therefore, attempted to organise their resources so that they paid for goods other than wheat at the time of purchase, either by cash or in exchange for wheat or other produce. Few households, however, managed without running up a debt.

When wheat itself was being obtained on credit, repayment by means of wheat had an additional charge of 50% by weight. This might seem unduly harsh. However the local market price of wheat could vary as much as 50% through the season, so that the shopkeeper could say that in charging 50% more in winter he was only selling wheat at the equivalent in kind of its then current price. It is true that if the villager were to go elsewhere and pay cash for wheat (if he could) he would then have to pay up to 50% more for the same weight in winter and spring than he would in summer. The shopkeeper would also say that, since he had to sell the wheat which came to him, he could not make a profit unless he charged interest.

The debt that the villager acquired with the shopkeeper was, therefore, mainly for wheat. Each harvest he would pay off the amount of wheat, plus interest, which he had borrowed during the previous year, and would also settle the debts outstanding on other goods. In an average year this would leave him with insufficient wheat to feed his family until the next harvest, so that he would have to borrow wheat again. This point is made clear in the sample budget presented, where what the villager received in wheat

at the harvest in 1965 would have been sufficient to feed his family until the next harvest, (with other goods being paid for from dairy produce and cash crops), if he had not had to settle wheat debts accumulated through the winter because of the previous year's poor harvest. As Lambton says:

> "It is thus not surprising that debt should be the curse of Persian rural life."[1]

With this background, a village budget for an agricultural season will be given, in so far as it is possible to do this accurately without written records. The budget is for an ox-less dihqān, a member of the most numerous class of villagers. He had five children, all of whom, at the time of fieldwork, were still at home, although the eldest daughter was already married. Her bride-price of approximately £50. was being paid at a rate of £2.50 a month, and her father was keeping half of this for her bridal goods and using the rest for family expenses. They owned a milk-cow. The year is 1964-65, and since the cotton-crop had failed on his juft this, both as consumer product and as cash-crop, is absent. However, since failure of one kind or another was not infrequent in Iranian agriculture, this year, although worse than average, was not extraordinarily atypical, and was offset by the better grain harvest of 1965. The budget is retrospective from this, according to the system of reckoning debts. The

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.38.

difference in usage between wheat and other goods has been retained for convenience. Prices were calculated at 21 rīāl to the £1., as was the exchange at the time of fieldwork.

Table XIV: Village Budget 1964-65

Wheat (in kilos)

Income				Owed in debts	
Amount	Value			Amount	Value
900	£31.42	Shop-borrowed wheat		105	
		Interest		52½	
		Other borrowed wheat	c.	20	
		Floor-felt		60	
		Baths		36	
		Barber		12	
		Cotton-seeds (for cow)		15	
				300	£10.47
				Needed for food	
				900	£31.42
900	£31.42	Total required...		1200	£41.89

Deficit: 300 kilos

Other Goods

Income			Goods required	
Produce sold	Bride-price	£11.90	Tea	£ 4.95
	Calf	£10.00	Rice	£ 2.47
	Clarified butter	£ 4.76	Meat	£ 2.45
	Yoghurt	£ 4.29	other foods	£17.14
			Clothes	£ 8.67
			Paraffin	£ 2.51
			Soap	£ 1.71
			Sundries	£ 1.71
		£30.91		£41.61

Deficit: £10.70, met by casual work & small loans from friends.

N.B. Vegetables and other dairy produce produced and consumed at home are not included, as quantities used were unknown.

This budget can be compared with a survey carried out by the Iran Statistical Centre of the expenditures of 7408

families in 2564 villages in rural areas throughout Iran during 1968.[1] From these data, the average monthly expenditure of a rural family was worked out, whose totals can be compared with the budget from Ḥusaynābād. For this purpose the latter had also been worked out for monthly expenses, and the monetary value of goods purchased by wheat has been calculated from its harvest price (22 rīāl per mann).[2]

Table XV: Comparison of monthly expenditure of National Survey and fieldwork budgets

	Foods			Non-Foods
	Purchased	Non-purchased		Purchased
1968 Survey	£7.51	Total £5.61	Wheat only £2.25	£6.19
1965 Field-work	£2.61	" ?	" " £0.87	£2.57

The obvious discrepancy between the Ḥusaynābād budget and the average one produced by the Survey is hard to account for, if all the families in the Survey were peasant villagers. They are described as farmers, fishers, and so on, but perhaps included some rural but wealthier families, farmers who were former land-owners, for example. Two other reasons exist. One is the implementation of Stage II of Land Reform, which took place after 1965, although it can be doubted

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1. Iran, Imperial Government of, 1969. Result of Survey of Family Budget for 1968 (in Persian). Tehrān : Plan Organisation, Iran Statistical Centre.

2. Locally 1 mann = 3 kilos.

whether this, in a very few years, would have increased three-fold the purchasing power of the peasants. In the village encountered during fieldwork where Land Reform had been carried out, the spending of the new land-owners had not increased by that amount. The other reason lies perhaps in the survey method of obtaining expenditures on a monthly basis. I found during fieldwork that greater accuracy was obtained, particularly with reference to non-foodstuffs only purchased occasionally, if an assessment of spending was made over a longer period. Moreover, the Survey mentions many items which never appeared in Ḥusaynābād households, and while the purchase of these had to be questioned in the interests of comprehensiveness, it can be asked whether the replies were altogether accurate.

By contrast with the peasant budget from Ḥusaynābād, that of a landlord will now be given, for 1964-65. Sayyid Riẓā held a few shares in Deh Kūchik as well as owning Deh Nou, and his income from these have been totalized. This is not a farming budget, the valuable alfalfa, for example, grown and consumed in the kilāteh, is not included, it would have cost £60 to buy. It is a record of personal income, from which, however, a few farming expenses were paid, and of expenditure for Sayyid Riẓā and his family. There were six children living at home at the time of field-work, his wife had had ten children in all and by the end of fieldwork she was expecting her eleventh. Sayyid Riẓā himself lived for the greater part of the time in Deh Nou, his family joining him there during the summer. His house in Bakshahr was not particularly large compared with those

of the other landlords. His income was probably slightly less than that of the 'average' non-working landlord, especially since he owned no flocks. The exchange rate is worked out as before; figures being rounded up to the nearest pound, since the figures Sayyid Rizā gave were rounded up to the nearest rīāl.

Table XVI: Landlord's budget 1964-5

I Budget in kind

Wheat consumed by family	1200 kilos
" given in charity	1800 kilos
	3000
Value of dairy produce consumed	unknown

II Monetary budget

Income (from sale of produce)					Expenditure	
Wheat:	9,000 kilos	sold at 4.76p/kilo		£429	Tractor expenses, wages of driver etc,	£ 381
	6,000 "	" " 3.97 "		£210	Non-produced food for family	£ 381
Cotton:	4,450 "	" " 5.56 "		£247	Clothing	£ 95
Barley:	4,200 "	" " 2.36 "		£ 99	Charities, wedding gifts, etc.	£ 57
Straw:	18,000 "	" " 0.48 "		£ 86	Medicines	£ 38
Maize:	900 "	" " 4.76 "		£ 43	Bycycle (for eldest son)	£ 18
					2 rugs	£ 21
					Sewing Machine	£ 19
					Radio	£ 10
					Other consumer goods & expenses	£ 198
	Total Income			£1,114	Total expenditure	£1,209
		Deficit :		£95		

It can be seen that landlord, as well as peasant, could get into debt, and it must be said at once that to do so was no disgrace in the society in question. It was considered more important to maintain a certain style of living than to

appear cheeseparing by remaining solvent. Sayyid Riẓā was only following the mores of his society, although he disliked debt. He had met it by borrowing cash from a fellow-Sayyid, a close friend, and to pay him back had to sell some wheat after the 1965 harvest in mid-August, when he received the lowest price for it. No interest was charged between fellow-Sayyids, although Sayyid Riẓā would later give his friend a present, which the mores again demanded should be a lavish one.[1] A landlord was expected to be generous even when settling those debts into which his generosity had landed him.

Although attention has been given chiefly to landownership, it is necessary to give some indication of the economics of sheep-farming, both because it was important in the baksh and because many landlords also owned flocks.[2] Ideally, a herd of 100 sheep should yield 100 lambs in a year, 50 males and 50 females, deaths being compensated for by twinning. The male lambs are sold, some when a few months sold, others at a year. Taking other produce into consideration, the yield of the herd was approximately as shown overleaf, in an average-to-good year.

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1. Kielstra, N.O. 1973. Credit Facilities in Iranian Villages. MAN (N.S.), vol.8., no.1, pp.110-1

2. c.f. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.350-8.

Table XVII: Profitability of Sheep

Each sheep produced		Of value		Total value for herd of 100
1 lamb		£ 1.50	or	£ 37.50 (assuming 25 sold at each price)
		£ 2.75		£ 93.75
Wool,	2 kilos	25p./kilo		£ 50.00
Clarified butter,	1 kilo	£66.67p./kilo		£ 66.67
Cheese,	2 kilos	£13.3 p./kilo		£ 26.66
				£274.58
Less a herder at 20p./day + keep (say 30p./day)				-£165.08
Less renting of winter watering				-£ 5.00
			PROFIT	£123.58 per year.

When it is remembered that the head of the B family in Ḥusaynābād owned perhaps 2,000 sheep it can be seen that profit from them was greater than profit from land. Nevertheless the cost of care per head of sheep was high. A herd of 500 needed five herders at lambing, although for the rest of the year one herder could look after 200 sheep. Each needed milking twice daily, and constant vigilance was necessary to avoid the spread of disease, which could easily bring complete loss. Sheep, in short, were a constant worry to their owner. Nevertheless it was reckoned that a flock of 500 would make a net profit of £750 a year. The major landlords of Ḥusaynābād all owned flocks in addition to their land. Most of their herds were of the size of those of the B family. Small landlords tried to keep a flock of 100 or so, and, at the lowest end of the scale, a peasant household sufficiently wealthy to own its oxen would also fatten up a couple of lambs for the winter, finding their produce as

well as their meat useful additions to the household means.

10. Land Reform

Although this thesis is not primarily concerned with Land Reform, the importance of this process, perhaps the most significant in Iranian social history this century, makes field observation valuable. Unlike pre-Reform agrarian data, the Land Reform programme has been well documented. Lambton,[1] McLachlan[2], Salour[3] and Zelli[4] among others, have described the political and parliamentary processes involved, and numerous publications of the Iranian government have detailed the successes already achieved and the structure and organization of the co-operatives which are essential features of the programme. By 1969, for example, it is reported that 23,697 villages

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1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1969b. The Persian Land Reform 1962-6. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

2. McLachlan, K. 1969, op.cit.

3. Salour, His Excellency Abbas. 1963. Report on the Program of Land Reform Activities in Iran. Tehrān: The Iranian Land Reform Organization.

4. Zelli, His Excellency M. Manoutcher, 1966. The Economic Progress of Iran. Journal of the Royal Central Asian Society, vol.53, no.1., pp.43-9

were covered by co-operative societies[1] and by 1971 the formation of co-operative companies, where overall direction is taken out of the hands of the shareholders themselves, had begun.[2]

At the time of fieldwork in 1964-5 the First Phase of the Land Reform Law of 1962 had already been implemented, and in the village of Gholām Ābād, which I visited during 1965, 58½ hours of water had been divided three years previously between 11 new landowners all but one of whom had retained their jobs as share-croppers to the remaining landlords. Each new owner received approximately 5 hours 18 minutes of water, the total amount being arranged for working convenience into four parts. Each new owner was repaying the Government approximately £4 a year towards buying his land. This would continue for 14 years in all to a total cost of £57 (to the nearest £). As required by the Land Reform Law[3] a co-operative society had been initiated. At first it consisted of three villagers, in accordance with the regulations governing its structure, two of whom were to represent the interests of the new landowners and the

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1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1970. The Land Reform Programme in Iran. Tehrān: Ministry of Land Reform and Rural Co-operation, Rural Research Centre.

2. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1971. Ninth Anniversary of the Land Reform Law. (in Persian). Tehrān: Ministry of Land Reform and Rural Co-operative Credits.

3. Salour, His Excellency Abbas. 1963, op.cit., p.6.

third to be their treasurer. Almost immediately disputes had arisen as to the type of crops to be cultivated on the divided lands. Appeals made over this and other matters to the local supervisors of the co-operative had resulted in the addition of three new men to settle disputes, a landlord and a dihqān, each representing their respective sides, and the landlord who had had some of his water taken for the division, to act as mediator. Once the divided land had been re-allocated among the new owners, disputes as to usage seemed to be diminishing.

In 1964-5 the divided land yielded 255 kilos of wheat and 22 kilos of cotton for each new landowner. Seed, of course, had to be supplied from this. The wheat had required 90 kilos of seed giving a nett wheat yield of 165 kilos, and 60 kilos of cotton seed had had to be purchased at 3p./kilo. Expenses were met jointly, those for the qanāt having already been mentioned; in addition the new owners collected £14 amongst themselves to pay for the hire of ploughs, threshers, and the like. In all each new owner reckoned to make about £12 a year from the divided land, a most useful addition to the share-cropping budget but not enough for subsistence.

It might be thought that in this village further land would become peasant property and the Land Reform programme continued. However, under certain conditions, mechanized farming is exempt from re-distribution,[1] and most of the

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1. Revised Phase Two Land Reform Law: 19th May 1961. See Ibid., p.8., and McLachlan, K. 1968, op.cit., pp.701-2.

farming at Gholām Ābād was mechanized. This would seem to mean that conditions in this type of village are unlikely to alter much in the future, the villagers still deriving their main income from share-cropping.[1]

It is obvious, and has been recognized from the outset, that the success of the Land Reform programme depends on the extent to which credit facilities are available to the new landowners. In his description of the co-operative societies Parviz says that this is their first function.[2] A Cento survey on agricultural credit shows that, in 1966, of the 435 farmers interviewed in Iran 186 (43%) were helped in some way by a local group or organization, of whom 140 (75%) received this help from co-operatives of one kind or another.[3] For Gholām Ābād credit was arranged by the co-operative bank, which had created an organization of 6 persons, 3 of whom were in office at the time of fieldwork, to handle these accounts. 10 of the 11 new landowners (the 11th said he had not the means to do so) had given c.£5 to the co-operative bank, after which the bank had loaned each £23 to cover immediate expenses, and would expect £25 to be repaid at the end of the year. The supervision of this debt (for other Land-Reformed villages as well as Gholām Ābād) was the task of these three

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1. For current trends in Land Reform, see McLachlan, K. 1968, op.cit., pp.684-713

2. Parviz, A.H.Amir. 1963. Use of Co-operatives. In CENTO Symposium on Rural Development, 1963. Tehrān.

3. CENTO. Travelling Seminar on Agricultural Credit and Co-operatives 1964, pp.57-58.

persons already appointed. The others would organize the cheap supply of seed, foodstuffs, paraffin, and the other needs of the farmers, without which subsidies the project in its initial stages at any rate was not really viable. Thus at the time of fieldwork the principal function of the bank's loan committee was to supply a sort of taqāvī to the new landowners, but it was clear that the other functions were vitally required. It is significant that, of the Iranian farmers interviewed by the Cento survey, 85% said that the credit available was inadequate for their farming needs.[1] Although future credit, when fully established, would cover a full range of facilities and needs, yet it must be said that it was not available at the time when it was required. The general feeling among the new farmers was that their land would be of real benefit to them once the credit facilities had been established in full, and the hire-purchase paid off. Meanwhile, with true peasant pessimism, they insisted that it was not bringing them very much.

Land-Reform was in its infancy however and, during fieldwork, preparations were being made for the implementation of the Decree Amending the Land Reform Law of 1963, generally known as Phase II,[2] under which all villages came under the scope of Land Reform. In 1964

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1. CENTO. Travelling Seminar on Agricultural Credit and Co-operatives 1964, p.45.

2. Salour, His Excellency Abbas. 1963, op.cit., p.7, and McLachlan, K. 1968, op.cit., p.697.

the dihqāns of Ḥusaynābād had been under the impression that they would each be given a pā (12 hours) of water and the oxen to work it. By 1965 their knowledge of Land Reform was more realistic, and they knew of the necessary establishment of the co-operative society and the facilities it would offer. In the hope of receiving some land of their own, three villagers had left the employment of the railway and taken service as dihqān in 1964-5. All were young and vigorous, and whatever their motives, the encouragement that the anticipation of Land Reform was giving to farmers to remain on the land could only be beneficial to agriculture as a whole.

Meanwhile personnel from the Ministry of Land Reform were travelling through the countryside asking each person employed in agriculture whether he was a day-labourer or a dihqān. Under the Amended Law of 1964, the second draft of Phase II, if he were the former then, subject to certain conditions, the land he worked would not be subjected to Land Reform.[1] These enquiries reached Ḥusaynābād and its adjacent villages while I was resident there in 1965, and, as can be imagined, were the major topic of conversation. Clearly, the landlords wanted their dihqāns to say that they were labourers paid a daily wage, while the dihqāns themselves wanted to declare their true status but were frightened of being dismissed if they did so, and many felt that their loyalty to their landlord

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1. McLachlan, K. 1968, op.cit., p.701.

demanded that they should say what he wanted. A rumour went around that all those questioned would be made to swear on the Qur'ān as to the truth of their status. This was clearly a fiction but, since even a dihqān could not be expected to forswear himself, was a device by which the men could tell the truth but justify their disloyalty in doing so, and thus hope to avert dismissal.

When enquiries were actually made, the personnel involved were clearly extremely experienced and competent. They ignored each dihqān's preliminary assertions that he was a day-worker, urged him not to be afraid of his landlord, and by persistent and skilled questioning, elicited the truth. They even managed to do this in Deh Nou although Sayyid Riẓā had taken care to be present, in the hope that he would influence matters the way he wished. However, when the dihqāns were taken aside from their landlord, they were unable to maintain that they were day-labourers because they could not state the exact terms of their non-existent wages. The dihqāns' fears of reactions from the landlords were not entirely unfounded, for, shortly after the Land Reform personnel had gone, one landlord in his anger at his dihqān's ultimate declaration of his true position did use physical violence towards him. On the whole, though, the enquiry proceeded smoothly, and few of the dihqaāns were sufficiently intimidated to make false statements.

Nevertheless it was clear that the long-term success of Land Reform would depend on the continued maintenance of the qanāt system. In this context a paragraph from the

description by Parviz of the functions of rural co-operatives is worth quoting:

> "Water for Irrigation: After the distribution of land the duty of managing irrigation channels has fallen on co-operative societies.....(who) thus carry out the most important and difficult function for the collective advantage of the member-farmers of the village."[1]

Again, in reply to the question in the Cento survey on agricultural credit:

> "To what extent should governments help co-operatives and farmers?"

143 (36%, the largest single group) said that they should receive irrigation help above all.[2]

Finally, the success of Land Reform, as of any other programme, depended upon the active enthusiasm of those most affected, in this case the new farmers themselves. Gholām Ābād was fortunate in having an intelligent and active village leader, who had been responsible for much of the local organization of Land Reform, without whom the others would not have even obtained their title-deeds. Success therefore also depended upon the arbitrary factors of personality, which no legislation can provide.

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1. Parviz, A.H. Amir. 1963, op.cit., p.5.

2. CENTO Travelling Seminar on Agricultural Credit and Co-operatives 1964, p.66.

11. Settlement rise and decline

To conclude this chapter a diachronic model of a land-holding cycle, presenting some features of village rise and decline, and relating to the case-histories of land-holding families, will be given. It is a model in the sense that, in reality, no village follows the cycle precisely as outlined, yet nearly all possess most, if not all, of its general characteristics.

Bakshahr could not support all its population, and some means of obtaining a livelihood had to be found outside it. Ownership of land was an increasingly important one. The process of acquiring land has already been described; it was not usually until his old age that an entrepreneur was able to buy land on an investment scale. When a man was ready to purchase, he bought cheaply a village or villages which were in decline through lack of maintenance of the qanāt, shares in prosperous qanāts rarely coming on the market.

The actual expense of repairs may not be undertaken until the next generation, when they could be complicated by the problem of conflicts arising between the heirs. This is overcome by one of the brothers, usually the eldest, gaining control over most, if not all, of the shares of the qanāt. When the qanāt is repaired it is usually brought up to or near its maximum flow at once; it is for this, as well as for the cost of the qanāt itself, that the entrepreneur has saved so carefully over the years. Dihqāns are brought in, usually from Bakshahr but occasionally from other villages, qal'eh are

built and agriculture both proceeds and flourishes. This is probably the period of maximum efficiency of the village, and can be described as Stage I.

In the next generation of landowners, the first or second from the original purchaser, sub-division occurs if is has not already taken place. However, the outlay for maintenance remains the same, the holdings get smaller and the financial return from them decreases. Some selling of shares takes place, efforts are made to prevent sub-division and its consequent multiple ownership from hindering qanāt repairs. Nevertheless the tendency is for the flow from the qanāt to decrease a little, and for the total amount of land under cultivation to diminish also, while the productivity of the remainder also declines. This constitutes Stage II.

Meanwhile the peasant population has been increasing. Actual immigration does not take place at this stage, the growth being due to natural increase until a maximum is reached at the end of Stage II. It is to be especially noted that this stage does not correspond with the period of maximum efficiency. Stage II lasts as long as no actual migration from the village takes place. There may be khwushnishīn but most of them find work within the village.

Stage III is initiated when the work/population ratio, having reached a state of equilibrium (ignoring labour mobility which tends ultimately not to alter the actual number of employees) begins to decline. With further sub-division, in perhaps another land-holding generation, some share-croppers are unable to find work, and many

owners have now got holdings too small to support a dihqān. The villagers tend to move away, particularly the more enterprising of them. With the relief of the population pressure the situation might stabilize were it not for the fact that, as a result of the smaller holdings, the flow of the qanāt continues to decline until it can become almost non-existent. The village dwindles to almost nothing, with few residents and extremely sparse farming. The end of Stage III occurs when there is only one villager left, although some of what he produces may go to his kinsfolk elsewhere. However, since shares in the qanāt have become cheap, the way is open for a new entrepreneur to come in and begin the cycle again. This does not always happen, and the settlement and qanāt may be abandoned altogether. New qanāts, started elsewhere, replace those which have declined and, given conditions of political security, their overall numbers will increase within a given region to cope with the rising population.

Two additional features are discernible. The heirs of a fast-declining village may become oxen-owning share-croppers elsewhere but continue to receive some harvest from their parent village and contribute their oxen and occasional labour towards it. Thus subsidized, peasant-proprietorship can prolong Stage III. Another type of village, represented by Jo'abāt in the survey, lies outside the cycle altogether, for there peasant proprietorship continues over many successive generations without being replaced by a majority of non-working owners.

The time-span for the complete cycle, between the

original purchase of the derelict qanāt or the building of a new one and the end of StageIII, when it is derelict again, can be as little as 25-30 years, although it is usually around 30-35 with a maximum of 40-45 in exceptional circumstances. This may seem very short, but was confirmed in discussion with perceptive landlords observing the process in their own villages and families. A qanāt is almost invariably in disrepair by the time the grandchildren of the original purchaser are in control, and may decline swiftly during the lifetime of his children. The time between the end of Stage III and the beginning of a new Stage I is more variable. New purchase may take place before the decline is complete, or a qanāt may lie derelict for some years or, as mentioned, new purchase may not take place at all. In general, if reclamation is to occur, it must happen within five years at the most from the end of Stage III, otherwise qanāt and settlement will be abandoned altogether.

Excluding Jo'abāt, with its continuous peasant-proprietorship, the 10 other villages in the survey can be placed in one of these three stages. The two new single-owned ventures of Deh Nou and Kilāteh ʿAlī Golī and the peasant-proprietor village of Burj Āqā were in Stage I. They had been begun or renovated within the previous six years. Ḥusaynābād itself was well into Stage II, and had been established some 16 years since renovation, while Gārmiteh and Ja'afarābād were just beginning this stage, having been established 12 years or so. These villagers were virtually entirely in the hands of large-scale

absentee owners. Deh Kūchik, also absentee-owned, was in Stage III, Kilāteh Jān with mixed ownership, and Kilāteh Nādir, with peasant ownership, were at the end of it. Kilāteh Nādir was only in its second generation of the present family ownership, Deh Kūchik had risen and fallen several times and the age of Kilāteh Jān was unknown. An outsider had begun to buy shares in Kilāteh Nādir, and it is possible that this qanāt would be reclaimed and the cycle start once more.

Stirling has proposed two models to describe the rise and fall of fortunes in land-owning families in Turkish villages. When land is available prosperity is possible, although not many achieved it, and prosperity, once achieved, did not last through more than one generation beyond the death of the household head, so that each son started with little more than what his father had begun with. There was also a continuous rise and decline in the relative positions of village households over the generations. When land was short, though, poverty was inevitable within two to three generations.[1]

This model has certain similarities with that proposed here for Iranian villages, particularly with respect to the social mobility of landowning families through time, with the free flowing of the qanāt in the Iranian model replacing the availability of land in rural Turkey as the determining factor of which enterprise can take advantage. In both examples success could, with

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1. Stirling, A.P.1965, op.cit., pp.134-47.

other factors, be measured by the employment of servant-type labour, which did not itself prevent other poor families from rising to power. Thus to a lesser extent Stirling's model also represents the rise of a peasant household which succeeds in acquiring its own oxen.

However, there are obvious dissimilarities between the two models. In the Turkish example, the village itself remained intact as a unit although the fortunes of individual families within it varied considerably. In Iran, on the other hand, the rise and fall of land-owning families was almost totally linked with the rise and decline of individual settlements. Again, in Iran, the flow of the qanāt upon which prosperity is based has to be struggled for by those seeking upward mobility, whereas in the Turkish example the land from which success was made was, in the past at any rate, available for the taking. It can therefore be said that Iranian prosperity in landholding requires even more effort than does the Turkish or, to put it another way, because it is difficult it is achieved by fewer people. The latter certainly seemed to be true. Taking the Iranian baksh as a whole, only a small proportion of its population was successful financially, whereas it seems to have been more frequent, although still difficult, in Turkish village households.

The second of Stirling's models illustrates precisely the decline in Iranian villages when neither qanāt flow nor the money to provide it is available, although as in Turkey, with the village becoming

increasingly part of the national organisation, hope is possible in the shape of help and re-organization from outside. The Iranian situation is also different in range from the Turkish ones; Iranian landowning families seem to become wealthier than in Turkey, and their decline seems to be slower; taking 2-3 generations instead of one.

In general, though, the similarity of the cycles is surprising, considering the important differences in the structure of landholding between the two countries. It might be that a model of the rise and decline of land-holding families, with or without a correlated rise and decline of settlements themselves, is valid throughout the Middle East.

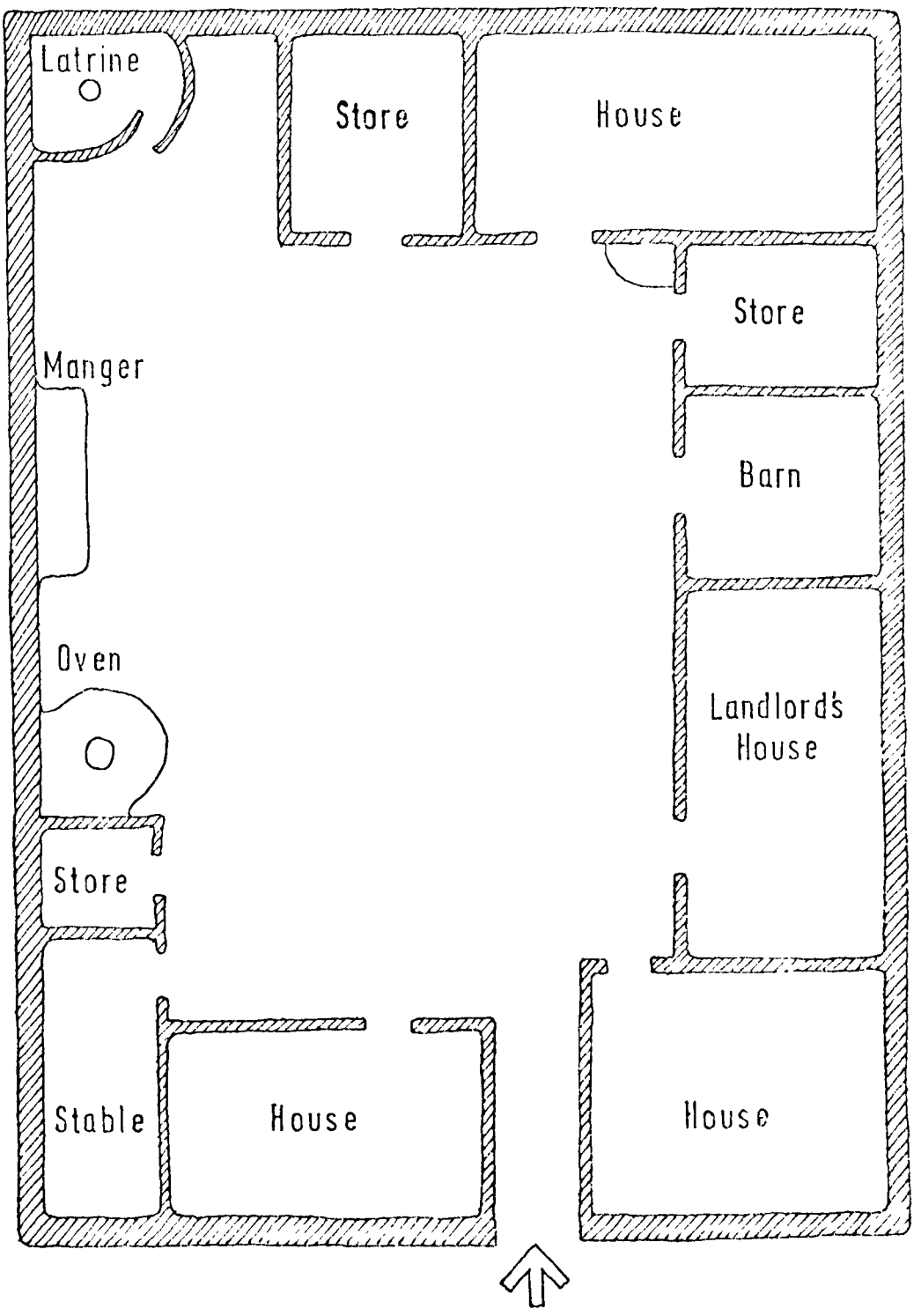
CHAPTER III: FAMILY LIFE AND STRUCTURE

1. Households.

The plan of Husaynābād and similar villages is an adaptation to the insecure conditions of previous years. A courtyard, known as a qal'eh, is built, with a high thick wall and a narrow entrance, where a heavy wooden door may still be found. The houses are built against the inside of this wall, their doors facing the inner part of the yard. The arrangements many vary in detail and in newer villages the walls may be low enough to be looked over, but adjacent to the high walls which also surround enclosed gardens. Map 5 is a plan of one of the qal'ehs of Husaynābād.

The courtyard, being an enclosed space, gives an area of privacy for the members of the constituent households extra to the house itself. It is regarded as an extension of each dwelling, which happens to be shared by the members of more than one household. This attitude is important, for it means that within the yard its inhabitants have a freedom of movement unhampered by the conventional modesty which inhibits them outside its walls. A woman does not have to keep her chādur (the all-enveloping cloak) on inside her yard, even when she may be seen by the menfolk of the other households, and she talks to them without reserve. She will don the chādur to go into the street, for any purpose, and to visit other qal'ehs. Likewise the men spend their time in the village in their houses or yards, with their families, or talking

Map 5 : Plan of qal'eh



to other men in the village street, but they have no reason to go frequently to other yards.

Each courtyard is built by one landlord, and his tenants for the current agricultural year all live there. Thus the inhabitants of each yard mix a great deal with each other, work and leisure times alike, and seldom, unless to visit relatives, have occasion to leave it.

The social self-sufficiency within each set of four walls becomes apparent if some time is spent therein, gaining familiarity with the inhabitants and their ways; to go into another yard is to meet with another group of persons who again spend most of their time exclusively in each others' company.

Each yard is also physically self-sufficient, with its bread-oven, latrine, quarters for beasts and store-rooms.[1] Deh Nou consists of one such yard, larger villages of more, and a village the size of Ḥusaynābād is an accretion of yards, varying in size. Its 70 households, at the time of fieldwork, were distributed in five main yards and two smaller ones, the number of households in each varying between 1 and 10. The qal'eh is the basic residential unit of all the villages in the baksh and beyond, varied and duplicated according to circumstances; the village can be perceived as a unit much less clearly, and less often in daily life.

By day the yards are almost empty: the men are in

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1. For further details of the geography of the qal'eh, see de Planhole, X. 1968, op.cit., pp.425-8

the fields, the children playing outside, the women busy about their tasks. In the evening each is a centre of activity. Everyone comes home for supper, the cows are brought in for milking and, except in summer, the oxen as well. Donkeys are tied up, the chickens come home to roost, and sheep may also be tethered. As long as the weather permits the people cook and sleep in the yard, only a few feet from the animals. There is a real sense that men and animals are part of a single community, and conditions can become quite crowded.

Attached to each qal'eh, and often part of it, is the house that the landlord has built for himself, for his visits to the village. It is usually a few feet higher than the others, and may be built on the first floor, for fresh air and privacy. The landlords are the only people who build these high houses (being the only) ones who can afford to do so), so they dominate their yards both physically and socially, and their houses can be distinguished from the rest of the village at a considerable distance.

Thus these small, isolated villages and courtyards differ considerably from those described elsewhere in Iran. Alberts, for example, describes the basic residential unit as being the hayat, a

> "physical counterpart of principal segmental unity of community social structure,"[1]

an extended family occupying a single hayat or several

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.172.

contiguous ones. This description applies exactly to the residential units in Bakshahr, where even the same term is used, but not to those in Ḥusaynābād. Similarly, Alberts' distinction between the khāneh, the physical residence of the family, and the khānevār,[1] the household as a functional unit, is relevant to a description of life in Bakshahr but not to Ḥusaynābād, or not to the same extent.

Alberts gives a good description of housing[2] and clothing in Davarābād,[3] which in both instances seem more elaborate and expensive than in Ḥusaynābād. The relevant section of the 1966 National Census of Iran shows that when households are described by the number of rooms they occupy, those occupying one room only are the largest single group, being 7,009 out of 26,866, and this total figure includes the households of landlord-resident towns such as Bakshahr.[4] For most households in Ḥusaynābād one room is all they have at their disposal, which is arranged to meet all their needs.

A village house in Ḥusaynābād is rectangular, its average size about 10' x 14', rising to no more than 7-8'

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.525-7.
2. Ibid., pp.154-64.
3. Ibid., pp.194-215.
4. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a. National Census of Population and Housing, 1966. op.cit., vol.CIII, p.75 (rural area).

in the centre part of the domed roof. The houses are usually, though not invariably, built on the north and east walls of the yards, so that they face south and south-west, to avoid the worst of the wind and to get the most sun. They are built of bricks made of mud and straw; most men know how to make these bricks, using the local ingredients, and how to build the walls with them, although a craftsman is usually brought in from Bakshahr to make the roof. There is usually a little window in the outside wall, that will look out onto the fields, this and the holes in the roof made for air circulation being blocked up in winter. The only permanent opening is the doorway with its heavy wooden door, a woman being able to talk to a man inside the house and maintain propriety provided the door is kept open. To one side of it, immediately inside the house, is a fireplace, although cooking is done outside as much as possible, and there may also be a large earthenware storage jar for grain. A hole in the thickness of the wall, at ground level, opening on to the actual doorway, is the hen-house. The chests and bedding are kept at the back of the house where there is usually a rough felt covering on the floor. Life is lived at floor-level, the bedding forms back-rests by day. Recesses in the walls, often neatly curtained, contain the lamps, clothes and household goods. In a few houses a large loom takes up half the space.

The household may also have another room, little more than a cupboard, where brooms, etc. are stored. But no house in Husaynabad, or in any of the other villages

visited, had a special room, an elaborately-furnished mihmān khāneh for the entertainment of guests, such as was found in Bakshahr and which Alberts describes as normal in the village of Davarābād.[1] The entertaining of guests has to be done in the presence of the entire family, since the greater informality of village life means that the women do not necessarily have to retire, and this relaxation of convention with regard to visitors is one of the striking differences between town and village life.

Although the landlord provides the house, it is for the tenant to keep it in good repair, though if it is actually crumbling the tenant will usually arrange to live elsewhere. If a landlord and tenant disagree over their minor responsibilities of house maintenance, the latter will usually leave all but minor repairs to the expense of the former and spend any savings he has at the end of the year on other things.

The drinking water is taken from the point at which the qanāt emerges to the surface, thereafter flowing through the street, where it is used for washing and thereafter diverted to the fields. Thus there is some attempt to maintain elementary hygiene, which is also practised in the home. Plates and dishes are carefully cleaned after use, the home is usually extremely neat and the good housewife cleans it out at least once a day.

Clothing is suitably adapted to village life. For

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959. op.cit., p.156.

working in the fields the men wear heavy black trousers and a coarse white shirt. The latter has probably been woven in the village while the former has come from no further than Bakshahr. Women wear a long-sleeved brightly-coloured dress, suitably loose to allow for pregnancies, with black trousers underneath; coloured trousers and stockings for special occasions are only worn by women in Bakshahr. The Islamic requirement that the head should be covered is met by a simple head-scarf, the donning of the chādur implies that she is going visiting or meeting a stranger; in small remote villages a woman might not put on this garment from one week to the next, in contrast to Bakshahr where it is ubiquitious and obligatory. Although women henna-ed their hair and occasionally their hands and feet, Alberts' description of clothing and ornaments[1] is more applicable to the wealthier Bakshahr than to village life in west Khurāsān.

The inhabitants of the small houses are usually no more than a nuclear family. In 1964 there were 73 households in Ḥusaynābād, divided into types in column 1 of Table XVIII. These have been combined into the groups used by the Census in its enumeration of household types in the shahrestān (city and region) in which Ḥusaynābād was situated, to show the extent to which the village was representative of its region.

By 1965 there were 70 households in Ḥusaynābād. Of the original 73, 10 had left, 63 had remained. But five

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.206-14.

Table XVIII: Households in Husaynābād and in Census Area

Husaynābād households					Total households in rural area of region (from Census)[1]		
Household type	Remained in village	Mobile	Total	%	Census Category	No.	%
Married couple, no children	11	-	11	15.1	Married couple, no children	3,868	12.0
Married couple, with children	36	6	44	60.3	Parent(s) and unmarried children	24,014	74.5
Parent & son	1	1					
Married couple, children & son & dau.-in-law	2	-	3	4.1	Parent(s) married children no grand-children.	386	1.2
Man, son & dau.-in-law	1	-					
Married couple, children, 1 son & wife & children	4				Parent(s),		
Man, 2 sons, their wives & children	1		8	10.9	married children,	1,444	4.5
Married couple children & mo. of husband	2	1			grand-children.		
Married couple, children, & sibling of husband	2						
Married couple, grandson	1		7	9.6	Others	2,493	7.8
Man on own	2	2					
Total	63	10	73	100		32,205	100

1. Iran, Imperial Government of. 1968a, op.cit., vol.CIII, p.60 (rural area).

new households had been formed, from marriage (3) or splitting of a former joint household (2), and 2 new families had moved in. Other movements took place: 11 households moved residence within the village without changing their composition in any radical way (i.e. excluding the birth of a child), and these 11 families exclude the 5 newly-formed new ones. These movements were mainly due to a change in the man's work. So, of a total of 73 households in 1964, in 1965 only 52 remained unchanged in location, and only 47 unchanged in location and composition.

Thus there was a constant mobility in village life, which was increased by transitory families. In 1964 and 1965 four landlord families and two artisans were resident in Ḥusaynâbād for a few months. With few possessions and a borrowed donkey any household could move without much difficulty, it was no momentous decision.

Daily life in Ḥusaynâbād followed a simple rhythm. The villagers rose at dawn and breakfasted on bread and tea before the men went to the fields. They might return for a light lunch and a rest in the heat of the day, and during the busy season would go back to work afterwards and, until the cotton was harvested, would sleep there, acting as guards against thieves both human and animal. The women busied themselves about their household tasks, every woman being skilled at butter-churning and bread-making, they were also expected to gather the soft greenstuffs to feed the milk-cows. Those who were able made themselves a little extra money by weaving. The older children helped their

parents according to their sex as appropriate, often being expected to work quite hard, and the older girls usually had a younger sibling tied on their backs as well. In Husaynabad some of the boys went to the school at the station, but the girls did not and there was no formal education in the more remote villages. Instead the boys would be sent out to herd, leading a life more solitary than the hardest-working man.

There were few crafts practised by the villagers, Ḥusaynābād being unusual in having a mill run by paraffin. The needs of the villagers were met by three shops and a series of travelling craftsmen, who tended to come round the villages in the early autumn, when the climate and work were easier, and people had money to spare. Other men, usually poor and elderly, or crippled, or insane, appeared singing religious songs until the villagers were tired of their coming, but never failed to give them some alms, however small.

There was almost no work done for ornament or pleasure, no musical instrument, apart from one flute, no embroidery or other fine handicraft. Fine work was practised in Bakshahr, and bought there. Thus in these matters, and in those previously mentioned, the village relied for essential things on a wide region round it, and the closing of the entire province of Khurāsān, which took place for six weeks in 1965 while I was in Ḥusaynābād (because of a cholera epidemic), brought hardship as supplies of tea, sugar and paraffin in particular ran out. To this extent every village was involved in the economy of Iran as a whole, and

even sometimes beyond its borders.

2. Kinship terminology.

The importance of the study of kinship terminology as a key to understanding social relationships has often been emphasized in anthropological writings. Beattie, for example, has pointed out that in small-scale communities the social importance of kinship is paramount. A person's residence, his group and community membership, whom he marries, whom he obeys and from whom he inherits may all be determined by his status in a kinship system. To the anthropologist the biological tie is not of itself important. What is significant is the social relationship with which the biological tie may be associated.[1] In different societies the same biological relationship may have quite different social connotations, and these are implied whenever a kinship term is used. Consequently, as Nadel has said, the system of kinship nomenclature becomes important, for it indicates relationships and modes of action expected to occur in conformity with the nomenclature.[2]

As in all societies, kinship terms used in the villages studied are not employed solely to describe

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1. Beattie, J. 1964. Other Cultures. London: Cohen & West, pp.93-4.

2. Nadel, S.F. 1951. The Foundations of Social Anthropology. London: Cohen & West, p.262.

persons to whom the individual is related through ties of blood. In village families specific individuals are described by specific terms, as will be seen, but many of these terms can also be used for non-relatives, and some of the terms used between members of different generations are interchangeable.

Alberts has an extremely good and detailed account of the principles of kinship terminology in Davarābād,[1] in particular how usage distinguishes relative status between ego and to whom he is talking[2] and how it changes throughout the individual's life-cycle.[3] Spooner also has dealt with terminology in the region studied.[4] Thus there is no need to enter into such detail for Ḥusaynābād, especially as there seemed less variety of terms used than in Davarābād. The chief difference between the two seems to lie in informal terms,[5] the other differences not being important enough to need enumeration or comment. The chief Ḥusaynābād terms are shown in diagram 2, sub-divided for convenience.

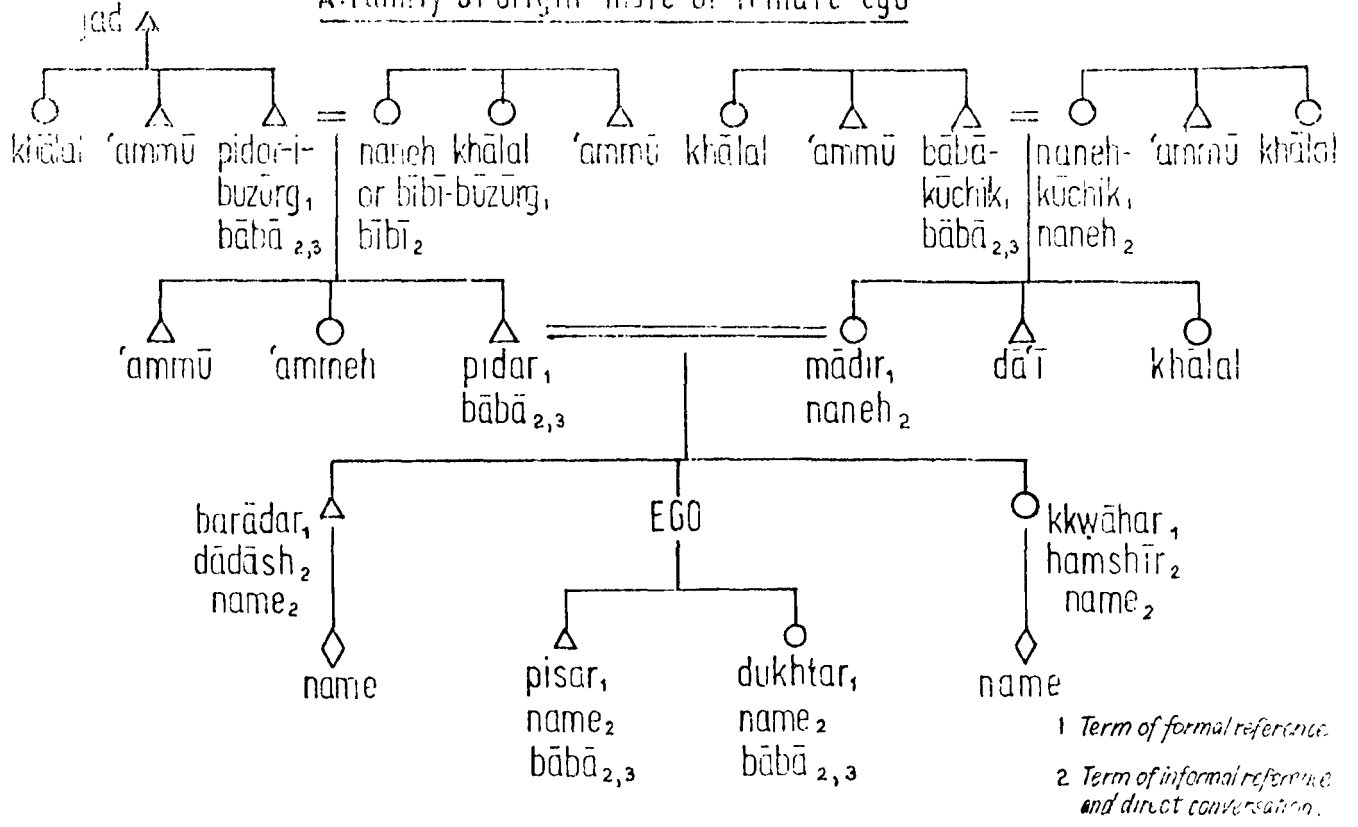
It will be observed that as far as the family of origin is concerned, ego uses the same terms whether he is

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.570-645.
2. Ibid., p.603.
3. Ibid., p.608.
4. Spooner, B.J. 1965b. Kinship and Marriage in Eastern Persia. Sociologus New Series, vol.15, no.1, pp.25-26.
5. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.576-90.

Diagram 2: Kinship Terminology

A: Family of origin - male or female ego

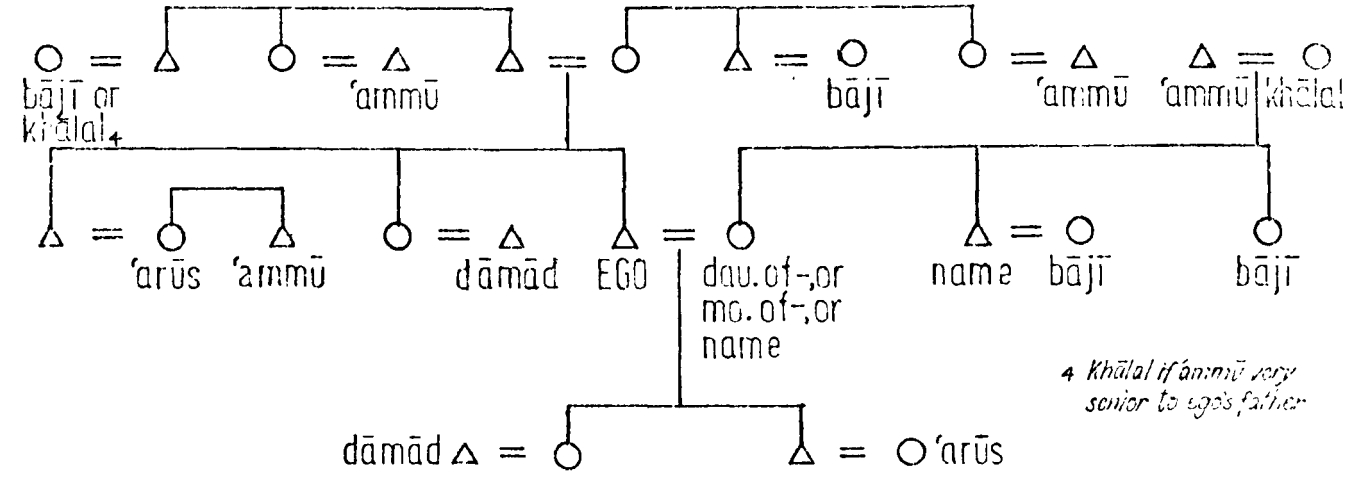


1 *Term of formal reference.*

2 *Term of informal reference and direct conversation.*

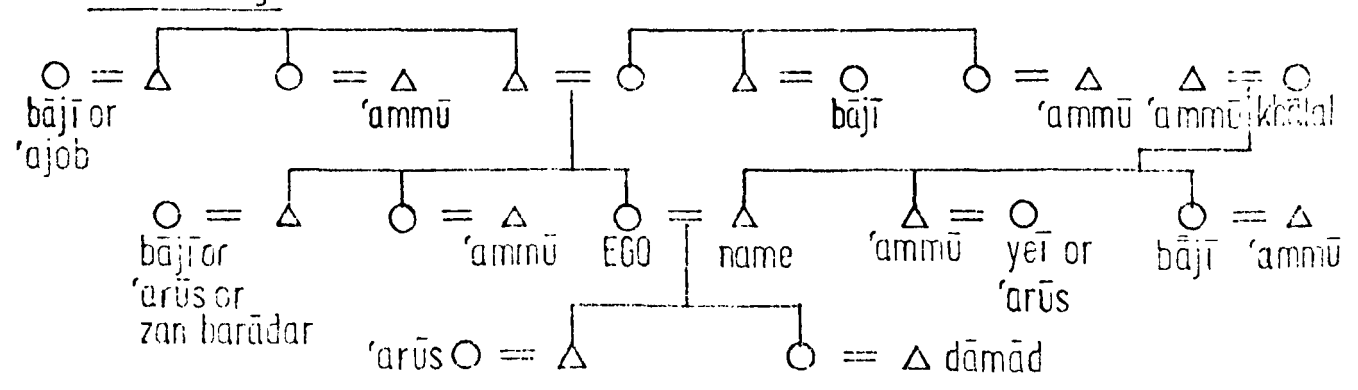
B: Those whom certain persons in A marry

(i) Male ego



4 *Khālaī if 'ammū very senior to ego's father.*

(ii) Female ego



3. For interchangeable use of bābā: see Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., p.119.

male or female. The principle here is that those in the senior generation, of both sexes, deserve respect, and are therefore addressed and referred to by respectful terms. Since it is difficult to comment on kinship terms in the abstract, in the following discussion the term 'khālal' will be used as an example of the principles involved.

The term 'khālal' was recognized as describing only the mother's sister. It was by courtesy extended to other female members of the senior generations, and also sometimes to a female of any age of high status, but in these latter instances the villages recognize that the use of the term is not descriptive. To the true 'khālal' ego shows a respectful deference, and he calls khālal those other women to whom he owes a similar deference. Thus the term 'khālal' and others similarly used describe both a particular and unique blood-relationship and also, in other situations, a general social relationship. Nevertheless the senior women to whom the term is applied are only those who are related to ego in a fairly limited fashion: in his own family it applies only to those with whom he can trace a direct relationship through his parents. Even here distinctions can be drawn; seniority tends to overcome distance; for instance, the mother's mother's sister is not, strictly speaking, khālal, especially if ego is male, but it is considered that her age merits the term if closeness of relationship does not. And, by this rule, on formal occasions and in situations of uncertainty any woman of obviously senior

age and status (such as a guest) will be called khālal.

