MEIDOB KINSHIP, MARRIAGE AND RESIDENCE

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The central problem of this thesis is one of explaining the complex nature of the kinship system of the Meidob, a small tribe of pastoralists living in the north-east of Northern Darfur Province, Republic of the Sudan. The system is unusual in that there is recognition of three different types of kinship group, the matriclan, the patriclan, and the group of descending kindred. This study also attempts to look at the way in which kinship networks function in such a highly segmented and fluid population as that of the Meidob, and to solve certain anomalies such as the wide dispersal of co-wives, and the central role that co-resident daughters and their children play in what is dominantly an agnatically orientated society.

The solution to these and other problems is found through a detailed analysis of marriage and residence. Through looking at patterns of marriage within the kin group, and at the process of establishing a new household, the way that the different groups come into play is made apparent. By studying residence patterns and their association with different stages of the developmental cycle, one gains an insight into the ways in which the conflicting ties of matri- and patri-kin come into effect. One of the crucial factors to the functioning of this system would appear to be that of polygyny and its associated residence patterns. These demonstrate how the polygynous union does not have the expected result whereby a man expands his co-resident family group. Instead we find that the dominantly virilocal pattern of first marriage assures agnatic continuity, whereas the separate residence of secondary spouses allows for the maintenance of cognatic family ties and the development of groups of descending kindred.

Finally, by looking at the distribution of these kin groups in terms of the localised cluster of hamlets, it is possible to see the consequences of these patterns of marriage and residence in terms of the development of localised and dispersed kin groups.
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Finally I wish to thank the many Meidob who helped to make our stay in their Dar such a valuable experience.
This thesis is based on fieldwork carried out in Dar Meidob between May 1974 and August 1975. The reason that this particular area was selected for research was due to a mixture of personal and more objective factors. It was my husband who first turned my attention to the Sudan and Darfur in particular, and at first Dar Meidob appeared to be but one of several possible areas for research. My own particular interest was centred on the process of Islamisation, and the Meidob referred to in the literature because of their matrilineal inheritance, their use of a non-Arabic language and their Bazza festival, (pre-Islamic in form) drew my attention. This area also seemed a logical choice due to the fact that three of the neighbouring groups, the Kababish, the Berti and the Zaghawa had been studied by anthropologists in the 1960's, but knowledge of the Meidob was still based on accounts written some thirty years ago.

My initial idea had been to look at the influence of Islam through a study of ritual, but my attention was quickly drawn away from this project to the more central issues of the kinship structure as such. Once actually in the field the first aspect of the Meidob social structure which attracted my notice was the apparently complex nature of this kinship system, and my interest was turned to ways in which recognised groups of kin were effective in terms of marriage and residence. I was also interested to see how kinship networks functioned in such a highly segmented and fluid population, and to solve certain anomalies such as the wide dispersal of co-wives, and the central role that daughters and their children played in what I was beginning increasingly to see
as an agnatically orientated society. The aim of this thesis is to
demonstrate how features such as these make sense within the totality
of the kinship system, and to see how the conflicting ties of
matrilineality and patrilineality are resolved.

The data for this thesis was gathered in two ways. First of
all through more or less continual residence with the members of one
hamlet cluster for a year, a network of friends and informants was
built up, of people who lived within that group, their neighbours and
their relatives. With the help of these Meidob a complete genealogy
was constructed of the three constituent dirria (groups of descending
kindred), each covering about four generations. These dirria were
linked through ties of kinship and marriage and a record was built up
concerning past and present marriages of the members. With this
intimate knowledge of one kin group it was then possible to identify
the type of information that would be most useful in looking at other
groups, and a questionnaire was developed on the basis of this.

The first census area in which this questionnaire was used centred
on the original area of study, and extended to cover the area known as
Aicho. Aicho is the name given to a well centre in the heart of the
Jebel, and the area sampled covered the population catchment area of
these wells in the dry season, and that part of the population which
had recently started to move out in the dry season but spent the rains
back there. This sample included people of the Usutti and Teukeddi
sections of the Urrti. The second sample population was located in
Dar Kargett and was drawn from the population catchment area of the
well centre Awinol (A. Shakhakha). Awinol is at the mouth of one of
the main valleys which flows south from the Jebel onto the plains.
Most of the settlements are located in this valley south of the wells, where it widens onto the plains. The people living within this area belong to the Kondeidi section, but because it was not possible to sample the entire population, the census only covered those settlements on the western side of an imaginary line drawn southwards from Awinol. These two populations thus represent the Urri and Kargeddi sections of the Meidob.