Similarly, the use of the term 'ammū for WF must not be thought an indication that FBD marriage has affected terminological usage (for in FBD marriage the WF is of course ego's FB, his 'ammū descriptively speaking). The use of the term 'ammū for persons other than the FB is using it as an honorific, as Gulick explains most clearly.[1]

As Gulick says (his discussion on the implications of Lebanese terminology applying very well to Ḥusaynābād) the system is neither classificatory nor descriptive, but is an adaptation of both in terms of social structure.[2] The use of a kinship term depends not only on the relationship of the person addressed, but also upon age, position in the social situation, and the sex of the speaker.[3] The term may vary with the situation; for example, a woman coming as a member of the wedding-party which fetches the bride will be addressed by a term not otherwise used for one of her age and degree of blood-relationship. I myself, young, unmarried and a stranger, have been called 'khālal' in these circumstances.

The principle of the extension of a kinship term to

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1. Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., p.117.

2. _____ 1953, op.cit., p.370.

3. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.572.

those to whom the situation calls for it is shown further by the terms ego employs to those who marry members of his family of origin or procreation (those who marry persons with whom he has direct blood-ties), and by the terms he employs to those persons with whom he acquires a relationship by his own marriage. Here different terms, depending upon whether ego is male or female, emerge more clearly.

The terms of respect a man uses for the senior members of his own family are extended to their spouses as appropriate, by the principles outlined above. The terms he uses for those who marry his sons and daughters (that is, people who talk and refer to him in respectful terms), he extends, with certain reservations, laterally to persons whom his siblings marry, as being people to whom terms of senior respect are not usually appropriate. In Diagram 2 we see emerging a term which is used very widely by a female for her affines: the term bājī. This term is rarely used by a man, but a woman uses it a great deal to address and describe other women. It recognizes someone of the same sex but of slightly superior status, when that status has been established by a marriage, and through an intervening male, and when recognition of that superiority is expected. It is her relationship to this intervening male which gives the person addressed her superiority over the speaker, for the term bājī, although in theory reciprocated, is rarely used so. A woman uses the term bājī with most frequency with reference to her husband's sister; since her husband is male he is

superior and his superiority extends to his female relatives. But the use of the term bājī for the brother's wife depends on the brother's age: if he is much younger than the speaker, then his wife is addressed by the term 'arūs, which is much more familiar; only if her brother is senior to the speaker is his wife called bājī. Thus, as in other relationships, the term used for a woman is established by the man to whom she counts as being connected in that particular situation from the speaker's point of view. When two women are involved who are separated by more than one man their status is established by the relative statuses of the men.

A further point to notice in comparing sections i and ii of diagram 2B is that a man recognizes more persons laterally as connected to his family of origin than a woman does, and that, correspondingly, a woman recognizes more persons in her husband's family by specific terms than her spouse does in hers. This only illustrates where the respective interests of a man and a woman lie, the former's being centred on his own family, the latter's being centred more on the family into which she marries. Thus the term 'yeī,' used in talking to and describing the wives of men who have married brothers, has no male counterpart, and a woman's recognition of her brother's circle does not extend further than his wife. Alberts takes these asymmetrical terminoligical usages to mean that a woman 'belongs' to the family into which she marries more than a man 'belongs'

to the family into which he marries,[1] but while this may be true with respect to daily and social associations, a woman in Husaynabad does not'belong' to the family into which she marries in any significant sense in the kinship sphere.

The relationship expected between the persons to whom these affinal terms extend is to some extent ambiguous. The deference which a term may imply is often, in village relationships, replaced by acrimony and quarrelling. Some of the fiercest abuse used in villages may be heard between women who should address each other as bājī. The use of deferential terms is clearly a recognition of the difficulties of the in-law relationships, and an attempt to avoid the open hostility which they may bring. Thus the use of bājī should mitigate the conflicting feelings of a woman to her brother's wife, whom she should welcome but who will also be someone to whom it is a chance to be superior and who, in her turn, will resent the superiority assumed by someone who is only a woman, and only her husband's sister, and to whose family in any case she feels a loyalty conflicting with her abiding love for her own natal family.

The use of personal names needs some mention, particularly usage in marriage. A young couple, especially today and particularly if they are related to each other, will call each other by their personal names. Nevertheless

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.536. My quotation marks.

it is not uncommon to hear a man address his wife by her father's name, particularly if she is not his first wife. After the birth of their first child he will address her by its name, and in fact may never use her personal name to her face, at all. Other people call a young wife by her husband's name; it is not until she has gained some seniority that juniors will address her by her own name. A very young girl may be referred to as "so-and-so's bride", and the name given may well be that of her father-in-law, not her husband, especially if the marriage is recent and the households still unseparated.

Men, even youths, are always called by their own proper names. The use of reference names for women clearly indicates their social positions: as social persons they are dependents, and are described not as themselves but as adjuncts of the men to whom they are attached, by birth or marriage.

In former times men had only a name and a patronymic. Since the government introduced surnames everyone has one, but it is no guide to lineage structure. The long name given by men to sundry officials who pass through the village has little to do with the name by which they are known and addressed within it. Women seem little concerned with surnames, displaying little knowledge or interest of them even within their own families.

Those of his relatives with whom the individual reacts can be divided into several groups or circles. There is the nuclear family, which in adult life is extended to those whom its members marry. Another circle

is formed by the more distant relatives, whom the villagers call qōm-khwīsh. A third circle is that defined by the limits of the mahram relationship, and its variations. These circles will overlap in terms of membership, but for descriptive purposes it is convenient to discuss them separately.

3. The structure of the nuclear family.

Before relationships within the family are examined in detail, it will be useful to summarize the family structure. Most households consisted of a nuclear family, with whom a near relative might also live, usually a younger sibling or an elderly parent of the father. Occasionally the family extended over three generations, with the parents, their unmarried children, married sons and grandchildren all sharing one household. Variations on this basic pattern inevitably occurred. Marriage occurred in two stages: the actual ceremony, after which the young couple continued to occupy their natal homes for a time; and the subsequent removal, when the bride was taken to her husband's parents' home. The young couple lived with the husband's parents for a further few years. In most cases the junior pair eventually separated themselves from the parental household and established themselves elsewhere with their children as a new nuclear family. In a minority of cases this separation never occurred. In some families all the married children established separate households until the senior couple

were left on their own. In others the youngest son would not separate his household after his marriage. After the death of one senior parent the other would usually live with a younger son.

Husband-wife

Husband and wife have different spheres of work, and do not always spend their leisure time together. A wife has very little control over her affairs. Her sole responsibilities are the care of the household and the children, and the practice of her own crafts, and she leaves all else to her husband. He makes most of the decisions necessary in a family and does most of the executive work as well: it is he who controls the money, makes nearly all purchases, including that of routine household items like food and clothing, and decides more general matters of style of living, dress and possible schooling of the children. The husband therefore takes over many of those responsibilities which in other societies are allocated to the women.

Nevertheless, the villagers recognize that in a good marriage the relationship between the married pair can be friendly and even familiar. Sexual adjustment, harmonious living, are things without which the household is a difficult one. A husband is held to be unreasonable if he complains when things are not perfect. A man will order his wife around, and expect her to be subservient to him, and if all women were completely subservient there would never be a difficult marriage. However the marriage relationship is also expected to allow the woman some

expression of her personality. Although the ideal wife is quiet and reticent, does not ask for food and clothing but waits to be given them, and although such wives exist and are highly-praised by all, yet many a man likes his more resilient wife, who may well give him a cheerful and cheeky answer.

Despite the intimacy of many a marriage, the couple are divided in social situations. A woman's close contact with her husband's family is made only with the one person; with her own family there are many kin, many relationships, she can use and contact. Thus, outside household affairs, a woman's greater pull is towards her own family rather than that of her husband. In his family there are people to be avoided, in her own she is welcomed. Thus, at social occasions, when she is separated from her husband, she will gravitate to her own family in the room where the women are sitting. The most usual long journey undertaken by villagers, the holiday-pilgrimage to Mashhad, was frequently made by husbands and wives travelling separately. The villagers explained this by saying that one of the pair had to stay behind to look after the children but sometimes a couple separated who had not these responsibilities.

Such separations show that a woman is not completely subservient to her husband, although a wife will not undertake such a journey without his permission. But, in general, through her deference to him, her own potential status as an adult member of the society is considerably reduced. If to be adult means to have certain important

spheres of responsibility allocated to one's control, then it would be true to say that in Ḥusaynābād and the villages like it the men are the only true adults. The only exception is always obvious: an occasional woman of senior years and good family, perhaps with some education, but above all, of considerable intelligence and force of personality. Men will seek advice from such a woman and listen to her opinions with respect.

Father-son

Schneider has observed that in a patrilineal descent system a man will be linked to his father by agnation as well as filiation.[1] This is well-illustrated in the relationship of father to son in Ḥusaynābād. If, by filiation, the son was a member of the elementary family of which the father was head, agnation made him a part of his father's descent group, and it was this relationship which tended to dominate their feelings to one another.

Fathers are very indulgent to their little sons, especially in landlord families. In the villages this is less obvious, but peasant fathers take great interest in the progress of a son from the time he is about a year and a half old. A little son is taken to the baths by his father, and to the mens' room on hospitable occasions, where he is talked to and petted by all present.

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1. Schneider, D.M. 1967. Descent and Filiation as Cultural Constructs. Southwestern Journal of Anthropology, vol.23, no.1, p.72.

But all the time the father is teaching the son correct deportment and behaviour, and as the boy gets older the ease departs from the relationship. The father has to teach the son to work: he will shout at him in a rage and hit him when things are unsatisfactory. Gradually, the son learns a new code of behaviour towards his father: to sit quietly in his presence, not to speak unless addressed, to show him respect and deference.

A son owes his father respect on several counts: as his begetter, as the head of the family, responsible for providing for him in childhood; as a man, as an older person, and as the giver of the bride-price for his wife. The son, on his part, is expected to show himself to be worthy of his father's concern, and a man in the Husaynabad sense; dignified, yet deferential, hard-working, aloof from quarrels yet supportive if necessary. It is from shame at his approaching manhood, and to avoid the implication that this might be seen as an attempt to diminish his father's unique position, that a young man shows his father ehterān. This term loosely means 'respect', but implies a self-effacement which, in the nature of things, as the son matures and the father declines, is a negation of the inevitable. A son will necessarily come to assume many of the roles his father enjoys: as a wage-earner, husband and head of a household. Thus the nearer a son comes to these responsibilities the more he increases his respectful deference to his father, to avoid any suspicion that he might be trying to rival him. Marriage heightens the ambiguity of the

father-son relationship; the two are ill at ease in discussing the matter. The son is anxious to avoid any seeming lack of respect (which of course is implied by his wish to assert his maturity), and yet if he has made a choice of a particular girl, he will wish to have his father on his side to negotiate for her. It is through ehteran as well as economic necessity that a son acquiesces in the choice made.

But perhaps the most difficult period of adjustment in the relationship is made when the bride is brought to her new home. Out of respect to his father the young man shows no affection towards his bride in his father's presence, indeed he shows hardly any recognition of her existence. During the day her work is under his mother's supervision; in the joint household his only contact with her is when they retire. The constraint that the young man feels is such that an observer, not knowing the true relationship, might suspect the young couple of being brother and sister, and a brother and sister who had quarrelled, at that. However, this avoidance does not mean that affection is absent.

This respect continues through marriage, and the household separation is less to permit the young man to assert himself than to separate the two women. Since the Husaynabad men have no real property to hand on to their sons there is no conflict over the son's ability to take his economic affairs into his own hands. An interesting comparison can be made with Campbell's description of a community of Greek mountain shepherds in this respect.

There, once the son takes charge of the family, his attitude to his elderly father will, behind his back, become patronizing and jocular.[1] In Ḥusaynābād, on the other hand, deference continues even when the son is head of his own family. Whereas among the Greek shepherds it would seem unmanly not to joke at the older man's expense, in Ḥusaynābād it would seem extremely unmanly to do so.

This continued deference needs some explanation, which in the absence of property is not economic. It has more to do with the lack of true descent groups among the Greek shepherds, and the presence of descent groups in Iranian village life. It has in it some of the elements of pietas as outlined by Fortes for the Tallensi. The most important acts of respect which a son pays to his father are those which place him among the ancestors, to whom respect is always necessary.[2] In Ḥusaynābād the link with ritual is not so direct, since it is not the ancestors who are worshipped, but God. Yet, in the beliefs of Ḥusaynābādis, God can only be reached by males, and the ties of the agnatic group are reinforced by their co-religion. The economic ties which to some

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1. Campbell, J.K. 1964. Honour, Family and Patronage. Oxford: Clarendon Press, p.163.

2. Fortes, M. 1961. Pietas in Ancestor Worship. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol.91, part 2, p.184.

extent are the basis of ehterān are those between each father and son, acquired by filiation, and may diminish in time. But to respect the father as a male, through whom God is reached, is a religious duty imposed by the religious merit thus gained. The father in a religious sense is a member of his agnatic group, it is the religious position of the male which a son receives through agnation (and in a society without property he receives little else). The agnatic group is continuous, there being a concept of male succeeding male in each generation to form an unbroken chain, in which the son takes his place. So his ehterān, part of his religious duties, is likewise continuous.

Father-daughter.

A father will play with his baby daughter, and show a general interest in her, particularly if she is his first child. But by the time the girl is five or six years old she is learning the deferential attitude expected of children to their parents, and in particular she is learning the withdrawn behaviour expected of a young girl. The proper behaviour of a young girl towards her seniors and menfolk is described as shyness; in other words, all contacts should be avoided, and those which do occur ended as soon as possible. The first person to whom a girl learns this avoidance is her father. By the time a girl is marriageable there is little actual intimacy in her father's behaviour towards her, despite the fact that the relationship is mahram. (see later). Her father will order her to do household tasks, although

these usually fall under her mother's jurisdiction, but, as a villager put it, he will not ask her in a friendly fashion what she has been doing during the day, as he might ask a young son. Once she is married the social distance between them increases even further. When she returns for a visit she will, in the presence of her father, give the breast to her baby only underneath her chādur, that is, in secrecy and inconvenience, out of respect for him.

Nevertheless, this lack of contact with his daughter does not preclude a father's genuine concern for her well-being. Although he will not discuss marriage-arrangements with her openly, he will refuse a prospective son-in-law if he does not think he will make her a good husband, and he is also anxious that his daughter will find him agreeable. Once married, if she is poor, and needs help from her own family, she will obtain it from her father. (She will not speak to him directly, both the request and the donation being made through the mother, but the true source is understood by all). The gift is usually something practical, such as a pair of shoes, rather than a sum of money, and it is understood that it is an occasional matter, not regular support. In this way a father will be able to extend help to a daughter who needs it and, if the disparity between them is very great, this support may become a regular contribution.

Although the reserve between a father and son, and between father and daughter, may have some similar

features, yet the basic concepts from which they arise are different. In the case of the former relationship the reserve is founded on the wish of the junior, subordinate person not to appear to be wishing to aspire to the status of the senior person. (Such humility can be seen in other situations in Iranian society, when the gap between the persons concerned may be one of rank or wealth rather than age). The father-daughter relationship is not based on reserve between generations. For although the generation gap is obviously present, the relationship is dominated by the greater reserve expected between the sexes. The reserve is also based on the recognition that the father has sexual access to the mother, and equality between father and daughter would be implied if the girl made apparent her awareness of this, and her general awareness of her father as a man. The father has potential sexual feelings towards any woman, and the unmarried girl has a latent sexuality which is potentially disturbing and as yet unallocated. Once the girl is married the power of her sexuality is removed from the household, and hence there can be a greater recognition of her needs by her father. He is her ultimate source of aid, and support for her point of view and her rights, if her marriage should falter.

Mother-son

In discussing the father-child relationships in the nuclear family it has been necessary to stress the qualities of avoidance therein. By contrast, the relationship between a son and his mother is one of real

association. It is one of the pivotal points of family life, and the relationship by which the family becomes three-generational in permanent residence. Ideally, the son acknowledges the debt he owes his mother for her care of him by remaining in her house to support her in her old age, and by bringing her a daughter-in-law who will work for her and whose position will confirm her own senior status. The relationship of a son to his mother is friendly, with some showing of respect. This attitude is to some extent typical of the general behaviour which a growing boy is expected to assume to his elders, an attitude both courteous and slightly reserved. He does not display the great affection shown by sisters to their mother, on the other hand his lack of demonstrativeness is more highly praised by the villagers.

This different code of expected behaviour makes his position in the joint family tolerable. He holds himself aloof from the tensions in the relationship between his wife and his mother, which quarrels are a woman's business, not his. He makes it obvious that when the households separate it is because of his wife's increasing maturity, not because of any change in his loyalty and affection to his mother. Indeed, if he takes part in the quarrels between the two women it will always be his mother's; he will threaten his wife in public with divorce, which is not so much a statement of intent but a declaration of where his loyalties lie, and where his wife's must too if the marriage is to continue.

The strength of the mother-son bond comes in the

woman's later years, when she is probably widowed. She will not be able to go and live with her daughter: the former easy relationship with her son-in-law, especially apparent before the bride goes to live with him, has long since worsened under the stress of the transfer of the girl's loyalties to her new family once she has been removed there. If a mother does take residence with her daughter, her son-in-law will resent the time his wife takes from his care to look after her, and her position will be inferior. She will be expected to take over the role of a daughter, doing housework and serving the male members of the family. In her own son's household her role becomes more male, because she comes from the man's side. Her daughter-in-law must defer to her, her son shows her respect, she sits in the upper part of the home and her grandchildren run errands for her. A widow with adult sons will inevitably go and live permanently with one of them, dominating the female side of the household. She will have to wait until she is invited, but one of her sons will invariably make it his duty to invite her to share his home. If one son is still unmarried at the time of her husband's death the three-generation family is established when he brings his bride home, on the understanding that separation will not take place. Otherwise the mother does not take residence with any particular son, although it will usually be the youngest one, because the relationship with him will have been more indulgent and because the daughter-in-law will be more easily controlled.

The villagers acknowledged the security and status of a woman with sons and, by contrast, the difficult position of an elderly woman without one. No female, of any age, lived by herself, both for reasons of propriety and also because it was felt that a woman was incapable of making her own social arrangements. After a lifetime of having their decisions made for them most women probably did need some sort of protector, and a woman without a son to turn to was forced to rely on the charitable impulse of kinsfolk or neighbours to give her a home, which she would have to acknowledge by suitably subservient behaviour.

Mother-daughter

The mother is the person responsible for the upbringing of the daughter, for instructing her in household skills and in the modest, withdrawn behaviour expected of her. A young girl, through ignorance and lack of character, is considered incapable of guarding her own chastity, so the preservation of her daughter's virginity and reputation is probably the mother's most important responsibility. In daily life this means that the mother watches carefully where her daughter goes in the village, to whom she speaks and where she sleeps. In recognition of this care, the girl's young husband first has access to his bride through the mother.

The deference that might exist between persons of different generations, in this relationship, is eased by the mutual identification of all women. In addition, the mother has no great status to which the daughter can

aspire, and few people with whom she can be friendly. Thus a girl and her mother can become close friends to each other, joking together and approaching equal terms in a way impossible in the father-son relationship. A mother will not hide from her daughter the fact that she has had to go to the baths after intercourse with the father, the avoidance of father and daughter doing away with the embarrassment that the situation would otherwise have.

Thus the villagers describe her mother as a daughter's best friend. She may not be as able a selector of a son-in-law as her husband, but she will be more zealous for a marriage to be arranged because of the greater prestige which a married daughter will give her. Not only is the relationship between the young couple eased by her presence, but she is also openly partisan in her daughter's favour. A mother rushing to her daughter's new home, sobbing bitterly and shouting accusations about her daughter being ill-treated is not an uncommon sight in village life.

Such a strong sense of identification, although making for accord between mother and daughter before the latter's marriage, becomes the seeds of discord in the new home, when a young husband will complain that his mother-in-law is making his bride dissatisfied with her new situation. Greater harmony may be preserved, and adjustments made more easily by all concerned, if, at marriage, the bride is removed some distance from her natal home.

Brother-brother.

The relationship between brothers has two conflicting components, in descent activities they are identified with each other, but the facts of family life tend to make for dissension between them. In general, in Bakshahr, where descent structure is more marked, brothers might appear to interract and co-operate more than in the villages. However there are ambiguities in both situations, and the relationships between brothers varies considerably from one family to another, and in each family through time.

The link between brothers in the descent field is not just one between members of the same sex, but one of male descendants of a male ancestor. Thus brothers are identified with each other because they are men and siblings. This identification is expressed not so much by the brothers themselves as by outsiders to their group, even their father playing down the differences between them and emphasizing their similarities of outlook and intentions. To some extent brothers act out this identification between them, in part as fulfilment of social norms and in part because of a genuine feeling of identity between them. Brothers support each other in quarrels, and intermix socially. Some peasant brothers are also work-partners, thus spending the greater part of their waking hours together in co-operation. As work-partners live in the same qal'eh such co-operation inevitably extended to leisure hours as well, so that in these instances the fraternal link was the central relationship of each life. Among landlord families the

equal division of property under Islamic law emphasized their likeness, since they might reside as neighbours, and economic co-operation in the management of qanāts was necessary for economic survival. In general, the identity believed to exist between brothers has some results in the conduct of the relationship; brothers can be counted on for moral and physical aid in crises and outright repudiation between brothers at all levels of interraction is unknown.

In family life, in daily matters, brothers do not always co-operate with each other to the extent conceptualised in the ideal relationship. Brothers invariably differ in temperament from each other, each having separate capabilities and sensitivities, each knowing that he is a unique person. The mutual identification expressed by others may irk considerably, since, in practice, they may lead quite separate lives. It is not easy for peasant brothers to work together as partners, because the senior brother wishes the other to obey him, and perhaps to do the hardest work, and the younger rebels against this; and the rivalry between them mitigates against co-operation. It might also be that the precarious nature of status in Iranian society, seen as something which must be constantly re-inforced and upheld, also prevents co-operation with one who is too close to make an entirely favourable assessment.

In property-owning families this rivalry between brothers comes into the open in the form of frequent monetary disputes. Murphy and Kasdan point out that under

the Quranic system of inheritance the interests of brothers, as opposed to the interests of sons and fathers, are not necessarily convergent.[1] Landlord brothers refuse to co-operate with each other when it would be to their advantage to do so; to them, the division of property indicates that they are each to work out their own economic affairs. The dissension between them is perhaps emphasized by the identification which is supposed to exist and their economic independence, even where economically disastrous, perhaps no more than an over-assertion of their individuality.

Thus in the sphere of family life, particularly as they establish their separate lives, the ties between brothers tend to fracture. But the ties they retain in the descent field tend to mitigate this friction, at worst, preventing a complete break, and at best, uniting them as working partners, thus bringing co-operation back into the family circle.

Sister-sister.

Inherently, sisters are very close to each other, confiding in each other and taking a great interest in each other's children, but, once they are married, and probably each removed to a separate village, the bond will be lessened because of the decreased opportunities

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1. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959. The Structure of Parallel Cousin Marriage. American Anthropologist, vol.61, part 1, p.21.

to see each other. A woman will feel herself drawn to her family of origin, and, if visiting anywhere, will go there.

The exception occurs when two sisters marry into the same family or neighbourhood group, when they will of course continue to see a great deal of each other. If they are friends they will take turns in child-minding, domestic tasks and the like; but this co-operation occurs more because of the bond formed by their respective marriages and the co-operative opportunities these provide, than because of their initial sisterhood. The wives of brothers, not necessarily themselves related, form a similar association. Two sisters who are married to two brothers, or have a close relationship of this type, will spend a great deal of time together, indeed as far as commensality is concerned the two households will not be entirely separated. However two sisters who have married within the same neighbourhood only, although close, will be less intimate.

Brother-sister.

Among the children of the family, the bond between siblings of opposite sex is recognized as being the most affectionate and enduring. From the man's point of view his brothers are more interested in their own families, their own lives and livelihoods, than in him. But his sister, unable to establish a separate status of her own in the same way, possibly living in a place strange to her, with only her husband with whom she can feel close, thinks longingly of her home and of her brothers. She

worries about their welfare, and visits them frequently. It is observeable that she does this from a greater distance, and more frequently, than brothers visit each other.

A brother recognizes the value of his sister's interest in him. Her presence in a distant community means that he can go and stay there, and her interest extends, if possible, to a series of small gifts to his children. Nevertheless, what she can give him without seeming to steal from her husband's family is limited: a dress for his daughter is permissible but wheat, which would have come from her husband's store, is not. A sister will come from some distance to a brother's side at times of crises or celebration, and help vigorously with the necessary work.

A brother is indebted for all this. A man speaks with gratitude of his sister's devotion to him and, although not wishing for daughters, he may occasionally express the wish that he had a sister. He recognizes his obligations by reciprocation: if means permit, he will give her small presents from time to time, and if he has a celebration in his family he is expected to invite his sister and to give her some of the food. A frequent form of recognition of her interest is that a man will take his sister with him when he goes to Mashhad,often bearing most of her expenses, and this is regarded as a praiseworthy effort. To the woman, the interest of her brothers is an invaluable safeguard against ill-treatment by her husband and his family. A woman with brothers is

very unlikely to be ill-treated, or, if ill-treatment occurs, to suffer it without redress. Part of a brother's duties may be to provide the money for an unhappy sister's divorce.

Step-parents and children.

Second marriages, particularly those of the widowed, bring into the household the additional complication of a step-parent. The relationship of a child to a step-parent of either sex is recognized to be a difficult one, and few households with such relationships are harmonious.

A woman, even if she has been married in order to be a mother to bereft children, will not care for them as well as she does her own offspring. The villagers said it was inevitable that her feelings for them will not be so strong, that she will fail to clean and feed them properly, and that she will hit them unnecessarily. It is felt to be natural that a step-father tends to resent the presence of his wife's son, especially when she goes on to bear him sons of his own, and his step-daughter runs the risk of sexual assault from him.

This difficulty in the step-parent relationship seems to arise mainly over the allocation of resources, scarce in this society. A step-father complains that his second wife steals his goods to give them to her own children; the step-mother complains that her husband's children are taking her personal goods and forcing her to starve. Both sides complain of disobedience.

The animosity between step-parent and step-child does not necessarily exist in the relationship between the

half-brothers and sister. It is usually difficult to tell, in a family group, who are the full siblings and who are not. Marriage arrangements and gifts, being partly a matter of prestige, are the same for full and half siblings when the time comes. Although divided internally, the family attempts to present a united front to the world. Nevertheless, differences exist, and are apparent in village life. Thus a step-son may well leave his parents' house even before his marriage, living alone for a time (which a full son will never do), and if he is still living at home when he marries he will separate his household very soon thereafter. The hostility of future step-children may be sufficient to prevent a second marriage from taking place, and may lead to its dissolution if it occurs.

A high level of second marriages in the village, and the consequent frequent occurrence of households with step-parents, seldom produced an amicable solution to this problem.

Differences between men and women.

During this account of village life it will have become obvious that women were treated and assessed quite differently from men. Within the family sons were preferred to daughters because of their potential economic contribution to a household. Women, on the other hand, were held to incur only obligations, and not to bring in any money. This was to some extent idealized, since many women earned a little money by baking or weaving, and was perhaps more a statement about the lower status of women

and their lower achievement potential.

Baer has given a good description of the inferior status of women in Islamic society, and has shown that many of the duties and obligations which underlie their inferiority do not necessarily derive from the Islamic religion itself.[1] In Husaynabad the different status of the sexes stems from certain beliefs in this peasant society as to their different natures. These differences are expressed in religious terms, and with religious justifications. Briefly, it is believed that men alone come from God, their prayers are directly relevant to him. Women do not have a direct association with God, their prayers are not means of contacting him but methods of keeping themselves free from impurity, and of removing it when acquired. Men are pure, because they come from God, women are not, because they do not come from God. Men can retain their godly nature by purification when necessary and by prayer, women can never be godly in the first place. Men are not themselves impure, but are defiled by women when they come into contact with them. Women are basically impure, because of their menstrual blood, and it is this that contaminates the men. A man's purity is endemic, a woman has to struggle for it and, even when pure, cannot hope to participate in the Divine Nature to the same extent as men do. A man's godly purity is expressed in his superiority and is used to justify it,

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1. Baer, G. 1964, op.cit., p.34. et seq.

and because of it he has powers of command and responsibility. This is how the villagers see it; from the outside point of view the greater godliness of men is the justification used for their superior social position.

A man's personality is said to have two sides, a human half, and a half of divine origin. Women are described as having three dispositions, or aspects of their personality. They are a third part donkey, that is, quarrelsome, but with some good in them; a third part dog, that is, always yapping; and a third part human in type, and that is their agreeable aspect. Divine origins as such are absent. A man is God's servant, but a woman is created by God for His use.

This conceptualisation of personality does not mean that a woman's nature is actually derived from that of a dog, or a donkey. It expresses the belief that the human personality is all goodness; agreeable, intelligent, and non-quarrelsome. Therefore the disagreeable aspects cannot be human, but are identical in nature to a dog's or donkey's personality. This association in basic natures between superficially quite different objects is common in simple societies, and has been well documented. Mention can be made of Lévy-Bruhl's concept of collective representations,[1] of the Nuer association between birds

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1. Levy-Bruhl, L. 1926. How Natives Think (trans. L.A. Clare). London: Allen & Unwin, p.126.

and twins[1] and Firth's comments thereon,[2] and also the contrast made by Greek mountain shepherds between sheep, which are pure and docile, and goats, which are like women, greedy, cunning and sensual and threatening the honour of men.[3]

Because of this basic belief in their inferiority, the women of Ḥusaynābād and the surrounding villages led very restricted lives. From earliest childhood they were taught that their most important characteristic should be shyness. The ideal village woman was retiring, ignorant, and without responsibilities. Women had the status of a girl at the time of marriage, but no more than that; their subsequent duties and responsibilities were restricted to the capabilities of a girl at that age. Conversation also revealed the difference in mental attitudes between the sexes. Most of the men had a variety of external interests, and a concern for political questions. Women, on the other hand, asked few questions on any subject and showed no knowledge of, or interest in, any matters other than domestic.

It must be a difficult life for the women, even those who were reared to it. The temper-tantrums, the

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1. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1956. Nuer Religion. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp.128-31.

2. Firth, A. 1966. Twins, Birds and Vegetables. MAN (N.S.), vol.1, no.1, pp.1-17.

3. Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., pp.26 and 31.

petty but vindictive quarrelling for which village women were notorious are perhaps indicative of the tensions that exist in the life of a mature and sensible woman who is treated like a child. It was noticeable that the quarrelling women were frequently the more intelligent, and the taking of opium, which in excess was found more among those of higher intelligence, was perhaps used as a more extreme form of release from the situation.

An interesting correlation of these observances of female personality deficiencies comes from a social survey of four selected villages in Fars, Iran.[1] This contains a relevant section on neuropsychiatric epidemiology.[2] An Arithmetic and a Black Design test was given to subjects of both sexes. Although literates of both sexes scored above illiterates, yet the scores of the female subjects remained below those of the males on both tests. In particular, the Black Design test was practically worthless when given to females. The tester reported that:

> "Very many of the women and girls displayed embarrassment, dazedness, confusion and emotional stupor in the test situation".[3]

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1. Petrosian, A., Shayan, K., Bash, K.W. & Jessup,B. 1964. The Health and Related Characteristics of 4 Selected Villages and Tribal Communities in Fars Ostan, Iran. Fars Public Health Department and Medical School. This publication has a short but useful bibliography of relevant conditions on health, sanitation, etc. in rural villages.

2. Organized by the Marvdash Rural Health Survey.

3. Ibid., p.79.

This low score was not due to illiteracy per se, because female illiterates scored lower than males. The testers felt it was not due either to a real difference in intelligence. They suggested that it occurred because:

> "Their (the female subjects) habits, customs and traditional manner of life... prompt them to shrink back from rather than to cope with suddenly presented new problems outside their everyday experience".[1]

and conclude:

> "We should also mention several cases of clinically verified neurosis and psychomatic disorder in women that were clearly due to denial of opportunity to exercise superior ability".[2]

These quotations could apply very well to the greater part of female behaviour in Husaynabad.

4. The life-cycle of the individual

Marriage is treated extensively elsewhere but other important occasions in the individual's life-cycle will here be summarized.

Birth

A pregnancy is diagnosed as soon as the first menstrual period is missed, and news of this quickly

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1. Petrosian, A., et.al. 1964, op.cit., p.80.

2. Ibid., p.80

spreads among the women of Ḥusaynābād. The potential mother, although in theory avoiding certain foods, in practice carried on much as usual, especially if it was not her first child. Certain older women acted as midwives, and were paid about 25 pence for their help, but their knowledge of midwifery was limited. Nevertheless they knew enough to correct a breech presentation, and most childbirths seemed to take place without much trouble.

After the birth the placenta was buried carefully, since it was believed that if it is eaten by an animal the woman will have no more children. A woman who has previously lost some of her children, and who wishes for more, will ask for the placenta to be buried under the threshold, so that, as she continuously passes over it, children will remain in the house.

The baby is tightly swaddled, both for warmth and to encourage its limbs to grow straight, and charcoal and kohl are placed on its eyebrows and around its eyes, so that its own hairs will grow to emulate the desired black thickness. The little bundle is passed around the group of women who soon gather to congratulate the new mother, but a baby is much preferred when it is old enough to show some responsiveness. The umbilical cord is cut at birth, and when it falls off it is carefully sewn in cloth or paper and bound round the baby with the rest of its swaddling. Forty days after the birth the cord is buried, in a mousehole if the child is a girl, or in a horse's trough if a boy. These animals are chosen for

their intelligence, and the association between the places and the sexes' different spheres of work is obvious.

The first milk is believed to be bad for a baby, which is suckled by another woman for three or four days. A mother goes to the baths for ritual cleansing ten days after the birth, and the child is then also washed for the first time, if it has survived. A rice meal is then prepared for relatives and friends. The baby is taken to a sheik, or a sayyid, or even a visiting landlord if no-one else is available. He whispers its name, chosen by the parents, into its ear, and a small prayer regarding the unity of God, Muḥammad as His prophet and 'Alī and his sons as the Prophet's successors. From then on the baby is considered as a person, having a name and being a Muslim, (and a Shī'ī Muslim as well, it should be noted). The landlord might give the parents a small sum of money if he performs this ceremony. The baby is still swaddled completely, its arms being freed after three or four months and the lower wrappings discarded when it is old enough to learn how to crawl.

Circumcision and puberty.

The next important event in the life-cycle is the circumcision carried out on boys when they are 7-10 years old. In a small village all the boys in this age-group will be circumcised together, and perhaps the group will include two or three brothers. Their parents bring in a practitioner from Bakshahr for the operations, which nowadays is performed under local anaesthetic, and the patients are usually walking around on the second day. A

considerable feast is made, the hands and feet of participants and important guests are dyed with henna, the sexes dance separately and a party atmosphere prevails. Some richer men make almost as much show on these occasions as at a wedding, with hired entertainers and musicians. Even the poorest families have some small festivity, since it is felt that the ceremony must be witnessed. It confirms the boy in his religious status as a Muslim, which brings with it further social prestige.

A girl's first menstruation is celebrated more quietly. She is given sweet, special food by her mother or mother-in-law, depending on whose house she is living in. She is secluded for the first few days, but only her close family and neighbours may be aware of what is going on. When the flow has ceased she will be taken to the baths, and shown the correct cleansing ritual for such occasions, after which she will be expected to manage the subsequent occasions herself. Although discreet, the event is greeted with pleasure, particularly if she is already married, since it indicates the onset of her fertility.

Death.

The degree of ceremony which attends a death depends upon the age and status of the deceased, being at a maximum for an older person, particularly a man, and at a minimum for a young child. However, some ceremony attends the death of even a young baby, provided that it has already been named. There is no sense that the passing away of a young life is a casual affair.

When a person dies the villagers hasten to comfort the

bereaved. Two rooms are made available, one for each sex, and in a small village everyone will come to pay his respects to the dead and to console the living. Relatives will also come and especially noticeable are those not seen near the house in normal circumstances, and some, particularly women, will travel considerable distances. The aim is to keep at least two or three people continually with the bereaved. There is no sense of reticence, men and women are expected to weep openly for their loved ones, and in the women's room in particular scenes of near-hysteria may take place.[1] If a father has died sons and other close agnates tear their clothes. Other people prepare and pass round light refreshments in the mourning-rooms, and do the necessary domestic chores for the afflicted family.

These visits continue for one to four days, depending on the status of the deceased. Meanwhile the body is prepared and is buried as quickly as possible. The grave is dug and an older person of the same sex as the deceased, but from outside the family, strips the body, washes it and wraps it in white cloth. A sum of about 25 pence is paid to the grave-digger and washer, accusations of stinginess being levelled at families who perform these offices amongst themselves. All the dead person's clothes are washed, since they have become contaminated, but afterwards those which are in good condition may be given to the grave-digger in part-payment or sold. They are not worn by the deceased's family. The clothes which the

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1. C.f. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1965, op.cit., pp.142-50.

deceased was wearing at the time of death are torn off and buried outside the village, they are not used again. As soon as it is ready the body is taken to the graveyard just outside the village by the men, all the men of the village and male visitors accompanying it. After the burial those who have handled the body change their clothes and go to the baths for purification.

Visits to the mourners may continue after the burial, a formal meal served after a few days being the signal for dispersion and the resumption of normal life. The male relatives sew up their clothes again, and both sexes continue further mourning for a period of forty days. During this time they can buy and sell things, and continue their daily occupations, but they may not use henna or go to the baths, and the first visit, at the end of the mourning time, is paid at night. After some time a small stone is raised over the grave, except in the case of a young child.

Fuller[1] has commented on the division of the village world into houses, the province of the women, and fields and desert, the province of the men. This description can be applied to Husaynabad. In the death ceremonies described above it is interesting that the body of the deceased is carried from the village which is the centre of life and the world of women who give life, into the world of men, the area of work which is also the place of

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1. Fuller, Ann. 1961, op.cit., pp.17-19.

death and spiritual existence. It is the men who take the body out of the world of physical life into their own world. But the graves are placed at the boundary of the houses, neither in the world of women nor in that of men.

5. The Developmental cycle of the family.

A new family has its origins in that of the previous generation, from which it is not suddenly created but from which it gradually emerges. A new family begins when a bride is selected for a maturing son. The formation of a new couple is itself gradual, and two years may lapse between the marriage ceremony and the union of the new pair under one roof; an even longer period may elapse before they have a separate household. During this period the goods or wages which the young husband earns by farming or other employment are handed over to his father to be part of the total economic resources of the joint family, and his wife similarly works for all its members. Children may be born while the household is still a joint one.

The long submergence of the new family within the old is caused by a number of factors. One of these is economic, for at the time of marriage the young man may not have reached his full earning potential, and his bride will probably be unable to carry out all a housewife's duties. However, since some families do separate at this stage, the joint family fulfils other than economic needs. It enables the older members to adjust gradually to those

Village crafts



Spinning. The woman is wearing tribal dress



Building: Using local materials



Baking bread: a near - daily task

changes in their relationships to the young family, made necessary by its creation. It also allows the young pair time to adjust to each other, being a testing period for the marriage-bond itself before it is made the foundation of a new household. For the couple may quarrel, and with her increasing maturity the girl may come to dislike her husband. Most marriages which end do so at this stage.

Nevertheless, the new household can be seen approaching independence within the old, by the contributions of the young man and his bride's work. If the marriage survives the stage of being part of the joint family, then most couples split sooner or later from the father's household. Family circumstances and relationships will produce variation between families in the lapse of time before separation occurs, but it cannot take place unless it is economically feasible. The separation does not mark the point at which the new family begins, rather does it indicate the culmination of maturation to the point where financial independence is possible. Even so, separation may be delayed, and a couple who are capable of financial independence may stay within the joint family, separating only if and when acrimonious social relationships make this necessary. Thus separation can also indicate the culmination of a process of emotional changes in the family. Shortly before or after the final separation the young man usually changes his job, partly to separate himself still further from his father's family, partly to indicate that his new status is not consistent with his position of filial dependence.

The new family is now firmly established at its most closely-knit stage. The value of the young man's produce is relatively high compared with the needs of the family, and this is the first stage at which household goods may be acquired. Any radical change in mode of livelihood, such as a new type of occupation or a long-distance separation from the rest of the family, takes place now. The young man is typically full of schemes and plans for self-improvement.

The realisation of plans and the continuance of mobility is checked and finally halted by the financial burden of the ever-increasing number of children. From being at a point of comparative affluence the couple sink to what is probably the second-lowest period of their life: the stage when the husband's earnings have usually remained the same, but household expenses have greatly increased. A village couple at this stage can often be seen to be miserably poor, their clothes ragged and dirty, their minimal household goods worn out or sold for extra money; they are heavily in debt to the village store-keeper. Sickness of children, with the attendant expense for treatment, may be a further worry. It is at this stage that occasional presents from other members of the family are received with much gratitude; however small, in such poor resources they make a noticeable contribution.

At this stage too the advantages of sons are seen. Very soon they can add their labours to their father's, thus bringing in more produce, and what they contribute can ease the situation. As soon as a daughter reaches the

age of ten, or even younger, she will be asked in marriage, and the ceremony will soon be performed. Some money will be received, and the proportion of it retained will help family finances considerably. Nevertheless the son's steady contribution is still regarded as being more valuable than the girl's, whose removal will eventually incur much expense. The financial contribution of each may not differ much, but the son is regarded as one who will stay with the household, steadily contributing to, and eventually continuing it. Thus in either sense he is of more value than a daughter, which mitigates the smaller amount of actual money he brings in at this stage.

Although the value of a daughter's labour will mainly benefit her husband's family, as she grows up she can help her mother in the household tasks. If it is possible for the mother to earn a little by weaving or some such task she can do so now. Daughters' marriages will not be expected to impoverish a family already poor, and the bride-price for the daughters-in-law will be paid at a later stage, and in small instalments.

When most of the children are adult a new period of ease comes to the family, heightened when the young man brings his new bride home: the climax of family maturity. The woman's status is enhanced, her work minimised and there are two wages or share-crops to support the family, which now consists mostly of producing adults rather than dependent children. If the man has been able to make any progress financially, it becomes apparent at this stage. The family may move to a better house, and may purchase

carpets and other goods. Since the joint family is the ideal type in this society, such a family enjoys considerable social prestige, as long as its material advantages continue. Even if the man has remained as a labourer, the financial burdens will be lessened.

When the last son and his bride remove themselves from the household, some period of decline inevitably sets in. Although one son usually does remain with the ageing parents, an old couple may sometimes live on as a lone pair. Since the man is unable to work as a dihqān, their lessened household needs will be met by chance labour, such as cutting at harvest, and perhaps simple craft work. Not until one partner dies is the family finally dissolved, and the survivor may find himself or herself quite alone for the first time in his life.

Stenning has shown how a family's economic viability can depend upon the varying structure of the family itself as well as upon environmental factors.[1] It can be seen that in Husaynabad, although the economic state of a family depends largely upon which stage of its cycle it is in, the reverse is not true: the composition of a family at any particular time is not dependent upon what is economically most advantageous. A family cannot exist

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1. Stenning, D.J. 1962. Household Viability among the Pastoral Fulani. In The Developmental Cycle in Domestic Groups (ed.) J. Goody. Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology, no.1. Cambridge University Press, pp.92-119.

independently without economic viability, although other factors may determine its structure.

This is apparent in the emergent stage of the new family. Tensions in the close relationships in the joint household may lead to the dissolution of a new marriage, for a marriage may founder on in-law rather than conjugal disharmony. The new family must be dependent while it is non-viable, thus its non-viability may lead to its dissolution before it has fully begun.

Household separation occurs at a social rather than an economic crisis, although an economic change may be made an excuse for the move. Separation may occur when it is still to the advantage of the new family to remain with the old, before the young man has reached his full earning-powers and while the bride may have to buy bread rather than make it. Such separation, though non-advantageous in economic terms, is made necessary by family tensions which are often exacerbated by poverty. A married son tends to stay with his father if the latter is wealthy, which increases the prosperity of the joint family.

The longest period in the family cycle, when the children are young, depends upon its continuance for its economic viability, the death of either partner being a tragedy. An old couple's poverty may be due to the inability of the following generation to support them. But an elderly widower is likely to live alone more because of his irascible temperament than because he is an economic liability in his son's household.

In summary, therefore, economic viability is not the only factor affecting family composition through its developmental cycle. At some stages composition depends even more upon tensions between the various members, and economic prosperity may depend upon their successful resolution.

6. The mahram relationship

In theory a woman should not be seen by any man except her husband, and should talk only with members of her own household. If strictly observed these restrictions would cause considerable difficulties in domestic life, especially in villages where members of more than one household share the same yard. A code of behaviour described as mahram has been evolved to deal with this anomaly.

Mahram means 'acceptable', allowed, its opposite, namahram meaning unacceptable, unallowed, and refers to certain acts of behaviour. A relationship is described as mahram, meaning certain items of intimate behaviour are acceptable between persons mahram to each other. It is difficult for the villagers to define a relationship exactly, but they can be quite precise in describing acts of behaviour. Consequently mahram or namahram describes such acts, but implies a definition of types of relationships. Spooner has given a brief description of mahram,[1] but the context of the relationship can vary

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1. Spooner, B.J. 1965b, op.cit., pp.26-7

much more than he implies. Alberts also has dealt with it.[1]

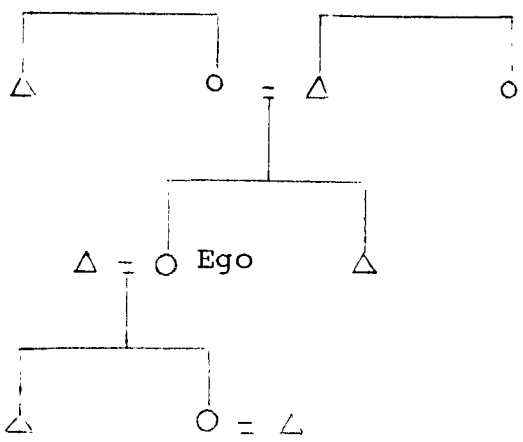
Mahram refers to intimate behaviour between members of the opposite sex. As in all societies, the sexual availability of a woman has a cluster of other acts of social behaviour round it, and perhaps these other acts are more specifically described in societies where it is strictly controlled, though not by the woman herself. What happens in the mahram relationship is that, while sexual intimacy itself remains limited to the husband, certain associated behaviour is extended to other members of the family with whom the woman is in contact. Mahram itself has degrees of application, depending upon the relationship of the woman to the man concerned.

Persons between whom the mahram relationship exists can touch each other, eat food together, and from the same dish; can travel together and can sleep in the same room, even under the same quilt. (The villagers do not undress at night, so sharing bedding is less intimate than it would be in our society). The woman does not have to wear the chādur. The conversation between them is informal and joking. A kiss can be exchanged. The mahram relationship exists, from the woman's point of view, with the males in the following diagram:-

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.677-80.

Diagram 3: The mahram relationship



Spooner gives the Quranic limits of mahram as H, F, HF, S, MB, B, BS, ZS.[1] The limits here described are those given and practised by the villagers in Husaynābād, and are expressed in a formula often repeated when discussing this subject:

"Everyone with whom marriage is possible is namahram

Everyone with whom marriage is impossible is mahram".

Thus expressed, the formula seems to cover only the relationships in the three-generation nuclear family, and would seem so obviously one of intrinsic intimacy as not to need definition. However, although all the items of mahram behaviour occur only within these limits, some of them can be used towards a woman's more distant relatives with whom marriage might still be possible, and which items can be used to which relatives are carefully differentiated.

For example, although mahram exists between a female

1. Spooner, B.J. 1965b, op.cit., p.26.

and her FB and MB, according to the formula their sons should be namahram to her. In fact, as is readily observed, the children of siblings do eat together and chatter easily to each other. They travel together, excused by their being one family after all: the point about the intimacy of travelling-companions being the helping hand, the intimacy of the journey, and the isolation from observers. But first cousins do not otherwise touch each other, sleep together or kiss. As Alberts expresses it, while they are namahram as potential spouses they are mahram in contigious situations.[1]

The children of siblings remain to some degree mahram to each other throughout life, despite their respective marriages. In village practice this means that first cousins of either sex are always welcome visitors, towards whom no particular formality is observed, although the removal of a woman to a different locality after marriage may mean that they do not meet very often. There are certain other persons to whom a woman may be mahram at some point in her life, and namahram at other times. This is when the relationship between them is established by an intermediary party on whose existence its maintenance depends.

Thus a girl's relationship with her step-father, her mother's second husband, is ambiguous in this respect,

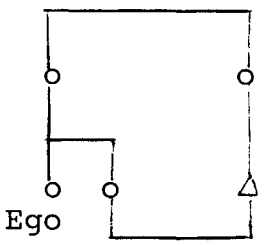
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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.677.

and only some of the behaviour described as mahram is practised between them. Before the girl's marriage they are members of the same household, so commensality between them is obvious, and co-travelling convenient. An easy relationship between them is desirable, and they can joke together, but their sleeping-places are quite separate, and once the woman is past being a little girl, no kiss is given. The relationship is tenuous, for on the mother's death her husband immediately becomes namahram to his step-daughter, even though had there been children of the second marriage, no marriage is possible between them (see marriage rules). In much the same category, from the woman's point of view, is the husband's brother. With him, the relationship is less formal than with a step-father, though not yet mahram. They can travel together, eat alone together, and sleep alone in the same room, although under separate quilts. If the husband is absent from home for some time (for example, if he is a herdsman) it is commendable that his brother share the wife's sleeping quarters if there is no suitable female relative to fill this office. It is understood that the brother is protecting the honour of the absent one, not cohabiting with his wife, and I observed this use of the mahram during fieldwork. But the two will not joke much together, the woman's behaviour being submissive rather than friendly, and any physical contact being avoided.

Endogamy further complicates the limits of mahram behaviour for close relatives of the married pair, so that two people can be mahram in one respect, and namahram in

another. It is then necessary to decide which of the ties is closer, and act according to the behaviour indicated by the closer relationship. Thus a village woman pointed out that, when the son of her khālal married her sister, (see thus:-)



he became mahram to her during her sister's lifetime. This, however, would cease on her sister's death, because marriage would then, theoretically, be possible between them. Many more examples of such ambiguity could be given.

Thus mahram can extend outside the nuclear family, and to persons who are not kinsfolk to ego. The villagers describe these extra-family ties as mahram, reserving namahram for the other men a woman will meet; neighbours, villagers and so on. Even to these, who are namahram, some of the behaviour described as mahram will be extended. In practice, a village woman (not a landlord's wife, who observes the proprieties more rigidly) will be able to have some contact with most of the men she meets. She will talk freely, without veiling, to her husband's work-partner, to tell him where he has gone, and will be delighted to offer a little hospitality to a traveller who was a neighbour in her natal home. Such a traveller will expect to be able to rest inside the house until her husband returns from the fields, and her refusal to admit

him in these circumstances is considered inhospitable, (in contrast to Bakshahr, where a visitor will wait outside the house until the husband's arrival). Nevertheless, the distinction is still made between such conversations and a mahram relationship, and a village woman would not, for example, go on a journey with such an acquaintance. It is only when a complete stranger, or a man of much higher status, enters her courtyard, that a village woman will follow the behaviour so familiar to the male foreigner: she will rise, cover herself completely with her chādur, facing the wall if outside or leaving the room if inside. But in the daily life of the village such full avoidance is rarely seen.

It can be seen that the mahram relationship does not follow such hard and fast rules as village or Quranic formula would suggest, having degrees of application. It is not co-terminous with the limits of permitted marriages, although it is linked to them. When some mahram behaviour is used to persons outside the nuclear family, it is a way of avoiding formality when this would be inappropriate. Thus the use of mahram in such circumstances is a recognition of the difficulties of the situation, for example, overcoming the conflict between modesty and hospitality. When used within the nuclear family it demonstrates that availability in marriage is co-terminous with its boundaries, and when extended to affines it shows family intimacy extended to persons with whom, in altered circumstances, marriage could be contracted but who are at present non-available. Mahram

to affines delimits persons who should not, at that time, be thinking of marriage or sexual intimacy between each other. Its partial usage in these circumstances neatly and simultaneously extends familiarity and implies marriage potentiality. The ambiguity of certain affinal relationships can thereby be brought into the open, and the tensions in the situation dispelled. The informality of mahram is itself a formalization.

The mahram relationship is extended, above all, to a woman's husband. Certain behavioural items are limited to him, the use of which to anyone else implies sexual intimacy. The most important of these is the showing by a woman of her uncovered head and arms, for she should remain covered before all other males. Such items of behaviour are means of singling out the special relationship between husband and wife in the three-generation family.