I also wished to include a representative sample of those Meidob who had moved out to the more recently established market villages, based on the development of bore wells within the last forty years. Due to the relative speed of gathering information when working within a network of kin ties I chose to sample two village based populations which had originated from and kept up links with families within the two previously sampled areas. The first of these populations originally from Aicho now resides in the main Meidob market village of Malha, and the second originally from Kondeidi had moved some 25 kilometres south to the village of Mareiga. The total sample, one unit representing one household was thus divided up as follows.

<table>
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<tr>
<td>Kondeidi</td>
<td>166</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malha</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mareiga</td>
<td>24</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>N =</strong></td>
<td><strong>366</strong></td>
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Certain practical problems presented themselves during the course of this work which often meant that the gathering of information took longer than one anticipated. There are therefore inevitable gaps in my data which it was not possible to fill during the limited period of fieldwork, especially in respect to questions which only occurred to me in the later stages. The most acute problem was that of transport. The Meidob live in small scattered hamlets, and much time was spent in moving between sites and tracing families who had moved on, rather than actually gathering information. It was possible to do much of this on foot, but the small size of settlements meant that one additional household put a strain on resources of food and water, and it was preferable to carry all our own provisions, and to be able to reciprocate hospitality. There was also the problem of moving our supplies of food from the market village some two days walk away, and keeping up stocks of water in the dry season. The solution was found in purchasing our own camels, which presented a new set of problems, but which kept us in contact with the local population in a way in which motor transport would not have, and allowed us to work in the heart of the Jebel.

The second problem was one of language. Although most Meidob men have some knowledge of Arabic many women do not. As I wanted to do much of my research with women it was therefore essential that I learnt the Meidob language. However before leaving for the field I could only really prepare myself through acquiring a basic knowledge of Arabic, as the only available information on the Meidob language was in the form of limited word lists. This meant that it was only
towards the final stages of fieldwork that I had sufficient linguistic competence in Meidob to gather information quickly, and some of the time I had to resort to the use of Arabic.

A third problem was that of finding assistants. Having a full time assistant was not a practical proposition because all members of the local population were fully occupied with their herds or on migrant labour, and bringing in an outsider would have increased the problems of keeping up a supply of food and water. For the first month or so after arriving in Dar Meidob I worked with several bi-lingual secondary school children on building up a basic grammar and vocabulary of Meidob, and later on we had the assistance of some schoolchildren for about six weeks to help in the work of census data collection. For the rest of the time we worked without interpreters or assistants.

Despite such difficulties the period of fieldwork proved to be a valuable and enjoyable experience. The Meidob readily accepted our presence and enquiries. They proved to be very hospitable hosts, despite the fact that most families had lost much of their wealth in livestock as a result of the years of drought, and we arrived at a time of great hardship. Because of the nature of the fieldwork experience I found it difficult to talk about Meidob society in such a depersonalised manner, and to turn friends and acquaintances into statistics within a census. To prevent the recognition of individuals or families I have avoided the use of hamlet names and changed all personal names.

The fieldwork was carried out together with my husband whose thesis 'The Pastoral System of the Meidob' looks at the social organisation from the economic point of view. We travelled and set up house-
hold together for much of our time in the field, to collect our respective data. We then pooled much of the census material which we gathered. However, during the process of writing our respective theses we have each made use of this information entirely separately. I can state therefore that this dissertation is the result of my own work and includes nothing which is the outcome of work done in collaboration.

Transliteration

Throughout this thesis I have used the letters T. and A. to distinguish words in Tiddin-al (the indigenous word for the Meidob language) and Arabic. I have not attempted to use a phonetic script for words in either of these languages, but have employed a simple transliteration, which in the case of the former does not convey the exact pronunciation or tone.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Geographical and Social Setting

The Meidob are a small tribe of pastoralists living in the north-east of Northern Darfur Province, Republic of the Sudan. The area with which they are identified is Jebel Meidob, a volcanic mountain mass, and they are mostly concentrated in and around these hills, although a smaller section has branched off to settle in the northerly part of the Tagabo Hills lying to the south-west (see maps 1 and 2). Their actual dar (homeland) extends onto the sand plains around these hills covers approximately 22,000 square kilometres. Although referred to in the literature and by some of their neighbours as Meidob, the name they use for themselves is Tiddi, their language Tiddi-n-al and their homeland Tiddi-n-or (or is Meidob for mountain).

The topography of these Meidob hills is largely the result of volcanic and fluvial activity, with the volcanic material deeply dissected by wadis which flow out radially from the highest areas. Apart from lava flows, the effects of past volcanism are evident in the peaks and craters which are characteristic of the central and highest parts. Such mountains and deeply cut valleys create a very dramatic landscape which makes much of the central area impenetrable except on foot. However there are also some broad and flat areas within these hills, where local erosion and infilling has resulted in the deposition of large areas of alluvium, some of which provide

Jebel is the Arabic for mountain.
valuable areas of cultivable land. Around the perimeter of the Jebel, where the wadis flow out onto the plains, there are localised deposits of boulders, gravels and finer alluvial material, and surrounding the whole area is the vast qoz (sand plain).

Geographically these hills are very isolated standing like an island in the surrounding flat and almost treeless landscape. To the north is the South Libyan Desert, a vast area of sand dunes without any permanent settlement. To the south, east and west is more qoz, open and gently undulating without dunes. The nearest settlement to the Jebel is in the Tagabo Hills, some sixty kilometres away, with no perennial water source between the two. Within this area of Dar Meidob there is a wide range of vegetation, between the extremes of parts of the uplands, where there is a dense vegetation cover of trees and shrubs, and the qoz, which is characterised by short grassland and isolated trees and shrubs. This regional variation means that separate areas are most suitable for grazing different types of livestock.

Both this topography and vegetation are very much the result of the nature and frequency of rainfall. Jebel Meidob is shown on rainfall maps of the Sudan as lying north of the 200 mm. isohyet. About half of this limited amount tends to be concentrated in a few heavy showers which result in rapid run off and erosion. The rainfall records of 1963 to 1973 show that the total rainfall was the result of an average of only fifteen days with recorded rainfall per annum. However these figures may not be representative of the longer term.

See Lebon 1965:8.
pattern, as this area was considerably affected by the Sahel Zone Drought. There were lower than average rainfall figures from 1965 to 1973, with below 80 mm. falling in the years 1966, 1969, 1971 and 1972, and only 38 mm. in 1973. These successive years of low precipitation had disastrous effects on the Meidob economy with average losses of livestock at sixty per cent and with no grain grown for several years. Fortunately the rains were better in 1974 but conditions found during fieldwork were hardly representative.

This level of precipitation, low even in average years, means that the wadis flow for perhaps only a few days in the wet season. It is appropriate therefore to say something about the alternative sources of water. The Meidob exploit two types of source, surface and underground. During the rainy season the surface water is most commonly tapped by the use of tamad (A. pl. tumud, T. poosi). These are shallow wells dug in the sand or gravels of a wadi bed to reach the residual flow beneath the surface, or to tap a pool caught in the bedrock of the valley floor. They are temporary affairs which easily collapse but are quickly rebuilt, and most rainy season settlements are within easy reach of suitable tumud sites. Once these have been exhausted the local inhabitants turn to use water from the natural reservoirs (A. gelti, pl. gulut) which are found cut out in the rock of the valley floor. They are excavated by the action of boulder-laden flood water flowing down steep and narrow valleys. The conditions of their formation often means that they are in rather inaccessible places, but they often hold sufficient water to support the local population.

These figures are based on rain-gauge recordings taken at Malha.
and its herds for a month or more. The third source of surface water are the shallow pools \( (A.\text{rahad}, \text{pl. rhud}) \) which are found on the alluvial plains in and around the Jebel, where a clayey depression may hold a large area of shallow water. Underground sources of water are reached by the construction of wells and there are two sorts, those where the water is extracted manually, and those where it is pumped out with the aid of a diesel engine. The former type are found in the Jebel where there are eight well centres, most of which are situated in valleys, where water can be found at a depth of between four and twenty metres. On the goz surrounding the Jebel the water table is generally deeper than forty metres, and the water is pumped up to supply water yards (fenced in areas containing a supply tank and water troughs). Rights to use the former are acquired primarily through inheritance from the builder. The latter type are owned by the government and a small charge is payable on every animal which enters the yard to drink.

People and herds are dependent on such wells for about half the year. Water sources are thus a limiting factor on movements and exploitation of land, and the density of population which can be supported. However Jebel Meidob with its small and scattered settlements has the appearance of being an area of low population, and this is confirmed by the results of the 1956 census which gives a total population figure of 20,856\(^4\). This can be corrected assuming a three per cent per annum growth rate to give a figure of 39,000 in 1975\(^5\), which averages out at about one person per square kilometre.