Although it has been emphasized that the distinctive feature of village life is its informality, this is only relative to the restricted behaviour of women in Bakshahr and other towns. Village women are still expected to preserve much of the separateness and reserve characteristic of Islām, even though they are in no sense in purdah. An adult woman, even in the village, is expected to take care that none of her behaviour can give rise to the least suspicion of impropriety, to avoid contact with men beyond her family circle, within the limits described above. If her husband is working, she is expected to stay within her courtyard; if he is absent for

a night, to bring another female relative into the home to sleep with her. Village women, talking unveiled to men by day, were punctilious in observing this rule at night. They were careful that they were not only chaste and correctly behaved, but seen to be so. Their informality, derided as impure by townspeople, is only a superficial relaxation of the code impressed on them when very young, and to which they will return immediately at any change in their circumstances.

CHAPTER IV: DESCENT, KINSHIP AND MARRIAGE

1. The structure of the descent groups.

Recent writers on descent systems in the Middle East have included Patai,[1] Evans-Pritchard,[2] Murphy and Kasdan,[3] Gulick,[4] Barth,[5] Peters[6] and Stirling.[7] These authors discuss for the most part societies where the genealogies go back a great number of generations. These extensive

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1. Patai, R. 1955. Cousin-Right in Middle-Eastern Marriage. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.11, No. 4, pp.371-91.

   ———— 1965. The Structure of Endogamous Unilineal Descent Groups. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.21, no.4, pp.325-50.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1949. The Sanusi of Cyrenaica. Oxford University Press.

3. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit.

   ———— 1967. Agnation and Endogamy: Some Further Considerations. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.23, no.1, pp.1-14.

4. Gulick, J. 1953, op.cit.

5. Barth, F. 1961, op.cit.

6. Peters, E.L. 1960. The Proliferation of Segments in the Lineage of the Bedouin of Cyrenaica. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol. 90, part I, pp.29-53.

7. Stirling, P. 1965, op.cit.

genealogies are found more among nomadic peoples than among sedentary groups. Among the former the genealogies fix the relative positions of those entitled to use different territories;[1] which relationship must be defined in a shifting economy, only a small part of the land belonging to a group will be used at any one time. There is, perhaps, a corollary between the minimization of the agnatic lineage and the continued utilization of all the lands which belong to it.

In the sense that clans are associated with definite areas of ground, and with a known line of descent, following rules, as to who belongs to the clan and through this membership can claim access to the clan grounds,[2] the villagers of Husaynābād did not have a clan system. In the town, more especially in previous years, there had been some links between areas of the town and the descent relations of those who lived there. Ideally, a man's sons were given a portion of their father's home on marriage, and continued their lives as his neighbour. As the generations increased, so the area associated with a particular family has sub-divided, or expanded. At the time of fieldwork, many households in Bakshahr still

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1. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1949, op.cit., p.55.

2. e.g. as among the Tallensi, C. Fortes, M. 1945. The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi. c.f. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

followed this pattern: brothers living in houses next to each other, or even in parts of what was originally the same large building, but now walled off into separate units, with more distant agnates living in the same area of the town, but further apart.[1] In this respect Bakshahr did have some of the features of a clan system.

There was an ideal in Bakshahr (and also in the villages associated with it) that a man should live next to his brothers and interract only with his kinsmen. This pattern of residence enabled this ideal to be fulfilled. The individual in it moved in a kin-neighbourhood sphere of acquaintances, and was not expected to need to move out of it. Such a situation was possible when the area occupied by each family was quite large, perhaps including some agricultural land as well, and when it remained the family home despite changes in methods of livelihood of its members.

For the villagers who were not land-owners, and who moved residence to wherever work was available, the residence-kin neighbourhood remained an ideal to be established when possible. In a small village, perhaps not long established, every individual within it would be a

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1. For the association of an area of a town with a specific patriclan, see also Forde, D. 1950. Double Descent among the Yako. In African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (eds.) A.R. Radcliffe-Brown & D. Forde. Oxford University Press, for the International African Institute, p.294.

member of the one or two kin groups which made up its entire population, and the ties within each group would be reinforced by intra-marriage. Marriages would also be contracted with the members of the other kin groups, and as the original families broke up when people moved away, the newer ties would remain. In a long-established village, from which people had been coming and going for a generation or more, although some families might remain in toto, their members did not associate as a distinct group to the same extent as they would do in a smaller, younger village. As a general rule, the members of a family interracted with the people who were geographically nearest to them, i.e. neighbours, and if these happened to be kin and even agnates, so much the better, but the kin-group was not the primary basis for day-to day-association. Daily life in Ḥusaynābād proceeded in terms of activities within each qal'eh: it was at the rites-de-passage ceremonies and other crises that people formed themselves into groups based on kinship connections. At such times a village house would suddenly become full of faces usually associated with other qal'ehs and other villages, and the faces of the neighbours, usually so prevalent, would disappear.

It is possible, in Ḥusaynābād society, to isolate a descent group: that is, a group of people who consider themselves bound in a special relationship by virtue of a particular way in which they are related. In this Muslim society the descent group was unilaterally patrilineal: it consisted of those males related by agnatic descent. The existence of this group was recognised in language; a man

described his direct male ancestors as his posht.[1] This word is also used for the air-wells of a qanāt as they appear in a line on the surface of the ground, and thus corresponds quite well to the anthropologists' diagram of a single line of descent. The lineages were not named. Gulick found that, in the Lebanon, lineage names have only been used since the government insisted that everyone had a 'family' name, but the minimal lineage did exist before this.[2] The actual size of the lineage was three to five generations in depth from the common ancestor, thus being similar to the "small clusters of patrilineally related males" which Peters describes in another Lebanese village.[3] Because the lineages are so small, it is not necessary to distinguish different orders of segmentation,[4] although Alberts distinguished between maximal and minimal lineages in Davarābād.[5]

It can be questioned whether a small group of related males should be described as a lineal descent group when membership of such a group brings no common ritual obligations or inheritance rights.[6] There are four means

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1. In Davarābād,on the other hand, this term refers to any male ancestor. See Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.552.

2. Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., p.107.

3. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.184.

4. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.158, also discusses the shallow nature of lineages in the Middle East.

5. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.21.

6. By definition, clanship determines exclusive obligations. See Royal Anthropological Institute (eds.) a committee of. 1951. Notes and Queries in Anthropology. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p.89.

whereby the patrilineages can be described as such in Husaynabad. The first is that they are identified and isolated by the villagers themselves. The second is that Husaynabad was part of a wider socio-geographic group comprising all the villages of the baksh and Bakshahr itself, wherein land-ownership existed and was identified with specific patrilineages. The third is that although the peasants in Husaynabad were not landowners, yet through time, over several generations, there was a considerable exchange of personnel between the propertied and the peasant classes. Every Ḥusaynābād lineage was participating in a property-owning society, and would not have to change its structure to cope with inheritance should fortune come upon it. Property owning was implied in the functioning of village lineages, and this should not be forgotten when its presence would help to explain some of the features of village life. This point will be particularly relevant in the study of lineage endogamy. The fourth reason is lineage endogamy itself, which causes the lineage to re-appear as a unit in successive marriage generations, and is the focus of the endogamy arrangements.

The structure of the patrilineage will now be examined in greater detail. The tie between the members of an agnatic group was one of mutual identification and the recognition of mutual obligations. This identification arose through various aspects of their common manhood, considered important by the villagers. To begin with, the tie between male agnates is described as being "of seed", that is, a tie of maleness, meaning that men of the group

all come from the same seed, and also that they all possess it. Being "of seed" did not just mean being members of the same sex, but also being descendants of the male ancestor, and being members of his sex. Thus brothers were agnates because they were males and siblings. This tie "of seed" is stronger than that with other cognates, and carries unique obligations.[1]

This concept is linked to that of the superior nature of men, compared with women. It was considered that a man's character was nearer than a woman's to the character of God, and this gave the men in a kinship group another reason to regard each other in a special light. The ideal of a man's character, as described by the villagers, enhanced this mutual regard; he was supposed to be soft-spoken, non-quarrelsome, honest in his affairs and a little aloof from the paltry details of life. The identity of a man with his fellows was therefore an association on his part with others of a similar lofty nature to his own, and it is easy to see that time spent with agnates was considered to have greater merit than time spent with females, whether relatives or wives. Thus the bonds between the members of the agnatic group were those between members of an elite, to preserve those characteristics which made them an elite. And these characteristics, non-quarrelsomeness, maleness, and so on, would tend to work towards the elite's

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.543, also emphasizes the superior importance of the male line.

preservation.

The agnatic group was that to which a man owed his first allegiance outside his day-to-day affairs. That is, a man's first responsibilities were deference to his father before he was married, and the provision of food, shelter and protection to his wife, family and widowed mother after he was married, and the fulfillment of these responsibilities took up the greater part of his life. But at other times, family quarrels, weddings and other life-crises, it was to his agnates that a man looked for support and representation. For example, if a man quarrelled with a member of another family his brothers would all take his side. Their sympathy would not be silent, they would raise the subject of the quarrel in discussion with other villagers and openly support their brother's point of view. They might visit other families to try and explain the correctness of their brother's actions. Such support during quarrels was the especial benefit of the tie between agnates, and the basic obligations of members to each other. Agnates were also the first to be invited to a feast, and the first to be asked to contribute towards it. In all these instances the help was real, and support and identification were given in practice.

It was hoped, ideally, that a man's sense of mutual identification with his agnates would be the foundation of many interractions in daily life. This was only partially achieved. In small, newly-established villages nearly all the agnates of a patrilineage, and their families, might be found working and living together in

harmony. As the men dispersed to seek work agnates would cease to be neighbours, or even work-partners. Again, the responsibilities a man had towards his own wife and children made some conflict with his agnates inevitable. However agnates would visit each others' homes from time to time, even if they had no other points of contact, and would tend to spend their leisure time together, sitting discussing financial matters in the village street.

In this discussion of agnatic groups, the place of women in them has not been mentioned. The members of a descent group are those persons, past, present and future through whom the line is recognized to continue.[1] A woman may, by birth, be a member of a patrilineal descent group, but the line stops with her.[2] In a real sense a person is only fully a member of a descent group if he or she is able, in the fullness of time, to contribute new members to it. This, in a patrilineal system, a woman cannot do for her parental lineage, and whatever her position in her husband's lineage, she is not considered equivalent to its agnates. This means that it is quite possible to say that, in a system of patrilineal descent (and possibly in all

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1. For a definition of a line of descent, see Royal Anthropological Institute (eds.) 1951, op.cit., p.71.

2. c.f. Fustel de Coulanges. 1874, The Ancient City (trans. W. Small). Boston and New York: Lee & Shepherd, pp.71-2, who makes precisely this point when describing the descent system of ancient Rome.

unilineal systems), a woman has no status of descent but only of kinship.

There are several corrollaries to this viewpoint. It first emerged in conversations with villagers. Only the men appeared to recognise the special relationship of related males, through their descent from a common male, a relationship which they distinguished from the ad hoc nature of the kinship network. The women, when describing the different ties of blood, would only discuss those in the kinship network. They seemed unaware of the special concept of agnation.

It is interesting to note that Schneider says that a category of women in a genealogical mesh is not necessarily a descent category.[1] Sanwal has also contributed here.[2] Extremely useful evidence is given by Fortes's description of the place of women in the patrilineal clans of the Tallensi.[3] He says that:

> "Lineage and clan consist of both their male and female members"[4]

but also says

> "they (women) have not the same jural rights and duties as their clan brothers."[5]

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1. Schneider, D.M. 1967, op.cit., p.66.
2. Sanwal, R.D. 1966. Bridewealth and Marriage Stability among the Khasi of Kumoan. MAN (N.S.), vol.1, no.1, p.57.
3. Fortes, M. 1945. The Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi. Oxford University Press; for the International African Institute, p.147 et seq.
4. Ibid., p.152.
5. Ibid., p.147.

and all those familiar with Fortes's work will know the emphasis he gives to the place of jural rights and duties in the domain of descent.[1] Thus it would seem that women have no place in this domain. Further evidence is provided by Fortes' careful details of the obligations of the clanswomen, for he emphasizes that whatever their other important duties they cannot perform those of the ancestor cults. This exclusion from the cult of the ancestral shrines is extremely significant, for this is the act, above all others, which is directed to lineage preservation and which is the quintessence of lineage membership.[2]

It is significant to observe the different grounds upon which women are excluded from lineage membership in Taleland and in Ḥusaynābād. In the former, the importance of women is recognized because, were it not for the accident of birth, they might have been full members of the lineage;[3] but in Husaynabad it is their very sex which debars them from it. In other words, Tallensi women are excluded because they are not men, but Ḥusaynābād women are excluded because they are women.

It should be noticed that the exclusion of women from the sphere of descent in no way diminished their rights to protection from it. Indeed, exclusion focussed the

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1. Fortes,M.1959a. Descent, Filiation and Affinity. MAN, vol.59, no.11, 308, pp.193-197 and no.12, 331, pp.206-212.

2. _____ 1945, op.cit., pp.100-103.

3. Ibid., p.148.

defencelessness it created, for in Ḥusaynābād a man's duty to protect his female relatives was emphasized by the little control they had over their own affairs. This protection was of special importance in the sphere of disputes in marriage, but its existence in the sphere of descent should not be forgotten.

2. Descent and Endogamy.

The type of descent found in Ḥusaynābād and its similar villages has been called endogamous unilineal descent. The classification and sub-division of unilineal descent as a whole has been much discussed by anthropologists. Fortes has described the main characteristics of such systems,[1] while Patai[2] and Murphy and Kasdan[3] have discussed the particular features of the patrilineal endogamous sub-type to which Ḥusaynābād culture belongs.

The discussion of descent in an endogamous society is inseparable from a discussion of the part played in its formation by parallel cousin marriage. With this in mind, Murphy and Kasdan summarize endogamous unilineal descent thus:

"1. It has the potentiality for atomistic fission

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1. Fortes, M. 1953. The Structure of Unilineal Descent Groups. American Anthropologist, vol. 55, part 1, pp.17-41.

   ——— 1959a, op.cit.

2. Patai, R. 1965, op.cit.

3. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit.

   ——— 1967, op.cit.

2. Through the use of genealogies, Arab agnatic systems may trace relationships that can ultimately include all Arabs.
3. Degree of relationship is the significant criterion in the number of allegiances. Distance from a common ancestor in terms of numbers of intervening kinsmen is crucial to the ordering of relations within and between agnatic sections."[1]

Other features described by Murphy and Kasdan can be summarized and added to the above, thus:

4. Integration of larger social units is achieved vertically, through genealogical reckoning, to common ancestors, rather than horizontally, through affinal bonds.[2]
5. "Internally exercised authority is not normative at any level."[3]
6. "In a system of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage the mothers' and the fathers' lines merge on ascending generation."[4]
7. "The system...has no mechanisms for the delineation of the lineage as an exclusive group"[5]

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1. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit., p.25.
2. Ibid., pp.27-28.
3. Ibid., p.20.
4. Ibid., p.24.
5. Ibid., p.24.

8. Complimentary filiation cannot exist[1]
9. Patrilineal descent therefore exists, in the sense as a basis for ordering social life, but is achieved as a fiction through the suppressing of female names in the genealogies.[2]

With these general principles of endogamous patrilinial descent Patai is in fundamental agreement, but disagrees as to how parallel cousin marriage fits into the structure. Rather than trace this discussion, it will be more useful to discover to what extent the descent situation in Ḥusaynābād corresponds to this general picture, both to classify the local picture and to clarify, if possible, the theoretical ideas.

The preceeding authors, together with Stirling,[3] Peters,[4] Evans-Pritchard[5] and many others, refer to the importance of the blood-responsibility groups in determining the composition of local lineages. This factor for analysis cannot be used with reference to Ḥusaynābād, where it seemed that such a group had not existed for many

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1. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit., p.25.
2. ——— 1967, op.cit., p.210.
3. Stirling, A.P.1965, op.cit., p.155.
4. Peters, E.L. 1960, op.cit., p.47.
5. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1949, op.cit., p.56.

years, the investigation of murder being in all cases left to the official judicial authorities.

The Arab Bedouin societies used as models in their discussion by Murphy and Kasdan, and in particular their endogamous, patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage groups, seem in some respects different to the system of Ḥusaynābād. Their first point, that the preferred system of marriage creates the potentiality for each group to become separated from the others, is applicable. This process is described as encystment, that is, when endogamous marriage is continued in the same descent group over successive generations it ceases to form new descent alliances with other groups and thus is no longer part of the network of marriage relationships which stretches across and unites the different descent groups in the wider society. Encystment not only refers to the self-perpetuation of an endogamous group but also to its lack of outside contacts. All the patrilineages in Ḥusaynābād which practised consistent endogamy were potentially encysting, and a few had actually achieved it. In these few, members married either within the actual patrilineage, or else within the cognatic kin associated with the patrilineage which constant in-marriage had brought even closer to it. It is interesting to note that such encysted groups were identified by the other villagers, who referred to them as 'closed', meaning not only their propensity for in-marriage but also that they were closed to those who might wish to marry into one of them.[1]

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1. c. f. the self-perpetuating tendency among certain Basseri families: Barth, F.1961, op.cit., p.41.

However, such groups were in a minority, more so it seems than among the Arab Bedouin. The tendancy to encyst may have been greater in the past, thus it will weaken further in the more mobile present.

Turning to Murphy and Kasdan's second point, the genealogies in Ḥusaynābād were not of sufficient depth to enable more than a few other Iranians to be included, and this failure to unite all Iranians is also because the boundaries of Iran contain many different, quite unrelated, tribal and even national groups.[1]

Murphy and Kasdan's third point, the significance of degree of relationship in deciding the number of allegiances, was probably less important in Ḥusaynābād than among the Arab Bedouin. When the Bedouin migrate, they do so as a group,[2] but a single family in Ḥusaynābād, and even a single individual, would frequently move without reference to other kinsfolk. Thus the change in location on the part of an individual or group was, in Ḥusaynābād, the more frequent cause than distance of relationship for its exclusion from the allegiance system.

It is the shallowness of its genealogies which leads to the wider differences between Ḥusaynābād and Murphy and Kasdan's model. In the villages being discussed, integration of larger social units occurred on a political basis:- that is, by virtue of common Iranian nationality, or at least common residence in the administrative province

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1. c.f. Wilbur, D.N. 1948. Iran, Past and Present. Princetown, New Jersey: Princetown University Press, p.183.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1949, op.cit., pp.35-6

of Khurāsān. This is in contrast to Murphy and Kasdan's fourth point,[1] which is that integration of larger social units is achieved through genealogical ties. On the smaller scale, it was precisely those affinal links, working horizontally (to which Murphy and Kasdan deny any importance in vertical integration) which united the tiny, atomistic-tending agnatic groups.

Patai[2] effectively refutes Murphy and Kasdan's argument on the weakness of internal authority in the endogamous patrilineal system. As he says, they have confused authority with familiarity, and the presence of the latter must not be allowed to hide the importance of the former. In Ḥusaynābād, familiarity was not so much in evidence in vertical agnatic relationships, which further strengthened their authority. Indeed, paternal authority in Ḥusaynābād was considerable.

Patai[3] has criticized at length Murphy and Kasdan's sixth point, on the merging of the fathers' and mothers' lines of descent in a patrilateral parallel cousin marriage system, nor does the counter-argument of the joint authors[4] entirely convince. They argue that, with patrilineal endogamy, ego's patrilateral kinsmen are also always his

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1. As agreed by Patai, E. 1965, op.cit., p.347.

2. Ibid., p.332.

3. Ibid., pp.333-5.

4. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1967, op.cit., pp.6-7.

matrilateral kinsmen, and would so appear, were it not for the suppression of female names in the genealogies. The fathers' and mothers' descent lines may well merge in a system of patrilineal endogamy, but they will only do so under certain conditions. These are, firstly, that genealogies be kept for some distance, for nine to ten generations, at least, so that the directions of the fathers' lines at least can be seen, and secondly, that lineage endogamy be practised, in each lineage, over a number of successive generations. Where these conditions do not exist the merging of the fathers' and mothers' lines of descent is merely putative.

The operation of these conditions can be illustrated by reference to Peters's description of two systems of genealogical reckoning in a Muslim Lebanese village.[1] Among the Learned Families genealogies were accurate up to the fifth ascending generation, after which, manipulated as necessary, they were placed on a general genealogical scheme covering all the Learned Families and going back into the remote past. Within these genealogies, at both stages, a considerable number of endogamous marriages were recorded. Thus, as might be expected, whatever the exact description of the relationship between a couple in an endogamous union, all marriages within the Learned Families were with parallel cousins,[2] as the people themselves recognised. The

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1. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., pp.183, 184.

2. Ibid., p.184.

two conditions described above were satisfied, and the lines of each parent did in fact merge. Among the peasant families though, (and these were in the majority) the patrilineages had a maximum depth of three generations, and their members habitually thought of themselves as belonging to bilateral kin groups, not patrilineal descent groups.[1] Lineage endogamy was also practised in this group, but less so than among the Learned Families, so the possibility of the merging of the lines of each parent was decreased. But in any case, although lineage endogamy might have brought about convergence of the lines of parental descent, the lack of genealogical knowledge makes it impossible to say whether or not it happened. Murphy and Kasdan's hypothesis, in this instance, remains unproven.

Turning to Ḥusaynābād, we find a situation similar to that among the peasant families described above, although the patrilineages were more clearly recognised. Again, the two conditions described above can be used to determine whether or not the lines of the fathers' and mothers' descent merged. Genealogical reckoning in Ḥusaynābād went a little further than that of the peasant families in the Lebanese instance, but not nearly as far as among the Learned Families there.

Turning to patrilateral endogamy, in Ḥusaynābād there were a few families who regularly married the patrilateral parallel cousin (or, even closer, the exact FBD) but while such marriages might be practised

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1. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.184.

in a particular family a few, or even several times, they did not always continue generation after generation. Nevertheless, they occurred with sufficient frequency in a few families for it to be evident that, within the genealogical material available, the fathers' and mothers' lines of descent did merge.

Patrilateral endogamy however was a rule only for the minority of marriages, and those families where it occurred with sufficient frequency to merge the parental lines were fewer still. For the greater part marriages occurred within a much wider group than the tiny agnatic segments; to the majority who had not (to their knowledge) married within their kin group, the line of each parent was quite distinct, as far back as it was known. That the lines might merge if the genealogies were taken back further was possible but, in view of the infrequency of patrilateral endogamy, improbable, and is speculative only, in either instance.

The Learned Families were a minority in their village, and it is possible that the parental descent lines will converge only among a minority in any society. While acknowledging that any society will show variations in custom from their anthropologist's descriptive norm, that norm should surely be based upon what were the events in the majority of instances. In this case, in Ḥusaynābād patrilateral parallel cousin marriage did not occur under such conditions as to cause the merging of the fathers' and mothers' lines of descent, and one would suspect that this would be the case in most societies. This is not to

invalidate the importance of such endogamy in encysting the patrilineages, but to say that the lines of all the fathers and all the mothers are thereby caused to merge is to go further than this, and further than the evidence permits.

Looking at the baksh in which Ḥusaynābād was situated, there is some support for Murphy and Kasdan's point. Nearly all marriages took place within the population of those groups of villages which were centred on Bakshahr and had done so more in the past than in the present. Within the baksh, therefore, the marriage rule can be described as a kin-based local endogamy, and if all the descent lines within the region could be traced back far enough, the fathers' and mothers' lines would indeed merge for all but the tiny minority of people who, in each generation, had married outside it. But this merging which, it must be remembered, is only putative, was a result of the continuance of marriage within a locality, rather than a result of lineage endogamy. The villagers themselves said that the people of Bakshahr (meaning everyone within the baksh) were all one family, and while this might well have been true, lineage endogamy was almost extraneous in bringing it about.

Taking the wider unit of the whole baksh (as opposed to a single village) Murphy and Kasdan's seventh point was also true; that within it there was no mechanism for the delineation of exclusive lineages. It depended on the level of descent used in specific situations. For marriage purposes the descent lines were seen as distinct, whilst for

wider, political purposes and kinship functions they were seen as merging. A few specific responsibilities and characteristics were viewed as being vested solely in the male group. To express this in a different way: from the viewpoint of the individual within the system, descent lines are distinct; but if each individual's descent is regarded in turn, the lines do merge, and from this latter point of view, for the area as a whole, distinct family units cannot be discerned.

With the merging of the whole of the local baksh into a vast (40,000) family unit, some interesting features are seen in the sphere of group action. It is true, as Murphy and Kasdan say, that a man has a shifting allegiance to different groups which is situational and opportunistic[1] but, in Ḥusaynābād, this did not give him the degree of individual freedom in his actions which Murphy and Kasdan suggest exists in Arab Bedouin societies. In the Iranian instance, the groups within which endogamy occurred were wider than the smallest segments of the agnatic lineage. This meant that when someone stressed a particular connection (as need and opportunity demanded) he was stressing his membership of a particular part of his wider group of kin. In seeking to become part of a group action, rather than acting as an individual, he also had to take into account the actions desired by that group as a whole. Thus the wider base of the endogamous group restricted the

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1. Murphy, R.F. and Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit., p.21.

degree of individual freedom which could be exercised within it.

In Murphy and Kasdan's scheme the fact that endogamy occurs in small groups causes these to separate. In Ḥusaynābād the endogamous unit was wider, on the whole, than that in Arab Bedouin groups, so that these small segments did not occur to such a marked extent. Instead, the weakness in Arab society created by the tendency to encyst existed in Ḥusaynābād, but translated upwards, to the point just outside the wider endogamous units at which marriages ceased to be arranged. There is no system, bar common sentiment and the administrative structure, for uniting the different baksh, or whatever local-kin endogamous group is the area unit.

Since, then, the wide local unit is the family unit, there remains the vexed question as to whether complimentary filiation can exist in a patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage system. The argument is that when all descent lines coalesce, there are not distinct patrilineages to which a man can filiate.[1] Again, this can be said to be true for the minority among the Ḥusaynābād families who marry strictly in this way. Among the other families, for each male individual the alliances which he forms, through his tie with his mother, to other patrilineages, are important actions, individual spheres of relationships which he himself creates. It may be that, viewing the system

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1. Patai, R. 1965, op.cit., pp.336-8.

from the outside, one can say that these kinsmen, with whom the bonds are so carefully traced, are in fact not outsiders but members of ego's own patrilineage. Nevertheless, these other patrilineal ancestral descent lines, supposed to link all kinship groups, cannot in fact be traced. For each person, separate kin groups do exist, as do individual patrilineages; and, as such, a man can form links of complimentary filiation between them.

The point becomes important when it is remembered that according to Fortes, if a person achieves status in what he terms the politico-jural domain through the links with his mother (in a patrilineal system) he does so not by virtue of his parents' marriage but by matrilineal filiation.[1] In other words, the structural cohesion given to Ḥusaynābād lineages by endogamous marriage would, in these terms, be achieved not by the marriages themselves but because the matrilineal filiation of the children of such unions would lead them back to their parents' descent groups. One might say, then, that endogamous marriage, structurally and internally, remains in the kinship domain, and stability is achieved by filiation, were it not for the importance of the concept in Ḥusaynābād society that married relatives do not divorce, and the structural significance of the descent relationship between an endogamously married couple.

Murphy and Kasdan's final point is that patrilineal descent is to some extent a fiction in a society practising

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1. Fortes, M. 1959a, op.cit., p.196.

patrilateral parallel cousin marriage.[1] Their argument is that the merging of both parental lines makes for a latent bilateral structure, and that patrilineality is only achieved by the suppressing of female names in the genealogies. I would suggest that the dropping of female names from descent recitals is as much indicative of their non-existence in this system as it is of an attempt to rationalize it, as Murphy and Kasdan suggest.[2]

In summary, then, the descent system of Ḥusaynābād, despite being linked with a preference for patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage, does not have quite the tendency to fission found in Arab Bedouin societies, and that fission, where it occurs, takes place at higher levels than the small local patrilineages. These small groups of patrilineages are recognized (small both in depth and number), and to them specific obligations are owed. In daily life the fluctuating bonds of kinship are of great importance, utilized at will and recognized as convenient. The patrilineage may be three to four generations in depth, the kinship system is two to three generations in depth at the most, but extends over a wider area, both socially and geographically, than the patrilineage. Kinship ties may be recognized laterally when the common ancestor is unknown. On the basis of kinship as a common factor the people tend to form wide family groups,

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1. This point is enlarged by Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1967, op.cit., pp.10-11.

2. Ibid., p.13.

distinct from the small nuclear families, with no intermediate link between the two levels of segmentation. Preferred marriage is practised by a minority among the population and in a few families it is practised to such an extent that they are able to encyst. To this ideal type the remainder of the population aspires, achieving it in part by marrying, if not into, then at least through the agency of, their own individual spheres of kinship.

At the higher levels of segmentation, considering greater masses of population, the various family groups coalesce into a large intra-marrying local unit, conscious of itself as such, self-perpetuating and, despite increasing reliance on modern imported technology, to some extent self-sufficient. Beyond this again local bonds are weak and may be said to exist through nationality and other nebulous ideas.

Preferred marriage apart, therefore, the Ḥusaynābād descent system invites comparison with the type of weakly patrilineal society found, for example, in Tikopia,[1] where there is also a break in the society between the small family and the wider kinship groups. It has been emphasized that, in an endogamous society, integration of the individual into society is latently bilateral,[2] though this is

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1. Firth, R. 1936. We, the Tikopia. London: Allen & Unwin. See especially pp.126-30.

2. e.g. by Ayoub, M. 1959. Parallel Cousin Marriage and Endogamy: A Study in Sociometry. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.15, no.3, p.266.

suppressed through the emphasis of the patrilineal line of descent. This hypothesis of bilaterality is perhaps based on the belief that the parental lines of descent merge to a greater extent than in fact occurs. True bilateral descent is found, for example, in the Maori hapu,[1] and the integration of the individual into society is quite different there, compared with the method of integration in Arab Bedouin societies. The comparison with bilaterality should not be pushed too far. The extended family groups of Ḥusaynābād were not so demarcated from, and opposed to, each other as are the biyut of the Sanusi,[2] but neither were they, in any structural sense, bilateral.

3. Kinship.

An agnatic group is a distinct unit, to which an individual either belongs or does not. In general, he can be a member of only one such group. It is not so easy to define the limits of the kin-group, as Fortes points out.[3] In Ḥusaynābād, as Alberts observed occasionally in Davarābād,[4]

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1. Firth, R. 1963. Bilateral Descent Groups: An Operational Viewpoint. Royal Anthropological Institute: Occasional Paper no.16, pp.22-37.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1949, op.cit., p.56.

3. Fortes, M. 1949. The Web of Kinship among the Tallensi. Oxford University Press, for the International African Institute, p.15 and elsewhere.

4. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.539.

the villagers distinguished verbally between the patrilineage and others to whom kinship relations might be traced. The link between males has been described as being "of seed", and the implications of this discussed; in contrast to it the villagers distinguished the link to relatives through the female line as being "of stomach". The male link was pure, unaggressive and mutually supportive, the female line was described as warm, friendly and earthy in character, but not as helpful in time of need. The villagers were aware of the different obligations to the different groups of kinsfolk thus distinguished, and the potential conflict between such obligations was recognized in the saying "Seed and stomach do not mix". The villagers also said that, apart from indicating the conflicts between the two types of relatives, this saying also meant that marriage with the MBD should not take place.[1]

This "seed" and "stomach" distinction of Ḥusaynābād corresponds to the distinction drawn by Fortes between cognatic and agnatic kinship,[2] with two important differences, firstly, that kinship includes the in-law relationships which, in Taleland, are rigorously excluded[3] and secondly, that in Taleland, kinship implied the impossibility of marriage,[4] when in Ḥusaynābād it suggested,

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1. In fact this marriage did occur, and the reasons for both the prohibition and its avoidance will be discussed elsewhere.

2. Fortes, M. 1949, op.cit., p.12.

3. Ibid., p.16.

4. Ibid., p.17.

above all, its possibility. Nevertheless, the distinction is both valid and applicable to Ḥusaynābād for the isolation of the agnatic units against the rest of the society from which a man draws his kin.

Just as the limits of kinship varied, so did the name given to it. Members of a nuclear family were called fāmīl,[1] and those who were neither fāmīl nor posht but with whom some tie of kin was recognized were called khwīsh or qōm or qōm-khwīsh. The term used tended to vary with the individual speaking, as well as with his sex. It is impossible to be precise about this point of terminology,[2] just as it was impossible to forecast precisely who might be included and who might not. An individual might recognize as khwīsh a person whom his neighbour, connected to another person through an identical sequence of cognatic-affine links, might not.

Nevertheless, some general definitions of khwīsh can be made. Alberts describes the kinship system in Davarābād as having a

> "symmetrical bilateral pattern with clear generation distinction and reasonably specific sex differentiation, but with lineal merging above the parental generation."[3]

As a general description this is true of Ḥusaynābād, but it is

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1. From the French "famille".

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.537.

3. Ibid., p.555.

possible to be more specific as to the extent of an individual's khwīsh network, as to how its eventual composition is arrived at.

In Ḥusaynābād the khwīsh network was only two to three generations in depth, but extended laterally to a considerable extent. As to its composition, a person's khwīsh was the result of the action of two variables. The first was that, for ego, his khwīsh were those persons with whom members of his own nuclear family were themselves, in different contexts in their lives, co-members of other nuclear families to which ego did not belong. This definition of khwīsh is irrespective of sex, but in fact the sex of khwīsh reached by the process outlined above was important, less for deciding whether the individual concerned was khwīsh to ego or not, but significant in the categorization of his children. This is where the second variable operated: for, of a pair of siblings whom ego recognized as khwīsh, the link of khwīsh was stronger with the brother than with the sister. For, however many generations of her descendants ego counted as khwīsh, he reckoned as khwīsh one generation more of the descendants of her brother.

A man, therefore, could reach his khwīsh in a number of ways. He could reach them through his parents' siblings; that is, they were those persons whom his parents counted as members of their own nuclear families. He reckoned such persons as khwīsh, and their children as khwīsh until a female was reached; she would still be counted, and her male

siblings, but not her children. In this definition khwīsh are relatives by ties of blood (they are the aunts, uncles, cousins, great-aunts, great-uncles and their offspring as they appear in our own system), excluding those who are already agnates. Although the tie might extend to a cousin of ego, it does not extend to the persons whomego's khwīsh marry in order to procreate the cousin.

A man could also reach his khwīsh through his own siblings, whose children became khwīsh to him, (these children were fāmīl to his siblings, themselves of his own fāmīl). Whether or not the brothers-in-law (i.e. the affines) thus acquired were also khwīsh was a matter of disagreement between village informants. From observation it seemed that, if the affine acquired through the in-law relationship were male, then he would be counted as khwīsh and the link extended sideways through him accordingly.

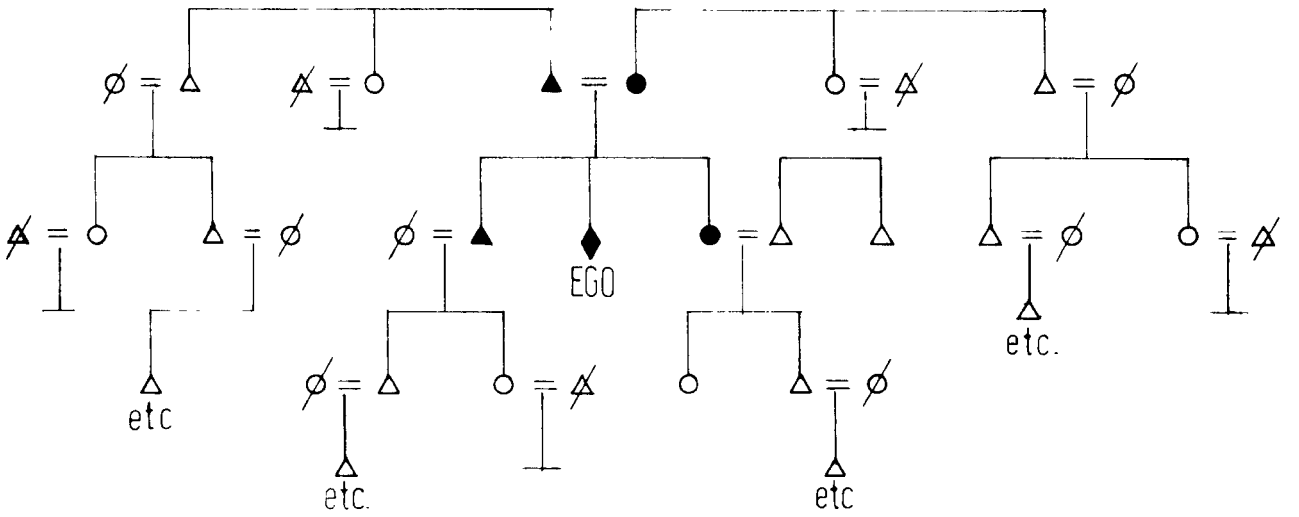
A man, on his own marriage, acquired a host of new khwīsh: his wife's parents and her siblings, and their children. Her affines, if male, might also be his khwīsh. To a lesser extent he also became khwīsh to his wife's parents' siblings and their khwīsh. As his children married, so he became khwīsh to each of the families they married into.

The general lines through which the khwīsh could be differentially attached are shown in diagram 4.

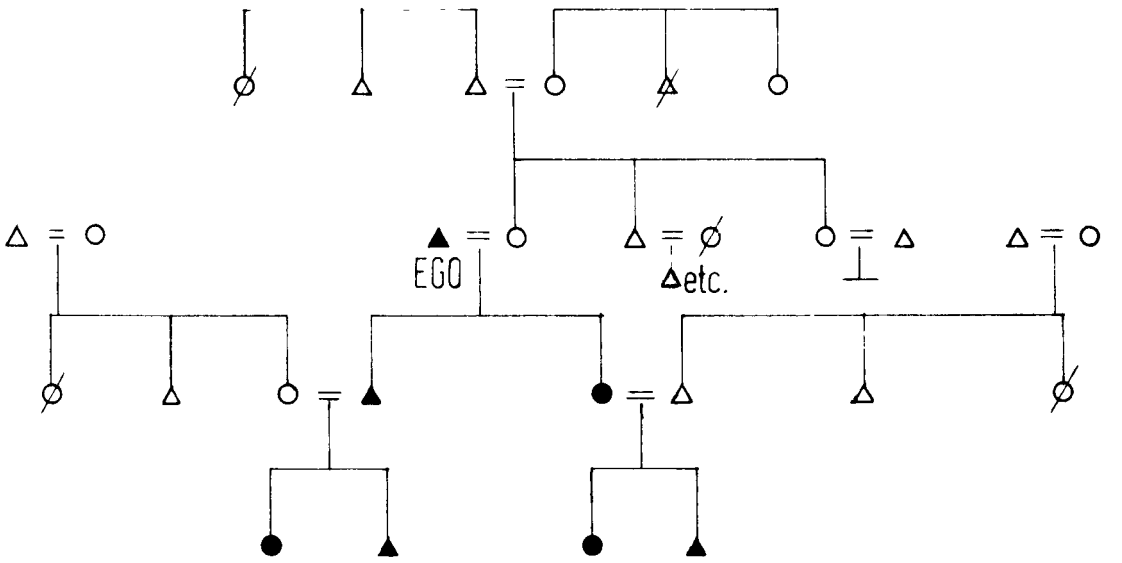
It would be a mistake, therefore, to describe khwīsh as those persons connected to ego by descent or marriage describing a series of concentric circles radiating outwards from him. Other factors were important, not the least being

Diagram 4: Khwīsh

A: Ego's family of origin



B: Ego's family of procreation



▲, ● fāmīl, not khwīsh

△, ○ khwīsh

⌀, ∅ non-fāmīl, non-khwīsh

⊥ children non-khwīsh

the sex of ego, as well as the sex of the person through whom the khwīsh link was made. Thus although in theory the range of persons from whom ego recognized khwīsh was the same whether ego was male or female, in village practice the greater seclusion of women meant that their range of khwīsh was both narrower and less extensive than that of the men. In general, too, a link of khwīsh, even if traced through a female, should always have a male point of origin.[1]

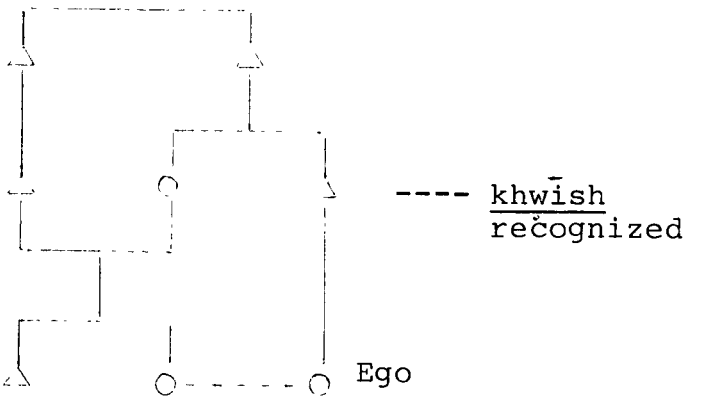
The ties of khwīsh which a person had with those around him were strengthened by the overlapping relationships within any particular family group which occur when individuals play more than one role vis-a-vis each other.[2] This overlapping is intensified and the khwīsh network widened by families marrying within each other. Thus, in section A of diagram 4, those persons marked Ø or ⍁ (non-khwīsh) will be khwīsh to ego, and their children khwīsh as well, if they are also related to ego in an additional way. For example, the children of the 'ammeh were not usually khwīsh, but between a village woman and her 'ammeh

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1. As in Davarābād, Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.630.

2. See the description of the "multiplex relationships" among the Barotse. Gluckman, M. 1955. The Judicial Process among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia. Manchester University Press, for the Rhodes-Livingstone Institute, pp.18-19.

the relationship was:-



so that, through endogamy, the children of the 'ammeh were in this instance recognized as khwīsh. Some family intermarriages occur within the kin sphere of every individual, thus bringing many affines into this network who might otherwise remain outside. Since the pattern of family intermarriages varies from kin-group to kin-group it is impossible to predict which affines will be recognized as khwīsh and which excluded. This makes his range of khwīsh even more unique for each individual.

As in Davarābād[1] the recognition of khwīsh also depended upon distance: a man's 'ammeh might not be reckoned such close kin as the khālal who had remained in his village. The recognition of khwīsh depended therefore upon the relationship between the two persons concerned being maintained, however infrequently. Khwīsh was a matter of real association. It also depended on whether the persons were of equal status (an upward link was recognized but a downward one ignored) and on whether or not their families were on good terms.

Each villager, therefore, had a theoretical network of

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.597.

khwīsh, which might be traced very far indeed, but by the sex of himself, the person he reached, the overlapping relationships between them, locality and preference, some persons were excluded from this range, and other inserted until his own khwīsh network contained only real associations, and was to some extent a matter of his own creation. Even two brothers would not recognize quite the same group of kin.[1]

The cognatic and affinal relationships between the people of Husaynābād are shown in diagram 5.

Khwīsh were recognized for certain specific purposes, which were not those of day-to-day association. Participation in the small events of life: leisure time, sickness, entertaining guests, was organized by the villagers on a neighbourhood basis, and kin co-operated in them only if they were neighbours as well. But the major events of life: birth, marriage and death; were organized by kin exclusively, and neighbours did not participate. Thus the distinctiveness of kin vis-a-vis the rest was recognized.[2] Nevertheless, apart from the kinship duties and uses described below the khwīsh system does have a certain amorphousness which Stirling describes for Turkish villages,[3]

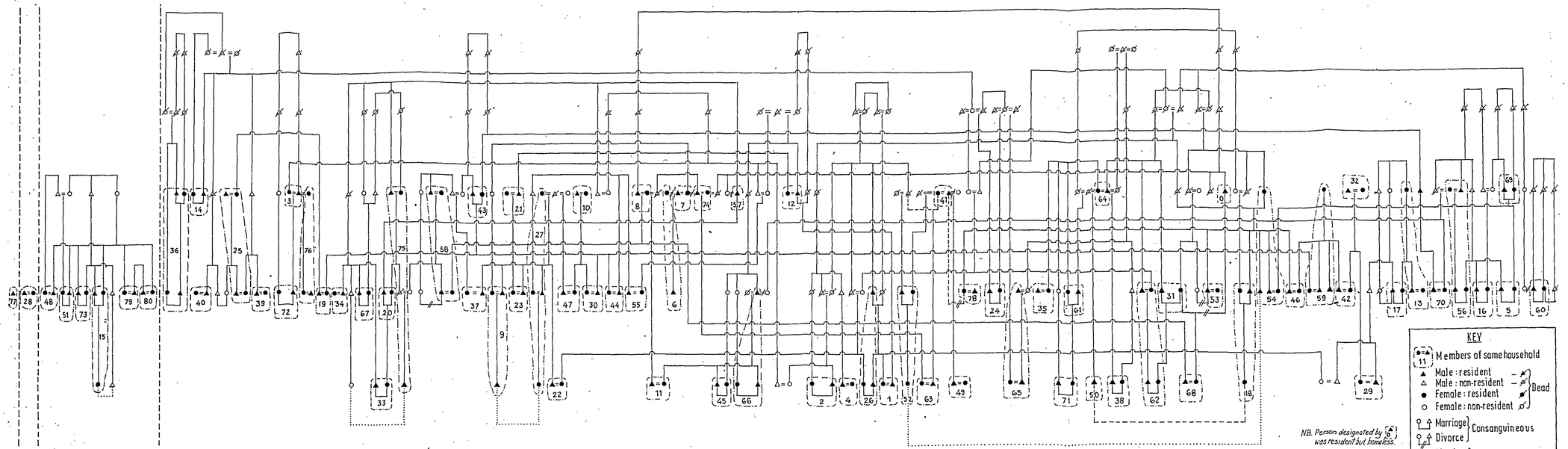
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1. c.f. Fortes, M. 1949, op.cit., p.269. Among the Tallensi two brothers do have the same range of kin.

2. c.f. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.149. In Sakaltutan no hard line existed between kinship and neighbourhood links.

3. Ibid., p.150.

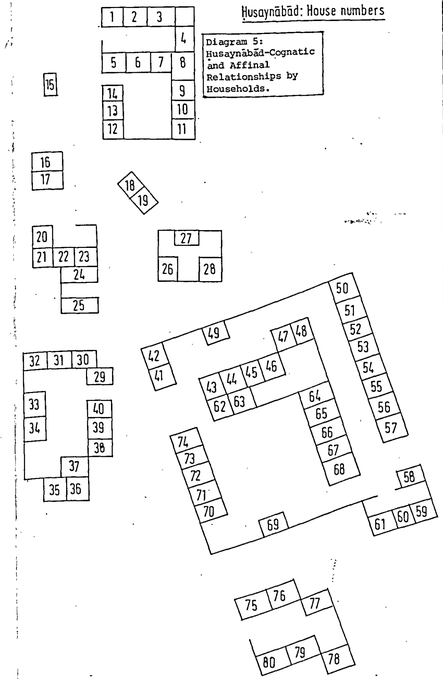
Diagram 5 : Ḥusaynābād - Cognatic and Affinal Relationships by Households, 1964-1965



NB. Person designated by [6] was resident but homeless.

KEY

- [11] Members of same household
- ▲ Male : resident
- △ Male : non-resident
- ● Female : resident
- ○ Female : non-resident
- Dead
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Consanguineous
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Non consanguineous
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Prospected marriage



though perhaps greater use was made of kinship in Ḥusaynābād than in Sakaltutan, thus increasing its distinctiveness.

Certain purposes of the kinship system are inherent in the way in which it is demarcated. If a man's descent group contains those people to whom he owes support, then his khwīsh is, by and large, the group from amongst whose members he selects his friends, and this difference corresponds with the invariable-variable difference between agnates and kin. The friend, or rafīq, has a peculiar importance in Iranian social life. Men as they work and meet other men in their daily lives perpetually fear and assume that other men will try to cheat and rob them. Thus haggling is necessary to prevent an extortionate price being asked for goods, and a close watch must be kept on possessions in case a handful of wheat is stolen. To a large extent these fears are realized, and theft and deception will transpire if the opportunity presents itself. It is interesting to question to what extent the expectation of these prompts an individual to exploit a situation. Whatever causes this frame of mind, its result was that the village men of Ḥusaynābād tended to lead lives full of suspicion of the motives of others.[1]

Life in Ḥusaynābād would be very difficult without a rafīq, for a man's rafīq was above all a friend who would

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1. This suspicion has been ascribed to the lack of security in a region constantly disturbed by political upheavals. Spooner, B.J. 1965b, op.cit., p.30.

not cheat him, a person to whom a man could entrust possessions and money and not have to fear for their safety. The importance to a man of having one or two such friends in the general untrustworthy world is hardly to be over-emphasized, for without them he would be very much on his own, with a picture of his fellows clouded by suspicion of their hostility almost to pathological point, that is, to a point where any action would be difficult. In parenthesis it must be added that a man's rafīq would change over the years. This was no blood-brotherhood, a swearing to mutual protection for a lifetime. A rafīq would, most likely, eventually cheat his friend over some minor matter, and the close trust between them be partially severed. But the rafīq, while in office, so to speak, was less likely to betray than other men, and his friendship was likely to be more constant.

It was axiomatic that a man's rafīq was to be found among his kin group: "A good friend is invariably a relative" was how the villagers expressed it, meaning that it was precisely their kinship which drew them towards each other. Therefore a man looked among his khwīsh for his friends, and there existed the added advantage that, should a kinsman defect from a promise, there existed the added weight of the arguments of their mutual kin to coerce him into fulfilling his obligations. It was admitted that a neighbour, a non-relative, could also become a close friend, but it was agreed that, since there were no pressures on him to conform, he might well cheat sooner than a relative would.[1]

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1. On the trustworthiness of kin, see also Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., p.41.

To his kinsmen, then, a man looked not only for support against those who would not be his friends, but also for those friends themselves. It happened frequently that two men who felt a natural liking for each other might not be khwīsh in the sense that another would recognize. They might be distant affines, or even affines of affines, or second cousins. But they would always be described as khwīsh, and the link carefully traced to enquirers to justify this. The implication remained that, without it, the association between the two would be more difficult.

This principle was taken to its logical conclusion. If two men were friends for a lifetime, their children and grandchildren would describe them as khwīsh, even as brothers, when careful enquiry would reveal that originally there had been no kinship link between them at all. It did not matter: it was inconceivable that such a friendship could not be based on kinship, and so the kinship was invented. More important, at least one marriage would be arranged between the children of such close friends, and then the two families would indeed be related, and the original fiction, superseded by the fact, would become unimportant.

Another function of khwīsh was to give monetary aid. A Cento survey of rural credit analysing the loans obtained by 494 farmers throughout Iran showed that, out of eight sources of money, the most common source of credit was the Agricultural Bank, from which 26.6% of the farmers had obtained their loans, while only 8.3% had borrowed from

friends and relatives.[1] The role of kinsfolk and friends in supplying credit would seem to be of minor importance, but when the actual amounts borrowed from the various sources were compared, it was found that relatives and friends had supplied by far the largest loans.[2] It was also emphasized that such private sources could provide the quick service that was so often required by rural debtors.[3] This survey shows that khwīsh could be extremely important in giving aid in the practical matters of daily life.

A kinship tie was recognized provided that the persons concerned met occasionally, even if they did not live in the same village. Thus an important use of the kinship network was the facilities it provided for travellers. (Agnates, living elsewhere, were also used for this purpose). Villagers moved about considerably between the villages in their immediate district: to sell a sheep, and so forth, and if a man had occasion to visit elsewhere, he would always try to go where he had khwīsh. Then he would feel that he could visit this relative with the expectation of hospitality, which he would invariably receive, however remote the relationship aroused. If a man had no relatives in the place he wished to visit, he would stay with his khwīsh closest to it; he would be unwilling to venture into a village where,

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1. CENTO, Travelling Seminar on Agricultural Credit and Co-operatives, 1964, p.38.

2. Ibid., p.39.

3. Ibid., p.41.

however well he might be known, he had no kinsman.[1] The kinship link removed the suspicion of hostility. Since villagers changed residence frequently the kinship network was widely dispersed, and was a considerable aid to mobility. Villagers also tended to visit Mashhad[2] in kinship groups, a married pair even splitting up for this purpose.

The most important function of the kinship network was finding marriage partners for its members. I once asked an informant "Who would you reckon as your kin" and he replied "Those whom I marry", and this succintly describes the emphasis among khwīsh for promoting marriage amongst themselves. Persons not only found their partners (or had them found for them) in their khwīsh network,[3] but if this failed to provide one, the khwīsh network was used to find a suitable outsider. When a young man was looking for a bride, and one of his own relatives was not available, it would be these relatives who would try to make good their deficiency by looking among their own khwīsh, and then among the families of their neighbours and friends, until a bride was found.

Thus many persons married non-kin, but the kin had involved themselves in the marriage. A young girl might be

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1. See also this reluctance among the Sarakatsani. Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., p.38.