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\(^4\) The results of the Second Sudan Census of 1973 are not yet available.

\(^5\) The 1956 Census showed for Kutum East Census Area (which includes Dar Meidob) a Crude Birth Rate of 42.6 per 1,000 and a Crude Death Rate of 11.2 per 1,000 giving a rate of natural increase of 3.14\(\%\) per annum. In calculating the 1975 total I use the total population figures estimated by J.M. Haies, corrected for inclusion of the Tamaleka Omodia omitted in the original census.
However, as many parts of the Dar are unpopulated the density of population in the settled areas is two or three times as high.

The separateness of the Meidob hills and an absence of any large settlements, (the market village of Malha in the south being the largest, with a population of no more than one thousand) convey a feeling of isolation. However, contrary to what might be expected the actual population is far from isolated in terms of world outlook, national politics and contacts with other pastoralists. An increased sense of political awareness may be partly due to the increasing number of transistor radios brought into the area, but the Meidob have a long tradition of involvement in national politics. Secondly the marketing of livestock involves travel and contact with other groups. Meidob herds are taken to the markets of Mellit (125 kilometres south), El Fasher (190 kilometres south) and Omdurman (700 kilometres due east). In the past men have also taken livestock to Egypt, though now the best market is to be found in Libya, which has the double attraction of offering high prices for sheep and camels and good wages for work on agricultural schemes such as those at Kufra. Herders therefore stay on for up to a year before returning home, and this source of income has gained importance since the drought. Thirdly many Meidob have made the pilgrimage to Mecca. Such travel and opportunities for meeting foreigners are however generally restricted to men, and women tend to have a much narrower outlook.

Contacts are also made in the course of moving and watering herds with Arab pastoralists such as the Kawahla who graze areas to the east, the Zayadia to the south, and the Kababish who have their camps east of the Dar but often move their animals to utilise Meidob land, and
the non Arab Zaghawa who graze land to the south west. The nearest permanent settlements and markets are those of the Berti cultivators to the south with whom much local trading is done and who over the years of the drought were the main suppliers of grain for the Meidob.

Despite such contacts however the Meidob have managed to maintain a degree of cultural identity and isolation. The main indicator of this is the use of the Meidob language (T. Tiddi-n-al) classified by Tucker and Bryan (1966) as a member of the Nubian group. Arabic is the lingua franca of the Sudan and the Meidob are surrounded by Arabic and non Arabic groups who alike use Arabic as their first language. Most Meidob men and some women speak enough Arabic to converse with their neighbours, but Meidob persists as the mother tongue. It is the first language learnt by all children and the one used in conversation with other Meidob. Secondly there has been little breaking down of tribal barriers between the Meidob and their neighbours through intermarriage. In the past where such marriages have occurred they have resulted in the incorporation of foreign women, often of slave status, into Meidob society, or the marriage out and loss of women from the area, rather than the merging of separate groups. A third factor, which also accounts for the low rate of intermarriage, is the mutual hostility and distrust that exists between the Meidob and surrounding peoples as a result of raids, thefts and killings.

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6 The Zaghawa who have also held on to the use of their own language are an exception.
The Economy

Like most people in Western Sudan the Meidob practice animal and crop husbandry, but they are primarily pastoralists. The animals which they herd are goats, cows, sheep and camels. The goats and cows are generally based at, and return every night to, the settlement where their young offspring forage for food during the day. The sheep and camels which have more specialised grazing requirements, and which can survive for longer periods without water, are generally pastured at a distance, returning infrequently to rejoin the settled population. Camels and sheep are generally tended by men and youths, whereas the work of looking after goats and cows falls more to the women and children. This is the ideal system. However, there is a great deal of variation in the practices of herding, and not all families own all types of animals. Goats are the most numerous livestock, especially in the mountains, and they comprise the minimum herd in that all pastoralists own some goats. Cows are less common and were hit especially hard by the years of drought. The largest number of cattle are found on the plains, whereas most mountain families have only one or two beasts. The families which are better off in relation to livestock generally keep sheep or camels in addition to goats, but it is only the wealthiest who own considerable numbers of all three types. Caring for these herds is the main occupation of most Meidob, and much of their work consists of finding good browse and grazing and supervising the watering of the livestock. During the dry season the most part of every third day may be taken up in moving goats to and from the wells and pulling
water for them. For sheep and camels this generally occurs at a longer interval. Other herding duties involve protecting the livestock from thieves and predators and tracking down stray animals.

The principal economic value of animal husbandry for the Meidob is realised in the sale of livestock in urban markets, with camels and sheep fetching the highest prices. There is also some slaughter for home consumption, although this is generally limited to weak or sick animals, young males and non productive females. Most of the meat consumed is goat's meat. The slaughter of a cow or camel only occurs at special events where there are large numbers to be fed, such as at funerals or weddings. Milk from the herds also constitutes an important element of the diet and all types of animal are milked, although only that of goats and cows is regularly used for domestic consumption. Sheep's and camel's milk is drunk by the herders. Excess cows' milk is made into clarified butter (A. semin), however neither this nor the milk is sold. This is due partly to the absence of a market and partly to the fact that there is little if any surplus.

The third way in which animals are of value is in relation to their hides. Goat skins are processed by the women of the family to produce bags for storing and carrying all the household goods, flour and other foodstuffs. Some are proofed with tar extracted from melon seeds to be used for the transport and storing of water, and others for churning milk. They are also made into slings for carrying babies. Cow hides are used to make the larger bags used for transporting grain and the traditional sandals, and the tough camel hide is made into thongs used for example in the construction of saddles.
Finally, camels provide an essential means of transport. The male beasts are used for moving the household from one site to another and for transporting grain and salt, and a good riding camel is a man's status symbol. Women however tend to ride the donkeys which once roamed freely in large numbers in the Jebel, but whose population has been cut by the years of drought. Most women now own one or two donkeys and their value lies in the regular work they do of transporting water to the settlements from the wells. They are also used for moving between hamlet sites and marketing. When not needed for such work they roam freely in local herds. Except for the market population, the Meidob, unlike many of their neighbours do not keep poultry.

With an annual rainfall of around 200 mm. Dar Meidob is marginal for cultivation, and although most Meidob do grow some crops, few households can produce sufficient for subsistence. Two types of farms are cultivated during the rainy season. Bullrush millet is extensively grown at certain farming centres on the qoz plains which surround the Jebel, and a wider variety of crops such as dura (sorghum vulgare), tomatoes, okra, and kerkaday (red sorrel) are grown intensively on the clay infills within the mountains. Wild foodstuffs are also important within the diet and certain grasses (A. kureyp, T. ali kaylay) are beaten to collect the seeds which supplement millet in the month or so before the harvest. Wild melons, cucumbers, and various fruits of trees and shrubs are also gathered, but all of these are low status foods in comparison with cultivated crops.

Although farms are often situated some distance from the areas of settlement and grazing, cultivation is not incompatible with

7The uri seeds of urengi (A. moket) are boiled in water to make a drink. The fruits of the heglig (T. arti) are chewed like a sweet by children.
pastoralism. This is due to the fact that the demands of farming are heaviest during the rainy season, when the ease of finding pasture and water means that there is less herding work to be done.

The grains of millet and dura are ground by hand by the women of the family and made into porridge (A. asida, T. ali) which is the staple diet. It is eaten with either a spicy sauce or milk. Beer is also brewed from millet by the southern tribe, but the northern tribe avoid all alcohol on religious grounds. Meat is eaten occasionally and sweet tea is the preferred drink.

This type of economy depends on the ability to utilise widely dispersed and seasonally changing resources of land, vegetation and water, and therefore on a degree of mobility. This can be partly achieved by the separate movement of livestock best adapted to infrequent watering, that is camels and sheep, to distant pastures away from the heavier grazed settled areas. However, even the settlement based community can rarely remain on one site throughout the year. This is due to the needs of the herds grazing within a limited radius of the hamlet, especially the young goats and calves which must find sufficient fodder within the vicinity of the settlement. The resources of vegetation and water must be constantly balanced with the human and animal population. This often results in families moving between many sites within one year, although there are some sedentary communities. The longest stay is generally during the rains when water and pasture are most abundant.
The actual settlements are generally very small and consist of groups of domed houses with accompanying animal pens, built from timbers and brushwood. The average settlement in the dry season consists of about five houses. In the rains they are often larger as favourable conditions allow more families to congregate in the one spot. I call these settlements hamlets because of their size, and the fact that they are often found close to one another in a locality, to form what might be called a neighbourhood or hamlet cluster. (The house and hamlet are described in greater detail later on). Regular moves between such sites when new residential groups can form, and the grouping and dispersion that occurs in relation to seasonal movement, can give a fluidity to the residential pattern similar to that found among tent dwelling nomadic groups, although many hamlet groups are relatively stable units.