2. A visit to Mashhad every few years was the aim, often achieved, of most villagers. The trip combined the pleasure of a shopping holiday in the city with the religious merit of a pilgrimage.

3. Preferably among agnates.

brought into a village, apparently a stranger to all in her new home, but discussion reveal that relatives of hers through whom the match had been arranged, were close at hand.[1] This relative was usually a woman, which is no more than obvious, since a woman is more likely to have observed the demeanour of a young girl and more likely to communicate this information to another woman. It can be said that if the khwīsh had special functions according to sex, it was that male members were sought when looking for kin for the purpose of travelling to a distant village, and women when the wish was to obtain information concerning a marriage.

The importance of the khwīsh network in finding marriage partners for its members is hardly to be over-emphasized. No other institution or situation was comparable with its efficiency in this respect, and by serving this vital function the network both consolidated and extended itself. It secured its importance in the individual's life and also secured its own continuation. For landless peasants the agnatic descent group failed to have as much significance as it did for the propertied classes. Landlord brothers may have quarrelled about their inheritances,but they were united as a group by their concern for them. For the dihqāns, on the other hand, the significance of the agnatic group was

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1. I.e. strangers' marriages continued a prior relationship, a point made by Rosenfeld, H. 1958b. An Analysis of Marriage and Marriage Statistics for a Moslem and Christian Arab Village. International Archives of Ethnography, vol.48, pp.32-62.

little more than a special feeling between related males, however strong that feeling. It was the khwīsh groups that aided in the practicalities of life, and proved a focussing object for common sentiment.

Thus the khwīsh system was founded upon friendship, travel and marriage, which were both its functions and its means of perpetuation.

Without kin, a person could be physically destitute, but charity could be given, and the villagers were generous in this respect. It was the social isolation of the person whom bereavement and circumstances had left without khwīsh which the villagers emphasizes, and which they could do little to alleviate.

A kinship network, although in practice selected according to proximity and need, could in theory extend indefinitely. In an exogamous society this network is a web which finally encompasses all the people in that tribe or group.[1] With Ḥusaynābād society however, this web, although extensive, was not all-inclusive, since endogamy within the web prevented this. Viewed from the highest level the society within the baksh (within which all except the few new-comers were related) segmented out into broad family groups. These were not agnatic groups, because they overlapped, but they can best be described as kinship clusters, that is, groups of kinship relationships which may or may not have an agnatic core.[2] Persons within a

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1. Fortes, M. 1949, op.cit., p.343.

2. c.f. village composition among the Nuer, where every village is associated with a lineage. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1940, op.cit., p.203.

cluster had most of their ties of khwīsh within it, and tended to intensify the density of each cluster by marrying within it. Their links with other clusters were fewer and more tenuous.

This clustering of kinsfolk was to a considerable extent the same as the way in which people were grouped together on the ground in clusters of villages. Thus there was a near-identification between common family origin and common place of origin, and the larger the unit surveyed, either of family or place, the more this identification was complete.

Thus the web of kinship was not spread uniformly over the ground, and might not extend outside a particular region. Some local groups, particularly those newly-adjacent to each other, might find it impossible to discover any bond of khwīsh between them, and their mutual relationships would accordingly be formal and full of suspicion. However a web was rarely entirely confined within a region, nor was a cluster ever entirely self-contained.

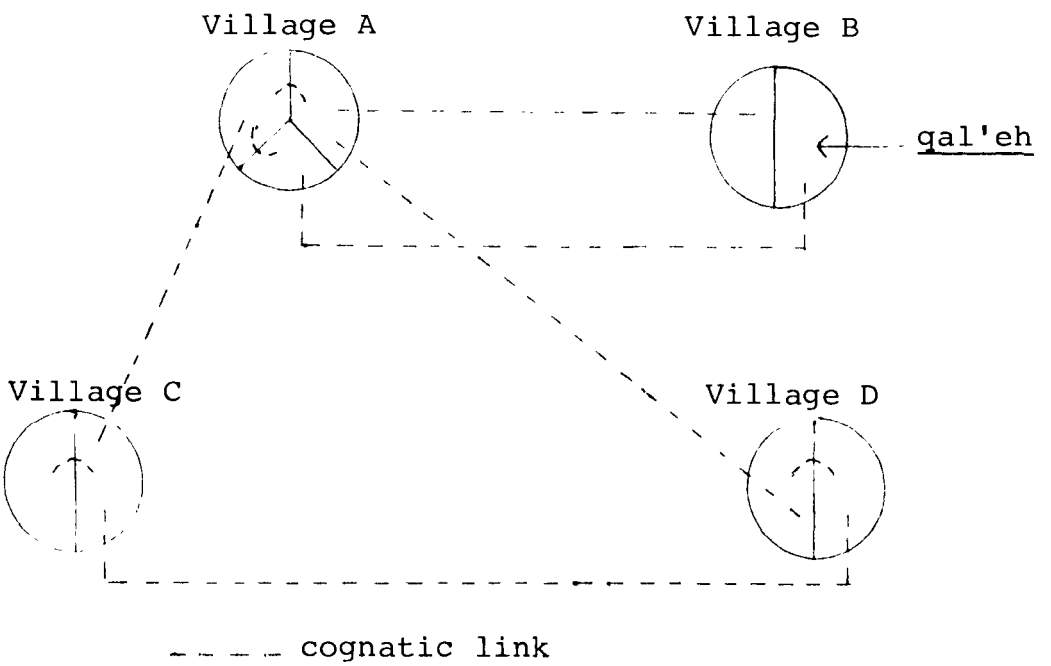
Fortes's maps of the patterns of clan-linkages among the Tallensi[1] bear some visual resemblance to the pattern of cognatic relationships between the separate qal'ehs in Ḥusaynābād, and between Ḥusaynābād and the villages in its vicinity. Fortes shows that some lineages in a Tallensi clan might be linked with each other, but others might not; so, in Ḥusaynābād, a cognatic connection might be found

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1. Fortes, M. 1945, op.cit., p.109.

between two qal'ehs, while a third have no ties elsewhere in the village. Again, a link could exist between two or more qal'ehs in separate villages, while these qal'ehs might or might not have cognatic ties with the other qal'ehs. This illustration is not meant to imply that the resemblance between clan linkages among the Tallensi and cognatic ties in Iranian villages is anything more than visual.

Diagram 6: Kinship links between villages



Summary: The role of descent and kinship in daily life.

It is important to remember in a discussion of descent and kinship in Ḥusaynābād and the villages around it that their occupiers do not own the means whereby their livelihood is obtained, that is, there is no formal link between kinship and the control of resources. Again, there is no rigid system of ranking among the families which is formally recognised and maintained.[1] The greater part of

1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit.

life is devoted to agriculture and the repeated re-organisation of scant resources, and recreation time will be spent with neighbours unless kin are very near. Cognatic relationships, while undoubtedly important in life, take up little time and thought. Village conversation is about money, the price of sheep, and so on. Ḥusaynābād men do not often discuss their activities in terms of kinship norms, nor is this type of assessment in constant use when they criticise the activities of others. The emphasis on kinship is to some extent the anthropologists' bias, and to some extent a distortion of village life.

Nevertheless, a man's agnates and khwīsh, particularly his chosen friends, provided him with certain non-physical comforts which wealth could not give, and were important in a poor society. Thus, although the necessities of life were scarcely met, while a man had kin he never had to search for emotional satisfactions. His relatives supervised his childhood, supported his quarrels, found his bride, provided his friends, and would not desert him in his old age. If wealth was absent, he was well endowed in other ways, from the cradle to the grave.

4. Theories concerning FBD marriage.

The custom of FBD marriage in Middle Eastern societies is becoming widely documented, and two different approaches have emerged. Ayoub (1959),[1] Goldberg (1967),[2] Gilbert and

1. Ayoub, M. 1959, op.cit.
2. Goldberg, H. 1967. FBD Marriage and Demography among Tripolitanian Jews in Israel. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.23, no.2, pp.176-191.

Hammel (1966)[1] and Randolph and Coult (1968)[2] have concentrated on using statistical techniques to analyse the problem. Their aim has been to show not only the incidence of FBD and other marriages, but also the probability of its occurrence, when compared with the other choices available. The last two papers show that the number of FBD marriages made in the groups studied was statistically significant. The other group of authors, Barth (1955),[3] Rosenfeld (1958),[4] Peters (1963),[5] Patai (1965),[6] Stirling (1965),[7] Murphy and Kasdan (1959, 1967)[8] and Khuri (1970)[9] among others, have

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1. Gilbert, J.P. & Hammel, E.A. 1966. Computer Simulation and Analysis of Problems in Kinship and Social Structure. American Anthropologist, vol. 68, part 1, pp.71-93.

2. Randolph, R.R. & Coult, A.D. 1968. A Computer Analysis of Bedouin Marriage. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.24, no.1, pp.83-99.

3. Barth, F. 1954. Father's Brother's Daughter Marriage in Kurdistan. South-Western Journal of Anthropology, vol.10, no.2, pp.164-71.

4. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit.

5. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit.

6. Patai, R. 1965, op.cit.

7. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., pp.178-220.

8. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit.

   ——— 1967, op.cit.

9. Khuri, F.I. 1970. Parallel Cousin Marriage Reconsidered: A Middle Eastern practice that nullifies the effect of marriage on the intensity of family relationships. MAN(N.S.), vol.5, no.4, pp.597-618.

not analysed the material in such detail, but have concentrated instead on analysing those marriages which actually occurred in terms of other features of the societies concerned. If the first approach is fundamentally statistical, the second is fundamentally social. The results of these different approaches will be discussed before the material from Ḥusaynābād is examined in detail.

These results from Ḥusaynābād can be compared with a survey of the fertility and other characteristics of 4,733 married women which has been carried out in a different rural area of Khurāsān, where it was found that 32,8% of marriages were consanguineous.[1] This survey is also valuable because of the details it gives regarding the relative frequencies of polygynous and monogamous marriages (2.5% and 97.5% respectively),[2] the duration of marriages terminated by widowhood and by divorce (8.0 and 5.9 years respectively),[3] the fertility of consanguineous and non-consanguineous marriages (4.45 and 4.44 live children born respectively)[4] and other interesting data. Although no explanation of these data is given, they provide a most useful supplement to the material collected in Ḥusaynābād, being far more comprehensive than the fieldwork data and,

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1. Chasteland, J.C., Amani, M., Aminzadeh, F., Khazaneh, H., Moezi, A. & Puech, O. 1965. Étude sur la Fecondite et quelques characteristiques demographiquesdes femmes marriées dans quatre zones rurales d'Iran (in French) Tehrān: University of Tehran: Institute of Social studies and research.
2. Ibid., p.195
3. Ibid., p.190
4. Ibid., p.121.

where the areas investigated are the same, corroborated by it.

The explanations of FBD marriage (or parallel cousin marriage, the terms will be used interchangeably throughout this analysis except where context makes the distinction clear) fall into three broad groups, which will be discussed in turn. (Although these groups do not quite correspond with those given by Khuri,[1] his is a useful summary of the arguments to date). In the first group FBD marriages are regarded as the end of a series of preferential marriages. Marrying a FBD is one sub-type of the more general preference for marrying a kinswoman, matrilateral or patrilateral, which itself is only one element in a system of rules deciding marriage selection.[2] This is the viewpoint, generally speaking, of the authors using the statistical approach outlined above,[3] and is perhaps a result of their method of identifying and enumerating all preferences. There is an interesting confirmation of this viewpoint from Gulick[4] who found that, in a Lebanese village, the preference for intra-village and intra-lineage marriage remains even where religion forbids the FBD union.[5]

In considering the preferences in Ḥusaynābād marriages

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1. Khuri, F.S. 1970, op.cit., p.598.
2. Goldberg, H. 1967, op.cit., p.190.
3. See especially Ayoub, M. 1959, op.cit., p.274 and Goldberg, H. 1967, op.cit., p.189.
4. Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., pp.120-8.
5. Gulick attributes this to a compromise between church and kinship rules: Ibid., pp.127-8.

the sequential interpretation is viable. Thus the most preferred marriage was with the FBD; the next within the patrilineal family; next, with other near kin; next, any kin; next, a non-kin within the village; next, a non-kin from elsewhere; with some disagreement between informants as to whether the third or fourth category should come first. As Patai says,[1] this type of marriage system is not endogamous in the sense that marriage outside ego's own lineage is forbidden, but is the first in a series of preferences for which approval decreases as distance from the in-group increases.

One of the reasons why the closer kinswoman is preferred is that in Husaynābād the emphasis on marriage-choice was to find someone of a family already known. Hence the emphasis on kinship, where people can most be trusted or, failing that, a search being made in the local community, where people's strengths and weaknesses were likewise a matter for common observation. The concept of marrying by exogamy into a group unknown and formerly hostile, as happens, for example, among Greek mountain shepherds,[2] was strange to the Ḥusaynābād way of thinking. Abduction, as Campbell clearly shows, is, in certain circumstances, a means of resolving this hostility between two groups potentially linked by marriage.[3] In Ḥusaynābād the idea was to marry into a non-hostile group, which would probably

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1. Patai, R. 1955, op.cit., p.386.
2. Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., p.124.
3. Ibid., pp.130-31.

explain the absence there of abduction.

In Ḥusaynābād certain factors common to all marriages contracted with kinswomen also make the preferential interpretation a feasible one. All types of in-kin marriages were arranged firstly to protect the person of the bride, secondly to secure the loyalty of the son-in-law, thirdly, by adding another kin link within a system of kinship already established it was hoped both to strengthen the existing system and, by preventing its dispersion, also prevent it from dissipating its strength. For these reasons, therefore, it can be seen that the explanation of FBD marriage usually given by those following the statistical approach throws some light on the problem in Ḥusaynābād.

However, some of the advantages of marrying a kinswoman are not especially favourable to marrying the FBD. For example, the strengthening of kinship links might better be served by marrying someone more distantly related. Yet the greatest preference in this series of preferential marriages is for the actual FBD, a predominance especially significant when it is considered that the FBD's are, in number, the smallest of the groups available for matrimonial choice. It seems reasonable to suppose that this choice must bring advantages additional to those of being the most preferred of an endogamous series. Khuri[1] suggests that the FBD marriages alone should be considered as in-marriages.[2] As far as Ḥusaynābād society is concerned,

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.614.

2. See also Grandqvist, Hilma, 1931, op.cit., pp.78-89.

although FBD marriage is definitely the end of a preferential endogamous series, there are additional reasons for the concentration of preference on the closer degrees of endogamy.

A second group of explanations of FBD marriage is that it is done to conserve property in the family. This is the argument of Granqvist,[1] Rosenfeld[2] (who has a useful summary of earlier authorities on this point), Peters[3] and Baer[4], to name a few. Barth[5] and Murphy and Kasdan[6] criticize Rosenfeld's argument but have missed his point. They say, quite rightly, that since women seldom inherit according to Quranic rule[7] FBD marriage will not keep property within the family. However, Rosenfeld does not say that the inheritance by women is usually ignored, what he actually says is:

> "The Koranic injunction ... is not followed <u>when there are sons</u>".[8]

This means that the brotherless girl's marriage is the important one, as he further illustrates in the cases of twelve brotherless girls whose marriages were so arranged that their inherited property could pass to their husbands; that is,

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1. Grandqvist, H. 1931, op.cit., p.18.
2. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.38.
3. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.189.
4. Baer, G. 1964, op.cit., pp.65-66.
5. Barth, F. 1954, op.cit., p.171.
6. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit., p.17.
7. Which is that women receive a half-share of that which men receive a whole share. Qur'ān, iv, 13.
8. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.37 - my underlining.

they were all married within their extended family to keep their property within it.[1]

This is by the way, for property conservation as an explanation of FBD marriage does not apply to any great extent in the baksh society, where the Quranic rule was ignored and women usually did not inherit.[2] Queries on the inheritance-rights of daughters elicited the reply that they received the qabāleh (marriage-insurance, see later) instead, and the fact that this came from the husband's family was ignored. Villagers, in any case, had little to pass on to their sons, let alone to their daughters. However, women's rights were not always ignored. The Quranic rule was occasionally observed in an FBD marriage, but it was stated emphatically that this did not happen invariably. What might occur was that the father of the bride in an FBD marriage might feel more inclined to give his daughter her rights than if she had married outside the family. In these circumstances the daughter's reception of a half-share was a result of FBD marriage and cannot therefore be considered as a cause of it. Another exception made to the waiving of women's rights occurred in certain landed families when a daughter had been married for some time before the death of her father. Then her husband, when division eventually came, might claim some land through her right to a half-share, and

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1. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.37.

2. c.f. in Turkey, where female inheritance may be valid, but ignored. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.123.

in theory could, and if insistent did, receive it. This however had nothing to do with the causes of FBD marriage.

Although the inheritance of land by women was largely ignored, FBD marriage was linked to property conservation in another way. Since property is divided upon the death of the father, FBD marriage may help to retain its management as it was the father's lifetime, and the economic importance of consistency in the running of qanāts has already been indicated. This point is further understood if one considers the average life-span: in a society where people marry young, a man may well have married off his elder children before his father dies, so that an FBD marriage will preserve the unity of the family property when the eventual death of the father would indicate its division. On the father's death the property will still be divided, so an FBD marriage in these circumstances is not, to the outsider, strictly logical, but it may well be arranged in the hope that the eventual property division will not cause a schism between the brothers severe enough to bring them economic harm.

Property-ownership as a cause of lineage endogamy in Ḥusaynābād and Bakshahr cannot therefore entirely be discounted. Unlike other societies, property conservation is only effective if marriage is with the actual FBD whereas, in other societies, a marriage within the wider lineage might still retain property within it.[1] Property ownership as a subsidiary cause of lineage endogamy among village families

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1. c.f. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.189 among many other examples.

cannot entirely be discounted, even though these were for the most part landless, because, as explained earlier, the landless families followed the customs of their total society in marriage and also because peasant families might well at some stage, past or future, be property owners. However, the absence of property at the present stage means that another explanation of FBD marriage must be found.

A third group of explanations of FBD marriage is that in terms of the relationships it creates between the participants, and different hypotheses have been advanced dealing with the different types of relationships which can be distinguished. Thus Murphy and Kasdan[1] and Patai[2] have described it, in Khuri's phrase, as:

> "a custom that reflects and strengthens the segmentary character of the unilineal system of descent among the Arabs".[3]

or it is seen as a custom to preserve harmony within the small patrilineage, or within the family itself.

The relationship of endogamy to the structure of the unilineal descent group has been analysed in the section on descent, and the arguments need not be reiterated here. While the connection between the two is indisputable, it is unlikely that people are able to manipulate their affairs to affect such a wide issue as lineage segmentation. Khuri's valuable criticisms are also relevant here.[4]

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1. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959, op.cit., p.26.
2. Patai, R. 1965, op.cit., pp.346-7.
3. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.598.
4. Ibid., p.604.

It seems more likely that FBD marriage is arranged not to gain lineage cohesion but to avoid conflict in the family. Relevant here is Barth's main explanation of FBD marriage in political terms. It is done, he says, to gain the political allegiance of the son-in-law, which in real terms means the subervience of his interests to those of the senior man; it means his obedience, in fact. The result is the solidification of the minimal lineage as a corporate group,[1] (the difference between this and Murphy and Kasdan's and Patai's argument is that here the lineage coherence is achieved only as the by-product, as it were, of individual acts of allegiance, and not believed to be a primary aim). Peters also suggests this interpretation.[2] Rosenfeld points out that the father does not gain political allegiance, and therefore advantage, by marrying his daughter to his nephew if such bestowal is in any case an institutionalized and compensatory right, and therefore out of his hands.[3] The reverse applied in Ḥusaynābād, where the nephew had no right to the FBD, thus her bestowal to him by her father put him considerably in the older man's debt, which he repaid by avoiding dissent with his father-in-law. This answers Khuri's argument that a man would not try to evoke loyalty among his nephews by marriage because they are already committed to his support by common patrilineage membership.[4]

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1. Barth, F. 1954, op.cit., p.171.
2. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., pp.188-9
3. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.39.
4. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.601.

Among the landlords in Bakshahr, in particular, it was openly stated that the younger man would not necessarily support a member of the senior generation of his own patrilineage unless he had marriage ties with him.

It therefore seems that, in the baksh, the political explanation is a useful one. The difficulty is that, however important politics might be to the landowners of Bakshahr, it was unlikely to have the same significance for the landless peasants in the villages, especially since the search for work broke up the patrilineages so frequently. What seems a more likely explanation of FBD marriage in Ḥusaynābād families was that it was done to avoid conflict within the family itself. Khuri, whose detailed analysis of this is most welcome in a difficult field, considers that the consequence of FBD marriage is the reduction of conflict caused by marriage in family relations by perpetuating existing ones after marriage without creating any dominating new ones. He further suggests that this reduction in conflict is concomitant only upon FBD marriage, and upon no other forms of endogamy.[1]

This analysis is the first attempt to relate FBD marriage to the detailed content of the relationships between the actors involved, and it is Khuri's hope that it will constitute a much-needed general theory.[2] It is therefore necessary to examine it in some detail to see how it fits in with the data from Ḥusaynābād.

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.601.

2. Ibid., p.598.

Khuri explains his hypothesis by showing that the sternness in the relationship between niece and paternal uncle in the Middle East is the same as that expected between daughter-in-law and father-in-law, and that there is a similar correspondence of respect and deference between the duties of son-in-law and those of paternal nephew.[1] While this is true of the son-in-law and paternal nephew relationships, it is not unique to those of the daughter-in-law and paternal niece. Thus, in Ḥusaynābād as in the rest of the Middle East, a daughter-in-law was expected to show great deference to her father-in-law, in part because of their relationship and in part because of the general deference and respect expected from the female to the male sex, and this deference was already so great that the addition of the attitude to the paternal uncle made little difference. Khuri also says that the avoidance of the expression of sexual attraction, and even sexual satisfaction, on the part of the wife towards her husband corresponds with the avoidance of sexual expression between cousins and the wife's desire not to shame her father and her father-in-law.[2] While this may be true of Chiyah and Ghbairy, it is certainly not true in Iran. In Ḥusaynābād a wife was expected to show considerable sexual feelings towards her husband which, if anything, were enhanced if the two also happened to be cousins, possibly because of greater familiarity since childhood.

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.609.

2. Ibid., p.613.

It is true that in Ḥusaynābād a wife, (and her husband also) was expected not to shame her father and her father-in-law by her sexuality, but this was achieved by avoiding even the slightest sexual expression in their presence. Shame towards the senior generation resulted in separating sexuality from them, it did not result in avoiding it altogether. Thus Khuri's descriptions of daughter-in-law behaviour cannot be used to explain FBD marriage in Ḥusaynābād, and perhaps this criticism may apply to other societies.

Khuri further explains the advantages of FBD marriage by emphasizing the harmony it produces in the household by introducing into it a bride who does not bring with her obligations to strangers, a girl already part of the family.[1] Again, this was not necessarily a result of FBD marriage in Ḥusaynābād. In the villages it was recognized that even the FBD had loyalties to her own family which conflicted with her new ones. I have heard a young husband publicly threaten to divorce his wife, his actual FBD, during a quarrel which arose because she gave her mother some food from her new family's store. Moreover, in Ḥusaynābād the fact that the girl may have come from another village, and the rivalry between brothers which Khuri also recognizes,[2] also tended to hinder the acceptance of the daughter-in-law. Ḥusaynābādī villagers knew that an FBD marriage was more unharmonious

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p. 609.

2. Ibid., p.608.

in a quarrelsome family than a 'stranger' marriage between friends, and indeed that 'stranger' was more an apt description of an unknown relative from a distant place than of a near neighbour, known since her birth. The weakness of Khuri's argument on this point is that, whoever the new daughter-in-law is, her introduction into the household is bound to create new relationships and conflicts within it. Her very purpose: to bring the experiences of husband and father to the son makes this inevitable. The Ḥusaynābād custom of the yashmak illustrates that the girl, however subservient, is a new individual introduced into the household whose personality will necessarily find some expression within it as she matures.

Khuri admits that his theory of FBD marriage does not explain the preference for other types of cousin marriages,[1] and indeed all non-statistical explanations of FBD marriage tend to ignore the fact that other types of family unions are also significantly preferred. Khuri's explanation of FBD marriage actually contradicts the existence of the other forms. For example, as he himself points out, a marriage with the MBD would bring the deferential role expected of a man towards his father-in-law into conflict with the joking relationship he enjoys with his maternal uncle. Now while it does seem that FBD marriage is a phenomenon which needs an explanation of its own, it is not unrelated to other types of in-family marriage, and it

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.615.

is unlikely that a set of conditions which explains one form of family marriage should work against the preference which exists for other forms. A more suitable explanation of FBD marriage would be non-contradictory of other forms.

A more pertinent criticism of Khuri's theory is that FBD marriage does not achieve the aim he suggests; it does not, ultimately, perpetuate the existing social relationships. In Beyrout, as in Ḥusaynābād, the presence of change and the creation of new and dominating relationships is shown by the eventual separation of the new household which occurs after the majority of marriages, including the majority of marriages with the FBD.[1] Thus the new relationships do come to dominate the old ones, the father ceases to dominate the son to the previous extent, and the niece becomes primarily a wife. Eventually the household is founded on the relationship between the married pair and the influence of other relatives is marginal.

Nevertheless Khuri's theory is extremely interesting. While he is undoubtedly right that FBD marriage is arranged to perpetuate certain relationships, it is debatable whether those relationships are of the family, bound to change as each individual life continues, and between whose members there exists, without the complications of the marriage of the children, more conflicts than Khuri

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1. Khuri, F.I. 1970, op.cit., p.609. 11% of FBD marriages in Khuri's sample had three-generation families, admittedly the highest percentage compared with the indices of three-generation families among the other types of marriages.

has perhaps been prepared to recognize. The relationships perpetuated by FBD marriage will be the subject of analysis of the material from Ḥusaynābād, to which attention will now be drawn. It is also true that the difference between Khuri's theory and that which follows may be in part due to the difference between Lebanese and Iranian customs, particularly with reference to the greater freedom of expression given to women in the latter, which in turn may reflect differences between communities following the Sunni and the Shī'ī sects of Islam.

5. FBD Marriage in Ḥusaynābād.

Before commenting in detail on FBD marriage in Ḥusaynābād a few observations will be made on the villagers' attitudes to marriage-choice generally, and the problems they saw therein. FBD marriage should be seen connected to a series of attitudes to all marriages, and since these concepts of the villagers motivated their actions they should not be ignored.

Endogamy in Ḥusaynābād is part of a general preference in the Middle East for marriages to be arranged within families. The Ḥusaynābādī villagers' explanation of this preference was that the families would know each other, the marriage was easily arranged, the bride-price not extortionate and, above all, the families would be the stronger for the union. The villagers explained that a family (the term 'extended family' is assumed) which married its sons to its daughters was thus united, and its

members could not be dominated by other families. Particularly liked was the marriage between the children of two brothers, i.e. FBD marriage. This was believed to have God's blessing in a special way not extended to other unions, even other family unions.[1] But most informants agreed that all family unions were very desirable. It was recognized that marriage brought quarrels (hence the delicacy of the negotiations), that quarrels were disagreeable and demeaning, particularly to a man, that they occurred over dissimilarities and unknown situations, and were therefore avoided as far as possible when kinsfolk intermarried. Such marriages were also believed to be more stable, the couple being held together by the additional bonds between their parents, and by the lack of discord brought about by unfamiliarity.[2]

The choice of marriage was not necessarily restricted to either a member of one's family, or a stranger, and by inference, non-preferred. A category of affinal kin came between the two. If a marriage had been successfully arranged between members of two families who had hitherto been unrelated then, it was felt, the way became open for further marriages to take place between the two families. Thus in those subsequent marriages the parties would not actually be related to each other, but their union had nevertheless arisen because of previous ties.[3] A

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.690. In Davarābād FBD marriages were described as "made in heaven". See also Patai, R.1967, op.cit., p.139.
2. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1931, op.cit., p.88.
3. ——————— 1935, op.cit., p.87.

frequent source of such marriages was the prevalence of second unions; for example a widower with a son by his first marriage would search for a bride for him among the family of his second wife, and perhaps a marriage would be arranged with her younger sister. These affinal marriages were most useful in extending the range of kinship into which a preferred marriage could be arranged.

A family marriage was not preferred in all circumstances, however. It was openly expressed, by some informants of both sexes, that a friendly 'stranger', to whom one was drawn by natural sympathy, made a better choice of family to marry into, to avoid quarrels, than one's own.[1] This minority of informants explained that strangers would be on their guard to avoid offence, and so could contact each other harmoniously. They correctly pointed out that quarrels took place in intra-family marriages. These informants seemed to be implying that the very closeness of the family brought tensions into the open, and that the ties of family and marriage were in conflict, and could not be resolved.

In village society there was one marriage choice which was, theoretically, to be avoided. It will be recalled that in the discussion of kinship the villagers were reported as saying: "Seed and stomach do not mix". For this reason they also maintained that marriage should not

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1. This viewpoint was also expressed in Davarābād. See Alberts, R.C. 1959,op.cit., p.691.

take place with the MBD.[1] This type of marriage did in fact occur, but when questioned on the discrepancy, informants tended to shrug their shoulders and say that the present generation were a godless lot and did not act as they ought or that, presented with a request from the mother's brother for a marriage, they could hardly refuse. It seems clear that this prohibition reflects, in the present at least, more a dichotomy in the structure of kinship than an actual avoidance of this type of marriage, and that if it was enforced in the past, its sociological context has passed with it, and can only be a matter for conjecture.

In favouring the parallel-cousin marriage, three differences from the Arab patterns must be noted: the bride-price is not foregone,[2] the nephew does not have a 'right' to his FBD, as is noted by Dickson, Musil and Murray who are quoted by Patai on this point,[3] a right revealed by the third difference, the obligation on her father's part of having to pay off the nephew in order to be able to marry his daughter elsewhere.[4] None of these

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1. c.f. among the Bedouin of Cyrenaica marriage with the MBD was also preferred, though not so compulsively as with the FBD. Peters, E.L. 1960, op.cit., p.44.

2. Patai, R. 1955, op.cit., p.375.

3. Ibid., p.377.

4. Ibid., p.375. See also Patai, R. 1965, op.cit., pp.332-3 and Sweet, Louise, 1960, op.cit., p.208.

features existed in cousin-marriage in the region studied. A final point to be remembered as background to the analysis of Ḥusaynābād endogamy is that it was frequently said that "Married relatives do not divorce". To what extent this was true will be examined in due course, meanwhile it should be borne in mind.

With this background we can begin to examine how, in fact, marriages were arranged in Ḥusaynābād. The great advances in the study of FBD marriages made by those who have used a detailed statistical analysis was appreciated at the time of fieldwork, but it was impossible to apply such an analysis to Ḥusaynābād. Goldberg has summarized the starting-point of such analyses thus:-

> "The statement that 10% of the marriages are with an FBD does not take into consideration such factors as 1) how many people have an FBD 2) how many people have an FBD of marriageable age".[1]

and without such details statistical analysis cannot be made.

Only a few marriages took place during fieldwork, when assessment of genuine choice could be made. To attempt to collect the necessary data to determine not only whom people did marry, but also whom they might have married from marriages already contracted was not possible. Informants could not always remember the exact order of marriages (i.e. whether the FBD was available to them or not, at the time of their marriage). People tended to be

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1. Goldberg, H. 1967, op.cit., p.178.

vague about ages (and the success of an analysis such as Goldberg's depends on the knowledge of exact ages). It was found also in the few cases where checking was possible, that an informant would tend to deny that he could have married the FBD (or her parallel-cousin equivalent) if she had been married elswhere, even when she had in fact been available to him at the correct time. Post hoc in Ḥusaynābādī memories having replaced propter hoc, the details of marriages in Ḥusaynābād are limited to those which actually occurred.

Table XIX: Husaynābād: all marriages contracted by villagers

At time of marriage spouse was	Marriage with:-	1 FBD	2 FZD	3 MBD	4 MZD	5 Other patri-kin	6 Other matri-kin	7 others related somehow	8 Others related through a prev. marriage	9 Not re-lated	Total
In same village	1st marriages	* 7	5	2	2	4	2	-	4	49	75
	Subse-quent marriages	1	-	—	—	-	—	1		16	18
In differ-ent village	1st marriages	* 3	3	4	2	1	—	1	1	17	32
	Subse-quent marriages	-	-	—	—	-	—	1	1	12	14
Total		11	8	6	4	5	2	3	6	94	139
%		7.90	5.75	4.31	2.86	3.59	1.43	2.15	4.32	67.7	100%

Notes: 1) These columns are mutually exclusive: i.e. each marriage appears only once.
2) A marriage is treated as a first marriage provided it is the first for one spouse, even if not so for both.

* Includes 1 parallel-cousin marriage, which would be FBD apart from one intervening male generation i.e. FFBD or FBSD. The villagers insisted these were true FBD marriages, the difference for analysis is negligible.

There are four important features of Ḥusaynābād marriage shown here. First is the preferential order of kinship

marriages referred to earlier. Second is the preference to marry within the place of residence. Third is the tendency of in-kin marriages to be restricted to first marriages. Now first marriages are arranged by the spouses' relatives, the choice and arrangements being left to the parties concerned only in subsequent unions. Thus this table shows clearly, fourth, the influence of their relatives in arranging the spouses' first marriages.

Thus FBD marriage in Ḥusaynābād is part of a series of preferential marriages, but part also of a decided preference for intra-village marriage, and depends upon its frequency as to whether a first or a subsequent union is involved. These last two points are perhaps clarified in the table below:

Table XIXB:
Ḥusaynābād: summary of all marriages contracted by villagers

No./ %	In same village	In different village	Totals	1st marriages	Subsequent marriages
Marriages with * kin	28 / 20.1%	17 / 12.2%	45 / 32.3%	41 / 29.4%	4 / 2.9%
Marriages with non-kin	65 / 46.8%	29 / 20.9%	94 / 67.7%	66 / 47.6%	28 / 20.1%
Total	93 / 66.9%	46 / 33.1%	139 / 100%	107 / 77.0%	32 / 23.0%

*Columns 1-8 in table XIXA

In an attempt to relate this pattern of marriages to that of a wider population a random sample of 10 of the 70 Ḥusaynābād households was taken, and genealogies were drawn for each household member. The results are shown in Table XXA, summarized in Table XXB, the marriages already in Table XIX being omitted.

Table XXA: Marriages from sample genealogies

At time of marriage spouse was	1 FBD	2 FZD	3 MBD	4 MZD	5 other patri-kin	6 other matri-kin	7 others related somehow	8 others related through a previous marriage	9 not kin	Total
In same village	14	6	4	11	11	5	9	7	113	180
In different village	2	2	5	2	4	2	2	4	51	74
Total	16	8	9	13	15	7	11	11	164	254
%	6.30	3.16	3.55	5.11	5.89	2.75	4.42	4.42	64.4	100

Notes: 1) These columns are mutually exclusive, each marriage appearing only once.
2) only one marriage/head was recorded. This may not have been the actual first marriage, but it was the one which was longest established, i.e., the marriage for that individual in the mind of the informant.

Table XXB: Summary of marriages from sample genealogies

No./%	In same village	In different village
Marriages with kin*	67 / 26.3%	23 / 9.1%
Marriages with non-kin	113 / 44.5%	51 / 20.1%
Total	180 / 70.8%	74 / 29.2%

* columns 1-8 above.

Table XIX and Table XX compare very closely with each other, the slightly lower proportions of kin marriages found in Table XX being due perhaps to some first marriages being unrecorded, see note 2) above, some of which would have been in-kin marriages, and proportionately more so than subsequent marriages. On the whole, though, the close correspondence

of the tables suggests that this marriage pattern is typical of more villages than those reached by the sample. Thus it is legitimate to totalise the data from Ḥusaynābād and the sample, all the data collected, as in Table XXI.

Table XXI: Summary of all data collected, marriages according to type

Marriage	FBD	FZD	MBD	MZD	other patri-kin	other matri-kin	others related somehow	others related through a prev. marriage	Total kin	non kin	Total
Total	27	16	15	17	20	9	14	17	135	258	393
%	6.87	4.07	3.82	4.33	5.09	2.28	3.56	4.33	34.35	65.65	100

A further reason for the diminution of kin marriages in subsequent unions is that the pool of potential spouses has been diminished and there is less choice facing the individual. (In other words, when a man seeks to re-marry, all his female relatives will probably be already married off.) So in comparing the data from Ḥusaynābād with FBD marriage elsewhere, it is probably accurate to take only those marriages made when the choice was at its widest, that is, first marriages only.

Table XXII: Ḥusaynābād; 1st marriages only

Marriage with:-	FBD	FZD	MBD	MZD	other patri-kin	other matri-kin	others related somehow	others related through a previous marriage	not kin	Total
Total	10	8	6	4	5	2	1	5	66	107
%	9.37	7.49	5.61	3.74	4.67	1.88	0.97	4.67	61.6	100

FBD marriage data from other studies are compared with the Ḥusaynābād data in Appendix B.

Thus in Ḥusaynābād 26.21% of first marriages were between

first cousins, of all types, and 38.4% of all first marriages were made with kin of one kind or another. This shows a definite preference for kin marriage, when it is remembered that non-kin are more numerous in any population. Among the kin marriages the highest preference is for FBD marriage. It should also be noted that, in this sample, more than 70% of marriages were arranged within the same village.

The prevalence of in-kin marriages is also illustrated in certain genealogies. When large genealogies are examined, it is apparent that the spread of kin-marriages follows very much the same pattern in each.

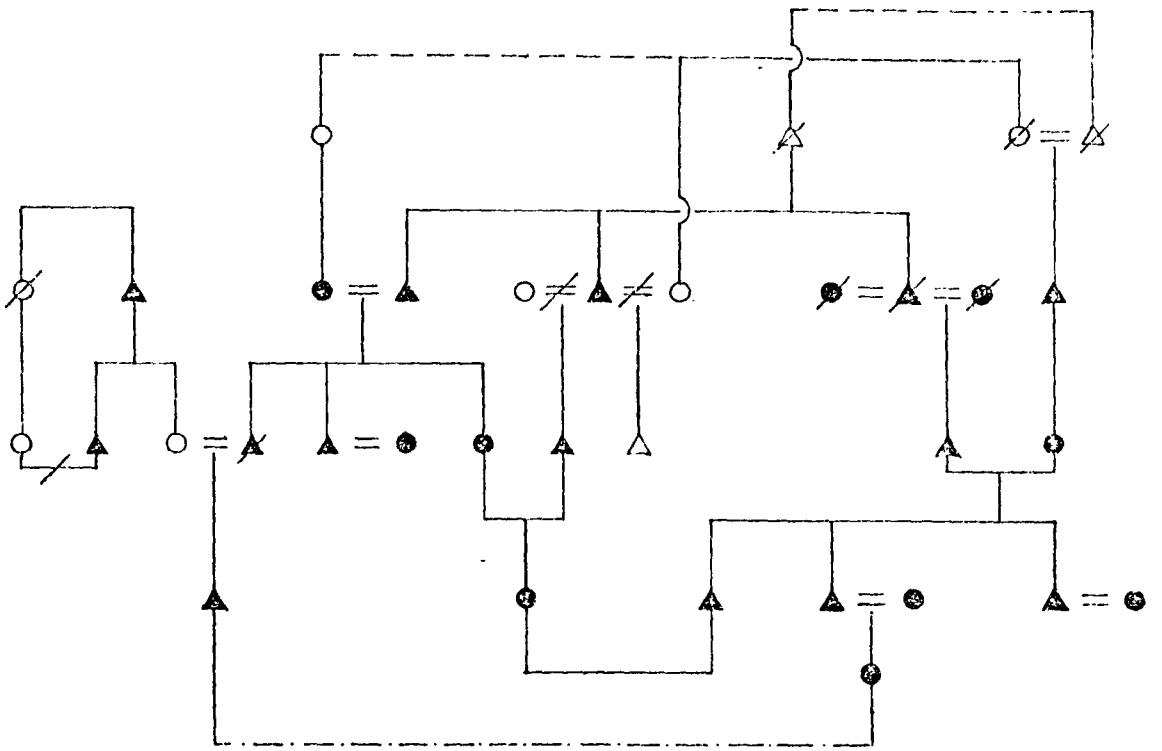
Table XXIII: Husaynābād: certain large genealogies

No. of marriages in each genealogy.	FBD	FZD	MBD	MZD	other patri-kin	other matri-kin	others related somehow	others related through a previous marriage	not kin
11	1			1	1			3	5
13	2								11
12			1	1			3	2	5
32		1	1		3	1		2	24
14	3	1	1		2	1			6
36	2		1	1	2	1	1		28
10	1			1	5			1	2
23	2			4	1	1	1		14
11		2	1						9
163	11	4	5	8	14	4	5	8	104

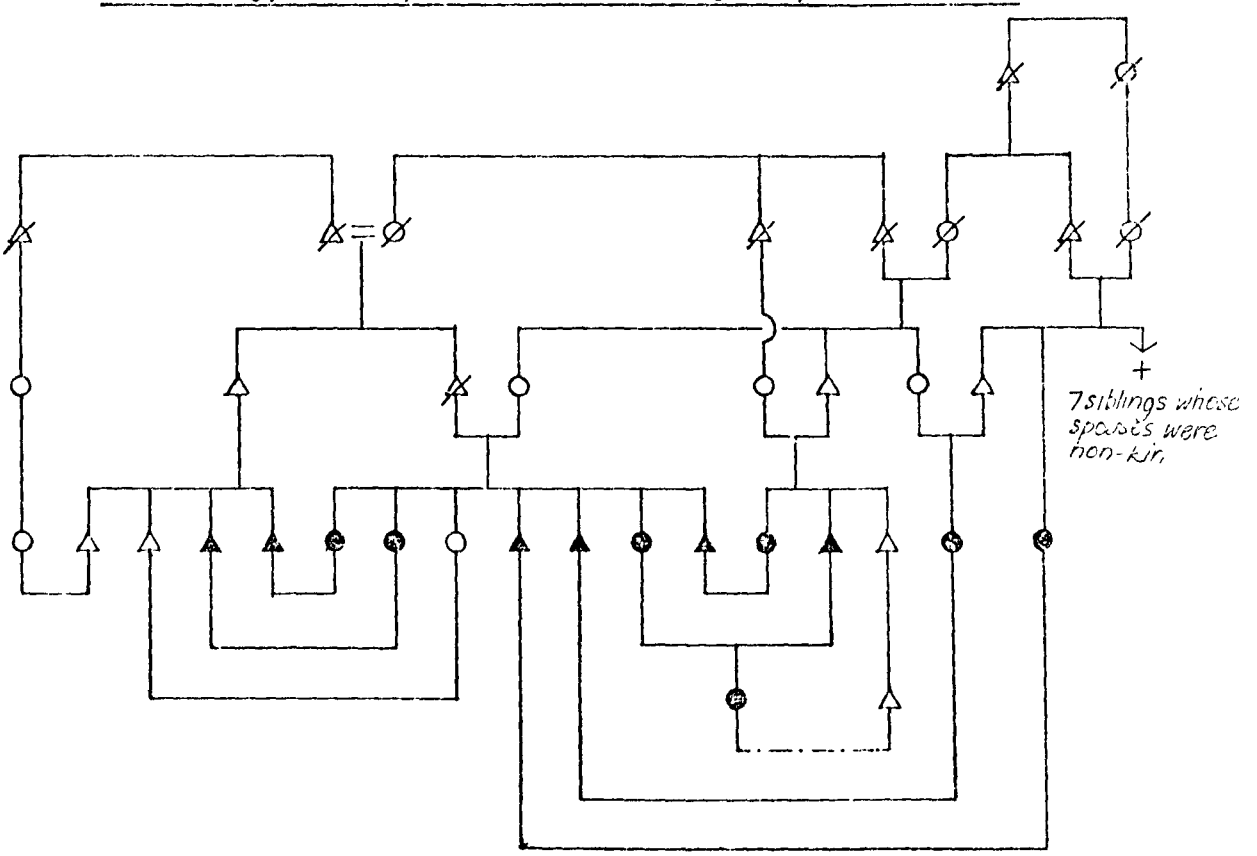
The action of in-kin marriages can also be shown in the genealogies themselves, in diagram 7, where the encysting tendency is revealed in specific examples. Not all genealogies showed such a high degree of encystment as the ones which follow. On the other hand, none of the Husaynābād genealogies had no inter-kin marriages in it. The first genealogy is of Husaynābād peasants formerly living in

Diagram 7: Genealogies

A: Genealogy of Ḥusaynābād family of Bakshahr origins



B: Genealogy of Ḥusaynābād residents originally from Simnān



— — — Probable link
—·—·— Prospective marriage
△ ○ Resident in Ḥusaynābād or station at time of fieldwork
○=△ Indicates non-consanguineous marriages
○ △ Indicates consanguineous marriages
} in these and other genealogies

Bakshahr. As has been emphasised, disturbed local conditions have tended to break up families and thus work against in-marriage. By contrast, therefore, the second genealogy is of a peasant family now resident in Husaynābād but who formerly lived for many generations in Simnān, where greater security prevailed.

In discussing the explanation of FBD marriage here offered, it will be useful to recall that Leach has said that it might be possible to distinguish two entirely different categories of unilineal descent; one in which

> "the ongoing structure is defined by descent alone"

and the other in which

> "unilineal descent is linked with a strongly defined rule of 'preferred marriage'".[1]

It is hoped to show that his distinction is valid, that societies practising FBD marriage belong to the second category, that FBD marriage is part of the "ongoing structure" of descent, integrated with it and functioning as part of it.

Murphy and Kasdan have indicated the importance of endogamous marriage in the formation of endogamous unilineal descent groups,[2] but they have not suggested that endogamous marriage, and FBD marriage in particular, is itself part of that structure. Yet the conclusion seems inescapable.

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1. Leach, E.R. 1957. Aspects of Bridewealth and Marriage Stability among the Kachin and Lakher. MAN, vol.57, no.4, 59, p.55.

2. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1959 & 1967, op.cit.

It will be recalled that, in Husaynābād, the males of each lineage feel identified with each other for two reasons. Firstly, as males from one male ancestor, and secondly as members of the male elite group with its special relationship with God. It will also be recalled that the villagers described FBD marriage (and this form alone) as being 'of God', meaning not only its acquired religious merit but also, in a more mystical sense, the direct participation achieved through such marriages in the pure, male nature of God. In fact, although the villagers did not equate the two exactly, they were implying that the beliefs which they attached to FBD marriage were the same as those they attributed to the relationship between males of a lineage, and in particular were the same as in the relationship between two brothers, as those lineage members with the closest religious and descent identity. FBD marriage in further strengthening this identity (and, in reality, the bond between brothers might well need strengthening) acquired some of the merit which was believed to exist in it.

Fortes has shown that an individual has two fields of activities, the descent field, in which he does not act as an individual but as a member of a group with whose members he is, in these activities, considered identical, and the kinship field, in which he can create those relationships he needs as a unique ego.[1] In an exogamous society such as the Tallensi marriage belongs to the

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1. Fortes, M. 1959a, op.cit.

kinship sphere, the individual's choice being a matter for those aspects of himself in which he acts as an individual. But in an endogamous society a marriage within the agnatic group is based on a pre-existing lineage relationship, the choice being directed by the lineage aspect of the individual's activities. Thus in endogamous marriage the individual is acting as a member of the group, and the endogamous marriage is an action in the field of descent. Just as the Tallensi preserve their lineages by maintaining the ancestral cults round which lineage membership centres,[1] so in endogamous societies the central feature of lineage membership is the very endogamy which is directed to the continuation of the lineage. And these lineage actions, both among the Tallensi and in Ḥusaynābād, are highlighted by the unique religious feeling attached to them.

Thus what is preserved in endogamous marriage is not the structure of the family, as Khuri suggested, but the lineage itself, and the feelings attached to it. FBD marriage preserves the central core of the lineage, the relationship between two brothers. FBD marriage therefore prevents the spreading of the lineage, and brings fusion to the point at which fission would normally occur.

The reason behind the Ḥusaynābād saying "Married relatives do not divorce" can now be understood. It does not damage a lineage if a marriage contracted outside it

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1. Fortes, M. 1945, op.cit., p.103.

be broken, since the marriage and the lineage membership are in two different fields of activities. The dissolution of a marriage in the kinship field would leave descent arrangements unaffected. But a marriage which is also a descent-orientated action cannot be allowed to bring its ephemeral nature into the field of descent; an FBD marriage which was broken would break up the agnatic group. Thus a marriage in the field of descent must acquire some of the permanency of the other actions in this sphere, the permanence of the descent group itself. This saying then also shows that marriage is a descent action.

It will be recalled that Fortes suggested that status in the politico-jural domain was achieved by filiation. This might cast doubts on the structural importance of endogamous marriage as a means of achieving status. Fortes makes it plain that marriage, viewed structurally, may be a contract in the politico-jural domain, but the internal composition of its units belongs in the domain of kinship.[1] In other words, the relationship between the married pair does not belong to the same sphere of activities as the relationships which groups formed by marriage have vis-a-vis each other. This may well be true in exogamous marriage where there is no tie of blood between the married pair. But in endogamous marriage the descent ties which unite them are of the same sort as the descent ties which unite the different

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1. Fortes, M. 1959a, op.cit., p.195.

groups formed by marriage with each other, for in both instances they are lineage ties.

Thus the distinction between the internal composition of the endogamous group, and its external relationships, becomes blurred. Furthermore, endogamous marriage tends to avoid the creation of different marriage groups confronting each other structurally. In endogamous marriage the group is strengthening itself internally, being the sphere of activity to which its structural actions are directed. In the endogamous society the creation of external alliances is of lesser significance. With their diminution the internal arrangements of the unit have greater structural importance.

The status of women in Ḥusaynābād brings further confirmation to this hypothesis. Fortes says that a woman who has no status by complimentary filiation (i.e. who retains no status as a daughter and sister after marriage) is undivorceable.[1] Sanwal confirms this.[2] But a Ḥusaynābād woman retains considerable status after marriage, particularly as a daughter, and this is exercised for her benefit: she is not lost to the care and control of her natal lineage, as in the Zulu and ancient Chinese systems, among others. Thus her undivorceability, although ideal and not absolute, must be for another reason; and I suggest that it is because the marriage itself, its internal composition, becomes a politico-jural matter, as

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1. Fortes, M. 1959a, op.cit., p.208.

2. Sanwal, R.D. 1966, op.cit., p.57.

immutable as descent and therefore as unalterable.

In summary, in this form of endogamy, certain principles of descent: the identity of members, the permanence of the group, the core-directed activities of its members: are acted out in that sphere of relationships, the sphere of marriage and kinship, in which the individual usually establishes his own unique position. By this transference of a set of ideals and their concomitant actions from one sphere to another, FBD marriage is brought into the sphere of descent activities and acquires its characteristics.

It has been indicated that an explanation of FBD marriage should not be inconsistent with an explanation offered of the other forms of in-kin unions. These other marriages, which, in total, are more than the FBD group taken by itself, have not usually received much attention, and not much more will be given here. But it should be noted that the explanation of FBD marriage here offered is not inconsistent with a similar explanation for non-FBD kin marriages. Thus the other cousin marriages can be seen as being arranged to preserve the kinship system of mutually beneficial friendships, which itself arranges the marriages. The main duty of the group, either the descent group or the kinship group, is to preserve itself, which it does in this society by arranging marriages amongst its members. And the fact that a person's first marriage is directed by his relatives helps to ensure that marriages will be group-oriented, for the young man or young woman concerned will not be interested to the same extent as his

relatives as to whether his marriage helps to preserve the unity of his lineage or his kinship network.

It is worth indicating some results of FBD marriage upon lineage structure. It can be seen as a mechanism working towards lineage cohesion. In families where FBD marriage (or patrilateral parallel-cousin marriage at least) is practised over successive generations the agnatic group is able to maintain control over its members throughout their lives, and FBD marriage is the only way this can be achieved. Murphy and Kasdan have suggested that FBD marriage can be regarded as an extension of "Father-Right", that is, not only is the allocation of the woman's fertility left in the control of the agnatic group, but by FBD marriage the results of her fertility, her offspring, are also part of the lineage.[1] On the other hand, Murphy and Kasdan show that, contrary to its desired aim, FBD marriage may weaken the agnatic core,[2] and the Husaynabad saying "Married relatives do not divorce" might be interpreted as a recognition of this.

Which is stronger, the structure of the descent-group or that of the marriage tie? Murphy and Kasdan suggest that this relationship from the field of kinship, brought into the field of descent, tends to weaken it. However, in Ḥusaynābād disruptive action is avoided by transforming the somewhat ephemeral nature of the marriage bond (adequate enough in the ephemeral sphere of kinship where it usually belongs) into an action within the sphere of

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1. Murphy, R.F. & Kasdan, L. 1967, op.cit., p.13.