**Historical Background**

Meidob tradition starts with their arrival from the Christian Kingdom of Nubia on the Nile, said to have been some six hundred years ago. There are two sets of stories of arrival held by the two main groups that make up the tribe, the Urrti and the Kargeddi. The Urrti version claims that they came from Mahas, and the Kargeddi version claims the opposite. Aside from such dissension which linguistic research can resolve better than contemporary Meidob, it would seem that such a past migration was possible. The Nubian link is verified by linguistic evidence and the different dialects spoken by Urrti and Kargeddi would seem to indicate a different place of origin for the two sections.
The Urrti version of arrival tells of a group of people wandering in the desert. For some reason a small party divided off from the main band travelling west and arrived at the northern edge of the Jebel at the Daju village of Ekendi (A. Dar Deifa) meaning place of the visitor. One version tells of a member of the party chasing a gazelle, losing the others, and being saved by an ostrich which shades him from the heat and later carries him to the Jebel. In another version a small party follows a cow which leads them to water, and in a third version the group sees fire in the hills. The leader of this group is called Ahmed Al Adoob (literally Ahmed the Meidob) and the descendants of his three sons form the three main Urrti sections.

The story of arrival of the Kargeddi is linked with the Ordati (which would seem to have been a sub group of the Torti). The Ordati were said to be living on top of one of the mountains and hearing the sound of new arrivals cutting down trees, presumably to build houses, asked, 'Who are these tree cutters?'. The Meidob for tree cutter is karr geddi. The Ordati then gave these newcomers a cow and a goat which were sacrificed, and this was the beginning of an annual ceremony at which these two beasts were sacrificed by the Ordati in order to obtain rain and health for the sick (MSS Arkell).

The Torti are the third and smallest group inhabiting Jebel Meidob today. It seems likely however because of stories such as that of the Kargeddi that they were the first Meidob group inhabiting

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8 The Daju are the original inhabitants of Darfur.
9 The prefixing of Ahmed to a version of the name of a tribe is a common form used in Darfur for the founding ancestor of the tribe. For an example see Hasan and O'Fahey (1970:152-161).
the Jebel. There is no recorded story of their arrival, only one explaining how they received their symbols of authority. A camel one day wandered alone into a Torti village, carrying a copper drum and sword. The camel magically disappeared leaving these symbols of authority which the villagers regarded as gifts from God (Sarsfield Hall, 1920; Lampen, 1928). Later on the drum and sword played a central role in many of the Torti ceremonies.

The importance of the Torti seems to have lain in the relevance of their rituals for all the Meidob (Sarsfield Hall, 1920:225-227), a role which is often associated with such an autochthonous population. The sacrifices made by the Ordati are one such example. They also had within their territory a large rock where rain and fertility rites were performed by making offerings of milk and semen. Jebel Awir (literally the Mountain of Pregnancy) also found in Dar Torti contained a cave visited by people from all over the Dar to increase fertility. Barren women brought small offerings, and men who wished to increase the fertility of their herds left hobbles and headropes.

Whether the Torti, like the Urrti and Kargeddi had their origins in the east is not known. Present day evidence can neither prove or disprove this, as all three groups share the common Meidob language, the same general customs, and members of all three belong to the same matriclans. One can only conclude that they probably also came from Nubia, but that their arrival predated that of the Kargeddi and probably that of the Urrti.

10 For similar examples see Fortes (1945:6-7) and Tubiana (1964:197).
From the legend of arrival of the Meidob to the early twentieth century there are only small threads of evidence as to the involvement of the Meidob in the successive states of Darfur. Early traditions assert that three dynasties ruled in Darfur, and that they all had their centre of power around Jebel Marra. These were the Daju, whose rule can be dated around the twelfth or thirteenth century, the Tunjur who ruled in the sixteenth century, and the Keira Fur who came to power in the middle of the seventeenth century (O'Fahey & Spaulding, 1974:107-116).