2. ——— ——————— 1959, op.cit., p.23.

descent. Whether, therefore, FBD marriage weakens or strengthens the lineages can only be found out by examining the strength of actual families. The patrilateral parallel-cousin marriages which occurred successively in certain Ḥusaynābād families did not seem to weaken them, in fact the brothers in such families tended to be work-partners more often than among less in-married families. A similar cohesion could be seen among in-marrying landowning families, especially with respect to greater co-operation over qanāt control. Barth suggests that the frequency of FBD marriage will be lower in villages with less developed lineage organisation.[1] It would seem that, in baksh society, the marriages arranged within the agnatic core tended to strengthen the ties between agnates, and that the peasants of Ḥusaynābād were able, in this respect, to manipulate their social customs in the direction they desired.

It is interesting that Campbell finds himself unable to speak of the shepherds of Sarakatsan as forming any descent groups; rather he prefers to describe them as bilateral kindred with an emphasis on the patriline. Associated with this are marriages exogamous to the kindred, which themselves force collaterals apart, and limit the time through which a corporate group based solely on kinship can exist, to such extent that only the elementary family can exist as such a group for a period as long as a generation.[2]

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1. Barth, F. 1954, op.cit., p.169.

2. Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., pp.50-51.

In societies practising endogamous marriage, on the other hand, the links in a previous generation are re-inforced in a later one, and the group acquires a coherence through time which enables it to be termed a descent group. It can be seen, therefore, that endogamous marriages contribute directly to the formation of the descent group itself, thus further suggesting that FBD marriage is a principle of descent.

The relationship between FBD marriage and other preferential systems can be noted briefly, and mention made of Lévi-Strauss'sgreat work on the subject. His major thesis is that those marriages which, by preferring one union and prohibiting another, ensure that the group gives its women to a different group than the one from which it receives them, and in turn, by bringing as many groups of the society into the system of exchange, provide the greater stability of the society as a whole. The marriage which, by preference and prohibition, brings about the involvement of the maximum number of groups is the preference for matrilateral cross-cousin marriage in a patrilineal society.[1] Assuming that societies can manipulate their customs to suit their ends,[2] it can be seen that endogamous marriage in

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1. Lévi-Strauss, C. 1969 (revised edition). The Elementary structures of Kinship (trans.) J.H. Bell & J.R. Von Sturmer (ed.) R. Needham. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, p.445.

2. This has been called a final-cause theory. See Homans, G.C. & Schneider, D.M. 1955. Marriage,Authority and Final Causes. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, p.17.

Husaynābād can be deduced from Lévi-Strauss's hypothesis. In Husaynābād the funtion of the preferred marriage was not to involve as many groups as possible so as to achieve society's cohesion, but to retain the females born to a lineage so as to preserve the lineages' cohesion. The marriage which achieved this end was the very one preferred, that is, marriage with the father's brother's daughter or at least with a patrilateral parallel cousin. The marriage to avoid was that which, by Lévi-Strauss's idea, would donate the girl to the group most directly opposed to the lineage, that is, marriage with the mother's brother's daughter, and it is a confirmation of Lévi-Strauss's theory that this marriage was theoretically prohibited in Husaynābād. Moreover, as Radcliffe-Brown pointed out, the sibling of the parent tends to have attributed to him the character of the sex of that parent.[1] This means that the mother's brother, the dā'ī in Husaynābād, took on some of the character of the female with which a Husaynābādī was anxious to avoid association and which marriage to a female from his own agnatic group as near as possible avoided.

It must be admitted that FBD marriage as here seen directly contradicts the hypothesis of Homans and Schneider:

> "Societies in which marriage is allowed or preferred with the father's sister's daughter but forbidden with or disapproved with mother's brother's daughter

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1. Radcliffe-Brown, A.R. 1952. Structure and Function in Primitive Society. London: Cohen & West, p.19.

will be societies in which jural authority over ego male, before marriage, is vested in his mother's father's or mother's brother's lineage".[1]

They have excluded as atypical those few patrilineal societies in which patrilateral-cousin marriage occurs.[2] Nevertheless, Homans and Schneider are dealing with exogamous societies. With endogamous societies the question of group-exchange does not arise, and with the reversal in the direction in which the women go, it is clear that there will also be a reversal in the desired and prohibited unions. It is not within the scope of this thesis to take the arguments over cross-cousin marriage further than this.

6. Marriage: Preliminaries.

The nature and conditions of Islamic marriage have been described by Abdelfaki.[3] One of the differences between Bakshahr and Ḥusaynābād is that in the town the women take a more active part in arranging marriages, because the wealthier men feel that a preoccupation with family matters would lower their dignity. In the villages the women, because of their reputed stupidity,

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1. Homans, G.C. & Schneider, D.M. 1955, op.cit., p.51.
2. Ibid., p.48.
3. Abdelfaki? 1964. Les Marriages en Tripolitaine (in French). Tripoli: Libyan Publishing House.

are not entrusted with this delicate task, such matters being almost entirely in the hands of the men.

It was not considered seemly that a couple should seek out a husband for their marriageable daughter.[1] In Ḥusaynābād this was not necessary as there seemed to be a surplus of young men and each girl's parents had received more than one overture for her hand. In other villages girls would wait longer for proposals, particularly the daughters of poor landowners living on their holdings and would seem not to marry until 16 or more. But in general, in both town and villages, the marriage ceremony took place when the girl was 8-10 and the boy 15-17, with the actual removal two years later.[2]

The reasons for such early marriage cannot be attributed entirely to the vagaries of population distribution. Grandqvist suggests four reasons for early marriage: firstly, to avoid disappointment in a proposed union, secondly, to obtain help with the work, thirdly, the mother-in-law, by bringing up her daughter-in-law, will thus be able to dominate her, and fourthly, to avoid exposing the girl to moral dangers.[3] Apart from the first

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1. c.f. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.612. Mention of an unmarried girl should be left to others. In Bakshahr the removal of a girl from school was an indication that her parents were willing to consider suitors.

2. c.f. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.179. Turkish boys are usually married at 15-18, with consummation two years later. Girls are married at 10-12, or even younger. See also Alberts, R.C.1959, op.cit., p.676.

4. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1931, op.cit., pp.42-6.

reason, which had some applicability in Ḥusaynābād, the other advantages of early marriage are to some extent negated if the marriage ceremony of removal is delayed, as was the case in Ḥusaynābād. Informants stressed that the amount of work a girl could do was negligible in any case, so that her economic loss to her family was slight, and her importation little gain, while if she were married early to rid her parents of the burden of an extra mouth, then removal would not be delayed. There are in fact two problems, one, why is marriage early, two, why is removal delayed.

The second question is more easily answered than the first. Removal was delayed to allow time for the bride-price to be paid, and because the girl was still too young to leave home. The reasons for early marriage are more complex, and require greater examination. Grandqvist's first and fourth reasons are valid, but the fourth in particular needs some expansion, especially as Alberts also indicates that early marriage is linked with the preservation of morality.[1] The questions can be asked: what are the 'moral dangers' to which the girl might be exposed? Or, more bluntly, why is the preservation of virginity so important? Pre-puberty marriage will achieve more than this, since a girl can be sexually mature and still virgin, so there is a suggestion that the pre-puberty marriage of girls achieved more than the preservation of virtue.

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.650.

Certain attitudes of the Ḥusaynābādī villagers towards the procreative process explain in part their wish for the early marriage of girls. Each menstruation was believed to have been a potential child, and proof of God's intention that a child should then have been conceived. Consequently the villagers expressed the view that it was a sin for a daughter to menstruate in her father's house,[1] if there were no prospect of an early marriage and if suitors were sent away. (If there were no suitors, or if the girl were already married and being removed in the forseeable future, no harm was done; the sin lay in the deliberate avoidance of the use of the girl's fertility). Early marriage, therefore, avoided this particular sin by ensuring that the girl's fertility was utilized as soon as it was available. (Some informants had, in fact, conceived before their first menstruation, which had puzzled even some of the more educated.) Since the preservation of virginity until marriage was considered essential (and is important in our society), this too should be considered as a reason for early marriage.

The Ḥusaynābād villagers believed that women could not control their sexual impulses and that, left to themselves,

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1. This belief has been used to justify the orthodoxy of pre-puberty marriage among Brahmin girls. See Alkehar, A.S. 1938. The position of women in Hindu civilization from Pre-Historic Times to the Present Day. London. p.67, discussed by Yalman, N. 1963. On the Purity of Women in the castes of Ceylon and Malabar. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol.93, part I, p.49.

they would be promiscuous after maturity. Antoun has said that the Quranic code of modesty is a means for controlling female sexuality.[1] Early marriage was seen as a device to control this sexuality; a girl married sufficiently young would not have been aroused by her own instincts and, as these matured, they would automatically become transferred to the husband to whom they rightfully belonged. Some informants spoke of their initial terror at intercourse, which wore off as their comprehension grew. Pre-puberty marriage also removed the girl from another source of sexual danger: her father. While it was felt that her sexuality was to some extent an affront to his purity, it was held even more strongly that it was a man's privilege to take advantage of any situation which might arise. The villagers implied that pre-puberty marriage was also a device to prevent the possibility of father-daughter incest.

Early marriage in Ḥusaynābād can be compared with Yalman's remarkable exposition of how the preservation of the sexual purity of women is necessary to the preservation of caste.[2] In Ḥusaynābād society we see many similar customs connected with the control of female sexuality: the belief in the defiling presence of menstrual blood, the combination of early marriage and segregation to preserve the purity of the women before marriage. In Yalman's analysis this is connected with preserving the purity of

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1. Antoun, R.T. 1968, op.cit., p.691.

2. Yalman, N. 1963, op.cit., especially pp.43-8.

caste: the woman must only engage sexually with a'pure' man, otherwise she will bear polluted children who will not be eligible for caste membership.[1] Yalman himself says that the preservation of female purity can exist apart from a caste situation.[2] In Ḥusaynābād, where caste in the Hindu sense is unknown, perhaps it is possible to see the controls over female sexuality as attempts to prevent their potential immorality and ritual uncleanliness from polluting that most exclusive 'caste' of all, the male.

Women are seen as polluting men. Grandqvist points out that a man's ritual uncleanliness can only come through a woman, that is through cohabitation with her. She also indicates the greater ritual impurity to which women are prone, since they have three sources of impurity (cohabitation, menstruation and childbirth) where the men have only one.[3] It is perhaps less easy to see that men can be regarded as a separate caste, yet some features of a caste system are present in the relationship between the two sexes as it appears in Ḥusaynābād and perhaps in all other Muslim societies. Men have unique religious potential, since they alone are made in the image of God and they alone can contact Him. The pollution concept itself is perhaps also caste-like. No exchange of personnel between castes of different sexes is possible. The right of men to allocate their women to men whom they consider appropriate is also

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1. Yalman, N. 1963, op.cit., p.41.
2. Ibid., p.54.
3. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1935, op.cit., p.162.

similar to the control over marriage which Yalman describes. In both the true caste situation and in Ḥusaynābād, this right of allocation is linked with a form of preferential marriage and with the necessity of preserving the woman's purity for the man to whom she has been allocated. And since, in Ḥusaynābād, all men are considered to have a higher status than all women, whoever a woman marries, her purity is worth preserving for him, in order that his may be preserved.

In summary, the concept of the differences between the sexes in Ḥusaynābad suggests a similarity with certain concepts in societies practising caste differentiation, particularly in the field of marriage arrangements. These similarities are the male control over marriage allocation,[1] their innate purity as opposed to the innate impurity of women, and the necessity of their absolute control over female sexuality. In Ḥusaynābād, where true caste differentiation was unknown it is possible that the sexes themselves, as differentiated from each other, had some of the features of separate castes, and preferred marriages, which preserve the caste structure in Ceylon, Malabar and elsewhere, were used in Ḥusaynābād to preserve the status of the male group as a whole.

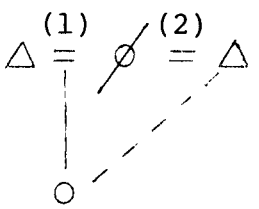
Ḥusaynābād, and other societies with similar beliefs, has to contend with two opposing ideas; one, that men are

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1. In Bakshahr, where women may arrange the preliminaries to a marriage, men still conduct and control the formalities.

contaminated by women, and the other, that contact with them must be made in order to preserve the species. A reconciliation of sorts can be made if the man can control the woman's sexuality, to do which he must initiate it, and thus the girl should be a virgin. Thus while it is true to say that early marriage was arranged in Ḥusaynābād to preserve the girl's virginity, what was important was her sexual innocence, of which the virginity was only a symbol. It was the control of innocence rather than the control of actual virginity which was the aim of early marriage.[1]

The forbidden degrees of marriage in the region in which Ḥusaynābād is situated have been given by Spooner.[2] There was one exception to the rules which Spooner gives: in the village a man could never marry his wife's daughter by her previous marriage if there were children by his own marriage to her: i.e.



The marriage indicated by ---- was permissible only if (2) was childless.

There were always formalities in village marriages, although for those arranged within the village they were

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1. c.f. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.180. A girl may find it difficult to make a good marriage if an engagement is broken, because she has already been embraced by another.

2. Spooner, B.J. 1965b, op.cit., p.26.

reduced to a minimum. A young man would not make the overtures himself. In Ḥusaynābād, and similar villages, he would have seen and known the daughters of his neighbours, and many marriages took place because a young man became attracted to a girl he had watched grow up in his own qal'eh. He would undoubtedly be able to engage her in occasional conversation, and perhaps suggest marriage to herhimself. The impression of a favourable attitude being received, the more formal discussions which he would then ask his parents to initiate on his behalf with her parents, if both sides were willing, would not be unduly protracted, and a go-between would not be employed. Equally informal were the arrangements of a marriage between close cousins, which had perhaps been contemplated by the parents of the pair for some years. Close to the time that the actual marriage was intended a few visits would be paid by the boy's parents to the girl's; if she lived in another village his mother usually went alone, to avoid the man having to interrupt his work in the fields. Such visits were sufficient to finalise permission for the marriage, and to make arrangements for the ceremony. Again, in such marriages, a go-between was not used, and most village marriages were thus informally arranged.

Formal negotiations involving protracted visits to the girl's home and the use of a go-between, took place when the outcome was genuinely uncertain. A distant relative or a non-kinsman would have to be circumspect in approaching the father of a girl whom he wished for his son. He would send a go-between, the preferential order of whom was the FB or MB of the groom, or, in the absence of men of the senior

generation, his elder brother or brother-in-law. Such a go-between was always a man, since it was the girl's father whose permission he had to obtain. He would approach him casually, when meeting him in the fields or in the village lanes, or, more formally, would come to the house. At the first meeting he would not make his business known, but would let it emerge gradually, and equally gradually the father would make known his reply. By the avoidance of straightforward discussion at the beginning of the negotiations undignified acrimony was avoided.

A father would always protest that his daughter was too young, and the bride-price too high; the two men came to understand each other over the length of time, by the vehemence with which the assurances were repeated, and the quality of the hospitality which the go-between was offered. After half-a-dozen meetings a picture would emerge; the go-between would either return to inform his family that a search must be made elsewhere for a bride, or the father of the girl would have signified his willingness to the match by the formula of asking the go-between to return. In the former case the aspirant family might try again by sending another go-between, of higher status than the first (such as a member of a land-owning family to whom they might be related), though this rarely altered the refusal.

It can be seen that the delicacy of the go-between situation is in some respects equivalent to a courtship between the young couple. Each side is anxious to avoid giving offence to the other and, while negotiations are taking place, anxious to cultivate the appearance of concern and

admiration for the other.

Once the fact of the marriage had been agreed, discussions of the marriage-payments which followed were not nearly so protracted. A willing father would not make his demands too high, since to do this was one of the best means of refusing an unwanted suitor. If the price was considered a little steep, the go-between would haggle a little.

Marriage negotiations did not always run smoothly. A young man who had approached a neighbourhood girl might find her parents unwilling for the match. A proposed union between relatives might be refused when the time came, because the girl's parents had received a better offer for her (that is, from a family of higher status, as well as a greater price), or because the girl herself disliked the proposal. Nevertheless, in contrast to what Stirling found in Sakaltutan,[1] there was no elopement in Bakshahr or in the villages around it. This can perhaps be attributed to the seclusion of the girls and to their youth, but more important is the deference paid to a father's position and the fact that a marriage could not be arranged without a prior agreement to pay bride-price.

Whereas the father had the choice over who could marry his daughter, and although negotiations were carried out with him, his was not the only choice in the final selection. Nor did the girl's mother, in the villages at any rate, have much to say in the matter: the girl had the privilege of

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1. Where approximately 1 in 20 marriages began by elopement. See Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.193.

deciding whether or not she married the accepted suitor. A girl might refuse a suitor for a number of reasons; among which disfigurement or a disagreeable nature were common. If the father thought well of the lad the girl might be coaxed to the union, but not coerced. If her refusal was adamant, the marriage would not take place. To the disappointed groom's parents her father would point out that the boy was for the bride, not for himself, and that the marriage was unlikely to succeed in such circumstances. This privilege of the final choice resting with the girl was one of the more agreeable features of village life, and can be contrasted with other places where refusal seems impossible.[1]

It was sometimes difficult for a girl to have seen a suitor, especially in Bakshahr, so, if she were doubtful, arrangements could be made whereby she could catch a glimpse of him. There were other subterfuges by which a young man could catch a glimpse of a girl's face before negotiations began. Such a glance often convinced the parties of the desirability of the union.[2]

Such negotiations were necessary only for the parties' first marriage. The father's choice over the disposal of his daughter was the most important aspect of his authority over her, a position which she greatly respected. In subsequent unions she would arrange matters herself; the

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1. Such as Art'as. See Grandqvist, Hilma. 1935, op.cit., p.57.

2. c.f. the opportunities provided by religious festivals. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.884.

father's privilege was to dispose of his daughter's innocence to the person whom he considered appropriate.

Yalman has pointed out the significance of the tali ceremonies, described by Gough, where the women are first allocated to "clean, pure, appropriate men, or at least, to objects symbolizing the ritual purity of the male principle"[1] before entering into procreative relationships. The tali is not a complete sexual union, whereas the first marriage of an Iranian village girl eventually is, but the principle which Yalman has elucidated applies to both; that it is up to the men to provide the correct allocation of the women. After the first marriage innocence has been lost, and hence control over its disposal is insignificant. All that is left is the woman herself, not the mystic purity which has been attributed to her, and thus she can arrange for her disposal herself.

Grandqvist considers that the father has the power to arrange marriages because he represents his family, and marriage is an arrangement between families.[2] While this has some truth, it does not explain the almost complete absence of relatives' concern over subsequent marriages in Ḥusaynābād, especially since a subsequent marriage can also have political implications.

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1. Yalman, N. 1963, op.cit., p.48. See also Gough, Kathleen. 1955. Female Initiation Rites on the Malabar Coast. Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute, vol.85, part I, pp.45-80.

2. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1931, op.cit., p.38.

The qualities desired in a girl were not necessarily good looks. An able-bodied girl was looked for, one who would be capable of carrying out the heavy household tasks. Rosenfeld in particular stresses the economic importance of the bride's labour.[1] The girl should also have a modest demeanour. Alberts gives a useful summary of the qualities desired.[2] Beyond these the qualifications for a spouse were not over-strict, and, in fact, despite the delicacy of the opening negotiations, a marriage for a particular person was not too difficult to arrange.

Marriage was seen as an economic necessity for both parties; the woman had no means of supporting herself, while a man's life was difficult without a housekeeper. Marriage was desired for the status and sexual freedom it brought, and was greatly desired by all parties for the children it was hoped would result. Grandqvist has indicated that children were desired for themselves as well as for their position as descendants,[3] and this was true of Ḥusaynābād. It was obvious that the antics and conversation of children brought some of the few pleasures in an otherwise harsh existance. Thus, in the village, marriage was a state to which all aspired and most expected to achieve, and there were not considered to be any compensatory merits in the unmarried state. Alberts's useful summary is that people

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1. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.48.

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.685.

3. Grandqvist, Hilma, 1931, op.cit., p.45.

marry for:

"Desire for community recognition of adult status and the ability to cope with it".

He also emphasises the comforts it brings, especially those of companionship and mutual concern for welfare.[1] There was, as it were, a spouse-shaped space in the lives of all but the very old and the seriously handicapped. All strove to fill this space as early as possible and, if it were emptied by divorce or early death, a replacement was quickly found.

7. Marriage: payments.

There has existed some controversy as to whether the money, or other commodities, paid for a girl at marriage should be considered as a purely social, or an economic transaction. The controversy has taken the form of discussing which of the terms "bridewealth" or "bride-price" should be used in this context. Evans-Pritchard has preferred the former term, since the economic function of bridewealth is not its only, or its most important, one.[2] Gray has preferred the latter, at least for societies such as the Sonjo, where the bride-price is similar to other economic transactions, using the same commodities and being

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.648.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1931. An alternative term for "bride-price". MAN, vol.31, no.3, 42, p.38.

part of the wider economic activities.[1] Dalton has attempted to reconcile these points of view by saying that bride-price can only be considered as an economic transaction within the limits of the economic organisation of the society in which it is found, but to call it an economic transaction does not mean that the economics involved approach those of Western society.[2]

This last approach is probably the best in which to regard the nature of the marriage payments in Ḥusaynābād, and the term "bride-price" is used. The payments are conceived by the actors concerned as economic activities, and at no point are any monies or goods used which are peculiar to the marriage situation. Marriage, in Ḥusaynābād, is an economic affair, and undoubtedly, for most villagers, the greatest economic transaction in which they will be involved in their lives. This is not to say that the transaction, particularly the payment of the bride-price itself, does not create and involve social relationships, but that these are expressed in the ordinary monetary terms of village society.

The marriage payment in Ḥusaynābād was in two parts, the bāshlīq[3] (c.f. baslik in Turkey)[4] and the qabāleh. The

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1. Gray, R.F. 1960. Sonjo Bride-price and the Question of African "Wife-Purchase". American Anthropologist, vol.62, part 1, pp.34-57.

2. Dalton, G. 1966. "Bridewealth" v "Brideprice". American Anthropologist, vol.68, part 3, pp.732-8.

3. Bāshlīq, means commander-in-chief, or head commander, and is of Turkish origin. It may have come from the Turkomān tribes in the region studied.

4. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.185

bāshlīq was an actual sum of money, paid over by the groom's father or the person in his position (an elder brother, for example) to the father of the girl or whoever was responsible for her. While the bāshlīq is best translated "bride-price", the qabāleh is best translated as "insurance"; it was an itemized list of money and goods written in the marriage contract as being the property of the bride in the event of her widowhood or her unilateral divorce. The items of both these sums were discussed during marriage negotiations, the settlement of both being equally important to the contract. They will be considered in greater detail.

The bāshlīq was a sum paid over for the person of the bride. Accustomed to the careful distinction in other societies between money used in normal transactions and cattle used in ceremonial exchanges such as marriage, it was a shock to hear the villagers state emphatically "we sell our daughters, like a radio or a car."[1] Grandqvist has emphasised that what is paid for is the economic value of the bride, in terms of the work she can do,[2] but she has also emphasised that payment was for the girl's fertility.[3] In Ḥusaynābād the bāshlīq was paid for the girl's sexual innocence or, as the villagers expressed it, her virginity.

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1. c.f. Gusii women, who say of themselves "We are bought, like cattle". Mayer, P. 1960. Gusii Bridewealth, Law and Custom. Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No.18. Cape Town & London: Oxford University Press. p.39

2. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1935, op.cit., p.149.

3. ——————— 1931, op.cit., p.133.

Confirmation of this was the considerably lesser amount paid for a widow or a divorced woman. Informants explained that a girl's virginity was the only valuable commodity she had, and was what was purchased; and they added that her virginity was the reason why first marriage ceremonies were so protracted and elaborate. It has already been explained why the purity of a girl and its correct disposal were so important in this society, so the high price paid for the symbol of purity follows naturally upon its importance.

In Ḥusaynābād the desirable bride-price was up to £50. A landowner with one small village might receive a bride-price of £250 for his daughter, and the price rose steeply as the social and urban scale was ascended, being about £1,000 for a landlord's daughter in Bakshahr. It is suggested that, roughly, the bāshlīq is the equivalent of a year's income at whatever level the bride's father subsists, the 'income' being that portion, in the peasant instance, of crops which he sells to buy cash goods, the value of what he uses himself not being counted. When the wedding-expenses are added, which are almost all the responsibility of the groom's side, a village wedding cost in the region of £100, that is, roughly the total value of everything the villager sold and utilized in a year.

The bāshlīq was paid over in instalments. An initial payment of about £10, in the case of a village wedding, would be made when the ceremony was performed, and the rest paid over the intervening period between then and the removal. One of the reasons for the delay in removal was to allow the payment of bāshlīq when the villager found it possible, and the payment of the final sum was the signal for the

preparations for the removal to begin.

The sum was provided, in the first instance, by the groom's father; in his absence by an elder brother, in his absence by the FB and in his absence by the MB. Usually one of the first was alive and able to help a youth, and this help was made only for his first marriage. For subsequent unions he found the money himself; which partially explains why a man rarely married a virgin more than once. Village bāshlīqs did not always reach the approved level of £50. Actual bāshlīqs paid over in recent years were £40 and £25; for a girl married within her family it was £20 and in one instance, admitted to be low, the bride was given for £10. Although it was said that the removal never took place until the final payment of bāshlīq had been made, in practice, if the groom's father was obviously poor, the final payment of £10 or so might be waived. The actual amount paid might not be agreed until the actual ceremony, but once paid, since it was used to buy marriage-goods, bāshlīq was not usually returnable in the event of a divorce, unless that took place before the removal.

It must not be thought that the lower bride-price for an in-family marriage was a reason for the preference for this type of union. In theory the bāshlīq should be the same whether a girl was a relative or not, being lower in an in-kin marriage to faciliate the union and to avoid imposing hardship upon one's relatives. The lower bride-price was an expression of its desirability, not an explanation of it.

Bāshlīq was usually waived in those marriages where sisters were exchanged between brothers,[1] although a slight

1. Called, in the Ḥusaynābād district, "cow-for-cow" marriages.

payment might be made where one family was much richer than the other.

The bāshlīq was specifically used to provide the goods that the bride took with her to her new home. The husband's family provided the shell of the home, all its contents, furniture, clothes and utensils, being provided by the bride's father. A good father would spend all the bāshlīq he received on such goods and, in the case of an only child, might augment from his own pocket; but if the family was poor it was understood that the father would keep some of the payments for his own use. Rarely, a father used all the money for himself, so that the girl was transferred empty-handed. The clothes that went with a girl were expected to last for ten years, and the household items were the major equipment for a lifetime. Consequently considerable prestige was attached to the generous father, for his deficiencies would not be augmented by others, and adequate provision made for a daughter was a sign of his good guardianship and his continued interest in her. Her husband's family would be slow to provide or replace the girl's household necessities, since once the removal had taken place these were their responsibility.

The qabāleh was the sum written into the marriage contract, it being held that it should always be higher than the bāshlīq. In Ḥusaynābād, since the bāshlīq was low, the qabāleh tended to be about twice as much, that is, about £100. For landlord families in Bakshahr, since the girl was already well-provided for by a higher bāshlīq, the qabāleh tended to be no more than half as much again. The qabāleh,

being promissory rather than an actual payment, was less subject to haggling and variation than the bāshlīq, which may also have been a reason for its comparative generosity. In the marriage-contract its value was usually written in two halves: the first being a sum of money, and the second being goods each to a certain value, a house worth so much, wheat worth so much, and so on. The goods of the bāshlīq being provided by the bride's family remained with her whatever happened, thus qabāleh itemized further goods and monies which would, in the event, be paid over by the husband's family. Thus a married woman would have all that she needed for a home, whatever happened to the marriage, for the rest of her life.

It is easy to distinguish between the bāshlīq and the qabāleh goods. They corresponded to the different goods associated with the different sexes as their responsibility. Thus clothes, cooking-pots and wrapping cloths were a woman's goods and concern, and were provided by the woman's side in the marriage. A house, sums of money, the actual floor-covering, foodstuffs (and most specifically wheat) were the man's concern in the division of responsibilities in daily life, and were what he provided in the marriage.

In theory, the qabāleh was an inheritance, the wife's for life. It should be paid over on marriage dissolution, either by death or divorce. Thus a widow should receive it on her husband's death, to enable her continued support, and a widower would pay it to his late wife's family, to her father, brother or sister, in that order as available. In practice, in the villages, a qabāleh was not usually paid

when a marriage ended in death, poverty being the reason, and was but rarely paid when the marriage ended in divorce.

With respect to second marriages, there was no levirate in the baksh. A widow might well marry her husband's brother with a minimal bāshlīq, but a second qabāleh had to be made, the first not being transferable. Similarly, if a sister was sent as a 'replacement' (see later), a second qabāleh had again to be made for her. It was the making of the qabāleh which constituted the marriage; the word applied both to the promissory sum and to the marriage contract itself, showing their interdependence in village minds. It was a village axiom that a woman in her husband's home had to have a qabāleh. And although bāshlīq might be absent in sister-exchange marriages, a qabāleh had to be promised for each girl at the customary amount. Similarly, the reduced bāshlīq for in-kin marriages in no way implied a reduction in the qabāleh.

The shīr bihā payment is mentioned in literature on Iranian marriages,[1] the name implies a payment made to the mother of the girl by the groom for raising her daughter. In the baksh region this payment was of no real importance. In landowning families it was perhaps £10, and in the villages it was not itemised separately; it was said that the shīr bihā and the bāshlīq were the same, since the households of the bride's father and mother were not separate.

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1. See Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.698 and Najafi, N. & Hinkley, H. 1960. Reveille for a Persian Village. London: Victor Gollancz, pp.82-8

The sum, or small token present, a gift to the bride's mother, was paid over at the end of the wedding day, and was a payment for the groom's right of sexual access to the bride.

Other payments of goods and small gifts of money were made during the course of the marriage ceremonies, but it will be more convenient to describe these in a brief summary of these ceremonies. In summary, though, the rule was that the groom's family provided everything necessary for the bride and all the expenses, and that her father should be reimbursed in goods for the outgoings of hospitality he had to incur.

8. Marriage: ceremonies.

A full description of Iranian marriage customs has been given by Najafi and Hinkley[1] and Alberts.[2] It would be tedious to itemise every point at which these descriptions differ from the ceremonies observed in Ḥusaynābād. Considerable local variation was also evident during field-work, and it seems likely that there are as many ways of conducting a marriage as there are villages in Iran. What follows then is only a composite picture, any lack of correspondence with other accounts not being too surprising.

Once the marriage has been agreed upon, the ceremony, the 'aqad, takes place quite shortly afterwards. Details

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1. Najafi, N. & Hinkley, H. 1960, op.cit., pp.82-8.

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.697-724.

are discussed in the final stages of the marriage negotiations, when the parents of the parties meet in the home of the groom's father. In Ḥusaynābād the appropriate authority, described as a Shaykh (i.e. a religious leader) is sent for from Bakshahr at the instigation of the groom's family. He will be given £1, and some tea and sugar, for his services. On arrival, he is entertained in the groom's house, traditionally rice being served to mark the importance of the occasion. A collection of money, about £7.50 to £10, is raised from the guests to defray the expense of this.[1] A similar meal is served to those in the bride's house, but no collection made. Then a set of clothing for the bride and foodstuffs for her father is carried with some ceremony from the groom's house to the bride's, the sugar[2] received being distributed among all his guests, in the name of the bride's father. After lunch in the groom's house the Shaykh (usually the only literate person present) writes out the marriage contract in the presence of the two fathers and the go-between, if one has been used. While this is taking place the bride is dressed in the clothes received for her and is sitting on a stool under which is placed a bowl of water when the Shaykh comes to the door. Through the aperture he reads out the marriage contract, listing the qabāleh item by item, and for each

1. The sexes were of course on this and other occasions served separately, the collection being taken from the male guests only.

2. Sugar: to sweeten occasions. The metaphor was used by the villagers.

item a woman puts a stitch in the bride's veil. A dialogue then takes place which can be summarized thus:[1]

Shaykh: Are you agreeable? (to this marriage)

Girl: No

Shaykh: He is a good boy, (etc.), are you agreeable?

Girl: No

Shaykh: Your parents are willing for this marriage to take place. Are you?

Girl: (slowly): Yes.

Her final affirmative answer is the moment of marriage, the form of the dialogue shows how the girl, officially at least, allows only her subservience to her father to overcome her modest reluctance to marriage, and that her disposal is entirely in his hands.

The girl is then taken to the baths by the women of the groom's family and, back in her own home, they make her ready to receive him. What follows is done quietly, in contrast to the bustle and publicity of the ceremony.

The marriage will not be consummated until the bride is removed to her new home. Thus the period, frequently extending to two years, between a marriage and its consummation, serves to reconcile a number of conflicting demands of marriage: that a girl must not become acquainted with any man except her husband, yet some degree of acquaintance prior to removal is desirable for the success of the marriage; that a young bride is preferred,

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1. The Shaykh's questions were more lengthy than summarized here.

but that a girl can be too young to be sexually useful to her husband; that the couple are now man and wife, and can therefore become aware of each other, but that a daughter's full sexuality cannot be recognized under her father's roof.[1]

So immediately after the ceremony the nāmzi bāzī begins, the period of being sweethearts, which is conducted somewhat like the old English custom of "bundling".[2] On the night of the wedding the young man approaches his bride's mother with a small gift[3] for the right of access to her daughter. After he has agreed to respect the daughter's virginity the mother takes him to her, in a room by herself, acting as intermediary between them. When the girl is very young this is no mere formality. Softened by presents from her husband and by kind words the girl agrees to spend a little time with him, and the mother withdraws. The couple talk and may caress each other, but it seems rare for a marriage to be consummated before removal, and some shame attaches to any resulting conception.

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1. In Davarābād the 'ashuq is called the 'arūs. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.695. Alberts gives a neat distinction between the 'aqad and the ashuq, ibid., p.695., and gives similar reasons for the lapse of time between them, ibid., p.706.

2. See ibid., p.707. "Delightful visits and clandestine trysts".

3. This was the only gift the Husaynābādīs called the shīr bihā, as earlier referred to.

Despite the importance of marriage, the two families may not come together for the ceremony, the Shaykh travelling alone between villages. If the wedding takes place within a village the mothers may exchange presents, but this may be omitted if they live in different places.

Until the bride is removed the groom visits her about twice a week. On each occasion he has to bring a little present for his wife: a local song was a lament by a young man sent away by his bride's mother because he came empty-handed. The husband lets his mother-in-law know that he is coming; she continues to put in a good word for him with her daughter, and bring them together in the evening. This period marks an easy time in the in-law relationship. At first the father of the bride pretends to know nothing of these clandestine visits (as is appropriate to his ignorance of women's affairs), but after a few months he prepares a rice meal for the youth and his male relatives. From then on the husband may visit his young wife quite openly, and indeed the son-in-law is a familiar sight in the home of a villager with a young daughter.

When the payments of the bāshlīq are nearly complete, the groom's father asks the bride's father if the removal, the 'ashuq can take place.[1] Some temporizing is usually made, but the approximate time is known. On the actual day

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1. In the villages near Ḥusaynābād which were occupied by settled tribesmen, the removal took place on the same day as the marriage ceremony.

Marriage - removal



The bride arrives: at a village hitherto unknown to her



She is escorted to her new home



Her bridal goods are carried after her

of the removal the bride's father sends a request for the food necessary for the guests: the giving of this marks the start of the preparations proper. The bride's clothes are carried from the groom's house in procession, followed by a lunch served to their guests by each household. Afterwards the groom's clothes are similarly sent, and each in turn goes to the baths. The bride is dressed by her in-laws in her new clothes and, for the only time in her life, her face is to be completely veiled. Meanwhile the groom's father holds a large supper-party for all his guests, and a collection is again raised to defer his expenses. Finally when the wedding-party come for her the women of the groom's family tell the bride it is time for her to go. She usually protests, saying that her father is unwilling but, on hearing of his consent, will permit herself to be removed either to the next courtyard, or to another village, with as much noise being made as possible. At the door of her new home, under a hail of sugar cubes, the groom carries her over the threshold.

Next morning the goods so carefully collected by the bride's father with the bāshlīq are ceremonially transported and unpacked in front of the groom's house.[1] Each item is held up for inspection and counted; the generosity of the bride's father and the possessions of the bride can be assessed by all. Also this ceremony obviously symbolizes a formal showing of the completed transfer of the person of

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1. Or, if the bride had come some distance, her goods would have been transported with her.

the bride: she herself is not displayed, but her goods are, in their new setting. Afterwards lunch is given in the groom's house for the women of the bride's family who have come with her, and to other women guests. On this occasion a collection is taken from the women, and given to the bride herself, to buy herself some object for her own use or adornment.

This lunch marks the end of the wedding-ceremonies, and life quickly returns to normal. The bride, however, is not yet completely a part of her husband's family. For the first few months she practises a custom which the villagers described as yashmak: she covers her mouth in the presence of her mother-in-law and her husband's female relatives, and she will not eat in her mother-in-law's presence or talk to her directly. Her husband's mother in particular is quick to find fault with her and she, small, shy and reticent, at first is careful not to offend. The final payments of marriage are those given to the bride by her mother-in-law, and later by other members of the family of both sexes, to 'open her mouth': to permit her to speak and eat in their presence. Her practice of the yashmak shows that the bride recognizes from the outset that her mother-in-law is head of the household, and the custom is relaxed when it is apparent that she has recognized this. The custom shows that two women cannot exist on equal terms in a single household.[1]

In summary, the payments made during a wedding

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1. I am indebted to Professor E. Sunderland, Department of Anthropology, University of Durham, for this explanation of yashmak.

belonged to one of two classes: the major sum of bāshlīq, paid over before the marriage is actually completed, and the series of small exchanges which make and mark, at each stage, the new or changed relationships which marriage is creating. Now, since the bāshlīq has been paid, there is no discussion about this at removal, but considerable friction may arise during the small exchanges of clothes and food expenses. The withholding of certain items is used to express dissatisfaction with some aspect of behaviour on the other side, the uneasiness showing the difficulties people have in creating new relationships, as well as outlining the conflicts that are inherent in these relationships. Grandqvist shows that such quarrels indicate the continuance of her family's interest in the bride after her marriage.[1] The complex series of exchanges may link the families together (or unite a family closer), but they also serve to express points of dissent and splits in family solidarity.

To take one example: in Ḥusaynābād either party most often withheld some usual item from the set of clothes sent to the other household. Clothes were normally given only within the nuclear family, so that the withholding of an item demonstrated that the senders did not regard the newcomer as a full member of the family. Dissension naturally arose if something was missing. Campbell has

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1. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1935, op.cit., p.73. See also Fallers, L.A. 1957. Some Determinants of Marriage Stability in Busoga: A Reformulation of Gluckman's Hypothesis. Africa, vol.XXVll, No. 2, p.113.

shown how marriage customs express the ambivalence of the marriage situation, where hostility among Greek shepherds has become formalized.[1] It was not so formalized in Ḥusaynābād, the minor quarrels seeming to arise quite spontaneously, but it was said that there were always quarrels at a wedding and, to the observer at least, they were expressing deeper feelings than dissatisfaction at the absence of, say, a pair of shoes.

The marriage may not be consummated immediately, the cause usually being the immaturity of both parties. Indeed, it seemed that some difficulties had occurred in most marriages. If the young man found himself impotent after some months, the usual recourse was to make him drunk, with surprising success. The girl's reluctance might be suffered for a couple of years, but, if it continued, the village remedy was to take her to a 'doctor' or someone regarded in that role, where the hymen would be perforated under sedation. Once the marriage was consummated a handkerchief, placed to catch the blood, was shown to the mothers of both spouses and the near female relatives.[2] It was not publicly displayed, since all blood associated with the reproductive process was regarded with shame and since in a small community whether or not the bride was virgin was public knowledge.

9. Bridewealth and the stability of marriage in Ḥusaynābād.

The union between husband and wife was the most

1. Campbell, J.K. 1964, op.cit., pp.132-6.
2. See also Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.720.

important formed by an individual in his life, in terms of the relative strength of the obligations and ties it brought compared with those entered into elsewhere. A man might, and frequently did, change his post and his occupation, and parental ties did not seem particularly strong once children were fully adult. There was no sense, in Ḥusaynābād, that marriage was but an incident in the life of an individual, subordinate to his role as a member of the family from which he was descended and to which his own children would belong.[1] The separate nuclear family was the most common household form; the marriage relationship the centre of an individual's life.

Nevertheless, marriage-failure was high in Ḥusaynābād and in the villages around it. A general account of marriage breakdown in Ḥusaynābād will be given first, followed by a discussion on the relationship of bridewealth to the stability of marriage. Finally, marriage-stability in Ḥusaynābād will be related to the presence or absence of certain factors in those marriages, presented with the actual divorce rates recorded.

Marriage breakdown in Ḥusaynābād

Quarrels took place in the course of a village marriage without divorce being contemplated although the parties averred at the time that this would occur.

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1. In contrast, for example, to a strongly patrilineal society like the Nuer, where the main aim of all forms of marriage is to bring children into the lineage. See Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1951, op.cit., p.97.

Typically, a quarrel would arise in a household from which the son and his new wife had not yet separated. The girl would have words with her husband over something she had appropriated for her own use, or even given to a member of her own family, or quarrel with her mother-in-law over the non-fulfilment of her household duties. Publicly berated, the girl would retire to her father's house, and divorce would be loudly threatened. After a few days a responsible woman or two, usually the household's neighbours, would go and persuade the not unwilling girl to return. If the girl were kin to her new household a mutual kinswoman could be sent. In discussion, it was emphasized that such incidents were in no sense the preliminaries to divorce, the couple were merely 'having words'. In a two-month period three such temporary separations occurred in different marriages in the 70 households of Ḥusaynābād. It is clear that such incidents were one of the means by which the relationships of the household members were gradually adapted to the daughter-in-law's presence, and a means by which she could increase her self-assertion in the household as she matured. In a sense, such separations were rehearsals for the final separation of the new household. This short-term separation, to achieve a specific right, has been described by Grandqvist for a Palestinian village, where again it was well-established.[1]

Although divorce was legally initiated by the man

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1. Grandqvist, Hilma. 1935, op.cit., p.218-251, on the hardane custom.

alone, there were two ways in the village by which a divorce could be effected. The first was when the man paid the expenses and gave the qabāleh, and the other was when the expenses came from the wife's family and the qabāleh was unpaid. The two were not combined, that is, the expenses could not come from the wife and the qabāleh be paid, since the method of securing the divorce indicated which side was the more desirous for it.

At the time when fieldwork was being done, it was Iranian law that only a man could sue for divorce, and this naturally influenced the manner in which marriage breakdown was managed. Also, polygyny was not impossible: if a man could support two wives he was, by common consent, entitled to do so. However the correct number of wives for a villager was held to be one, since he could only afford to support one, and for this reason if he should have two, both fit and well and dependent upon him, he was expected to choose which one he would keep.[1] No villager, in Ḥusaynābād or in the surrounding villages, had more than one fertile wife in his household at any one time, and co-resident polygyny even in Bakshahr was restricted to a few of the older, wealthier men.

In fact, it was not uncommon for a very young girl to

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.667 denies the economic reason for the avoidance of polygyny, saying, in Davarābād, that it was avoided to prevent rivalry between co-wives for the husband's affection.

be married with her consent, even to a close relative, but to come to dislike him so much during the nāmzi bāzī period that she would refuse to go and live with him. In such cases her family returned all the goods bought with the bāshlīq, and would also give about £25, being sufficient to cover the legal expenses which the divorce would incur. The giving of this sum signified that the girl's family were determined that the marriage would not continue, it was also to encourage a husband to grant the divorce[1] by showing him that he had nothing to lose. In such circumstances the husband proceeded with the divorce since, if he did not, he would still have to make some contribution to his wife's maintenance, and thus be unable to marry a more willing bride. The qabāleh would not have to be given, since the divorce was not by his desire. If, between the marriage ceremony and the removal, the husband decided to refuse the girl after all (an unlikely event, since he would have had more choice in the matter than she) then divorce, with full payment of the qabāleh, had to be given, and none of the goods bought with the bāshlīq were returned.

In a village some distance from Ḥusaynābād, with which the Ḥusaynābādīs had some kinship ties, it was customary to postpone the marriage ceremony until the day of removal. Bāshlīq was paid over in instalments before this, to enable the bride's goods to be collected. If, in such circumstances, the girl refused the boy before the ceremony, all these goods and any remaining money were returned, but

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1. Which is a written document.

with the absence, of course, of the additional payment for a divorce. If the boy's family terminated the proposed union, the remainder of the bāshlīq as yet unpaid was not given but, on the other hand, it was not expected that the goods prepared with the amount already given should be returned. Since the ceremony had not taken place there was no need for any payment of qabāleh.

On the night of the marriage it might be found that the girl was not a virgin. If the young man admitted responsibility, (and her parents usually knew if prior intercourse had taken place,) there was nothing further said about the matter, although some shame was felt. But occasionally it happened that the girl was not a virgin but without prior intercourse with her husband, and the young man then had every right to refuse the girl and send her home. The usual practice, in such cases, was to search for the man who had taken the girl's virginity and to try to decide to what extent the girl was willing or otherwise. The decision whether or not to continue the marriage was made as a result of these investigations. Thus in one village case it was discovered that the girl had, in fact, been seduced by her father-in-law after the marriage ceremony had taken place. The girl complained to her parents, who brought in the police to charge the man with rape, a serious offence. The son, to save his father from going to prison, denied that an offence had taken place, and so the marriage continued. In another, more recent, case the husband came to suspect during the 'nāmzi-bāzī' period that his bride was not a virgin and, as was correct,

had informed her parents. They and she had protested her purity, he having warned that, if they were wrong, he would divorce her. The removal took place, the girl was found to be non-virgin, having been seduced by a neighbour while her parents were absent, of which occurrence they were well aware. The young man sent her back to her parents, where she remained, although she subsequently bore a son, who had been conceived on the wedding-night, the only time the couple were together. Furthermore, the father was later able to obtain legal guardianship of his son who, when I knew them, was being brought up in his household by the husband's mother.

A certain difficulty over the divorce arose in such cases. If the girl was truly unwilling, the young man would probably take her as his wife, provided she had confessed to him, and not attempted concealment. Another recourse open to her, to prevent the shame of being sent away, was to make an official complaint to the police shortly after the offence. Medical examination, and a statement to them, would be sufficient to induce her husband, if she were married, to keep her with him. The difficulty here was the reluctance of such girls to testify to the authorities, not that the offence was non-culpable (a sum of £100 was mentioned as the fine payable to the father of a raped virgin). Without such public exoneration the husband was reluctant to accept the girl at removal, for this would imply either that he did not disapprove of her rape or that he himself was responsible. Nevertheless, the girl raped before marriage, who admitted the event

would eventually find a husband. Should the marriage have taken place before the rape or seduction, or before her true state was discovered, then the man was in a difficult position. He had no wish to keep her, especially if deception had been used as in the above case, but he was equally unwilling to disimburse the considerable qabāleh necessary in divorce when repudiation was his act. In this case the couple had parted, the man did not maintain her but the divorce had not been given. The man could marry later, but the girl could not, and probably, if a later marriage were arranged for her, it would be up to her parents to give the husband the money for the divorce, and the qabāleh would not be paid.

The most common way for a village marriage to end was for the wife to leave the household, and for her or her family to provide the money for a divorce, without the payment of qabāleh. One of the grounds upon which this occurred was mutual incompatibility, and it usually happened in the early stages of a marriage. This may be due to sexual incompatibility, Alberts having indicated the importance of this to both spouses.[1] It was not unknown for a couple to part in this way even if there were children of the marriage. Ideally, it was felt that a woman should receive a qabāleh in a divorce based on mutual incompatibility, so if the couple were poor they would try and stick together. But if they got on very badly "in the

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.653-659.

house and under the quilt" as a village informant expressed it, then the wife would be willing to forego her rightful qabāleh in order to be free. No particular shame attached to this type of marriage termination.

The qabāleh was also foregone, and the divorce expenses were provided by the wife's family, in those marriages which were ended through dissatisfaction on the wife's part alone, when the husband still wished her to remain. The most common ground for a woman to end a marriage on her own accord was when she felt herself to be ill-treated in the marriage. The woman was more likely to find some personal or physical defect in her husband insupportable if she had been coerced into the marriage; hence the realization that her full agreement was desirable. Outright cruelty, beating and starvation of a wife, were not unknown but were rare. Madness, opium-addiction (which led to acute poverty), or extreme physical defect were other reasons for which a woman would leave her husband, and to which her family would be sympathetic enough to send the money for the divorce. Village feeling might also be on her side.

Whether the marriage ended in mutual incompatibility or by the woman's dissatisfaction, the woman would always try to get a divorce if she wished to re-marry. Since a man could re-marry without one, the obtaining of a divorce was not always his first concern, which was why it was up to the woman to provide money for the divorce even if the marriage ended in mutual incompatibility. A man might taunt his wife by saying that, even if she left him, he

would refuse to divorce her "Until your hair is as white as your teeth", implying never; but if the marriage had ended in all but name, he would provide the divorce if given the means to do so.

Divorce initiated entirely by the man, which meant giving a three-fold repudiation and payment of qabāleh, was rare among village marriage terminations. It indicated the wife's unwillingness for the divorce, but the husband's outright repudiation because of some disgraceful act on her part. The three grounds upon which this unilateral divorce was given were opium addiction, persistent stealing and, but not invariably, adultery. This divorce indicated that the man could not rid himself of his wife by any other means, and in contrast to which, considerable disgrace attached to the woman divorced in this way.

The habitual taking of opium was not uncommon among village women. What made it difficult in marriage was the expense it incurred, and that was why the persistent taker would be divorced, since pity rather than shame attached to the addict. No money was safe with her, and she would try to sell goods to satisfy her craving. Moreover, frequent opium-taking induced miscarriages, so that such women often made themselves childless, itself a further cause for resentment against them. If a woman was in any way a serious addict: if she took opium daily: then she would be divorced eventually, despite the presence of children. Opium-addiction was the most frequent grounds for the unilateral divorce of a fruitful woman, even the mother of sons, and it was not uncommon. This contrasts with the

Turkish situation, where in Sakaltutan there was no instance of a normal fruitful first marriage ending in divorce.[1] Of the 139 marriages contracted by Ḥusaynābādīs 5 at least had ended in this way and the stability of at least another 3 was threatened.

Women were often accused of stealing some small household good or supply of food, either to give to their relatives or to sell, and this if persistent also led to divorce. In theory, adultery of course would be punished by divorce, but it was a difficult charge to substantiate, and not commonly made. In Bakshahr it was not unknown for a woman who, disliking her husband and preferring another, not to over-conceal her adultery in order to be divorced and marry her lover. This was said to happen frequently when she had been married too young to make her own choice with discretion, but happened less often in the villages, where marriage was arranged a little later. In Ḥusaynābād, divorce did not follow upon the only charge of adultery made during my stay there, partly because the husband's family owed the wife's father a considerable sum of money and could not afford the qabāleh, and partly because the woman's husband still found her extremely attractive despite the charge against her, and was himself reluctant to divorce her, the movement being greater on his father's part.

Since a man did not need to divorce his wife in order to re-marry, he might simply send her back to her parents if his dissatisfaction was not sufficient for such outright

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.216.

repudiation as formal divorce. He would be responsible for part of her support until such time as the divorce was given. Non-virginity was a cause for this, as has been mentioned, and insanity was another. The man could thus be supporting more than one wife, but if the impediment were persistent, that support would eventually cease, and the marriage would end in all but name. If the wife did not wish to re-marry, a marriage-failure based on quarrelling might also lack formal termination.

Barreness, by itself, was never grounds for divorce, even in the poorest family. Usually, the wife would not even leave the household. If the man really wanted children he would take another wife and they would share the household. The second wife might be a younger sister of the first, at a reduced bāshlīq but, as mentioned previously, a full qabāleh would have to be promised for her. Hers was a separate marriage, she was not just a substitute. This is logical, since it is not thought that the only purpose of a wife is to provide children. Thus there may be sororal polygyny, but there was no sororate.[1]

That the barren wife was retained and the fruitful opium-taker divorced show neatly what was considered desirable in a village marriage, and what helped its durability. This was a good relationship between the pair, the fulfilment of all wifely duties, not only childbearing, and economic trust between them. On the wife's side, her husband's generosity and kindness were more likely to keep

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1. c.f. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.642.

her with him than, in the end, mutual parenthood.

A village marriage also frequently ended with the death of either of the partners, and, if the surviving spouse were young, it was recognized that an early re-marriage was in order. A widower however, was expected to wait for up to a year, for his former father-in-law to tell him that he considered mourning had continued sufficiently long, and that he should now consider himself free to choose whoever he wished.[1] It was considered reprehensible in the extreme for a widower not to wait for this permission. Some years before my stay in Ḥusaynābād a young wife died during her first childbirth, and her husband re-married in what was considered by all to be unseemly haste (accounts of the exact lapse of time differed) and without permission from the father-in-law. The latter was so incensed that he demanded that the qabāleh be repaid in full, goods as well as cash. Ten years later, the villagers still told vividly how he had stormed to his former son-in-law's house, appropriated the qabāleh goods and placed them in front of the mosque, to be sold and used for religious purposes. All the money he received, which had to be paid by instalments, he donated similarly. Village sentiment was that his behaviour had been quite correct. The incident, and the custom which sparked it off, shows the extent to which a wife's correct treatment is considered a cause for her family's concern: even her

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1. c.f. Turkey, where widowers did re-marry immediately: Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.196.

correct treatment in death.

A widower, therefore, would not re-marry immediately after his wife's death, even if he had children; he would employ a childless woman of the village to keep house for him, for a nominal fee. When he took another wife, it was usually a young widow, or a girl with some disability, for whom bāshlīq would be reduced, and the wedding ceremonies would also be considerably curtailed. If the man were no longer young when widowed, he would be more likely to marry off his eldest son as soon as the lad was old enough, to bring a young girl into the household, and he would make his permanent residence with this couple.

A young widow, with only one or two children, was more likely than not to return to her parents' household, and re-marry from there, even if her husband had been a close relative. If she had a son, she would usually leave him with her in-laws for them to rear. This was partly so that he would not encumber her choice of, and relationship with, a second husband, but also because the donation of the child was seen to some extent as the fulfilment of her obligations to the terminated marriage, and as the removal of some of the in-laws' animosity at her subsequent departure. This leaving of the son was not uncommon. To my knowledge it had occurred in three out of the 70 Ḥusaynābād households and ties with the mother were thereafter totally severed.

An older woman, unless childless, would not normally re-marry, and it was considered shameful for her to do so. As an informant expressed it "for such a widow, her children

should be her husband": their welfare should be her total concern. A second marriage, bringing with it new kinsfolk and a lessening of their mother's attention, was bitterly opposed by the children of an older widow, usually with success.

The choice for a second and subsequent marriage was left entirely to the partners concerned, and it cannot be said that second marriages were, on the whole, more stable than the first. Once re-married, some people of distinctive personality and difficult temperament found a second termination equally easy, and individuals could be found of either sex who had notched up a considerable record of re-marriages. It should be mentioned that perhaps not all unions were terminated by written contract, and perhaps not all second marriages actually had a written contract. Stirling, referring to the Turkish village situation, wrote:

> "In this society, then, a divorce is any separation which terminates a marriage"[1]

and this may be equally true of the society in small Iranian villages with the rider that any marriage other than the first is one, when the parties live together, even if the contract has not been made. Some sort of bāshlīq will, however, always have been given. Again, Stirling's observation:

> "All unions are marriages in village eyes"[2]

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1965, op.cit., p.214.

2. Ibid., p.220.

is also true in Ḥusaynābād. Finally, although temporary marriages are permitted by Iranian law,[1] none of these were recorded in the villages studied.

Bridewealth and marriage stability

The association between bridewealth and marriage stability has been much discussed, particularly by Evans-Pritchard,[2] Fallers,[3] Gluckman,[4] Leach,[5] Sanwal[6] and

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1. Levy, R. 1955. The Social Structure of Islam. Cambridge University Press, pp.116-7.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1931. An alternative term for "bride-price". MAN, vol.31, no.11, 42, pp.36-9

   ——— 1934. Social character of Bridewealth, with Special Reference to the Azande. MAN, vol. 34, no.11, 194, pp.172-5.

   ——— 1951. Kinship and Marriage among the Nuer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp.89-96.

3. Fallers, L.A. 1957, op.cit.

4. Gluckman, M. 1950. Kinship and Marriage among the Lozi and the Zulu. In African Systems of Kinship and Marriage (eds.) A.R. Radcliffe-Brown & D. Forde. Oxford University Press. For the International African Institute, pp.166-206.

   ——— 1953. Bridewealth and the Stability of Marriage. MAN, vol.53, no.9, 223, pp.141-3.

   ——— 1954. Bridewealth and the Stability of Marriage. MAN, vol.54, no.4, 96, p.67.

5. Leach, E.R. 1953. Bridewealth and the Stability of Marriage. MAN, vol.53, no.11, 279, pp.179-80.

   ——— 1957, op.cit.

6. Sanwal, R.D. 1960, op.cit.

Schneider.[1] Sanwal points out that the material used in the discussion has been drawn from sedentary subsistence societies.[2] Since Ḥusaynābād falls into this geo-economic category, it will be relevant to examine bridewealth there in the context of this discussion. The data for marriage stability are given in Tables XXIV, XXV, XXVI. (pp.391 & 393).

Sanwal summarizes the major issues in the discussion as 1) the role of kinship as a causal factor in marriage stability 2) bridewealth and marriage stability 3) the meaning of stability as a concept.[3] As this is the latest article in this series, these three issues will be used in the following discussion.

On the first point, the role of kinship as a causal factor in marriage stability, Gluckman has postulated a causal link between degree of patrilinearity and marriage stability.[4] Leach[5] suggested that different types of patrilinearity might be involved, and Fallers put forward the concept that the relevant issue is the degree of the wife's incorporation in her husband's lineage; that where this is complete, as among the Zulu and Swazi, patrilinearity strengthens marriage, but where incorporation is weak, as

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1. Schneider, D.M. 1953. A note on bridewealth and stability of marriage. MAN, vol.53, no.4, 75, pp.55-7.

2. Sanwal, R.D. 1966, op. cit., p.46.

3. Ibid., p.46.

4. Gluckman, M. 1950, op.cit., p.201. See also Gluckman, M. 1953 and 1954, op.cit.

5. Leach, E.R. 1957, op.cit., p.55. See also Leach, E.R. 1953, op.cit.

among the Soga, patriliny weakens marriage. Sanwal's material supports this division,[1] and he adds that, in societies with complete incorporation, lineages are large and determine the political, economic and other dimensions and the children belong to the husband's lineage, whoever is the genitor, whereas in the other type, to which he adds the Lakher and Khasi, where incorporation is incomplete, lineages are small, distinct in their activities from the political and other spheres of activity, and children are incorporated in the descent group of the genitor.[2] In the former group divorce is impossible, in the latter, divorce is recognised, and the actual fertility of the woman may be crucial.

The society of Ḥusaynābād and the surrounding villages would seem to fit very well into the second group of this division, where high bridewealth does not necessarily mean stability of marriage. It must be remembered that the protection of her natal group does not necessarily mean that a woman is a full member of it, and that incorporation, complete or otherwise, in a lineage at marriage does not mean full membership therein, or lack of it; it means the extent to which the jural rights vested in the woman are transferred. Thus, in Ḥusaynābād, the jural right of the woman to protection from her husband's lineage remains vested in her natal one, and, when invoked, is the cause of

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1. Sanwal, R.D. 1966, op.cit., p.52.

2. Ibid., p.57.

much matrimonial dispute. Added to these factors, in the case of these Iranian villages, is the fact that the people themselves conceptualize their preferred marriage as a means of achieving marriage stability. Kinship here is not so much causing marriage stability; ultimately, because of the endogamous character of the preferred marriage, it is the stability of the preferred marriage which preserves the lineage structure, and it may be that such reformulation of Fallers's hypothesis is necessary in endogamous unilineal societies of this type. The place of children as causal in stabilizing marriage, particularly secondary marriage, has been indicated, and can be summarized as important but not crucial.

Kinship in Ḥusaynābād is therefore causal to marriage stability, but only in the sense that marriages with kinsfolk are more likely to succeed. Although the villagers often said "married relatives do not divorce", and this saying has been examined, it was not entirely true; that is married kin did divorce, though less frequently than non-kin. What was likely to tip the scales one way or the other in a particular marriage was the degree of ill-treatment of the bride; and this would be modified if she were kin. It has been seen that a family were expected to be concerned for a daughter's welfare, even though she had passed out of kinship range, as it were, and a family was more likely to be able to prevent ill-treatment of their daughter if she had married kin: it was this, rather than the forbearance of her kinsfolk in-laws, which eased the situation of the girl in such marriages. If such was the

matter of dispute, then kinship did aid the stability of marriage, but if the disagreement was more profound, through disability or non-compatibility, then the kinship of the married pair was unlikely to prevent a break in the marriage. Such divorce between kin was held to be bad, but the villagers realistically shrugged their shoulders and said that such things happened despite one's wishes.

Turning to Sanwal's second issue, on the relationship between bridewealth and marriage stability, Evans-Pritchard has shown for the Azande that bridewealth is paid gradually for a relationship which exists over a long period and that the wealth is therefore to be regarded more as a recognition of the stability of a marriage than its cause,[1] and similarly for the Nuer.[2] Sanwal finds no clear correlation between the two[3] and Gluckman has a rough correlation between high marriage payments and low divorce which, he is careful to point out, does not mean that the high payments are causal of stability.[4]

When applying this discussion to Ḥusaynābād it must be remembered that qabāleh, the payment concerned in divorce, was not, strictly speaking, a marriage payment, as was the bāshlīq. The high level of bāshlīq (high relative to the income level of the parties concerned) expressed the high level of incorporation of the wife in the husband's lineage,

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1. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1934, op.cit., p.173.
2. ——————— 1951, op.cit., p.96.
3. Sanwal, R.D. 1966, op.cit., p.57.
4. Gluckman, M. 1950, op.cit., p.192.

which was high indeed when compared with societies such as the Lozi,[1] and the high value placed on the attributes of the bride herself: her virginity,[2] her goods, her person. There is no direct link between bāshlīq and marriage stability; it cannot even be said to express its stability. And bāshlīq is the obvious equivalent of 'Bridewealth'. There is, however, a direct link between the high level of qabāleh and some factors of marriage stability, and these will be duly examined.

Why was qabāleh high? One important reason is that although qabāleh was theoretically paid on widowhood or divorce, that is on the termination of the marriage however it came about, in practice it was only paid on divorce, and even then, only on some divorces. If a woman died first, it was supposed to be given to her children; in practice this was waived. In exhoneration the villagers said that the children would eventually inherit the household goods anyway (ignoring the fact that these were purchased with the bāshlīq and had nothing to do with qabāleh). A promise of money that will in all likelihood remain only a promise can be made quite high. Other reasons for high qabāleh are that, at the time of marriage, when the contract is drawn up, the thoughts of the parties were on the coming union, not on its dissolution; that factors of prestige might make a man promise a higher qabāleh than he could ever pay; that

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1. Gluckman, M. 1950, op.cit., p.182 and p.197

2. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., p.56. The honour of a woman has economic value.

qabāleh, described as an amount sufficient to provide home, goods and enough food to last the woman her lifetime, had to be high.

Turning for a moment to Sanwal's third issue, the meaning of stability as a concept, Schneider's useful distinction between jural and conjugal stability[1] is important in the analysis of marriage stability in Ḥusaynābād, where a man could (and occasionally did) remarry without a divorce but where a woman could not. In Ḥusaynābād a man who repudiated his wife conjugally would usually make the point clear by divorcing her as well; it has been said earlier that the continuation of a marriage only in jural terms indicated that no blame could be attached to either party for its cessation conjugally. The reverse situation, a conjugal union without jural basis, did not seem to occur in Ḥusaynābād. The shame upon her family brought by a woman of low morals became a pressure which they used to get her to agree to her bestowal in marriage. The young girls were married early, a purely conjugal situation could only arise when a woman had left her husband and he refused to divorce her out of malice. If such a woman showed signs of contracting what the villagers regarded as an immoral union (living with a man without bāshlīq as well as without qabāleh) she would be set free by her relatives sending her husband the payment for the divorce.[2]

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1. Schneider, D.M. 1953, op.cit., p.50.

2. This is not to deny the occasional presence of an extra-marital illicit relationship, but to say that these were not established openly, as in de facto marriages.

Marriage stability in Husaynābād

It has become customary in social anthropology to use bridewealth payments as a starting point for the examination of marriage stability. Since discussions have inevitably tended to digress into wider fields, it is perhaps time to consider whether this approach adds any coherence to the study of marriage stability, or whether it is not more logical to begin with examining stability itself. This will be done in the present instance, but first the actual data will be presented.[1]

By examining Table XXlV (page 391) some interesting facts come to light. One of the most important is the difference in marriage and divorce rates between the sexes. Thus the 80 men in Husaynābād between them contracted a total of 115 marriages, = 1.44 / head, whereas the 82 women had between them only 100 unions, = 1.2 / head. Of all these 115 marriages 16 contracted by men ended in divorce, giving an overall divorce rate for men of 1 in 7.2 marriages. For the women, 11 of their 100 unions ended in divorce, giving an overall rate of 1 in 9.1.

These divorce rates are most easily understood if marriage stability is related to four factors: the presence or absence of kinship between the spouses; the presence or absence of co-residence between them at the time of marriage; whether the marriage is a first or a subsequent union, and, lastly, the fertility or sterility of the union. In any

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1. c.f. Rosenfeld, H. 1958b, op.cit., pp.54-9 and Grandqvist, Hilma. 1931, op.cit., pp.258-68.

Table XXIV: Husaynābād: All marriages Contracted by Living Inhabitants

Type of Marriage	Sex of Contractor	Relation of Contractor to Spouse	Residence of Spouses at time of Marriage	(1) Still Extant	(2) Ended by ♂ Divorcing	(3) Ended by ♀ Divorcing	(4) Ended by Death	No.of (1) with children	No.of (2) with children	No.of (3) with children	No.of (4) with children
1st		Kin	Same	18 (inc.∅	3*		4	17 (inc.∅	1		3
			Different	10			1	5			1
		Non-Kin	Same	23	3		8	21	1 +		4
			Different	6	2		2	5	1 +		4
		Kin	Same	18			3	16			3
			Different	12		1		6		1 +	
		Non-Kin	Same	26	3		6	23	2 +		3
			Different	7 (inc.∅	1	2	2	4	1 +	1	2
Subsequent		Kin	Same	4							
			Different	2			1	2			1
		Non-Kin	Same	11	3		1	8	1		
			Different	4 (inc∅	4	1	4	2 (inc ∅	1		2
		Kin	Same	3				1			
			Different	1				1			
		Non-Kin	Same	8	3		1	6	1		1
			Different	2	1			2			

NOTES:

1) Except when both parties were resident in Husaynābād, each marriage has one entry only. Columns 1-4 indicate the state of that marriage at the time of fieldwork.

2) inc = includes, i.e. a figure in a column is the total marriages in that section, including those separated.

3) ∅ = a marriage separated, but not divorced.

4) + = a son in a divorce-ended marriage

(*These were with the FZD, the MZD, and a patrikin D, the second of which had female issue.)

marriage all four factors are present in one or other alternative, so it is impossible to say which tipped the balance towards stability or divorce in each instance, but by isolating each factor some idea of relative importance may be gained. For simplicity, men will be considered first.

Taking the kinship factor alone, men contracted a total of 43 marriages with kin, of which 3, that is, 1 in 14.8, ended in divorce. They contracted a total of 72 non-kin marriages, of which 13 ended in divorce, that is, 1 in 5.54. Kinship between the spouses would therefore seem to be a major factor in marriage stability.

Taking the residence factor alone, men contracted a total of 78 co-resident marriages, of which 9 ended in divorce, that is 1 in 8.56, and a total of 37 non-resident marriages, of which 7 ended in divorce, that is 1 in 5.28. Residence is also important in marriage stability, but it does not aid it quite so much as kinship. Its importance is contributory, though, when it is remembered that some kin will also be co-resident.

Turning to the third factor, whether or not the union was a first or subsequent one, we find that, of the 80 first marriages contracted by the men, 8 ended in divorce, giving a rate of 1 in 10, and of their 35 subsequent unions, 8 ended in divorce, giving a failure rate of 1 in 4.47. Thus the failure rate for subsequent marriages is nearly double that for the first marriage, or, to put it another way, nearly one quarter of all subsequent marriages ended in actual divorce, and this is true whichever sex is considered

as contractor.

These three factors can be summarized thus:-

Table XXV: Failure rates of marriages, men as contractors: Proportion of failures to total

		Co-resident kin		Non co-resident kin		Co-resident non-kin		Non co-resident non-kin	
1st marriages	Total	25	1 in 8.34	11		34	1 in 11.3	10	1 in 5
	Failed	3		0		3		2	
Subse-quent marriages	Total	4		2		14	1 in 4.67	13	1 in 3.25*
	Failed	0		0		3		4	

*Actual divorce, 2 more unions out of the 13 were conjugally separated.

Turning to the women, the numbers involved are such that separate consideration of kinship and residence factors would add little to the argument, especially as they appear in Table XXVI. The contrast in failure rate between kin and non-kin unions is interesting, being 1 in 38 and 1 in 6.2 respectively, both of which rates are lower than the corresponding ones when the men are considered as contractors. In general, therefore, men married more often than women, but women's unions were more stable, both of which might be expected in a society where the men had the initiative both for marriage and divorce.

The kinship and residence factors for the stability of marriage when women are considered can be summarized thus:-

Table XXVI: Failure rates of marriages, women as contractors: proportion of failures to total

		Co-resident kin		Non co-resident kin		Co-resident non-kin		Non co-resident non-kin	
1st marriages	Total	21		13	1 in 13	35	1 in 11.67	12	1 in 4*
	Failed	0		1		3		3	
Subse-quent marriages	Total	3	Insufficient numbers		Insufficient numbers	9	1 in 3	3	1 in 3
	Failed	0				3		1	

* of these divorces, 2 were initiated by the women.

The smaller numbers of subsequent marriages for women are not really suitable for this type of tabulation. Nevertheless it can be seen that, despite the fact that their overall divorce rate is lower than for the men, subsequent marriages among the non-kin classes seem to be at greater risk among women than among men. This illustrates the great vunerability of the non-kinswoman, married away from her parental home.

A marriage is more likely to success if it is a first marriage between co-resident kin, and the absence of one or, progressively, more of the four factors increases the threat to its stability. The end of the progression is almost the opposite of its beginning: a subsequent marriage, made between non-co-resident non-kin has only an even chance of maintaining its conjugal stability. The interesting feature about these factors in marriage stability is that they are inherent in each marriage from its start; thus the potential stability of any marriage, or lack of it, can almost be predicted from knowing into which category it fits. Marriage stability seems more relative to these factors than to occurrences after the marriage has been established.

The conjugal instability of subsequent marriages is not aided by the demographic situation. In a small village like Ḥusaynābād there is unlikely to be a limitless pool of spouses: and a man will be forced to look further afield especially for a subsequent marriage to find a suitable widow or divorcee. Thus he will marry into one of the classes of instability and it may not be feasible to consider as closely as for a first marriage such questions as the

friendliness of the bride's relatives and her own agreeable nature. Indeed, the impression received is that subsequent marriages are often made in haste, and repented after only a little leisure: the conditions under which they are made subsuming their consequent instability.

Fertility has been mentioned as a final factor in marriage stability, but the importance of this in bringing it about is difficult to assess in a society where nearly every marriage was fertile. For example, among the 80 first marriages contracted by men, 63 were fertile, and of the remainder, 2 were as not yet removed and a further 7 were between young couples whose future fertility was highly likely. Thus of these 80 marriages, 72 were probably fertile, in time. Of these 80 first marriages, 8 of which ended in divorce, 3 were fertile, 2 having sons. Thus, although the numbers are too small to be significant, there were proportionately fewer infertile first marriages than failed ones. Subsequent marriages were less fertile than first ones, as might be expected from the age of the spouses but, in view of the few numbers involved it is difficult to say whether their infertility contributed to their instability.

It is clear from Table XXIV that the fertility of a marriage and even the presence of a son, did not prevent its conjugal breakdown, although it might prevent the giving of jural divorce. This was especially true when the marriage was also between closer ranges of kin. Thus among those marriages made with persons within the first 4 classes in Table XIX (with the FBD, FZD, MBD, or MZD) only one had

ended in divorce when the marriage was fertile, and none had ended in divorce when the offspring was male. The only marriage breakdown that had occurred with a male offspring in those four classes was due to the mother's insanity, and that marriage continued jurally in that the divorce had not been given and some maintenance was continued. Even in this instance the closeness of kin probably contributed more to the continuance of the marriage than did its fertility.

On the whole, therefore, although fertility undoubtedly played a part in helping marriage stability, that part was not as important as the other factors mentioned.

In each of the classes of marriage separately considered, almost the same proportion of marriages was terminated by death as by divorce or separation. (Table XXIV, column 4). The proportion of marriages terminated by death was, , on the whole, fewer in subsequent marriages. Taking men alone, of their 80 first marriages, 14 ended in the wife's death, that is, 1 in 5.72, the rate for subsequent marriage is 1 in 5.83. For women the rate of dissolution of first and subsequent marriages due to death of partner was 1 in 7.46 and 1 in 19 respectively. In fact, in the sample, only one woman had been bereaved in a subsequent marriage, and the figures reflect the small size of the sample. As far as men are concerned, the risk of losing a spouse through death is only slightly less than that of divorce in all classes except that where the rate of divorce is highest. Demographically, since men marry older

than women, one would expect the number of widows to be higher than that of widowers; that this is reversed may be due to errors in a small sample and may also reflect the risks of childbirth.

It might seem, from the high rates per head of marriage and divorce, that the former institution was somewhat unstable in Ḥusaynābād. But among the 80 men and 82 women in the village there were no less than 52 couples where first marriage was the first for both parties, and was still intact, actually as well as jurally. The total number of unions, stable jurally at least, in which the marriage was the first for at least one of the parties was 68. The total number of all the marriages contracted by all the Husaynabadis was 139, but this high number was brought about by unstable and repeated re-marriages of a minority of the population. Of the 80 men and 82 women in Ḥusaynābād 62 men and 63 women had maintained stability of some sort in their first marriages. Plural marriage, for a few, and the high rate of divorce, for a minority, accounted for the rest.

Schneider has distinguished the need to ask why some marriages remain stable and some do not.[1] The problem falls into three questions a) what maintains the stability of those marriages where it is never in serious doubt b) what causes the ultimate stability of those marriages where it is threatened, but is nevertheless maintained c) what causes actual breakdown, if such occurs, and what, therefore, was operational in a) and b) but failed to produce stability in

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1. Schneider, D.M. 1953, op.cit., p.56.

c)? The three groups of marriages thus distinguished will be called 1), 2) and 3) respectively.

The distinction between 1) and 2) is important, since it is the difference between asking "what makes a good marriage?" and "what preserves marriage stability in quarrels?" In Husaynabad a good marriage tended to be synonymous with good treatment of the bride, which was itself more likely to occur if the union were contracted between co-resident kin and if it were fertile. The difference between group 1) and 2) is the presence or absence of a good relationship between the married pair; in group 2) absence is made temporary, or at least bearable, by the factors making for general marriage stability: the presence of mutual kin or long-term neighbours (to fetch home the bride) and to a lesser extent the presence of children. The possibility of qabāleh payment is not a factor for stability in group 1) marriages, since breakdown here is not envisaged. It appears in group 2) as a powerful additional persuader to preserve the stability of a threatened marriage. The need for qabāleh payment certainly prevented instantaneous divorce during the heat of a quarrel; it is the knowledge of this large monetary commitment deemed necessary to complete divorce which makes the parties pause and thus provides a sufficient cooling-off period in which the kin (who would also have to contribute to qabāleh) can bring about reconciliation.

The payment of qabāleh, or threatened payment, was a cause of marriage stability, especially if the girl's family were wealthy and qabāleh had therefore been assessed high.

However, to what extent this, and mutual kinship, were factors in marriage stability must remain open to some question; one can know why a marriage was dissolved, but it is always more difficult to know for what reasons particular marriages have stayed intact.

Turning now to group 3), those marriages which actually fail, it can be seen that the importance of qabāleh as a factor in marriage stability has disappeared, since it has failed to bring it about. Qabāleh disappears in another sense for, as shown earlier, it was not paid in most village divorces. In group 3) the factors which stabilized the marriages of group 2) had failed to overcome the breakdown between the married pair; had failed because they were not there to be relied upon, marriage breakdown being higher among couples who did not have co-resident mutual kin.

Emphasis on the relationship of bridewealth to marriage stability, in the system as in Ḥusaynābād, is a red herring, tending to obscure the significant features. Of the two principle marriage payments, bāshlīq was the actual bride-price, and although the promissory qabāleh was essential to the marriage-contract, it was not part of bride-price. Bāshlīq had no direct relationship to marriage stability (without prior knowledge of the long-standing theoretical discussion it would not occur to the observer to suggest that there might be a link between them); the payment of qabāleh was only crucial in maintaining a threatened, but not yet dissolved, marriage. For all marriages, the crucial factor in stability seemed to be whether or not the marriage was an inter-kin affair, with co-residence, fertility and qabāleh as subsidiary, though important factors.

CHAPTER V: RELIGION

1. The Shī'ī Religion.

The Constitution of Iran designates the Ja'farī sect of the Shī'ī branch of the Islamic faith as the religion of the country. The association between this sect and Iran is unique, since it is the only country in the world of which it is the state religion. Shī'ī Muslims as a whole number some 10% of the Islamic world,[1] and most of them are to be found in Iran. Not all the population of Iran are Shī'ī, according to the 1966 Census 98.6% of the population are Muslims,[2] but the Census does not distinguish between the different sects of Islām. There is certainly a Sunnī minority in Iran,[3] and it should be remembered that most of the Islamic world is Sunnī. Iran, therefore, is a stronghold of a minority sect, and the historical reasons for this are important in understanding the religion as it is today.

The origins of the Shī'ī sect have been admirably summarized by Fisher,[4] Wilbur[5] and Guillame,[6] among many

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1. Fisher, W.B. 1950. The MIddle East. London: Methuen & Co., p.119.
2. Iran, Imperial Government of 1968b. Statistical Yearbook for 1968 Tehrān: Plan Organisation, Iran Statistical Centre, p.21.
3. About 7%. See Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., p.183.
4. Fisher, W.B. 1950, op.cit., pp.117-9.
5. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., pp.208-11.
6. Guillame, A. 1954. Islam. London: Penguin Books, pp.115-6

other authors. The sect began after the death of the prophet Muḥammad in 632 as a difference of opinion among his followers as to who should succeed him as Caliph of the growing Islamic empire. The majority, who came to be called the Sunnis, took the view that the succession should be made elective, while a minority, who called themselves Shī'ah (meaning, partisans) maintained that it should be a hereditary office going to the family of Muḥammad, and designated 'Alī, the Prophet's nephew and son-in-law, as his heir. However, the Sunnī view prevailed.

'Alī did eventually become Caliph in 656, but was assassinated in 661, and his son Ḥasan resigned his claim to the Caliphate, dying a few years later. The Shī'ah faction asserted that he had been murdered, and came out in open revolt. Ḥasan's younger brother Ḥusayn took the field against Yazīd, who had succeeded to the Caliphate, but Ḥusayn was killed at Karbalā in 680. This marked the end of the association between the Shī'ī sect and the Caliphate of the still-growing Arab empire.

However, the Shī'ah minority continued to regard the established rulers as usurpers, and found support among those who were dissatisfied with them. The Shī'ah became associated with non-Arabs who had accepted Islām and claimed exemption from the taxes and the social disabilities to which non-Muslims were subject, claims which the Arabs never fully admitted.[1] Thus there were real grounds for discontent

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1. Guillame, A. 1954. Islam. London: Penguin Books, p.116.

among those conquered by the Arab forces who found in the Shī'ah movement a focus for their dissatisfaction and a means whereby they could draw a distinction between themselves and the ruling house. In Iran, as in other places, Shī'ī dynasties favoured this sect to differentiate the country from the rest of the Arab world. Under the founder of the great Ṣafavid dynasty, Shāh Ismā'īl, himself a lineal descendant of the Prophet, the Shī'ī faith was proclaimed the state religion of Iran, and the association between this sect and Iranian nationalism is important today.

In the region studied in Khurāsān everyone followed the Shī'ī faith, so it will be useful to give a brief outline of it before examining the material collected during fieldwork. Although differences between the Shī'ah and the Sunnī were at first purely political, others of doctrine and outlook soon appeared.[1] The beliefs of Islām as a whole have been well described by von Grunebaum[2] and Guillame,[3] among other authors. Donaldson has given an invaluable account of the tenets of the Shī'ī[4] faith, and Spooner has provided a functionalist interpretation of religion in Iran.[5]

Fisher has summarized the duties of Muslims as being five-fold: prayer five times daily; the giving of alms;

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1. Fisher, W.B. 1950, op.cit., p.117.
2. Von Grunebaum, G.E. 1951. Mohammedan Festivals New York: Abelad-Schuman, especially pp.10-50.
3. Guillame, A. 1954, op.cit., pp.63-77.
4. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, The Shi'ite Religion. London: Luzac and Co., pp.305-56.
5. Spooner, B.J. 1963, The Function of Religion in Persian Society. Iran vol.1, pp.83-95.

abstention from alcohol, tobacco and the flesh of the pig; fasting during the month of Ramaẓān; and pilgrimage to Mecca.[1] The requirements are binding upon all Iranian Muslims. All the sects of Islām believe that the prophet Muḥammad was sinless, that he had divine infallibility and that he was the direct recipient of the word of God. In addition, the Shī'ī believe that these qualities passed to certain of Muḥammad's lineal descendants, whom they call Imāms.[2] This difference is crucial for, in order to establish the authority of any particular doctrine, the Shī'ī theologian need only show that it can be traced to one or more of the Imāms,[3] and these Imāms are venerated as much as Muḥammad himself.[4] Which of the Prophet's descendants are believed to be Imāms varies according to the Shī'ī sect, of which there are many. The official religion of Iran recognizes twelve, beginning with 'Alī, Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, and ending with the Mahdī, the concealed one, who is believed not to have died but to have disappeared and whose re-appearance will mark the final triumph of good over evil and the beginning of a new age.[5] Various persons have come forward from time to time claiming to be the

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1. Fisher, W.B. 1950, op.cit., p.116.
2. Guillame, A. 1954, op.cit., p.118-20.
3. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.xxv.
4. Ibid., p.307.
5. Ibid., pp.237-8. See also Guillame, A. 1954, op.cit., p.117.

concealed Imām, for example the Mahdī whose forces Gordon encountered at Khartoum, and it is worth noting that the article in the Iranian Constitution in which the Shī'ī faith is proclaimed provides that it is to remain in effect until the appearance of the Hidden Imām.[1]

The Shī'ī of Iran, then, venerate the twelve Imāms as being sinless, infallible, miracle-workers, and to have been divinely appointed.[2] Those of them who died for their faith are worshipped as martyrs,[3] and pilgrimages are made to their tombs. Iranians are especially devoted to the cult of Ḥusayn, he who fell at Karbalā, and the day of his death is the most important event in the Iranian religious calendar.

It can be seen that the doctrine of the Imamate is a central feature of Shī'ī theology. When Shī'ism was established as the state religion of Iran it became important to show that there were sound religious reasons for what was, originally, a political movement. In other words it became important to justify the doctrine through theological arguments, in order to justify the bloodshed which the Sunnī-Shī'ah schism had caused.[4] The way in which this was done by the authoritative seventeenth-century Shī'ī theologian Majlisī has been translated by Donaldson,[5]

1. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., p.210.
2. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.307.
3. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., p.210.
4. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.305.
5. Ibid., pp.306-19, translating Majlisi. Hayat u'l-Kulub, (Life of Hearts).

and is a most interesting summary of the main points of the doctrine itself.

The argument runs that, since God is kind, He must have sent someone to restrain men from sinful and violent actions and to guide them into more orderly ways.[1] Hence the necessity of the Imāms. Again, the Qur'ān is in places obscure, so, as Donaldson translates:

> "An authoritative interpreter from God is needed, therefore, to make legal deductions or conclusions from the Koran".[2]

Again, an Imām is needed. It follows from this that if the Imāms were sent to be obeyed they must have been sinless, otherwise their authority would be fallible and questionable. As Donaldson translates:

> "All agree that belief in the sinlessness of the prophets (i.e. the Imams) is one of the necessary beliefs of the Shi'a faith".[3]

The Imāms are also believed to be mediators for sins.[4]

It was one of the duties of an Imām to designate his successor, so that the chain of authority should be continuous. The doctrine must also explain the advantages of the continued concealment of the twelfth Imām. These are that, while he is hidden, he is protected from his enemies

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1. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.208.
2. Ibid., p.308.
3. Ibid., p.321.
4. Ibid., pp.344-6.

at a time when, if he came, he would not be recognized; and that, in expectation of his coming, men will try to abstain from sin.[1] Meanwhile, during his concealment, his authority continues.[2] Modern Shī'ī theologians are believed to be inspired by the Hidden Imām,[3] who gives a direct validity to their statements. Thus the Shī'ī is an authoritative religion,[4] although Binder does not consider the religious authorities have much influence in modern Iranian government.[5]

This, in outline, is the doctrine of the official religion of Iran. It must be emphasized that few of the details are known at village level. The average villager worships a being whom he speaks of as The Imām, a rather vague, all-powerful but kindly figure. The villager does not always distinguish this figure from God Himself, or separate the twelve Imāms into distinct personalities. He venerates Ḥusayn as a sinless man, inspired by God, who died for his faith. He is concerned with obtaining savāb, a reward in heaven which, as Spooner says, can be gained by attending religious ceremonies and by giving alms.[6] The

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1. Donaldson, D.M., 1933, op.cit., p.311.
2. Ibid, p.310.
3. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., p.210.
4. Guillame, A. 1954, op.cit., p.120.
5. Binder, L. 1962. Ian: Political Development in a Changing Society. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, p.76.
6. Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.86.

opposite of savāb is gunāh, sin, which is closely linked with the norm in outward conduct: provided a man lives by the Qur'ān he will avoid sin and go to paradise.[1] Also important in village life are the shrines of the Imāmzādehs, real or putative descendants of Imāms. These shrines are found dotted throughout the countryside, so that practically every community in Iran is within easy reach of one. Since forgiveness from sins is obtained by making a pilgrimage to the shrine of an Imām, so that the Imām will intercede on the sinner's behalf, pilgrimage is an important part of the villager's religious aspirations. Those who cannot hope to make the major pilgrimage to Mecca, or to go to Karbalā, Qummor Mashhad, can venerate these local shrines instead and, as Spooner says, every shrine will always have evidence of attention paid to it.[2] The cult of these minor religious figures, unknown outside their own small, particular districts, can perhaps be compared with the veneration of purely local saints which is carried out even today in the more remote districts of Brittany.

It is important to realize that, in the communities studied, the moral codes and norms of correct behaviour were largely derived from the Islamic faith. However, during fieldwork I found that serious discussion on religion and the mores stemming from it was regarded by the villagers as a male prerogative. Consequently it was difficult to obtain information on this subject.

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1. Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.87.

2. Ibid, p.87.

However, this point has been dealt with extensively elsewhere. Levy in particular has shown how the moral, legal and conventional rules of conduct in an Islamic society are based upon religious doctrine.[1] Lutfiyya, too, has emphasized that Islām demands that all actions of the believer, no matter how trivial, meet prescribed religious standards. It is a complete system of social conduct, with no difference between the sacred and the secular.[2] With regard to the form taken by these codes of conduct in rural communities, Lutfiyya has made a particularly valid point which, although written about a Jordanian village, could well apply to Ḥusaynābād:

> "Village culture has been conditioned by religion ... But in a folk community the fundamental teachings of faith are often mixed with local myths, custom, emotional experiences and misinterpretations. In this manner a formal religion was re-shaped as a popular religion. In the eyes of the folk group the popular religion is the true religion, and it plays a substantial role in conditioning the behaviour patterns of the villagers".[3]

Spooner's work is a functionalist interpretation of religious motives; another view-point may be valid. Christianity sets a very high goal before its adherents: the ideal of sainthood which, in theory at least, Christians must

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1. Levy, R. 1957, op.cit.
2. Lutfiyya, A.M. 1966, op.cit., p.38.
3. Ibid., pp.16-17.

strive towards but which for most people is unattainable. By contrast, the directions of Islām are not so demanding. Prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage; the conscientious fulfilment of all these is not easy but, with some degree of prudence and good fortune, they are within reach of most people, certainly more than have ever achieved Christian sainthood. Islām is a religion of moderation, and has this effect upon its practitioners, that they approach life's problems confident of overcoming them but without worrying to the extent of emotional exhaustion. Iranian village society in particular had an easy-going and hopeful attitude to life that might seem strange in the face of the physical hardship endured. Nor was this attitude due to fatalism or to ignoring those conditions. Family life and a tolerant religion gave each individual a sense of personal validity and achievement which produced a pattern of emotional security rather than of soul-searching. The absence of self-doubts, and their consequent inhibiting torments, is the feature of Islamic society most likely to be envied by visitors from another culture with a more demanding, idealistic faith.

Wilbur, among other sources, lists the public religious holidays observed in Iran.[1] The rest of this chapter will record any original material concerning these festivals perceived during fieldwork.

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1. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., pp.210-1.

2. Religious ceremonies.

Muharram

The tenth day of Muharram, the anniversary of the death of Ḥusayn, grandson of the Prophet Muḥammad is the most important festival of the Shī'ī Muslim year. The historical circumstances of the death of Ḥusayn and the events leading up to it have been described by Bogdanov,[1] Donaldson[2] and Pelly[3] among others, and the ceremonies themselves have been variously described by Bogdanov,[4] Donaldson,[5] Lane,[6] Lassy,[7]

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1. Bogdanov, L. 1923. Muharram in Persia. Visvabharati Quarterly, vol.1, no.2. pp.119-23.

2. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., pp.79-87.

3. Pelly, L. 1879. The Miracle Plays of Hussein. London: W.H. Allen & Co., vol.I pp.vi-xv.

4. Bogdanov, L. 1923, op.cit., pp.123-7.

5. Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., pp.98-100.

6. Lane, E.W. 1871. An Account of the Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians. London: G. Cox, pp. 145-54.

7. Lassy, I. 1916. The Muharram Mysteries among the Azerbaijan Turks of Caucasia Helsingfors.

Morier,[1] Nijhoff,[2] Pelly,[3] Peters,[4] Robson,[5] and von Grunebaum,[6] to name the more important. The events of Muḥarram fall into three categories; first, recitations of the historical events with a religious commentary; second, processions representing Ḥusayn's funeral procession in which horses, decorated shrines and flagellates are notable components; and passion plays or ta'zīeh representing the events at Karbalā on 10th Muḥarram 61 A.H.(=10th October 680 A.D.) when Ḥusayn fell in battle in his unsuccessful bid for the Caliphate.

The reasons for offering here another description of the ceremonies are that the three elements, which were observed in Bakshahr in 1964, have not often been described together, that this description is contemporary in a situation where the ceremonies are less dramatic than formerly[7],

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1. Morier, J. 1818. A Second Journey through Persia, Armenia and Asia Minor to Constantinople between the years 1810 and 1816. London: Longman, pp.175-84.

2. Nijhoff, M. 1931. Mekka in the Latter Half of the 19th Century (trans.) J.J. Monahan. London: Luzac & Co., p.41.

3. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., for descriptions of the plays and texts.

4. Peters, E. 1963, op.cit., pp.193-200.

5. Robson, J. 1956. The Muharram Ceremonies Hibbert Journal, vol.5, no.3, pp.268-71.

6. Von Grunebaum, G.E. 1951, op.cit., pp.87-8

7. Being officially banned in Iran since 1935.

and that while descriptions have been plentiful, interpretations have been few. In particular it is hoped to examine the question, not previously asked, of the historical authenticity of the events depicted in the plays, and the significance of the departures therefrom.

There were two sorts of recitations held in Bakshahr; public and private. The former were held every morning on the first ten days of Muharram, in the public square. The regular audience numbered some 150 men, and 100 women, with persons under about 30 years old and very young children noticeably absent. Each recitation dealt with one of the events in the historical cycle, and was usually given by a Sayyid or a Shaykh noted for his piety, and usually of advanced years. The atmosphere at these recitations was one of devotional concentration, the actual story of the events being interspersed with pious comments and instructions for good behaviour. Towards the end the audience took up the story in a rhythmical chanting, and some members began weeping, but there was none of the frantic display of emotion which typified the plays and processions. These rouzeh khwānis, as they were called, had the approval of the most orthodox religious leaders because, they said, they propagated historical events without distortion or exaggeration.

The private rouzeh khwānis took place in the evenings, being held for men in the mosque, and for the women in private homes. While the mosque rouzehs khwānis again had official approval, those held by women were to some extent deplored, since the recitation would contain exaggerations

of the sufferings of Ḥusayn and his family to excite the pity of the audience and to encourage their tears to flow. Typically, a rouzeh khwānī would end with everyone weeping noisily, and some beating their chests with the fist clenched, and the emotional release experienced was considerable.

A play was performed every afternoon on the first ten days of Muḥarram, in the same square where the rouzehs khwānīs were held in the mornings. The audience was much larger, increasing daily until it numbered at least 600 for the final performance, and more diverse. The attentiveness of the morning was replaced by a more casual spectatorship, with occasional laughter and weeping. The parts of Ḥusayn's family were played by Sayyids,[1] and female parts were played by boys with their faces veiled. Nearly all actors read their parts from long slips of paper held in front of them, and their director was constantly on stage with them.[2] A few banners and scarves decorated the immediate area, otherwise there was no attempt at decoration or scenery.[3] The language of the plays was formal but not archaic, and the form seemed to be loose verse, not rhyming but with a distinct rhythm. Each play lasted for two hours at least, and the last took over five hours to complete. The sexes sat separately, as they did for the rouzehs khwānīs, but there was considerable movement among the audience. Although called 'plays' they were often little more than dramatic

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1. c.f. Peters, E. 1963, op.cit., p.197.
2. as Bogdanov, L. describes: 1923, op.cit., p.125.
3. in contrast to the magnificance of the former stage-setting in Tehrān, q.v. Bogdanov, 1; 1923, op.cit., p.124 and Morier, J. 1818, op.cit., p.180 among others.

readings, with gestures and actions only illustrative and subsidiary.

These plays, unique in Muslim activities, were ignored by religious leaders and discussed by the orthodox with reluctance and disapproval. First, the acting of female parts by men was considered impious, and this was the most serious charge against them. But they were also condemned for innaccuracy, because they contained many interpolations and exaggerations added for dramatic effect and to make people cry. Thus every play had at least two stories, the 'true' one, according to the historical account accepted as such by the orthodox, and the 'false', the apocryphal amendments, and in summarizing the events of the plays it was found necessary to distinguish these two elements. The orthodox modified their condemnation of the plays by saying that they were very ancient, that in the absence of cinemas and so forth they provided entertainment for the masses, and were the only means by which they would learn of the death of Ḥusayn and of its importance.

Processions in Bakshahr normally began on the third night before the tenth of Muḥarram, but this may be modified by the weather. Thus in 1964 the first procession was held on the eighth evening, that is on the eve of the ninth day[1], and was followed by others on the morning of the ninth day, on the following evening, and before the rouzeh khwānī on

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1. the reckoning of a festival begins on the evening of the day preceeding it.

the 'Ayd-i-'Ashūrah itself. Each procession consisted of several sections, which increased in number as the festival proceeded. At the head of each section two men carried a large embroidered banner, which often depicted the battle-field at Karbalā according to its traditional arrangement.

Silver hands were mounted on to the top corners of these banners,[1] and other, smaller green banners followed. Behind these again was a long double row of men, in pairs, wearing black trousers and a black top whose front opened to bare the chest. They walked in silence together, arms crossed, but stopped after some yards, when the pairs turned to face each other. Then they started chanting, and beat their breasts with their hands to the rhythm of the song, all the arms moving together.[2] After the song, the section moved on again, while another took its place with another song and more beating. The songs were about Ḥusayn's brothers, the Prophet's daughter Fāṭimeh, the battle, and so on. The procession moved slowly to the central mosque, at which a rouzeh khwānī was held when all had arrived. The final procession followed the enactment of the death of Ḥusayn.

The public ceremonies (i.e. excluding private dinners and rouzeh khwānīs)during Muḥarram followed this order:
1st day: Morning: Rouzeh Khwānī: The life of the Prophet, with 'Alī designated his successor.

Afternoon: Play: Concerned a man called Garmīā,

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1. as noted elsewhere, see especially Robson, J. 1956, op cit., p.270, and Morier, J. 1818, op.cit.,p.181.

2. c.f. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.904.

described as the governor of Palestine. He threw the children of Imām Riẓā (the eighth Imām, whose shrine is at Mashhad) into prison for which he was punished in a dream in which Moses appeared to him and, despite his pleas for mercy, threw him into a fire. Ḥusayn was informed of this by Moses. The prison scenes were amusingly acted, with a troupe of small boys as jailors.

Variation: The above account of the play was summarized by a Sayyid, however, some of the audience believed that the children were those of Ḥusayn.

Since it contained a reference to Khurāsān the play had an obvious local interest, otherwise its significance for the audience was that it showed the prophet of another religion (i.e. Judaism) acknowledging the superiority of Ḥusayn.[1]

2nd day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: Concerned the childhood of Ḥasan and Ḥusayn.

Afternoon: Play: On this theme. On the birthday of the Prophet, 'Alī refused to give Ḥasan and Ḥusayn, then small children, new clothes because he did not think they should have them while others went without. The children cried, especially when they saw the sons of rich men in new clothes. So Gabriel from heaven made them happy by bringing two sets of new clothes each for them .

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1. The theme of eternal punishment for those who do not believe in the validity of Ḥusayn's claim follows Scene III in Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol. I pp.33-50.

3rd day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: About the Mahdī, the concealed Imām,[1] and disclaiming the validity of those who have pretended to be him, and in particular, the perfidy of the Bāb.[2]

Afternoon: Play: The beginning of the Karbalā sequence. The Caliph (historically Yazīd ibn Mu'āwiah, but unnamed to the majority of the Bakshahr audience) ordered his vazir 'Abdullāh Zabān to acknowledge him or be killed. Ḥusayn was shown the order and fled from Mecca to Medina to protect his womenfolk. On receipt of a false letter from Kūfa, Ḥusayn set out for that city, despite the cautions of his brother 'Abbās. He left behind one of his daughters because she was ill, which parting was given extensive dramatic treatment, and was played with much pathos.[3]

4th day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: About some of the prophets who preceeded Muḥammad.

Afternoon: Play: Muslim attempted to entrust his children to Husayn, but they insisted on going with him to Kūfa where he arranged support for Ḥusayn. On the arrival of Ibn Zīyād, Muslim was forced to flee, entrusting his boys to a friend. On his journey he was sheltered by Fāṭimeh (the Prophet's daughter, historically impossible) but was

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1. See, for example, Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., pp.226-241.

2. Ibid., pp.362-365.

3. This play is, in most important respect, the same as Scene XII in Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, pp.207-223, except that herein 'Abbās makes no objections. However, Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op. cit., pp.80-81 confirms the Bakshahr variation.

then betrayed to Ibn Zīyād. After repeated farewells to his children he was executed having refused to acknowledge Yazīd as Caliph.[1]

Variation: Historically Muslim's departure preceeded the letter to Ḥusayn, which Muslim in fact wrote.

5th day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: The story of Muslim.

Afternoon: Play: The story of Muslim's children. Harūz, a soldier of Ibn Zīyād, (governor of Kūfa) was ordered by him to capture the children of Muslim, known to be in hiding in Kūfa. After searching fruitlessly all day Ḥarūz went home, where he found the sleeping boys, who had been sheltered by his wife. Despite her protests, he killed them.

Despite the tragedy, this was a comic episode, made so by the brilliant acting of the man who played the part of Ḥarūz. A railway worker, he had played the part for many years and knew his lines by heart. The matrimonial quarrels in particular were much relished by the audience.

Variation: Some of the audience believed that the children were those of Ḥusayn.

Variation: According to my Sayyid informant the play was not historically accurate. He said that Muslim's children were sheltered by his mother-in-law (the quarrelsome couple being interpolated for comic effect only) whose son betrayed them to Ibn Zīyād. They were imprisoned, but released out of pity by their jailor. Ibn Zīyād sent Ḥarūz after them,

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1. The Kūfa sequences of this play are almost the exact equivalent of Scene X in Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, pp.171-189. See also Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., pp.83-84.

who killed them.[1]

6th day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: The true story of Muslim's children, as above.

Afternoon: Play: The four leaders: Ḥusayn, 'Abbās, 'Alī Akbar, and Zayn al-'Ābidīn prepared for battle.

7th day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: The story of 'Alī Akbar.

Afternoon: Play: The story of 'Abbās, Ḥusayn's brother and standard-bearer. He was an impetuous character, and started fighting without his brother's permission. His hand was cut off[2] in the fighting, a punishment for disobedience, and he tried unsuccessfully to persuade Ḥusayn to give him reinforcements, and quarrelled with him over this. Returning to the fray despite Ḥusayn's pleadings, he was killed after a heroic defence.[3]

8th day: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: The fate of the children of Ḥusayn.

Afternoon: Play: The Death of 'Alī Akbar. He was the eldest son of Ḥusayn, and offered to sacrifice himself for his father. Bidden by Ḥusayn, 'Alī Akbar said farewell to the women, and did so by wrapping himself in a shroud to indicate his immediate martyrdom. Seen thus he caused great distress to actors and audience alike. He went off to battle, returned wounded and thirsty, Ḥusayn tried to give him his

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1. See Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, Scene XI, pp.190-206 which combines both versions.
2. This is the hand above the standards: c.f. Morier, J. 1818, op.cit., p.182 among others.
3. To some extent this play follows Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.II, Scene XIX, pp.18-36: Pelly's text emphasizes the army's shortage of water.

saliva, but the boy died in his lap.[1]

The melancholy scenes in these plays were accompanied by weeping from the audience, real tears being shed, and some of the more affected beating their chests with clenched fist. This tension increased as the days went by and the emotional climate intensified. The last four plays in particular formed an almost continuous sequence, as acts of a play. References in one play were made to events and persons in the preceeding scenes, so that the break of a day was minimized and continuity effectively preserved.

Evening: A procession of chest-beaters, about 60-70 men taking part.

9th day: 'Ayd-i-Tāsū'ā: Morning: Rouzeh khwānī: Concerning all the brothers.

Afternoon: Play: The story of Qāsim, the son of Ḥasan. He had been betrothed to Fāṭimeh, the daughter of Ḥusayn and Laylā, and in the play he insisted on marrying her. (N.B. This is an FBD marriage!) Laylā refused to attend the wedding of a young man so soon to be killed, but Qāsim eventually persuaded her to come. On hearing of the death of 'Alī Akbar, Qāsim wanted to fight for Ḥusayn, and after retiring with his bride he was killed in battle.[2]

Variation: Although the young couple were betrothed, historically the wedding did not take place, as Qāsim at the

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1. c.f. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, Scene XVII, pp.287-303, which follows the play fairly precisely.

2. c.f. Ibid., vol.II, Scene XVIII, pp.1-17, which follows this play in general outline.

time was 13-14 years old and Fāṭimeh only 8-9.

Evening: A procession of chest-beaters, about 80 men taking part.

10th day: 'Ayd-i-'Ashūrah: (The Day of Martyrdom).

Morning: A procession of chest-beaters, at least 100 men, ending not at the mosque but at the square where the rouzeh khwānis and plays were held. Then followed the

Rouzeh khwāni: About the life and death of Ḥusayn himself. After this a different sort of procession was drawn up.[1] First came two nāqūs. These were wooden structures, about 15 feet high, slightly ovoid in shape, carried upright by teams of men holding the poles thrust through their bases. They were richly decorated with scarves, fringes etc., and were said by the audience to represent the camels which carried Ḥusayn's family to the battlefield at Karbalā.[2] Then followed some stretchers, representing the dead, then some embroidered banners, and finally a few camels.[3] The black-dressed men who had taken part in the flagellate processions then formed a circle round the nāqūs, and danced round them slowly, their arms on each others' shoulders, singing about Ḥusayn. After this the play was begun, which was, of course, about the Death of Ḥusayn.[4]

1. c.f. also Spooner, B.J. 1963, op.cit., p.92.

2. c.f. for example Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit.,vol.I, p.xxii.

3. Morier, J. 1818, op.cit., pp.180-183, and Robson, J. 1956, op.cit.,pp.2-10 in particular have good descriptions of this procession.

4. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.II, Scene XX, pp.82-103,also called the Death of Ḥusayn, differs from the Bakshahr story in some respects.

The earlier part of the play was a summary of the previous scenes, for the benefit of those of the audience who had come into Bakshahr for the day from the outlying villages. Thus 'Alī Akbar, Qāsim, and some subsidiary characters were killed all over again. Out of historical sequence, there followed the journey of Ḥusayn to Karbalā, the death of Muslim was reported and further supporters were killed. Ḥusayn in his thirst (historically the army had been cut off from water-supplies for some days) was given water by a character described as The Imām, but stopped drinking when reviled for doing so by his opponents while his womenfolk were being taken prisoner.[1] Then followed a repeat of the death of 'Abbās. Ḥusayn was asked by Shāhbānū his wife (the daughter of the last Sasanian king of Iran) to plead for water because the long thirst had dried her breasts so that she was unable to feed their youngest son.

Ḥusayn mounted a horse, taking a child with him, and a curious interlude followed, in which children from the audience were passed under the horse by their mothers, and a sip of water given to the man playing the part of Ḥusayn. This was done for sick children, in the belief that it would cure them, and the stage-director had to turn some away so that the play might continue. When the action resumed Ḥusayn took the child to his enemies and said that Yazīd surely did not want the death of a child, but the answer was the child's death. Ḥusayn then donned a blood-

1. c.f. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.II p.44 (i.e. not in the scene of Ḥusayn's death).

stained robe, to indicate his wounds,[1] at which the audience began to weep.

Then came a curious interpolation, an incident in which a hunter in a distant land, pursued by a lion, called on Ḥusayn to deliver him and Ḥusayn, at that moment fighting at Karbalā, was transported in front of the lion and delivered the hunter.[2] My Sayyid informant, who had been so fussy about the accuracy of minor events, did not question any of the incidents which concerned Ḥusayn himself, however incredible.

After this Ḥusayn returned to the fighting, but soon afterwards, wounded, returned to his women to be mourned by them and to comfort them,[3] and to defend them from the enemies' attacks. He then took on his lap a little child, who was immediately killed.[4] This was followed by the recess for the noon prayer, Ḥusayn cleansing himself with sand instead of water, as is permitted.[5] After this he was attacked again, kicked over and stamped upon by the soldiers, his sisters, who were attempting to protect him, being beaten back. The audience, by now nearly all weeping, rose to its feet as the climax approached. Ḥusayn, by this

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1. c.f. Pelly, L: 1879, op.cit., vol.II, pp.90-93: Ḥusayn puts on an old robe so that Ibn Ziyād will refrain from stripping his body naked.

2. Pelly records this incident in a separate scene: Ibid., Scene XXl vol.II pp.54-59.

3. c.f. Ibid., vol.II, pp.101-2.

4. c.f. Pelly's summary in his Preface. Ibid., vol.I,p.xv.

5. c.f. Ibid., vol.I, p.xv.

time lying face downwards on the ground, was 'killed' by a soldier with a blow on the nape of the neck.

Immediately the audience shrieked out in distress. Some cried 'Ḥusayn is dead', all were shouting and sobbing. In a rush of bodies they ran on to the stage-area, to join in the action. The men quickly formed a tight-packed circle round the 'corpse', running round and round the circle as quickly as possible, shouting 'Ḥusayn, Ḥusayn' and hitting their heads as hard as they could with their hands. This was the point at which formerly people used to cut their heads with knives and inflict other tortures upon themselves,[1] and soldiers from the gendarmerie stood by the frenzied scene to curb any excesses. One man had a short chain removed from his hand, and others were urged to calm themselves. The big nāqūs were carried round as quickly as possible, their stability imperilled by their speed, and the procession re-formed itself, with the addition of the horses used in the play, the bodies having been placed on stretchers. This procession represented the journey of Ḥusayn's corpse and the captives to Yazīd,[2] and is found in places where the plays themselves are not performed.[3] Eventually the procession made its way to the

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1. See especially Robson, J. 1956, op.cit., p.271 and Bogdanov, L. 1923, op.cit., p.126.

2. c.f. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, pp.xxi-xxiii and Von Grunebaum, G.E. 1951, op.cit., p.88, among others.

3. E.g. Lane, E.W. 1871, op.cit., pp.145-54.

Friday mosque, where the 'corpse' preached a short rouzeh khwānī on his sacrifice.[1]

The emotional climax which this play produced is impossible to describe briefly and adequately. Undoubtedly, for most if not all of the audience, Husayn's death had, in a mystical but nevertheless real sense, taken place at that moment; although they were able, outside the play, to distinguish it from reality, this distinction was blurred during the actual enactment. Personal involvement can be aroused in Western audiences by good theatrical performances; the dismay and sorrow that these audiences felt at the death of Husayn was intensified by their personal involvement in the issues at stake. It was an event by which people entered into the sacred world, in the sense propounded by Durkheim,[2] which, as Leach observed, may be characterized and demarcated from normal life by masquerade.[3]

If the death of Husayn were a purely historical event it would be forgotten as are most events in the past. If the battle of Karbalā is remembered today, it must have some contemporary significance, and the commemorative activities must satisfy some need in audience and performers which is

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1. c.f. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.197.

2. Durkheim, E.1915, Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (trans. J.W. Swain): London: Allen & Unwin, p.218.

3. Leach, E.R. 1961. Rethinking Anthropology. London School of Economics, Monographs on Social Anthropology no.22. University of London: Athlone Press, p.135.

relevant today. Some suggestions as to this meaning will now be made.

Peters has indicated that the Passion Plays epitomize the avoidance of a class struggle; in that they are performed and organized by Sayyids and Shaykhs they reinforce the superiority of the Learned Classes over the shopkeepers and peasants.[1] Moreover, the plays are about the ancestors of the Shaykhs, and thus demonstrate their superiority in action. They are also about the triumph of good over evil, for Ḥusayn is resurrected and is not defeated by the dark forces that would kill him. They give a glimpse of the evil of ignorance, and the chaos that would result if it ruled the world, thus the death of Ḥusayn in the play is a parable of what would happen if the masses, and not the ruling classes, organized community life.[2] But order is restored in the end, and the ruling classes are there to protect the masses from themselves.

This interpretation is true to some extent of the plays and processions in Bakshahr, particularly in view of Sayyid participation in them and Sayyid political domination of the town. However, I would suggest that there are other interpretations, some of which will have more significance for the majority of the audience, and for those who come in for the plays from the outlying villages.

A minor element in the plays was their nationalistic

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1. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., p.197.

2. Ibid., p.198.

significance. The local relevance of the first play has been indicated, but more important was Ḥusayn's supposed marriage to the daughter of Yazdagird, the last Sasanian ruler of Iran, who was conquered in the Islamic invasion.[1] She was an important character in the plays, and through her the audience clearly identified Ḥusayn with Iranian national interests. Ḥusayn in the plays became the Iranian national champion, and the plays were also a representation of the political oppression by the Arabs of Iran. They therefore showed the reasons for the consequent Iranian acceptance of the rights of the Fāṭimid claim to the Caliphate,[2] and explained why the Shī'ī came to be the state religion of Iran. Thus the orthodox religious element in Bakshahr justified the plays as being a potted religious history of Iran, and therefore of great educational value. Indeed the audience, by this means, did seem mostly to be aware of the Shī'ī/Iran connection.

Another strand in the plays is their representation of the importance of family unity. Elsewhere in this thesis the role of the family as the centre both of social relationships and of personal security has been indicated. One son survived the holocaust at Karbalā,[3] and thus the plays demonstrate the tragedy of a person bereft of all kin.

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1. Wilbur, D.N. 1948, op.cit., p.209.

2. See especially Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.I, p.xvi

3. Zayn al-'Ābud-Dīn, reckoned by the Shī'ī as the fourth Imām. See Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.102.

In a sense the audience were identifying with his sorrow as well as weeping for the death of Ḥusayn. Perhaps the acting-out of such a tragedy is, in this instance, a technique for avoiding it in real life. Other elements of family life appear in the plays: the quarrelling brothers and the FBD marriage, for example. Motives of physical security appear; the sufferings from thirst of Ḥusayn and his family are heavily played and have an obvious parallel in the regional water shortage.

In this field of interpretations the most important aspect of the Muḥarram ceremonies is their representation of the ambiguities in the father-son relationship. These have certain similarities with those of the Tallensi; in both cases ambiguity is based on the fact that sons must deny their ability and wishes to supplant their fathers, despite the inevitability that they shall eventually do so. As Fortes says of the Tallensi:

> "Beneath the solidarity (between fathers and sons) due to common interests and mutual dependance lies the rivalry and opposition of successive generations".[1]

In both cases sons only come completely into their own on the death of the father, yet the death of the father is strongly abhorred. Both societies ignore the ambiguity. The Tallensi do not admit the full significance of the father's death:

> "Instead they emphasize the supreme filial duty of

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1. Fortes, M. 1959b. Oedipus and Job in West African Religion. Cambridge University Press, p.47.

performing a parent's funeral rites".[1]

In the same way, and to avoid admitting the same ambiguity, the participants in the Muḥarram ceremonies emphasize the supreme importance of weeping for Ḥusayn, whose death in this context clearly represents the killing of the father.

There are, of course, many differences between the two societies. The funeral rites of the Tallensi transform the father into an ancestor, in Muḥarram the father is already an ancestor. One can say that the Iranians weeping for Ḥusayn can be more explicit in their depiction of the father's death because they have transferred that event to a remote point in time. However, in the descent field, the similarities still exist. Once the Tallensi father is an ancestor, his power continues:

> "This transforms his mundane and material jural authority into mystical power - that is, power which is absolute, autocratic and unpredictable because it transcends the human controls of moral and jural sanctions".[2]

Correspondingly, through the Muḥarram ceremonies, the actual power of the real, living fathers receives mystical reinforcement, through identification of the agnatic with the religious group, as previously mentioned, and without this reinforcement paternal authority in rural Iran might not survive the adulthood of the sons. The final similarity with the Tallensi is that in both societies the mourning

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1. Fortes, M. 1959b, op.cit., p.48.

2. Ibid, p.48.

ceremonies exonerate the sons of guilt,[1] which is, perhaps, the full significance at this level of interpretation of the weeping at Muḥarram.

One important difference exists between the two societies, which is that the Tallensi perform filial duties but once, whereas Iranians act out the death of Ḥusayn every year, since the ceremonies have additional interpretations. It is suggested that in order to understand their true significance they must be seen in the context of the Shi'ī doctrine as a whole. Grunebaum has indicated that the Shī'ī added two ideas to the original message of Islām, both of which are expressed in the Muḥarram ceremonies.[2] First is the belief that 'Alī and his descendants were divine manifestations in man, were immaculate, sinless, and superior in all respects to other men. Thus Ḥusayn's bid for the Caliphate was not only justifiable, but also entirely necessary on theological grounds alone, and his death was not that of a plotter against authority but a sacrilegious act against divine persons and a flouting of the intentions of God. In Bakshahr the audience's sympathy with Ḥusayn was from religious as well as political motives, and to think otherwise would have been heresy. The second innovation of the Shī'ī doctrine is that of the efficacy of passion, or

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1. Fortes, M. 1959b, op.cit., p.49.

2. Von Grunebaum, G.E.1951, op.cit., pp.85-86.

vicarious suffering, as a means of achieving salvation, forgiveness of sins and thus admission to Paradise. It is central to Shī'i doctrine that Ḥusayn's death was a voluntary self-sacrifice, and in this lies its contemporary significance, for those who today believe that Ḥusayn suffered on their behalf will themselves be saved from hell. This was made explicit in the plays[1] and is probably the real reason for the audience's participation in them, for the plays are not only a representation of the achievement of salvation but are also a re-creation of it.

It is obvious that, if salvation is achieved through voluntary suffering, it is more likely to be achieved if suffering is assumed by each individual who wishes to be saved. So the tears of the audience at the Muḥarram ceremonies have two functions: they show that the individual concerned is really participating in Ḥusayn's sufferings, and also that he has a sense of personal loss and grief which is voluntarily assumed. The self-flagellationsundertaken in the processions expand this theme; they are both a closer sharing of the pains of Ḥusayn and a voluntary offering of their torments made by the flagellates themselves, to ensure further their own salvation.[2] Moreover, in the context of the Shī'ī

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1. See, e.g. Pelly, L. 1879, op.cit., vol.II, pp.100-1 and pp.334-48, and Donaldson, D.M. 1933, op.cit., p.341.

2. Robson, J. 1956, op.cit., p.274.

doctrine as believed in Bakshahr, without such suffering salvation is unlikely, hence its necessity, and that of audience-participation. This belief in the efficacy of suffering has been noted elsewhere. Robertson Smith has said that, in particular, the shedding of blood is a means whereby the worshipper recommends himself and his prayers to God,[1] and that this ritual is also a part of mourning rites by which the individual establishes an enduring relationship with the dead.[2] Therefore weeping and flagellation at the Muḥarram ceremonies are forms of supplication for the forgiveness of sins, and the latter is also lamentation for the death of Ḥusayn, by which the individual identifies himself with the Shī'ah claimant, establishes kinship with him, and also with the religious doctrines he represents. Moreover, as sin is continuous while life goes on, so the need for the attempt at salvation is also continuous, which explains why the ceremonies, unlike the funeral rites of the Tallensi, take place each year.

The Muḥarram ceremonies therefore combine many elements, only a few of which have been indicated here, but their central theme would appear to be that they are a mask for, and a resolution of, family tensions, and are also an

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1. Robertson Smith, W. 1927. Lectures on the Religion of the Semites. London: A. & C. Black, p.303.

2. Ibid., p.412. See also Durkheim, J. 1915, op.cit., p.399 on the similarity between mourning and other collective rites.

effort to ensure that the sufferings in a hard environment in this life will not be reproduced in the hereafter.

Three questions can be asked as to the relevance of the accuracy of the events presented in these religious ceremonies. The first is whether any of them is true in the historical sense. The second is why were certain events described as true by the orthodox and some as untrue; here we are questioning the distinction between the historical tale and its variations. The third is whether or not there is any basis for reconciling the "true" and the"false", for it can be assumed that there must be some validity for the inclusion of the false, for its presence to be permitted at all.

The first question, that of historical truth, can be answered in terms of the acceptance of any orthodoxy: that it is true within the system it delimits, and must be believed by its adherents. A parallel can be drawn, for example, with the acceptance by Christians of the life of Christ as a historical fact and of the details laid out in the Gospels. The descriptions in the orthodox Shi'ī of the events up to and at Karbalā can be subjected to this type of scrutiny; a battle took place, that is known, and the details of it are equally accepted. Whether or not the details are as historically true as the central historical fact is an unnecessary question, what counts being that they are treated as if they were true by those who delimit the faith.

The second question, as to the presence of the "true" and "false" material, is again one of delimitation. What

is distinguished here is the difference between the canonical and the apocryphal, again as in Christianity, belief in the first being a matter of theological necessity, and belief in the second a matter of theological instruction. This is the level at which the Sayyid commentator on the Passion Plays separated what he believed to be the true from the false incidents. To him (as to the other orthodox) it was necessary to be precise as to which events formed part of the body of theological doctrine and which did not.

The third question, as to whether there are any grounds for accepting the non-doctrinal matter as valid, is the most interesting. A parallel can be drawn here with the writings of medieval theologians on the lives of minor saints, in which many incidents are both apocryphal and acceptable. Bede, for example, writing in the eighth century in his preface to his "History of the English Church and People" has said:

> "For if history records good things of good men, the thoughtful hearer is encouraged to imitate what is good: or if it records evil of wicked men, the good religious listener or reader is encouraged to avoid all that is sinful and perverse, and to follow what he knows to be good and pleasing to God".[1]

This shows that the primary function of history in a religious context is its value as instructive material, and

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1. Bede, The Venerable. 731. History of the English Church and People (trans.) L. Shirley-Price. London: Penguin Books 1955, p.33.

we have seen that it was for this purpose that the orthodox Shī'ī accepted the presence of the Passion Plays although on many other grounds they disapproved of them. This, however, still leaves the question whether spurious material may have any instructive value; Bede clearly did not doubt the historical accuracy of what he himself recorded. A different attitude was taken by Reginald of Canterbury writing in the eleventh century in his preface to his Life of St. Malchus, as discussed by Jones. Reginald of Canterbury believed that what he described had happened at some time or another, but:

> ' "If I ran across a good story anywhere," says Reginald, "I included it; for all things are common in the communion of saints (Jones' italics). Since Malchus was just, saintly, loved by Christ and full of the very essence of righteousness, I do not deviate from the truth, no matter what miracles I ascribe to Malchus, even though they were manifested only in some other Saint". '[1]

This shows that, provided spurious material illustrated the divine nature and purpose, it did not matter whether or not it was accurately ascribed. In these terms the deviations from the accepted story of Karbalā: the confusions between the persons involved, the transference of events out of sequential order, the attribution of deeds to

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1. Jones, C.W. 1947. Saints' Lives and Chronicles. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, p.61.

the "wrong" person: none of these matters since the total story represents the divine nature of Ḥusayn and the validity of his political claims. All the deviations are different ways of expressing that validity without in any way detracting from it, indeed they embellish it. It is by this means that deviations in the "true" story became acceptable to those who knew that, in the sense of history taught by the orthodox, they were untrue.

A further question can be asked as to the meaning of the curious interpolations in the Plays of the miracles attributed to Ḥusayn, events quite impossible in the actual course of events however described (the intervention by Ḥusayn, during the battle of Karbalā, in a lion-hunt in a different land, for example). Here we are distinguishing between the belief in different versions of the same story, all of which are equally likely to have been true in terms of actual probability, and the belief in events which could not have been true except on a miraculous basis. Again a comparison can be made with medieval writings, this time on the nature of the miracle. From St. Thomas Aquinas, writing in the thirteenth century, it is clear that miracles are events which occur outside the whole course of nature, inexplicable by any worldly process or by any sage, which, since only God can do, must be effected by Him.[1] Now,

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1. Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1265-1271. Summa Theologica, I, qu.105, art. 7, para 4. (trans.) the Fathers of the English Dominican Province. London: R. & T. Washbourne, 1912, Part I, no.3, p.405.

Aquinas also says:

> "The human intellect is measured by things, so that a human concept is not by reason of itself, but by reason of its being consonant with things, since an opinion is true or false according as it answers to the reality. But the Divine intellect is the measure of things, since each thing has so far truth in it, as it represents the Divine intellect...Consequently the Divine intellect is true in itself, and its type is truth in itself".[1]

This means that truth is that which is recognized by its symbolic aptness as an illustration of the power of God, so that anything that represents His nature must be true. In these terms, since all miracles necessarily reflect God's purpose, it is impossible to have a miracle which did not happen; it must have happened, because it is godly. It seems to have been at this level of belief that the Sayyid who disputed the accuracy of minor historical and probable events in the Karbalā sequence was able to accept the most improbable stories concerning Ḥusayn; to him all the miracles attributed to Ḥusayn must have occurred since they were a reflection of his divine nature. To dismiss them as unlikely and therefore as not having happened would be to cast doubts on Ḥusayn's divinity.

The final comment on the unnecessary nature of the

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1. Aquinas, St. Thomas. 1265-1271. Summa Theologica II, i, qu.93, art i, para 3. (trans.) The Fathers of the English Dominican Province. London: R. & T. Washbourne, 1915, Part II (first part) no.3, p.29.

truth of the miracle to make it valid comes from AElfric's preface to his life of St. Swithin. AElfric, writing in about 1000, reproves those who knew the saint for not recording his deeds and words in his lifetime, but also says:

> "His deeds were not known before God Himself manifested them neither have we found in books how the bishop lived in this world, before he departed to Christ .... But God hath nevertheless brought his life to light by manifest miracles and wondrous signs".[1]

This shows that an entire life can be known to have been historically doubtful, and yet be acceptable on theological grounds, and be worthy of reverence, St. Augustine has also made this point.[2] Similarly, characters and incidents in the Karbalā stories can be total inventions and yet be taken seriously in the context of religious activity.

In summary, then, the questions as to the truth of the incidents in the plays can be answered in the sense that, in the religious field, the sort of truth required is non-historical. It is valid in the religious context where the events are considered, and their criterion for truth is not their historical occurrence but their resemblance to the fundamental nature of the beliefs described.

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1. Skeat, W.W.(ed.) 1881. AElfric's Lives of Saints. London: Early English Text Society, Vol.I, p.441.

2. Augustine, Saint. Bishop of Hippo. c.397. Confessions (trans.) R.S. Pine-Coffin. London: Penguin Books, 1961, pp.115-6

'Ayd-i-'Umar

'Umar was the second successor of the Prophet to the Caliphate, following Abū Bakr in 632. A noted warrior, he extended Islamic domination over a wide area.[1] He was assassinated in 644 reputedly by an Iranian Christian who had applied to him without success for protection against the Muslim forces in northern Iran.[2] The day of his death is not a public holiday in Iran, but in Ḥusaynābād, where I participated in the ceremonies concerning his death in 1964, the story behind his assassination showed considerable variation.

The version given by a Sayyid landowner with secondary education was that 'Umar was a good man because of his propagation of Islām, but that he erred in believing himself to be a true successor of the Prophet (the Sayyid denied that 'Umar had ever held the Caliphate, although historically he ruled in this capacity for over 10 years). An Iranian miller, 'Abdullāh by name, said the Sayyid, disliked 'Umar's ambition to the extent of deciding to kill him. 'Umar asked the miller if he would build him a mill, and 'Abdullāh replied that he would build a mill which would last to the end of 'Umar's life. Since mill-stones only last for three or four years 'Umar realized that 'Abdullāh wanted to kill him, and had him imprisoned; but when friends pointed out to 'Umar that imprisonment

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1. Levy, R. 1957, op.cit., pp.10-11.

2. Ibid., p.12.

without cause was contrary to Islamic law 'Abdullāh was released. Whereupon he stabbed 'Umar from behind as he was praying in the mosque at Medina.

'Abdullāh, running away, was halted and questioned by 'Alī (Muḥammad's son-in-law and the Shī'ah claimant), who was present in another part of the mosque. 'Abdullāh explained and'Alī released him, then joined 'Umar who shortly afterwards died. The bystanders asked 'Alī if he had seen anything, to which he replied that from the moment he had sat beside 'Umar he had seen nothing. 'Alī, in this tale, both connived at 'Umar's death and avoided lying only by a trick, which did not disturb the Sayyid's veneration of him, and his approval at the rejoicings on the anniversary of the death of the false claimant.

The story of 'Umar, as related by a village woman, mainly concerned miracles performed by 'Alī to demonstrate to 'Umar his superior claim to the Caliphate. Thus 'Alī transported both himself and 'Umar to India and back again in a moment, and showed him a field at one end of which the dihqāns were sowing wheat, and at the other end of which they were already reaping it. The miller re-appears in this tale, but kills 'Umar when he comes to have his wheat ground into flour. 'Umar himself was ground between the millstones and the miller's wife baked bread of him.

Most of the villagers believed that 'Umar was the murderer of Ḥusayn (historically untrue) and that by rejoicing at his assassination they were vindicating Ḥusayn. But some of the village women knew no more about 'Umar than that he had committed some crime a long time ago, which did

not prevent their enjoyment of the festivities.

The festival of the death of 'Umar was celebrated for two evenings in Husaynābād.[1] On the first evening women danced together inside the large courtyard, while the men rivalled each other in contests of physical skill and strength. On the second day final touches were put to the image of 'Umar, made by the wife of the village butcher. This was an effigy somewhat like a British 'guy', very cleverly made; shaped like a scarecrow, dressed in rags, with two guns, made from donkey's legs, a rosary of donkey dung,[2] and prominent male genitalia including a large erect phallus. This last was the subject of bawdy jokes and comparisons among the onlookers. In the evening, after more dancing, and a more festive meal than usual in each household, the young men fought for the honour of carrying the 'Umar. Eventually, after several circuits of the big yard, it was set alight by paraffin and the disintegrating mass kicked and abused.

This festival was clearly a release for the villagers from the long period of mourning of Muḥarram. It expressed a final outburst of anger at the death of Ḥusayn, and also perhaps at the restrictions on ordinary life which the period of mourning had imposed. (Weddings do not take place during the month of Muḥarram, for example). It had also some elements of saturnalia, although subdued, and was to

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1. c.f. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.90.

2. The donkey is an unclean animal.

some extent a festival of rebellion, when normal restraints were thrown aside,[1] in particular the restraint against sexual jokes. Finally, it was an expression of village solidarity. It was the only festival in which the villagers co-operated as a group, without going to or relying on the town, and this was emphasized by the fact that, owing to the different reckonings of the passage of time, neighbouring villages tended to hold the festivities on different days, each saying that its own was correct.[2] The motive of village cohesion was expressed openly at the time, as she lit the bonfire the village bath-woman shouted out "Let's show all the villages that Ḥusaynābād has the best 'Umar. Let's show all the villages that Ḥusaynābād is the best village".

'Ayd-i-Ghadīr

'Ghadīr' refers to the pool of water beside which, it is believed by the Shī'ī, Muḥammad acknowledged 'Alī as his successor, shortly before his death. In Deh Nou, where I was staying when this anniversary came round, the dihqāns recognized the occasion by kissing Sayyid Riẓā's hand or chest, and other visitors came to pay their respects. Little work was done that day, refreshments were served and a great

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1. Gluckman, M. 1956. Custom and Conflict in Africa. Oxford: Blackwell, pp.131-6. See also Leach, E.R. 1961, op.cit., pp.132-6.

2. c.f. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.902-903.

Scenes from religious ceremonies



Flagellates at Muḥarram



Part of Ḥusayn's funeral procession



Effigy of 'Umar, ready for burning

deal of deferential attention was paid to the Sayyid.[1]

These ceremonies are significant in view of the fact that one of the most powerful families in Bakshahr were Sayyids, and their numbers included the mayor. While all rich men were not necessarily Sayyids, and not all Sayyids influential or wealthy, it was probably true that the proportion of rich to poor was greater among the Sayyids than among the rest of the population. Sayyids and non-Sayyids alike agreed on the greater efficacy of the prayers of the descendants of the Prophet,[2] and this superiority in the religious field extended to status in other spheres.

The extension of their superior status was also the efforts of the Sayyids themselves, for individually and as a group they never lost an opportunity of emphasizing the moral superiority which their descent had given them over the rest of the population,[3] and of using this to gain political and other ascendancies. In the local community the Sayyids formed an elite, and the function of 'Ayd-i-Ghadīr was to remind the rest of the people of this.

3. Magic and sorcery.

In describing the festivals of the Shī'ī communities of Ḥusaynābād and Bakshahr it became possible to distinguish

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1. c.f. Donaldson, B.A. 1938. The Wild Rue: A Study of Mohammedan Magic and Folklore in Iran. London: Zuzac & Co., p.58.

2. Ibid., p.58.

3. Ibid., p.56.

between elements which are part of orthodox Islamic doctrine and practice, and those which, in terms of this orthodoxy, are concerned with apocryphal events and practices. The difference corresponds to a great extent to McKim Marriot's distinction between the 'great' and 'little' traditions in Indian village culture,[1] and particularly to his application of this distinction in the description of the origins of Hindu religious festivals, some of which were sanctioned in Sancritic tradition, and some of which were without such a rationale.[2]

In Ḥusaynābād the difference between the 'great' and the 'little' traditions in religious festivals was not so easily distinguished, for all religious festivals and events were in some way related to the 'great' tradition of the national religion of Iran, the 'little' tradition elements therein, apocryphal stories and practices, being integrated with those sanctioned by the 'great' tradition. However, the 'great' and the 'little' traditions were clearly distinguishable in the religious field in Ḥusaynābād for, aside from the religious doctrines, there existed a whole field of magical beliefs and practices. These were couched in the language of the 'great' tradition, literally so; the names of 'Alī and Muḥammad and verses from the Qur'ān were used in spells, amulets and superstitious

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1. Marriot, McKim. 1955, Little Communities in an Indigenous Civilization. In Village India (ed.) McKim Marriot. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 171-222.

2. Ibid., pp.191-3.

practices but, by their nature, they belong to the 'little' tradition and its cultural manifestations.

Bess Donaldson has written a comprehensive account of Iranian magical beliefs and practices[1] and the following brief account of observations during fieldwork is by no means exhaustive of village beliefs and practices in this sphere. Evans-Pritchard's distinction between magic and sorcery[2] is useful in categorizing practices in Ḥusaynābād.

The most ubiquitous magical belief was in the evil eye. This belief, found in many other communities, is that the evil eye is capable of projecting the malignity of its owner,[3] so that misfortune is attributed to covetousness or jealousy.[4] For Iran, Spooner has particularized the categories and traits that may attract suspicion, and selected devices to counteract them.[5] In the village idiom evil emotions were masked by praise, and in consequence

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1. Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit.

2. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1950, op.cit., p.380.

3. Gifford, E.S. 1958. The Evil Eye. London: Faber & Faber. See also Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.923-7.

4. Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., pp.18-19.

5. Spooner, B.J. 1970. The Evil Eye in the Middle East. In Witchcraft Confessions and Accusations (ed.) Mary Douglas. Association of Social Anthropologists Monographs no.9. London: Tavistock, pp.311-9. This article has a useful selected bibliography on the subject.

villagers were careful not to over-praise, particularly with regard to children, and any misfortune which befell a child was likely to be attributed to praise of it previously heard,[1] as an indication of harmful jealousy. The possessor of the evil eye did not necessarily know that he was causing harm,[2] but it was the responsibility of each individual to avoid its occurrence. Children were particularly vulnerable to the evil eye, and most village babies had magical charms, particularly blue beads, attached to their swaddling bands. Pregnant women and others who felt themselves to be particularly at risk, would also wear protective beads and amulets, to avert both the evil eye and the actions of bad spirits.[3] Rites and incantations might also be used,[4] but were less common. These practices are interesting because they were preventatives against influences which were purely magical and potential, but were nevertheless counteracted by actual sorcery.

If an illness was believed to be caused by the evil eye a cure might be attempted by the wearing of special amulets,[5] but more elaborate rites were usually employed. Thus although amulets and charms were used to ward off the

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1. Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., p.15.
2. Ibid., p.18.
3. Ibid., p.26 for more details.
4. Ibid., pp.19-20 for details.
5. For a detailed description see Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.909.

evil eye they were not considered sufficient to cure its ill effects. The most common method of cure was to burn dried seeds of the plant called isfand (sebend, in the local dialect) or wild rue, although other methods existed.[1]

Middleton and Winter say that not everyone in a society can be a potential witch[2] but in Ḥusaynābād the possession of the evil eye was not attributed to any particular category of persons. Anyone could have it, and as among the Azande, it was impossible to say who or who not might possess the witchcraft-substance.[3] Spooner suggests that the concept appears to be an institutionalized pysychological idiom for the personification of misfortune, in so far as it (or the fear of it) may be related to the fear of outsiders and their envy.[4] An attempt to detect the donor of the evil eye might be made[5] but, in general, oracles were not an important part of the customs surrounding this belief.

Minor illness and accidents were quite common in village life, and these were usually attributed to physical causes, not necessarily within the influence of the evil eye. Resort to Bakshahr was sometimes used for treatment, but because of the expense involved village women tended to prefer local herbal medicines, very much part of the 'little'

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1. For other methods see Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., pp.20-2.
2. Middleton, J. & Winter, E.H. 1963, op.cit., p.8.
3. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1950, op.cit., pp.124-9.
4. Spooner, B.J. 1970, op.cit., p.314.
5. Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., pp.22-3.

tradition, to treat such ailments as bowel complaints and fevers. These were used in a therapeutic idiom, to counteract physical disorder rather than to cure magical influence, and some medicines did seem to have curative properties.[1] Schapera has indicated the fallacy implicit in describing a herbalist as a magician except when his treatments are effective,[2] and Beattie has said that rites may be effective, but are primarily expressive in nature.[3] To the villagers of Ḥusaynābād the scientific and symbolic forms of treatment were distinguishable, but could exist side by side without contradicting each other, each remaining valid in its own terms. Thus, while I was talking to a woman noted as a good herbalist, another woman passed us who was heavily bandaged with amulets to cure her headache. I asked my companion her opinion of such treatments, and she replied "Oh, that woman is stupid, those are no good for a headache, aspirin such as you have is better" but added, after a pause "But those charms are good for a headache caused by the evil eye". In daily life, though, the causes of illness were not categorized as being either magical or physical, and treatments were neither entirely scientific nor entirely symbolic, although one element might predominate over the other. Some treatments

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1. Donaldson, B.A., 1938, op.cit., pp.142-6 for details of medicinal plants, etc.

2. Schapera, I. 1969, The Crime of Sorcery. Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute for 1969, p.21.

3. Beattie, J. 1964, op.cit., p.204.

belonged to both spheres, such as the use of donkey dung to heal wounds, and all treatments were supposed to be instantaneously effective.

Activities which can be described as sorcery had both specialist practitioners and daily use. A sorceress lived at the station near Ḥusaynābād, and her spells for love-medicines were said to be particularly effective. Such a spell would be a piece of paper with some writing on it, perhaps the name of 'Alī and other holy men, and perhaps a picture.[1] The practice was to use such a spell for contiguous magic; to dip it in the desired one's tea or place it where he or she might walk over it. Four or five would be purchased at a time, and thus variously used. They were employed to cope with the irrational elements in life, uncontrollable by reason or medicines, such as the emotions of love or jealousy or the desire for sudden wealth, and might also be used in prolonged illness, when they would be burned and the sick person passed over them.

Sorcery was also practised in the home, though almost entirely for benevolent purposes. Every home had decorations made from dried seeds of isfand, which were burnt on a variety of occasions other than at illness; when a new house was being built, to welcome back a traveller, at marriages, and so on. The sweet, spicy smell was believed to drive out evil spirits, and to bring good luck. Other herbs were also burned on occasions, to ease the pain of childbirth,

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1. See Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., pp.132-9 for use of specific parts of the Qur'an for spells, etc.

for example.[1] In general, the burning of herbs was directed against jinns and other evil spirits and their use was accompanied by the recital of a prayer or a verse from the Qur'ān. Other rites were used for a variety of purposes, for example, a medicine against fear was to drink water into which a piece of iron had been dipped,[2] again with the recital of a prayer.

Donaldson[3] and Alberts[4] give comprehensive summaries of the beliefs in jinns and other evil spirits which are similar to fears of the supernatural among the villagers of Ḥusaynābād. Marsden has described spirit beliefs and associated rituals in another area of Iran.[5] In Ḥusaynābād 'Āl and the ghūl were particularly feared, whereas the jinns were considered to be only mildly malicious, a part of the world of which the villagers were also a part. Similarities between their social structure and that of the humans is an indication that, for the villagers, jinns were external symbols of their own irrational fears, and a satisfactory explanation of events perceived as irrational. Thus the

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1. See Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., p.27 for details.

2. See Ibid., pp.154-5 for the many magical uses of iron and other metals.

3. Ibid., pp.35-46.

4. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.907-920.

5. Marsden, D.J. 1972. Spirit Possession in the Persian Gulf. DYN (The Journal of the Durham Anthropological Society), vol.2, pp.23-42.

villagers did not live in perpetual fear of jinns and if, from fear of them, villagers did not walk outside the village at night, that action itself was no more than prudent. The fear of 'Āl and the bogyman Batūl was more inhibiting, and Alberts suggests that the use of the latter by a mother to discipline her children might contribute to personality inadequacies in adult life.[1]

Donaldson has listed the foods considered as 'hot' or 'cold'[2] and Alberts has indicated how this system of categorization is used in the treatment of disease.[3] The latter has also very clearly described the difference between being dirty (kasīf) and being unclean (napāk) as being between physical and ritual impurity, and has detailed the washing rituals especially associated with the latter condition.[4] The villagers of Ḥusaynābād took these cleansing rituals seriously, and scrupulous observance of them, with a purer water-supply, might have had some benefits from the hygienic point of view as well. The villagers were not unmindful that ritual cleanliness was supposed to achieve physical cleanliness as well, and the water in the communal bath reeked of disinfectant.

Important but daily events of life were hedged about with rituals and prayers designed to bring about their

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.922-3.
2. Donaldson, B.A. 1938, op.cit., p.192.
3. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.934.
4. Ibid., p.833.

success. A notable focus of these activities was the baking of bread, inevitable in its central role in village diet. There were certain auspicious and inauspicious times for this job, and many rituals unconnected with the manufacturing process itself were carried out. Prayers, using the names of 'Alī and Muḥammad, were said at critical points, and the mystique is heightened when it is remembered that all prayers, being said in Arabic, were not understood by the majority of villagers but were symbols learned by rote. The actual technique of kneading and baking, difficult enough to acquire, was wrapped round with magical practices which were to ensure its success as much as the physical movements and gestures. The prayers and gestures which the outsider (and only the outsider) distinguishes as being part of the ritual, as opposed to the technical, process, are part of the 'little' tradition; for the language is that of Islām but the content is not. These are magical rites presented in a religious idiom, and perhaps pre-dating it.

Activities in the home were often interpreted as omens of coming events or projections of events elsewhere. If discarded shoes fell on top of each other a journey was indicated for the owner; if the cat washed its face and paws in the morning, visitors would come, and so on. These little auguries for the most part foretold pleasant events, and their observation and anticipation was a pleasant relief to the monotony of village life.

CHAPTER VI: SOCIAL CLASS AND RANK

Murdock has described social class as a process operating not only to unite members of different local groups, but also to segment the community itself and to complicate its social structure. Participation tends to be greater within such groups than between them, and significant differences may emerge.[1]

Social class in rural communities in the Middle East has been extensively described. In particular Peters[2] and Gulick[3] have summarized the class structure of Lebanese villages, Alberts[4] has done the same for an Iranian community, and Spooner has outlined the power structure of a small town similar to Bakshahr.[5] Stirling has given a more detailed account of ranking in a Turkish village with which the present account can be compared.[6]

Husaynābād and the other villages studied did not represent a cross-section of the class structure of the wider society, as, for example, Williams reported for an English rural community.[7] Social class in the villages can only be

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1. Murdock, G.P. 1949, Social Structure. New York: The MacMillan Company, p.88.
2. Peters, E.L. 1963, op.cit., pp.167-70.
3. Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., pp.131-2.
4. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.727-57.
5. Spooner, B.J. 1965 (b), op.cit., pp.23-4.
6. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit.
7. Williams, W.M. 1956, The Sociology of an English Village: Gosforth. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, pp.86-120.

understood as being part of the class structure of the baksh as a whole. Most of all, it was related to the class structure of Bakshahr as the place where many of the landlords lived. Even those who resided in more distant towns were still part of the class structure of the community through their economic control of it.

Broadly speaking, there were two social classes in the area, described by both as the āqā[1] and the ra'īyat respectively. The āqā were the upper class, and consisted of landowners with at least one dihqān, owners of large flocks, wealthier shopkeepers, religious officials, senior government officials, and the few members of the professional classes found in the baksh. The ra'īyat consisted of share-croppers, small-scale landowners, herdsmen, khwushnishīn, craftsmen, junior government officials, qanāt workers, and the like. The smaller shopkeepers occupied an uneasy position between the two classes, which both denied that they belonged to them, and in everyday life they kept very much to themselves. Finally, the tribespeople in the area were a lower sub-division of the ra'īyat. To some extent, then, social class could be distinguished by place of residence, the āqā in the town, the ra'īyat in the villages, and the tribespeople in their tents.

It is possible to distinguish these groups as social classes because the people themselves distinguished them, and because they seldom interracted socially. For example, few

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1. Or khāns, according to Spooner, B.J. 1965 (b), op.cit., p.23.

landlords lived in their villages for any length of time. Intermarriage between social classes was rare. Social capillarity made it inevitable that a rich man had poor relatives, and a poor man rich ones. However, the barrier of wealth tended to outweigh the preference for inter-family marriages, so that rich and poor relatives would be allotted spouses from their own economic class, non-relatives if no other choice was available. When cross-class marriages occurred girls always married upwards and men downwards. This was because the poorer families were unable to afford the large bride-price wealthy fathers demanded for their daughters, whereas some families did not mind acquiring a girl of pleasant character from a lower class because the bride-price and wedding expenses would be lower also. These are also the reasons which Mayer gives for girls marrying upwards in the caste structure of Central India.[1] In the region studied in Iran a man could consolidate his social class by an advantageous marriage but he could not use this means to raise it.

This class structure could cut across the agnatic family. In a family of mixed wealth rich brothers interracted more with each other than with poorer ones. However the ideal of agnatic unity was upheld in that a rich man would support his poorer brother if the latter quarrelled with a non-agnate.

The personnel of each social class having now been

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1. Mayer, A.C. 1960, Caste and Kinship in Central India. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, p.205.

described, the process by which social class was assigned can be discussed. As Williams has pointed out, the characteristics of any one class are only meaningful when considered as part of the total system, so that discussing each class as an entity is to some extent artificial.[1] However, in Iran, members of both social classes tended to agree as to whether specific individuals belonged to the āqā or to the ra'īyat. Class "perspectives", as Williams calls them, can be described, though each class had its own concept of the other classes so that the "perspectives" differed between the classes.[2]

In the Turkish situation, Stirling distinguished three groups of scales which were used to determine rank; broadly speaking, these were age and position in family and lineage, wealth and occupation, and morality and religion.[3] These groups of factors can also be used to describe members of the social classes of Bakshahr, with the difference that the classes disagreed as to which sets of factors were significant. To the āqā, being an āqā meant having wealth, most of which should be in the form of substantial flocks or landholding. The possession of wealth implied other characteristics associated with higher status: education (or an unusual degree of shrewdness), the correct observance of religious forms of behaviour, and strict adherence to

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1. Williams, W.M. 1956, op.cit., pp.86-9.

2. Ibid., p.107.

3. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.43.

the moral codes. To the āqā themselves, the āqā possessed all these.

The ra'īyat regarded the āqā somewhat differently. To them, the sole difference between the two classes was the possession of substantial wealth. They distinguished the āqā from themselves with phrases which are almost exactly translated by the terms "the haves" and "the have-nots". The ra'īyat acknowledged the superior education or shrewdness of the āqā, but denied that they had any innate religious or moral superiority.

On their side, the āqā regarded the ra'īyat as inferior persons. They described them as being stupid, dirty, dishonest and impious, although admitting that some of them could be good workers. In particular they deplored the fact that the villagers' wives were not as isolated from other men as were their own. It was assumed by the āqā that his social class set a limit beyond which a member of the ra'īyat could not rise. Clearly, the āqā did not express their opinion of them to the ra'īyat personally, but rather acted it out in social avoidance. On the whole, the ra'īyat thought that the āqā had a slightly better opinion of them than in fact they did.

The ra'īyat regarded themselves as very little different from the āqā, an attitude which was not shared by the superior class. They admitted that they were not as strict as the āqā in conventional religious behaviour, but attributed their laxity to circumstances. The āqā, said the ra'īyat, could afford to keep their women isolated. To them, formal piety was largely determined by wealth which,

to an outsider, was partly true. The ra'īyat also considered themselves to be more honest than the āqā. They pointed out that few of them abused their responsibilities towards their landlords' property, and despised the āqā for the more serious frauds they committed. To some extent the ra'īyat considered themselves the moral superiors of the āqā, an opinion of which the latter class were unaware. Thus both sides, unknowingly, despised each other.

Although an analysis of the tribes in the area investigated is beyond the scope of this thesis, their place in the class structure should be described briefly. The āqā made little distinction in rank between the tribespeople and the villagers, but to the villagers themselves there was a great deal of difference between them. The villagers used the same denigrating terms to describe the tribespeople as the āqā used to describe the villagers. Nevertheless the tribespeople cannot truly be considered as a social class lower than the villagers because their leaders were regarded as āqā and were received by them as their equals. The tribespeople saw themselves as being the social equals, at least, of the villagers, and did not acknowledge their superiority in the economic field, although this probably existed. On the whole, therefore, from the point of view of an outsider to the society, the tribespeople can be considered as a group more parallel to the villagers than below them. However, within the society they were ranked a social class lower than the villagers.

Cutting across the two-tiered class structure were the Sayyids. There were Sayyids in all sections of society,

although they tended to be found in greater numbers among the wealthier groups. Their reputed descent gave them prestige which they otherwise would not have had, a Sayyid ranking slightly higher among non-Sayyids who were otherwise his equals in terms of economic status and occupation. The Sayyids distinguished themselves from the non-Sayyids, whom they referred to as the 'ām. Although everyone was expected to give alms to the impoverished, the Sayyids said that they gave only to other Sayyids. In practice, they did give to the 'ām, but never without saying that they should not be expected to do so.

The Sayyids were an interesting group in that, unlike the social classes, the model which they had of themselves was endorsed by other members of the community. To put this in another way, they acted out what was considered to be the typical Sayyid character and were helped to do so by the confirmation they received in their role from the 'ām. Yet, apart from the belief in the greater efficacy of their prayers, this role was not associated with any particular occupation or estate. The role was an archetypal personality, quick-tempered, aggressive, quarrelsome, sexually demanding, and not easily influenced to more moderate behaviour.

The Sayyids used their personality role to justify their behaviour. For example, with every whim indulged Sayyid Riḍā's youngest child screamed if ever his demands were not immediately gratified. Although temper-tantrums were found among 'ām children, Sayyid Riḍā explained that in his son they were an inevitable result of his descent. Thus the child's behaviour was reinforced and even encouraged

because it conformed to the stereotype. Alberts has observed that the landlord class could commit crimes without fear of redress,[1] but in the region studied this impunity seemed to be confined to the Sayyids. For example, although sexual assaults were usually reported to the gendarmerie, when, in one local case, the assailant was a Sayyid, no complaint was made. It is not easy to decide whether the Sayyids who flouted the moral codes did so because of their own belief in their unassailable righteousness, or because of the permissive attitude of the rest of the society towards them. In fairness it must be added that many Sayyids used their prestige to work for the common good.

Each social class had, of course, its sub-divisions. The āqā were divided into groups of lesser or greater wealth, the villagers into oxen-owners, oxen-less, khwushnishīn and so on, and the tribal people into group leaders and group members. Persons in these sub-groups tended to associate with each other more than with members of the other sub-groups, but it was impossible for the sub-groups to avoid each other completely. Within the social classes social distinctions were assessed by the ranking process and acted out in specific situations. However, before describing the criteria upon which rank was based, it is necessary to examine the concept itself.

Stirling has said that in describing rank we are describing those elements of behaviour which occur in any situation when one member of a society acknowledges another

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.745.

to be his superior.[1] Alberts says that two people interracting would be ranked buzūrgtar (greater) or kūchiktar (smaller) with respect to each other, and their behaviour towards each other would be based on this mutual assessment.[2] Alberts's emphasis that their respective ranking must be agreed upon by both persons concerned is important, for without it harmonious social interraction would be impossible. In Ḥusaynābād there were no guest rooms attached to houses, such as Stirling describes in Turkey,[3] and no tea-houses or other recreational places where men could gather under one roof, so that the situations in which rank was formally assessed and demonstrated were few. Nevertheless, men did gather in informal groups, and in more formal village councils, and in those situations ranking could be observed.

Deferential behaviour included giving the places at the upper end of a room to those of the highest rank, and was also shown by those of lower status being first to greet those of higher status and by the use of honorifics in speech. It would be impossible to list all the means whereby relative rank was expressed, but in general, as Stirling implies, it was done more by the person of lower rank emphasizing his inferiority than by the person of higher rank asserting his superiority.[4] In this context

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.35.
2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.770.
3. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., pp.34-5.
4. Ibid., p.34.

the code of behaviour known as ta'āruf should be mentioned. This is a process whereby another's superior rank is acknowledged verbally by self-effacement and self-deprecation. Alberts says it is a social lubricant, a cultural codification of the acknowledgement of superior rank.[1] It must be realized that no two persons held precisely the same social rank, so that at any social interraction some acknowledgment of relative status would be expressed.

Ranking will be described in village life, where it was most closely observed, but it should not be forgotten that it was a feature of the internal structure of the other social classes as well, and that if members of different social classes met, deferential behaviour increased accordingly.

Whereas allocation to social class depended almost entirely on the criterion of wealth, ranking within social classes depended, just as Stirling describes, on how the individual was rated on a number of different scales, those for piety and religious learning, moral reliability and helpfulness, wealth, occupation, age, and standing in one's family.[2] Just as in the Turkish situation, in Ḥusaynābād the scales were interconnected, so that high rank in one set of scales usually meant high rank in another[3] and, in general, a man's rank was an overall assessment of his

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1. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., pp.786-95.
2. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.35.
3. Ibid., p.43.

rating on all the scales.[1] Also, again in Ḥusaynābād as in the Turkish example, the scales used to assess individuals could vary with specific situations, so that it was possible for a man to be ranked higher in one context than in another.[2] Alberts, in dealing with rank, has distinguished no less than thirteen scales (themselves ranked in order of importance) upon which a person's rank was eventually assessed.[3]

Before describing the factors upon which rank was assessed in village life it will be useful to take into account the distinction made by Stirling between the prestige and the power components of rank. Prestige commanded respect, while power commanded obedience. A person's rank contained elements of both factors, indeed prestige and power were usually interdependant so that a high score on one factor usually meant a high score on the other. However the factors could be independent of each other, so that a person could be given a great deal of outward respect but have little power, or he could have considerable power but, although obeyed, not be outwardly honoured in social situations.[4]

This difference in the components of rank is relevant to the assessment of rank in Ḥusaynābād. It appeared that prestige and power could act more independently of each

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.35.
2. Ibid., p.35.
3. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.773.
4. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.35.

other than in the Turkish example, so that to some extent there were two scales of rank, one which was measured by the degree of outward deference paid to a person, and one which was measured by the degree to which he was obeyed. However, the two types of rank were by no means entirely separated from each other, and there were methods by which a person with a high score on one factor could acquire a high score on the other.

The factors upon which respect, that is, outward deference, was paid were, in order of importance; sex, age, formal piety and wealth. In social situations men always ranked higher than women, regardless of however old the woman or however young the man. Older men ranked higher than younger men, and a pious old man higher than one who was not so punctilious in his religious observances. In general, therefore, a pious younger man was treated with less respect than any man older than himself, unless he happened to hold formal religious office, in which case he was ranked just below pious elderly men. In some situations the rank allotted - the place given in a room, for example,-depended upon the character of the persons concerned. Thus a relatively young religious leader might not refuse the highest seat in a room when it was offered to him, whereas another man, his equal in all other respects but with a more modest personality, might insist on taking a lower place.

Wealth was the least important of the scales upon which formal respect was based, in marked contrast to the Turkish example,[1] and to the village investigated by Alberts,[2]

1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.37.

2. Alberts, R.C. 1959, op.cit., p.731.

where it was the most important. It must be remembered that this refers to ranking among villagers. The situation was very different in Bakshahr, where a wealthy man was always shown a considerable amount of respect.

Nevertheless, wealth was not entirely unimportant in the village scale of respect. A wealthy dihqān would be treated with more outward respect than his poorer contemporaries, but he would still be ranked below an elderly man, however poor the latter might be. It is difficult to assess the factor of wealth by itself further than this, since it was usually combined with other prestigious factors. Since a villager did not usually become wealthy until his middle years his seniority also brought him respect. Also, once a man had acquired wealth, he was usually careful to observe the forms of outward piety as well, if only in order to gain respect. Though wealth gave the means to achieve respect the degree of deference shown was not that given to the most respected villagers.

If a person ranked high on the scales of respect and power he was deferred to publicly and privately; if he had prestige alone, his high rank varied with the social situation. For example, a Hājjī was always treated with great respect in public, and wealthy men might contribute to his support. But he had no power if his pilgrimage was all that earned his respect, and in private a man might be criticised if, having impoverished himself by pilgrimage, he thereafter expected the community to support him.

The factors upon which power, that is, obedience,

depended were moral character, sex, age, wealth, formal piety and age. This order of importance is only approximate, because it was not so easy to rank these factors as was done when describing the components of prestige. There are two reasons for this. One is that the possession of power in village affairs was not so obvious as that of outward respect. The other reason is that village power itself was of two sorts, it could be given or taken. The first sort of power was that held by those whose advice the villagers heeded in times of conflict or perplexity. One can say that this sort of person had power because, as long as people acted upon the suggestions he made, he exerted control over his fellow-men. However, he could not control a situation by force, and his power ceased as soon as people ceased to follow his advice. The second sort of power was that held by those who took it upon themselves to control village affairs, by assuming the care of village funds, or taking the initiative in approaching government officials, and so on. Since there was no formal authoritative post at village level which carried any real power with it, there were plenty of opportunities for a villager who wished for this type of power to take it. Such a person can be said to have power because he imposed his control upon his fellows. This type of power, therefore, depended upon the actions of an individual in specific situations, being active rather than allotted, taken rather than given, and could continue even if the villagers disliked it.

The allocation of the first sort of power depended

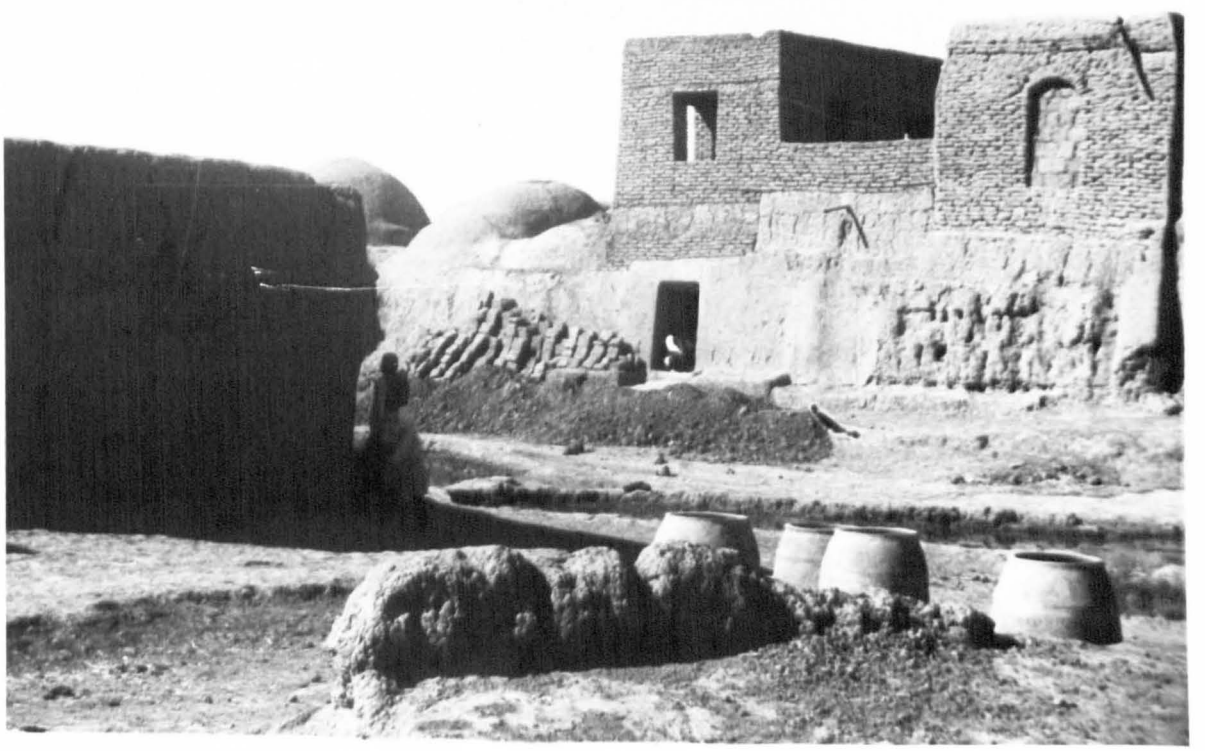
primarily upon moral character, with the factors of age, sex and piety ranking equally thereafter. Wealth was unimportant. A young man could be a village leader if he made intelligent suggestions and showed a knowledge of how government administration worked. Similarly, an old woman (though never a young one) would be listened to with respect by a man if she gave sensible guidance, and her advice acted upon. Such persons were held in the highest esteem by the villagers, and should therefore be described as possessing high rank, although in social situations they were not shown any unusual marks of deference.

This type of high rank, although apparently unacknowledged, was extremely important because it had the highest value in the eyes of the villagers. What they desired most was power given by voluntary obedience rather than by coercion. They were aware that deferential behaviour could be empty formulae, without any of the high esteem it was supposed to symbolize. Occasionally this type of power could lead on to other forms. The mayor of Bakshahr, for example, had been selected because of his scrupulous honesty, a quality which usually led to respect but not to power.

The second form of power, that which was acquired rather than allotted, depended mainly upon the shrewdness and wealth of the person concerned. Shrewdness meant, for example, controlling a village project by collecting the funds for it and, frequently, suggesting it in the first place. Age could be important in acquiring this type of power only if it were a factor in gaining wealth. Piety here had the same function



A tree makes a settlement visible from a distance



Rising in the world: a shopkeeper has been able to afford to build a two-storey house

as when used to assess prestige, it could reinforce power but not determine it. Sex was important, for no woman could hold this type of power. Moral character was entirely unimportant,[1] provided dishonesty was not too overt. In general, despite the higher esteem of the first form of power, it was the second which exerted greater control over the villagers.

The re-organization of the villages through Land Reform meant that monetary affairs would be dealt with in committee, which lessened the opportunities for a man to collect money without any authority to do so. However opportunities were increasing for men to gain power through acting as intermediaries to the various facets of modern government administration. Such power was not necessarily venal, indeed such men were usually acting in the best interests of the village.

It is time to consider to what extent the scales of respect and power depended upon each other, and to what extent these qualities could be held by the same individual. Now, although allocated power could bring a more direct form of control to its holder it rarely did so, and since its essential characteristic was that it was awarded voluntarily by others, it could not be held at the same time as coercive power. In village life those with allocated power and those who had achieved it were usually separate

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1. As in the determinants of power in Turkey, see Stirling, A.P. 1963, op.cit., p.42.

persons, particularly if the individual with the former type were female, as happened occasionally. It might be argued that a certain measure of allocated power must have rested in the achieved variety since, with easy access to governmental authority, a man could not rule a village by force. However, there is a difference between acquiescing to the power of another, and awarding it to him; the villagers might have obeyed those who asserted themselves but this does not mean that they were content to do so. The two types of power, therefore, were self-contradictory rather than interdependent.

Respect and power, on the other hand, could depend on each other. Power which resulted from high moral character alone did not bring respect with it, power which depended upon shrewdness, wealth and piety, did. Prestige by itself did not bring power, but power could bring prestige. A man had to gain some amount of formal respect if he wanted to wield power, and the more power he sought, the more important the formal prestige became. This was why the wealthy practised formal piety, although formal piety by itself never led to power. The highest rank was held by those who rated high on both scales of factors, men of wealth with strong personalities, middle-aged at least and outwardly extremely pious. The lowest rank was held by the poor and, above all, those who were unable to escape their poverty.

Overall rank, however, was difficult to assess, as it depended upon context. In social circumstances the factors determining prestige were important, but in political

affairs rank was based upon the scale determining power. Those who sought power tended to shun informal occasions; aware that their aims and methods might lead to the expression of disapproval from their fellows, they pursued them as privately as possible. In consequence the gap between social and political occasions tended to widen still further, which further separated the scales upon which ranking was assessed.

In summary, therefore, the scales for power and respect operated differently than in Turkey, being more easily separated in Husaynābād and its adjacent villages. In general, power was the result of an individual's actions in specific situations, whereas respect was a more general assessment. Putting it crudely, power showed what a man did, respect showed what a man was. Some degree of respect was inevitable if one lived long enough and had a reasonable disposition, but power was not inevitable. The persons to whom the greatest deference was rendered on social occasions were not always those with the most influence over village affairs, and public deference was rarely matched exactly by opinions expressed privately.

It is tempting to link the difference between prestige and power here described as similar to the distinction originally drawn by Linton between ascribed and achieved status.[1] Power in village life was always achieved, and many of the features upon which respect was based, such as

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1. Linton, R. 1936, The Study of Man, New York, London: D. Appleton-Century Co., p.115.

age, or wealth if the person concerned had been born into a rich family, can be called ascribed. However, respect was also based on the achievements brought by power, and the highest rank was given to those who ranked high on both factors. So the correlation is not exact, but it does illustrate an essential difference between the power and prestige components of rank.

In the Turkish example women were automatically ranked lower than men.[1] However, in the region studied in Iran, a woman took her rank from her father if she were unmarried and from her husband if she were married. Consequently, a dihqān ranked lower than his landlord's wife, and he would defer to her and obey her if they met. The deference of men to women was unusual, but only because they rarely interracted, and not because women were outside the ranking system itself.

Women were also ranked among themselves, and again there was a difference between outward respect and private opinion. Formal deference was paid to a woman in accordance with her husband's overall rank, her character, in which piety was included, and age, in order of importance. There were differences with the male ranking system. For example, among the men an old man was always shown some deference, whatever his character, but among the women a foolish old woman was ignored.

In private discussion, by contrast, women ranked each

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.34.

other according to personality, the qualities admired being modesty, cheerfulness, non-quarrelsomeness and helpfulness. It is difficult to rank these in order of importance, because they tended to be found together or not at all. Putting it another way, a woman was privately respected according to her overall rating on all factors, rather than on the outstanding presence of any one. The women with the highest formal rank did not have the highest rank on the informal personality scale, but those with low rank on one scale were usually ranked low on the other.

Attention must be paid to the formal administrative system in as far as it interracted with the informal structure of power. In dealing with this it will be useful to bear in mind the distinction made by Smith between the authority of the formal legal system and the power of the informal political structure.[1] It will be seen that government was effected almost entirely through the informal structure.

At the time of fieldwork Iran was divided into 12 ostāns (provinces), which were in turn divided into 141 shahrestāns (cities and towns), and sub-divided into 448 bakshdaries (districts).[2] In the region studied all but one of the local representatives of the Ministry of the Interior resided in Bakshahr, and their activities do not directly concern this

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1. Smith, M.G. 1960, Government in Zazzau. Oxford University Press, for the International African Institute, p. 15.

2. Iran Almanac 1964-5, Tehrān; Echo, p.82.

thesis. If there were a violent village dispute representatives of the gendarmerie would come to compose matters. Since communications were poor they usually arrived after the villagers had settled the affair themselves, so all they could do was to give cautionary advice. Village life was affected by the Ministry of the Interior only when certain of its administrative officials visited the kadkhudā to inform him of new governmental regulations with which the villagers would be expected to comply. The officials' sole action in implementing the new rules was to post a notice explaining them, which was studied with deliberately exaggerated interest by the illiterate while the few who could read circulated a distorted version of the contents. Any action required was left to the kadkhudā to organize. In the normal course of events government administration had no other contact with village life.

The kadkhudā, who was originally the landlords' representative in the village, as Lambton says, has been incorporated into the hierachy of government officials.[1] He was the only village representative of the Ministry of the Interior. However, at the time of fieldwork he was still appointed by the landlords, so that his office was both an official position and a representation of private enterprise. In neither aspect was it particularly effective, the duties of the one negating the effectiveness of the other. In all important features the office was a duplicate of that of muhktar described by Stirling.[2] In both cases it carried

1. Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., p.349.

2. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., pp.41-2.

neither respect nor power, it was not sought after and frequently fell to a young man, the duties being resented and the holder disliked for representing "them". It is not necessary to analyse further a situation which Stirling has already fully described and explained.

In Ḥusaynābād dues should have been paid to the kadkhudā (the wheat equivalent of 20 p. a year per household), but they had not been given for two years before fieldwork, nor were they given during it. The landlords refused to contribute on the grounds that the villagers did not give their share; the villagers refused to contribute on the grounds that the kadkhudā did not do any work for them, and that what he did was of no benefit to them (which was not entirely true), and the kadkhudā complained that he could not act effectively unless he received his dues. Meanwhile he continued to pay for the obligatory hospitality to official and unofficial visitors out of his own pocket, and was threatening to discontinue even this. The situation in Ḥusaynābād was typical rather than atypical of the position of the kadkhudā in the other villages visited, in particular disputes over the payment of dues occurring frequently.

The activities of a kadkhudā were limited in practice to the hospitality previously mentioned and the pecuniary negotiations by which it was decided which young men should go to national service. Sunderland has detailed the means whereby, for monetary inducements, a kadkhudā presented cases for deferment of national service, year after year, to the recruiting personnel, until an individual was too old to be accepted,[1] so that no further comment on this

1. Sunderland, E. 1968, op.cit., p.629.

activity is necessary. Nor is it necessary to detail further the activities of the kadkhudā, since all other administrative matters were settled by the informal power structure of the village. In summary, the situation in Husaynabad and its adjacent settlements confirms Sunderland's observation that a kadkhudā and the gendarmerie, as representing the legal authority of the government, did not have much power in the daily lives of the villagers.[1]

Effective government in the village, therefore, was carried out informally, through the structure of the ranking system. Two distinct functions of village power can be isolated, the settling of disputes and the implementation of government regulations. Minor disputes were settled through the system of allocated power described previously, and there might be more than one person in a village whose advice quarrelling persons were willing to take. Major disputes, which can be distinguished from minor ones as being those in which physical violence was used and cases of serious matrimonial disharmony, should have been settled by the appropriate constituted legal authority. Instead each village acknowledged the informal leadership of a man whose remonstrations they would listen to and whose advice as to settlements they would take.

For Ḥusaynābād and its adjacent villages this person was a youngish man, who had been trained as a motor mechanic. He was a Sayyid, but in the eyes of the villagers his high rank was augmented by his genuine concern for the welfare

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1. Sunderland, E. 1968, op.cit., p.629.

of his fellow men. He did not hold any official government position. His intervention in affairs was direct; if he heard of a matrimonial dispute, for example, he would enquire after the persons concerned which, in terms of village etiquette, was a polite request for one of the disputants to come and visit him. The villager would inevitably present himself, since there was no loss of face in calling on a person of superior rank. Having established conversation and made contact the rest followed almost automatically. The advice he gave was usually no more than common-sense, and seldom contained elements which had not already been reiterated in village discussions. Yet his interventions were usually effective. Ultimately he was heeded because of what he was rather than what he did although, in addition, he had the ability to express himself forcibly without creating resentment in his listeners.

The details of his method have been given because they show how leadership was effected entirely by the use of the codes of etiquette and the social stratification of the society concerned. In Tezerjān, near Yezd, Sunderland also noted a village leader who had no formal authority but who was respected on account of his personal qualities and whose intervention in disputes seems to have been equally effective.[1] It is interesting to note that both he and his counterpart in Ḥusaynābād were Sayyids, and it might be that informal leadership at village level in Iran requires this formal religious prestige to be effective. In addition,

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1. Sunderland, E. 1968, op.cit., p.630.

it seems that a large amount of informal power can only be vested in one person in a community or area, implying that the common acknowledgement of leadership was part of its effectiveness.

The second function of village power was the implementation of government regulations. Stirling states that, in Turkey, with the absence of true power in the hands of official leaders, the effectiveness of government regulations is lost or diminished at village level.[1] To some extent this was true of the Iranian villages studied, but this ineffectiveness was known at government levels, and the measures were designed to make, at village level, action imperative. An example of this will be given, to show how Ḥusaynābād organized itself without formal leadership, and who was able to exert coercive power.

Ḥusaynābād, as has been mentioned, had a bath-house whose single pool was used by everyone in the area. In October 1965 the hazard to health of this arrangement was officially recognized. The door of the bath-house was sealed by governmental officials from Bakshahr, who issued an order requiring the villagers to organize and build new bathing arrangements based on showers which could be used individually. None of the organization for the implementation of this order was created by the officials, who left it entirely to the villagers.

After a couple of weeks, during which the villagers

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1. Stirling, A.P. 1953, op.cit., p.43.

used the station bath-house, it became clear that something would have to be done. The station was some distance, and its residents resented the presence of the villagers. A co-operative committee had been formed in Ḥusaynābād preparatory to Land Reform, and the issue of the baths was brought up at an official meeting of this body. The officers of this committee, who had been chosen by common consensus by the men of the village, are worth describing to illustrate ranking in the village.

The chairman was the oldest Sayyid villager, an oxen-less dihqān. There was another Sayyid share-cropper in Ḥusaynābād, he owned his oxen and had a higher moral reputation than the elected chairman, but was much younger. The deputy chairman was also an oxen-owning dihqān, he had succeeded in buying a little water for himself. A few years prior to fieldwork he had organized and collected funds for a petition for government help with qanāt repairs and had never been asked to account for his disposal of the money. Although until the formation of the committee his position was entirely unofficial, he was the most powerful man in the village. The keeper of the treasury (empty, it was pointed out) was a village shopkeeper, the eldest son of Ḥājjī B. There was also a keeper of the grain-store (again empty); it had first been proposed that another villager shopkeeper should hold this post, but finally a youth had been chosen because he was partially literate, the only committee member with some formal education. He was also a dihqān, in partnership with his grandfather who owned the oxen, and who, since he had made a pilgrimage to Karbalā,

was highly respected. In addition, this grandfather had lived in the village almost longer than anyone else. There were three other members of this committee, without portfolios, as it were; they were the village shopkeeper turned down as grain-keeper, the younger brother of the deputy chairman, also an oxen-owning dihqān, and the eldest dihqān son of a woman of high rank who lived in the village. (She had a still older son, but he was a railway worker, and therefore ineligible for office). This organization had recently been informed that one of its duties was to take over the appointment of the kahkhudā. They had not yet done this, which was why the present man was not on the committee, and he was not, in fact, present at the meeting.

The criteria upon which the village chose its leaders can be seen immediately. Formal authority was given to the man to whom the highest formal respect was due, the oldest Sayyid, and this despite his low moral reputation. Perhaps this might indicate also the greater licence given to Sayyids over moral issues. Had this man had a high moral reputation in addition to his prestigious descent he would doubtless have had actual command of the village as well as a formal post; as it was, real power went to a man whose wealth was proof of his acumen, the deputy chairman. He could be respected because he was outwardly pious and had succeeded in keeping a fairly high moral reputation. The choice of treasurer needs no comment. The man rejected as grain-keeper was considered for the post because he was known to be extremely honest although without the acuity necessary for real leadership. He was making preparations

for the marriage-removal of his only daughter, and the affair was to be a lavish one despite the fact that she had rejected her father's original choice of son-in-law and was now married to another villager, a poor oxen-less dihqān. In the circumstances the villagers were feeling friendly towards him, otherwise he might not have been considered for office. The appointment of the literate youth in his stead shows the awareness by the illiterate of the importance of the written word in contemporary life.

Of the three other committee members, the shopkeeper's post was clearly conciliatory, while those of the other two were equally clearly due to their family connections as was, in part, the appointment of the literate youth to the executive. These three kinship appointments, if one may call them that, show that the high rank of one member of a family can bring higher rank than they would otherwise have had to his or her relatives. It should be noted that either prestige or power could be significant in achieving this type of rank, the high-ranking woman, as a female, had no formal prestige, while the "Karbalā" grandfather had no power.

The meeting was held in a landlord's house, by permission of his steward. Most of the adult men in the village were present, I was the only woman there, and that because of my accepted role as observer. The main business before the meeting was, of course, the matter of the baths. The principal speaker was a young man, non-native to the region, and an oxen-less dihqān. However, he was pious, had a high moral reputation, and was intelligent and

articulate, for which qualities he was allocated some power. He pointed out that there wasn't a man in the main qal'eh who was not ceremonially unclean, which received a murmur of agreement. The new baths were costed at approximately £50., which, he said, could be levied from all adult males excepting the absent herds and the khwush-nishīn. After some discussion it was agreed that the railway workers should contribute, since they used the Ḥusaynābād baths. Assuming that 100 men could contribute, if each gave 50p. or 15 kilos of wheat, the work could be done. After more discussion the meeting was adjourned.

This incident has been told in detail because of what it revealed about the workings of village life. First, the importance of the baths themselves: it was the loss of their religious function which provoked the villagers into action rather than their secular hygienic significance. Second, the shrewd election of the village officers so that those most likely to organize matters were given the authority to do so, while formal respect was still paid to those who, by village codes, ought to receive it. Third, although, strictly speaking, the baths were not the concern of the co-operative committee as those concerns were constitutionally determined,[1] this was not once considered by the villagers. In using the available machinery, regardless of the legal nicety of doing so, they were using a sensible and rational approach to the problem and one most likely to bring about effective action.

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1. Parviz, A.H. 1963, op.cit., pp.4-5.

Turning for a moment to the kadkhudā, (although he had been ignored by the villagers), it can be seen that his position was an invidious one. His reason for avoiding the meeting was embarrassment; since he was not on the committee his attendance would have been ex officio, and the fact that the committee was considering his appointment was a further reason for his absence. This meant that the only man with any official authority to deal with the problem of the baths was in effect kept away from it. Thus the villagers were able to settle their administrative problems entirely through their informal system of power, as they preferred to do. It is an interesting question as to whether the gap between the formal administration and the more effective power structure will narrow when the kadkhudā is chosen by the villagers themselves. It might be that the post is always resented as a symbol of external authority, and therefore rendered ineffective.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION: HUSAYNĀBĀD AND THE CONCEPT OF FOLK-CULTURE

The question arises as to whether a concept of rural society as a whole should be used to examine village life in northern Khurāsān. Gulick used a scheme of half-spheres divided into segments (itself based on an idea of Evans-Pritchard) to represent the various ways in which people in the Arab world can be united by some factors and divided by others.[1] The advantage of this scheme is that the same basic plan can be used to show differences and similarities between any two groups or individuals, whether widely different or closely related. This scheme will not be used here because the communities studied are not being directly compared with any one other group.

Probably the best-known concept for the examination of rural agricultural communities is Redfield's analysis of what he has called the 'folk-culture'. This concept has already been used by Lutfiyya to analyse the culture of Baytīn in Jordan, which he found could be categorized as a folk society as Redfield has described it.[2] Lutfiyya has also suggested that this concept would apply to a large degree to most villages in the Arab Middle East.[3] Although Iran is not, strictly speaking, part of the Arab world, it is

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1. Gulick, J. 1955, op.cit., pp.159-177
2. Lutfiyya, A.M. 1966, op.cit., pp.168-76.
3. Ibid., p.186.

usually described as part of the Middle East, so it will be valid to use Redfield's framework to examine the characteristics of the communities studied in northern Khurāsān to see if they can be described as such a 'folk-culture'.

Foster[1] has given a useful summary of this concept. He says it consists of two parts. Descriptively, Redfield finds:

> "Folk societies to be small, isolated, nearly self-sufficient groups homogenous in race and custom. Their component parts are closely interdependent, personal relationships are face-to-face, technology is simple and division of labour is slight. The family plays a large part in societal institutions, the sanctions which govern conduct are predominantly sacred, piety is emphasized, and ritual is highly developed and expresses vividly the wishes and fears of the people. Such a society is relatively immobile, change is slow, the ways of life form a single web of interrelated meanings, and habits of members tend to correspond to custom".

Theoretically (according to Foster), Redfield places these societies in a logical system made up of two ideal types represented by urban and non-urban (i.e. folk) societies. Indeed, it is through the construction of these polar opposites that the ideal type for each society is arrived at. The folk society is defined through assembling, in the

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1. Foster, G.M. 1953, What is Folk Culture? American Anthropologist, vol.55, part 2, p.160.

imagination, the characters which are logically opposite those to be found in the modern city. In consequence:

> "As the type is constructed real societies may be arranged in an order of degree of resemblance to it. The concept develops that any one real society is more or less 'Folk'.[1]

Despite the difficulty in showing folk culture, and the progressions away from it, as living examples on the ground, Redfield does suggest that a folk culture can be perceived, and that the less the characteristics of any real society correspond to those of the folk type, then the nearer it approaches the city type.[2]

Redfield has also suggested that if varying communities in any one society be arranged along the folk-urban continuum, then such a sequence might form a cultural history of the development to urbanism of such a society.[3]

Before examining the culture of Ḥusaynābād in the light of Redfield's ideal type the limits of the society to which these should be applied must first be decided. Should the society be taken as the single village unit, or should it be taken as the group of villages linked by close ties of geography and personal association, or should it be taken as the baksh as a whole, town and all villages included. Should

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, The Folk Society. American Journal of Sociology, vol.52, no.4, pp.293-308. See also:
   ———— 1955, The Little Community: Viewpoints for Study of a Human Whole. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2. ———— 1941, The Folk Culture of Yucatan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.338.
3. Ibid., p.340.

the peasant population only be taken, or should the landowners be included. Since Redfield emphasizes the small and homogenous nature of the folk society, the single village will be taken as the unit for study.[1]

Redfield's criteria for the folk society can be arranged in groups. The first to be considered deals with its geography, physical and social. In these terms the community is revealed to be small, isolated, and with a high degree of mutual understanding amongst members. As Redfield defines the terms they are mutually dependent, thus:

> "The folk society is a small society. There are no more people in it than can come to know each other well, and they remain in long association with each other".[2]

The first part of this statement is by and large applicable to Ḥusaynābād, and is certainly true of the smaller villages which are more typical of the region. However, since mobility from village to village is high, especially within small regions, the villagers cannot be said to remain in long association with each other. Regarding the final part it is relevant here to add that Redfield has also said that the people of the ideal folk society always remain within the small territory they occupy.[3] The continued

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1. Srinivas, M.N. Introduction. In India's Villages (ed.) M.N. Srinivas. West Bengal Development Department: West Bengal Government Press, p.5.

2. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.295.

3. Ibid., p.296.

occupation of the territory of a village either by particular peasantry or by particular landlords does not exist without some change taking place. On the other hand, if the wider unit of Bakshahr and its associated villages is taken as a single territory, continued occupation does exist for the majority of the peasant population. Mobility outside this region being small, in this sense it is a recognisable isolate. But the limits within which people move, and those within which they know everyone else, are not the same.

The ideal folk society is also isolated. As Redfield uses this term, it has several meanings. It can mean that communication is by word of mouth only.[1] Certainly this is true of intra-and inter-village news, but the village is also acquainted with events in the wider society, particularly with administrative decisions in Tehrān. News of these, and they are the most important communications the villagers receive, comes almost entirely by radio, and they are implemented by written directive. Neither can the village be said to be isolated in the sense of being unaware of other people.

Isolation can also refer to the limits of the social network.

> "A society is isolated to the extent that contacts among members of the local society (community) are many and intimate and characterized by a high degree of mutual understanding....while contacts between members of the local society and outsiders are few, not intimate,

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.296.

and characterized by a lower degree of mutual understanding".[1]

Again, there is difficulty in deciding the limits to which this should apply. In spatial terms the little villages are isolated from each other, and a considerable degree of understanding does (perforce) exist between their members. But these links are not necessarily varied and intimate. The relationship between the transient dihqān and his partner is not so except in the short term. A kinship link is only reinforced by membership of the same community if the link is close. For the majority of villagers the bond between them, however close, is based on the single fact of co-residence, and these are not the only intimate ties they have, nor are they the most enduring. The villages are so small that the people in them do not exhaust the number of intimate relationships which it is possible for the individual to form, and these are found with persons outside the community as well. Walking distance to another village does not weaken (except, necessarily, in daily interraction) the tie between the original members of a nuclear family. Friendship too continues though local residence may vary.

More contradictory to the scheme is the strength of the ties with the landowners. This is of paramount importance in the economic sphere of the male peasant's life and is a bond with a person outside his village, outside his social class, and, in many cases, outside the Bakshahr region. The

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1. Redfield, R. 1941, op.cit., p.16.

relationship is also quite rich in content and, although mutual sympathy may be absent, mutual understanding may be said to exist, often to a considerable extent.

On the other hand, the relationships of the villagers to the various aspects of external civil, medical and educational administration with which they come into contact may be said to be as Redfield describes them.

It is also said that in a folk society people have a strong sense of being together.[1] Here again, the group of immediate villages is the lowest level at which this can be applied, and it is felt more strongly at the level of the baksh as a whole. Here there is a real feeling of 'being together' by geography, kinship and friendship, marking this unit off from those adjacent to it.

Turning to the technical field, in ideal type the folk society is simple and independent.[2] For Ḥusaynābād the varied dependence upon the landlords has already been stressed. Tools may be simple, and raw materials local, but manufacture is done by itinerant craftsmen from towns. (The use of wood, which must come from a considerable distance, is another illustration of the village's dependence upon close contact with its outside world). In this field the baksh is not an independent isolate, since it too looks to a more complex society, and to the occasional hire of specialists, to satisfy its own needs. Compared to a city,

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.297.

2. Ibid., p.298.

the division of labour needed to maintain this agricultural life is slight; roughly speaking, it consists of landlords, peasants, craftsmen, well-diggers and keepers of flocks. But the population of a village supplies only one or two of these classes, where labour is concerned the village being only one of a unit of many parts. Economically, the village is dependent upon markets, and these upon other factors some of which may be subject to global pressures. Administration in the capital, and market conditions, may also determine the amount and type of crops that are grown. In the field of agriculture the village is least independent, and shows the most deviation from the type of the ideal folk society.

Ideally, in the folk society, there is no money or common denominator of value, and there is no place for the motive of commercial gain.[1] This can well be illustrated in some primitive societies,[2] but it is more difficult under folk circumstances. The very definition of folk society brings in the concept of urbanism, and degrees of interraction with it, and urbanism has some monetary basis. It is especially difficult to apply this description of Redfield's in a country such as Iran where the urban tradition has been established for some three thousand years. And in all this time it is doubtful that the motive of commercial gain has ever been absent.

In dealing with kinship in the ideal folk society, Redfield has three criteria to offer. The first is that, in

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.305.

2. e.g. Firth, R. 1959. Social Change in Tikopia London: Allen & Unwin Ltd., pp.151-4.

the society, kinship connections provide a pattern in terms of which all personal relations are conventionalised and categorized.[1] The examination of this concept is complex.

The closest personal relations which the villager forms are with members of his own family, with his friends, and with his work-mates. The ties with the parents tend to be formalized, while those with siblings are more friendly and less formal. From the wide range of more distant kin the individual selects certain persons who become personal friends, and the friendship is always said to have originated in the kinship link. Friendships are occasionally formed with non-kinsmen; in which case a fictitious link between the two persons may be cited, especially by their descendants.

Personal relationships are usually formed with fellow-villagers, for it is in their support in daily life that the value of the relationship lies. The relationships which the villager contracts and maintains over time with persons in other villages are invariably based on real bonds of kin. It is through this network that the villager is able to travel to other villages and, through his kin there, meet non-kinsmen for various purposes, such as acquiring a bride or selling a few sheep.

The connections between kinsmen and work-mates has been explained previously. Kinship is the basis of the most enduring partnership, that of father and son.

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.301.

The kinship network of the individual is of supreme importance to him in his daily life. Friendship can truly be said to be 'conventionalized and categorized' in its terms. So are the relations formed between non-kin neighbours whose children marry each other. Of an individual's other personal relations it is more true to say that they are formed through the kinship network, than expressed in its terms. The norms and obligations of relations with friends and close neighbours are those of the kinship system. The norms and obligations of business and work-relations formed through the kinship network are not.

There are some relations a villager has which are non-personal but which are expressed through the terms of the kinship system. One of these is the relation with the landlord. It is difficult to know whether this should be called a 'personal' relationship; since the two seldom meet. It can be called non-personal. But it is often described, especially by the landlord, as being exactly the same as the relationship between a father and his children. Another such relationship is found in the field of religion. The peasant speaks of the figure he calls 'the Imám' with emotion, calling him a father, and, since he is a father, kind, just and generous. One might dismiss this as metaphor were it not for the insistence that all men are descended from Him.

The second of Redfield's generalizations regarding kinship is in three parts. First, that one may think of folk peoples as being consanguineously connected. Second,

that in groups whose size is restricted by environment the connection between husband and wife is emphasized, but when environmental conditions permit the formation of larger groups there may be found an emphasis on one or other of the consanguineal relations. Third, that in comparison with city life, marriage is an incident in the life of the individual.[1]

The first statement is a true description of the baksh as a whole, and little more need be said, except that it is the smallest group of which this is true. Regarding the second, in the small villages the connection between husband and wife is of great importance, and the size of these villages is indeed restricted by the environment. But the conjugal relationship is of equal importance in Bakshahr, where the main lines of patrilineages are still co-resident, even adjacent neighbours. However, in the town both husband and wife have additional relationships by reason of proximity to their kin, an enrichment that is absent in the villages. But here conformity to ideal type ends, for it cannot be said that marriage is incidental in the life of either the townsman or the villager. Marriage may be arranged by families, but thereafter is an individual concern. One illustration of this is the preponderance, on the ground, of separate nuclear families amongst the types of households.

Redfield's final remark concerning kinship in the folk society is that it is families acting rather than individuals.[2]

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.302.
2. Ibid., p.303.

While this has been shown to be true in many primitive societies[1] it does not apply to all the roles of the individual even there,[2] and is not really true for the villages under present consideration. The type of personal relationship of one villager to another is determined, in the main, not so much by whether they are related, but by whether the person through whom the link is traced also lives in the village. Having or not having a relationship with another, depending on whether that other is recognized as kin or not, can be distinguished from family action rather than individual action. Except at major events such as weddings, most of village interraction is by individual-to-individual contact.

To turn to some of Redfield's remarks about religion in the folk society, he says that the value given to traditional acts or objects approaches a sacred quality and that technical action is much mixed with magical activity.[3] The first is very true of traditional and technical actions in the villages, most if not all important activities have their story of religious origin (that is, it is said that they were begun by the Prophet or by the Imām). As far as mixing technical activity with the magical is concerned, this

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1. E.g. in the actions of the blood-feud among the Nuer: Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1940, op.cit., pp.158-61.

2. c.f. Fortes, M. 1949, op.cit., p.14. Through kinship each individual has a unique sphere of action.

3. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.305.

applies far more to the women than men. At every stage in their various crafts they invoke pious precepts and formulae which, since such 'religious' tales have no place in the orthodox canon, and in fact horrify the more educated, must be regarded as magic acted under the guise of religion, and through its phraseology.

Turning to another set of criteria, Redfield says that in the ideal folk society the members are much alike biologically, through long association in a small area.[1] It would be very difficult to draw any such conclusions without detailed investigations by physical anthropologists. Certainly, as far as physical appearances went, there was a wide range among the people of Husaynābād. Similarly, Redfield says that members of the folk society are alike mentally, that what one man knows and believes is the same as what all men know and believe; that one man's learned ways of doing and thinking is the same as another's. This also is difficult to assume without specialised investigation, such as that by Carstairs.[2] Many anthropologists have been able to give vivid pictures of the general personality of the peoples they have worked among,[3] but this is far from saying that a type may be constructed by knowing only a few

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., p.297.

2. Carstairs, G.M. 1957. The Twice-Born. London: Hogarth Press.

3. E.g. Evans-Pritchard, E.E. 1940, op.cit., pp.11-15. See also Oliver, D.L. 1955. A Solomon Island Society: Kinship and Leadership among the Siuai of Bougainville. Cambridge (Mass.): Harvard University Press, pp.231-5, and pp.452-8

individuals in a society, or that such individuals are similar. As far as the people of Ḥusaynābād were concerned the writer received the impression that this similarity could be seen among some of those women who had always led a restricted village life and who displayed some personal immaturity, but that otherwise, descriptions of beliefs and thoughts had to be composite and generalized from many individuals.

We are approaching the more diffuse aspects of Redfield's description of the folk society, but for the present purpose it is sufficient to deal only with those aspects which apply to the material presented in detail. Always remembering that the folk society is a concept of an ideal type, the question was asked, to what extent do these villages conform to this ideal? It has been found that they approach it very closely in the field of kinship, less so in their relations to their environment, and hardly at all in the agricultural and other technical spheres of activity. Out of this non-conformity a further question emerges. To what extent has the concept of a folk-culture been found useful in analysing this, and other, rural agricultural communities?

This question should perhaps be re-phrased in two parts. One must ask, how many of the salient features of the social organization of the community are revealed through using these points for analysis? And one can also ask, does failure to conform to the ideal type necessarily mean that the society is less 'folk', and is approaching the urban type?

The ideal folk-society being small, isolated and self-sufficient, allows no place for consideration of the various fields, and degrees within those fields, in which the community is involved with the world around it. Yet one of the most striking features of the community which the foregoing analysis has revealed is this involvement. This problem facing those who use a concept of folk-culture is not new. In analysing the folk-culture of Indian villages Gould[1] was able to isolate at least three activities, marriage, pilgrimage and pecuniary employment, in which, to different extents, the villages reached out into, and were reached by, their environment. Gould avoids the comparison with urbanism by evolving the concept of centrifugal and centripetal forces acting upon the village, existing conditions reflecting a balance of power struck between the two. Foster[1] also shows the difficulty of placing societies along a folk-urban continuum if they fail to conform to the ideal type in only one or two criteria. He cites Sol Tax's work on the Guatemalan Indians, who fit the ideal type almost perfectly except that they go to markets and on pilgrimages to distant towns; and Herskovits's work on the West African folk society with a profit motive. Foster shows that the striking thing about the folk society is the importance of elements in their culture which they have incorporated into their fabric through the intellectual, sophisticated world from urbanized elements of their own traditions - again, the importance of involvement with the

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1. Foster, G.M. 1953, op.cit., pp.161-2.

surrounding world.

It is interesting that many of the ways in which these societies are dependent upon their wider environment are also ways in which the culture of Ḥusaynābād has been found to fall short of the ideal type. Mobility of personnel, outside extensions of the kinship system, a monetary economy and pilgrimages to distant towns are also typical of the life there.

Are there some grounds for treating the wider society, such as a network of villages or a unit such as a baksh as the basic unit in the folk society? The town has far more interractions with the wider society and with the capital than the villages. The wider and more populous the unit selected, the greater becomes the involvement with the urban environment, and therefore the less it can be said to be a folk society.

Because the culture of Ḥusaynābād and similar villages does not come near to that of the ideal folk society it is difficult to say that it approaches the urban type. The physical and social isolation of the region as a whole, the simple agriculture, the paucity of material goods and standards, the close network of kinship, the complex, almost superstitious religion, the close agricultural and seasonal determination of many facets of life;[1] these and many other factors combine to form a pattern of culture that is, in its own terms, closely integrated, relatively

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1. Crary, D.D. 1955, op.cit., p.46.

uncomplicated and essentially rural.

The problem would appear to be that, when defining a folk-culture, Redfield found it necessary to construct it as the polar opposite of life in the modern city. In his scheme, if two folk societies have different cultures, one or other must move along the folk-urban continuum towards the urban type, they cannot differ as folk-societies and yet remain equally non-urban. Redfield himself was aware of this when he said:

> "The more elements we add (to the ideal type), the less possible it becomes to arrange real societies in a single order of degree of resemblance to the type".[1]

The dilemma would be solved if it could be allowed that societies could vary in depth along the folk-end of the continuum. If this folk-urban continuum be imagined as a straight line, or a series of straight lines, along which societies are placed, then the variation in types of folk societies can be seen along a straight line, or series of lines, at right angles to the continuum and placed at the folk end of the polarity. Mobility, complexity of agriculture, the extent of the kinship network and the network of other communities from which brides are obtained, are a few examples of the ends of the lines along which different folk societies could then be placed.

Another problem has come from the fact that Redfield has equated 'urbanized' with 'westernized'. In Iran, the one

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1. Redfield, R. 1947, op.cit., pp.161-2.

is old and the other recent, and it is still possible to distinguish between them, although this distinction is decreasing. Prior to Westernization it might have been possible to say that a group of communities arranged in a series of increasing urban complexity (such as Husaynābād - Bakshahr - Shāhrūd - Mashhad - Tehrān) represented a rough account of the cultural history of the country. But with a few western goods reaching the remotest village it is no longer feasible to construct this sequence.

Is it necessary then, that a true description of folk society be formed as an opposite picture to that of the urban society. A community could be described by a number of factors which are not necessarily opposite to those found in urban societies.[1] Like the Guatemalan Indians, it could be mobile, but none the less folk just because mobility is a characteristic of city life. The society must be considered as a whole: is the total picture, formed by the interraction of the sets of dependent variables, urban or rural?

If it were wished to arrange societies along a folk-urban continuum it could be done once the total picture of the society has been formed. The method suggested is an analogy to that which Littlejohn found the people of a Scottish rural agricultural community used when ranking

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1. A description of the 'pure' folk society seems little different to that of a primitive society, if it is always described as the opposite to urbanism.

their fellows according to social class. Many factors are taken into consideration but eventually the individual is placed in a rank-order with respect to his fellows. Littlejohn finds:

> "It is clear that none of these factors by itself determines class status, ... Instead there seems to be in the community an implicit notion of a 'class quota'. It is as if points were awarded on the basis of all the values considered and a total allocated".[1]

Perhaps some concept of 'folk quota' could be evolved, by which societies could be ranked as to how far urbanized they could be considered. The advantage of this method is that the original factors taken into consideration in the formation of the 'folk-quota' for any one society could come from either end of the polarity. Like the farmer in Westrigg who was placed, reluctantly, in the upper - middle class because his holding was so big, the Guatemalan Indians would find their true situation.

It would seem that an ideological framework which binds together all the institutions of a peasant community is not a great deal of help in understanding its basic structure. A concept of the total society tends to be a Procrustean bed for the society measured against it, distorting the relationship between the separate institutions. Existing links between the various parts may be destroyed,

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1. Littlejohn, J. 1963, Westrigg: The Sociology of a Cheviot Parish. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, p.92.

and others implied where, in the field, in the actual society concerned, no link is apparent. The anthropologist must always be wary of creating analytic correlations which would not be borne out by fieldwork observations. This is not to decry the importance of retrospective analysis, only to remind one that it should always accord with reality.

It is impossible to describe any society in its entirety, and the analysis which has been given of village life in north-eastern Iran is necessarily incomplete. Nevertheless some conclusions can be drawn. Goldschmidt and Kunkel,[1] in investigating the characteristics of 46 peasant communities from all over the world, found that the structure of the family was associated with the factors of peasant life: the overwhelming importance of agricultural pursuits and the subordination of peasant community life to the dominant forces of the political states of which they are a part. This is true of village life in northern Khurāsān. The importance of agriculture and the restrictions upon it has been one of the main subjects of this thesis, and the turbulent history of Khurasan cannot fail to have affected every aspect of life there. The effect of this history upon the rise of Khurāsān as a focus for the Shī'ī religion should be especially noted.

However, Goldschmidt and Kunkel's hypotheses do not cover all the features of the society examined. In summary, the social structure of the villages studied centred on three main institutions, or sets of relationships, those connected

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1. Goldschmidt, W, & Kunkel, Evalyn J. 1971, op.cit.,p.1069.

with agriculture, those connected with kinship in its broadest sense, and those connected with religion. The first two have been extensively analysed, the treatment of the third has been more cursory, but its importance should not therefore be underestimated for, as an institution, it was at least as important as the others. The picture of village society is therefore biased by omission; religion provided an ideology for most daily actions, a standard for moral codes and for evaluating personal behaviour, and a guide for customary practices, in a way that has been insufficiently described. The reasons for this were given elsewhere.

Some connections have been found to exist between the separate institutions. The link between endogamy and unilineal descent is clear; on a broader aspect the structure of the descent group has been found to be linked not only with agricultural practices but with the limitations upon them. This link was found in the land-owning classes, and among the land-less another type of link was found between the problems of kinship and agricultural efficiency. Some connection was found between the history of settlement rise and decline and the economics of agriculture, again linking both of these to the ongoing structure of the descent group. The structure of the landlord-peasant relationship could be analysed in terms of the concept of alienation, itself a historical theory, so that all these institutions were linked. The kinship network was found to give an individual a place in society through which almost all the important problems

of his life could be reached and solved, nor should the emotional security which this structure provided be underestimated. In both the fields of kinship and agriculture it was found impossible to describe one village in complete isolation from its neighbours; landlordism provided the links in the field of agriculture and mobility, itself related to landlordism, the link in the field of kinship. Ultimately, therefore, the structure of the descent groups among the landlords affected kinship among the peasants.

Social stratification was found to exist; within each class, however, ranking was assessed on a number of different factors. The allocation of power, at village level at least, was quite different to the formal authoritative structure of government.

The death of Husayn was found to symbolize the individual's personal problems and the ceremonies commemorating that event to be a means of coming to terms with them and, for some, of overcoming them. While the difficulties of daily life, in terms of practical shortages, were real, acute, and largely beyond control, these problems, in the society concerned, were not considered to be the most serious ones. In the final analysis what was important to the individual was his salvation, and religion provided for that. In this sense the society was, ultimately, perhaps more secure than our own, in that it provided its own solution to what it saw as its gravest problem. The society had the ordered cohesiveness that has been so often noticed in economically simple, rural groups, and this characteristic was perhaps

the more remarkable because the wider society, Iran, has a long tradition of urban diversity.

If a single concept is sought to unify the institutions of village society, it is perhaps "exclusiveness". Landlord brothers preferred to exclude each other from the management of their resources, even when co-operation would have been more rational economically. Endogamy, and the consequent encysting of the patrilineages, can be described as being based on a wish to reinforce the exclusiveness of the agnatic group. The general preference for marrying kin, and for making all relationships through the established kinship network, can be seen as the participants' wish to exclude relationships with strangers, "to keep themselves to themselves" as we might say. In a more general sense this can also be seen as an attempt to exclude unfamiliarity of any sort. In the field of religion the Shī'ī has some of the features of the exclusiveness of minority sects, for it emphasizes those doctrines by which it demarcates itself from the majority viewpoint, and sees no truth in alternative beliefs. Exclusiveness is less apparent in class structure, but is a feature of modern Iranian nationalism, emphasizing as it does that, as opposed to the Arab world, Iranian culture is 'Aryan' in origin. However, it is not suggested that the concept of exclusiveness can be used to explain every aspect of Iranian village society.

Finally, it must be emphasized that the study took place at a time of rapid social change, not the least of which was Land Reform and the whole practice of agriculture in general. In such an integrated society these changes will affect

other social institutions, but the only valid prediction about social change is uncertainty as to its outcome.

Appendix A: Selected examples of wheat division and dues, 1965, Weights in kilos

1) Dues before division: oxen-owning dihqān + helper (Gărmiteh)

Total wheat yield of juft : 5,250. From this was taken:

Cutters	525
iron-worker	60
wood-worker	60
crop-watcher	30
hire of thresher	210
	885

After dues, what was left was 4365
To which was added 45 in sievings to aid the division

4410 was divided 2:1 The landlord took 2940 (seed from this)
Dihqāns took 1470
4410

The dihqāns share was divided into 4 parts, each dihqān and each ox counting as 1 part, which was therefore 367.5.
The oxen-owner took 3 parts = 1102.5 (no building wage or gleaning)

2) Dues before division: 3 oxen-less dihqāns (Gholām Ābād)

Total wheat yield of juft : 6,000. From this was taken:

cutters	600
iron-worker	30
wood-worker	30
mīrāb	180
wage of tractor	300
	1140•

which left 4860 to be divided 3:2.

The landlord took 2916 (seed from this)

leaving 1944 + 1140• = 4056 = landlord's total share
+ 6 (in sievings to aid division)

making 1950 to be divided between 3 dihqāns and 2 oxen equally.

The dihqāns each received 390, the landlord another 780

+ building wage 60
+ cutting (no gleaning) 50

500 = for each dihqān

3) Dues after division: oxen owning dihqān + helper (Husaynābād)

Total wheat yield of juft 3900. From this was taken:

seed	900
cutters	600
	1500

which left 2400 to be divided equally between landlord and dihqān.

Landlord took 1200 (dues from this)

Dihqān took 1200, less 300 given to his helper

=	900
+ building wage	150
+ gleaning	39
	1089 for the oxen-owner

N.B. In 1964, the previous year, this juft had yielded a total of 6,000, which meant that, counting in gleaning, etc., the oxen-owner had received 1800. Moreover, since his son (in 1965 on military service) had shared the work with him, he had not had to pay a helper.

4) Dues after division: 2 oxen - less dihqans (Husaynābād)

Total wheat yield of juft : 9000. From this was taken..cutters 900

leaving 8100* to be divided 5:1

The landlord took 6810 (dues & seed from this)

Dihqāns .... took 1290

The dihqāns share was halved between them, giving

645	each
+ cutting 56	
+ taqāvī 240	
941	for each dihqān (no building wage)

*(If the total division was 8100, the dihqān's share should have been 1350. Probably the total yield was less than 8100, but made up to that with sievings, to facilate the division).

Appendix B : Comparable endogamy data

Author	Area or Village	No. FBD marriages	% FBD marriages
Ayoub	Druze Arab	23 out of 254	9.1
Barth	Kurdistan	9 " " 21	44
Goldberg	Even Yusuf	*	7.7
Grandqvist	Ar'tas	35 " " 264	13.3
Khuri	Beyrout suburb	422 " " 1105	38.2
Rosenfeld	Tu'ran	76 " " 254	13.1
	Husaynābād	10 " " 107+	9.3

* no figures given

+ first marriages only

APPENDIX C: GLOSSARY

This glossary gives the meaning of the terms as used in the fieldwork area. Other meanings of terms marked * can be found in Lambton, A.K.S. 1953, op.cit., pp.422-59.

'ādī : fixed amount of rent, given whatever the income.

'ajob : FBW, used by female ego; term of respect to senior kinswoman.

'ām : non-Sayyids.

'ammeh : FZ.

'ammū : FB; WF; other senior cognates and affines; an honorific.

'āqa : upper class; member of upper class; term of address.

'aqad : marriage ceremony.

'arbāb* : large-scale landowner.

'arūs : bride; SW; sister-in-law junior to speaker.

'ashuq : removal of the bride to her husband's parent's home, some time after marriage.

'Ayd-i-Tāsū'ā : 9th day of Muḥarram.

'Ayd-i-'Ashūrah : Day of martyrdom (of Ḥusayn's death). 10th day of Muḥarram.

ayish* : fallow land.

bābā : father; son (informal term); term of endearment.

bājī : female affine.

baksh : district, administrative sub-division of Shahrestān.

barādar : brother (the formal term, rarely heard in village life).

bāshlīq : bride-price.

bībī : grandmother.

buzūrg : large, great. Bībī buzūrg: paternal grandmother.

chādur : large semi-circular piece of material worn by women as a cloak or veil.

dādāsh : brother (the customary village term)

dā'ī : MB.

dāmād : bridegroom; DH; WB; junior male affine.

daym : dry, i.e. non-irrigated farming.

deh : village.

dihqān* : share-cropping peasant.

dukhtar : daughter; young girl.

ehterān : filial respect.

fāmīl : nuclear family.

hamshīr, lit. "same milk": sister (the customary village term)

Ḥusayn : the third Imām, according to the Shī'ī, who commemorate his death in battle on 10th Muḥarram.

Ibn Ziyad : governor of Kūfa, whose forces defeated Ḥusayn's at Karbalā.

Imām Riẓā : the eighth Imām, according to the Shī'ī, buried at Mashhad.

jad : paternal great-grandfather; ancestor.

juft : a pair of oxen; the land they can work.

kadkhudā* : village headman.

Karbalā : where Ḥusayn was killed, fighting for the Caliphate.

khālal : MZ; WM; other senior cognates and affines; an honorific.

khān : tribal leader.

khurdeh malik*: small-scale landowner.

khwāhar : sister (the formal term, rarely heard in village life).

khwīsh : relatives outside the nuclear family; consanguineous kin and affines.

khwushnishīn*: unemployed villagers. (Local use only).

kilāteh : small village, hamlet.

kūchik : little, small. Bibi kūchik : maternal grandmother.

mādir : mother, the formal term.

Mahdī : the twelfth Imām, according to the Shī'ī, in concealment since A.D.873.

maḥram : acceptable; close relationship.

mann : weight measure, c. 3 kilos.

mīrāb : official in charge of the distribution of water for irrigation.

Muḥarram : lst month of the Muslim religious year; ceremonies commemorating Ḥusayn's death.

muqannī : one who makes and repairs qanats, q.v.

musallamī*: a rent which is a fixed proportion of the total harvest.

nāmzi bāzí: period between marriage ceremony and bride's removal.

naneh : mother; grandmother; (informal term).

näqūs : large wooden structures used on the 'Ayd-i-'Ashūrah.

pidar : father (formal term).

pisar : son (formal term); youth.

posht : air-well; descent-line.

qabāleh* : marriage contract; the goods and monies specified therein.

qal'eh : walled courtyard.

qanāt : underground channel which collexts water for irrigation, etc., by seepage.

qōm : as khwīsh, q.v.

rafīq : friend; comrade.

ra'īyat : lower class; members of lower class; peasants.

rouẓeh khwānī : religious recitation and exhortation.

sahm* : unit of water for selling purposes.

Sayyid : descendant of the Prophet Muḥammad through his daughter Fāṭimeh.

Shahrestān: city and the region associated with it.

Shayk : religious leader; one with much religious knowledge.

Shī'ah*: the party which holds that, after the death of the Prophet Muḥammad, leadership of Muslims passed to his son-in-law 'Alī, whom they consider the first Imām, and to his heirs by hereditary succession.

Shī'ī the religious sects which arose out of the Shi'ah party.

Shīr bihā : gift to the bride's mother at a wedding.

takhirmān : building wage.

taqāvī* : interest-free yearly loan of wheat.

ta'zīeh : passion play.

'Umar : Caliph of the Islamic empire 632-44.

vaqf* : land whose revenue is reserved for religious purposes.

yashmak : avoidance custom practised by a bride towards her husband's kin.

Yazīd ibn Mu'āwīyah: the Caliph whose rule Ḥusayn attempted to challenge at the battle of Karbalā.

yeī : collective term for the wives of brothers.

zamīn : strip of field cultivation.

zan : wife (the term shouhar, meaning husband, was not usually heard in village life).

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