The story of arrival of the first Meidob tells of the presence of the Daju in Jebel Meidob and their later departure, and the fact that the Meidob were later incorporated into the Tunjur State is suggested by Arkell, who located within Dar Meidob two ruined walled settlements which he attributes to the Tunjur (Arkell, 1951 and 1952). There is more detailed information concerning relations with the Fur Sultanate. The Meidob payed tax directly to the central Fur treasury as well as to their own maliks, and a number of Meidob achieved high positions within the court of the Fur Sultanate, playing an important role in central politics (Nachtigal, 1971:305-306 and 357). On the other side of the coin Meidob politics were never completely free from the influence of the Sultans. Any newly appointed Malik had to receive the Sultan's approval and to take him gifts, and contestants to the throne could resort to using the Fur court's influence. Lampen relates how the wakil (deputy) of one of the Kargeddi kings bribed the Fur Sultan to give him the throne (Lampen, 1928:57).

Malik is Arabic for king. However the office of malikship had limited powers in Northern Darfur. There was no formal court and it might be more appropriate to consider the malik as an important chief.
The involvement of the Meidob in the wider political sphere is again demonstrated during the time of the Mahdia when the Urrti king 'Ali Eisa was appointed as the governor (A. 'amir) of north-eastern Darfur. Despite Urrti support for the Mahdi, the Kargeddi resisted when they were ordered by the Mahdist Emir for Darfur, Osman Gano, to form part of the army of Darfur tribes travelling east. They were taken in bonds towards Omdurman, and only released when it was assumed that retreat home would be impossible. However they did attempt to return to their Dar, and many managed to reach the Jebel, although some died on the way. (In another version they managed to cut their bonds rather than being released). After this incident an army of Berti soldiers followed by a contingent of Jihadia (Mahdist forces) were sent to punish them. They were gradually driven back and their wells were cut off. Eventually, forced to concede they went to fight with the other Darfur peoples.

The relationship between the Meidob and other Darfur tribes is set in a background of mutual hostilities. For example the Gura'an of north-eastern Tchad attacked the Meidob on several occasions, capturing people and livestock. There are still one or two very old people living in Dar Meidob who spent some of their younger years as slaves, having been captured in such a raid. However the Meidob were not always on the defensive side. They made repeated attacks on the villages of the Berti, their nearest neighbours to the south, raiding their valuable grain stores. The Berti were forced to retreat southwards from their original settlements in Abu Garan and conflicts
between them only ceased in the later years of Ali Dinar (Holy, 1974:64). Perhaps the commonest type of conflict however was, and still is, that which arose over the sharing of grazing land. For example, when the Hamr and Bani Jarrar Arab camel owning pastoralists from the east grazed near to the Jebel, there were repeated clashes between herders and thefts of animals. The Meidob also stole from and were raided by the Umm Jalul, and to this day such affrays continue with the Kababish with several deaths every year.

Internal Political Divisions

In terms of Sudanese politics the Meidob are seen as one group, one tribe with a common foreign tongue. However from an internal viewpoint the Meidob consider themselves not as one but as three separate tribes. These are the Urrti, the Kargesdi (or Shelkota) and the Torti, and each has colonised a different area of Dar Meidob. The Urrti are found in the northern half of the territory with most of their settlements in the hills, the Kargesdi occupy the southern and western edges of the Jebel with an outlying area of settlement on the northern edge of the Tagabo Hills and the Torti occupy the south-east corner of Jebel Meidob. Both geographical concentration and hostile relations have held these groups apart. In the past warfare was not uncommon, and camel theft continues to the present day. This aggression was most frequent between the two strongest groups, the Kargesdi and Urrti, leading to defences such as stone walls being built across valleys by the Urrti to prevent thefts of large herds. Fear of thefts also prevented widespread grazing within other tribal
areas, and this was further cemented by the local development and ownership of well centres and watering points. This geographical concentration of groups and hostility between areas proved an effective marriage barrier.

Hostility and competition for power between the Urrti and Kargeddi was also very much influenced by their relationship with external powers, and the balance of power was often tipped by appointments made from the outside. During the time of the Mahdia the Urrti king 'Ali Eisa established his authority in the north and called himself 'King of the Jebel' (Lampen, 1928:59). He was later summoned to the court of the Mahdist Emir, and during his absence the Kargeddi king Jami' Kheir took advantage of the situation to increase his power. During the time of Ali Dinar, Malik Mansour Suliman of the Urrti was exiled in Kordofan in 1915 for his relative lack of co-operation with the Sultanate in comparison with the Kargeddi king (Arkell, 1922:131-132). Ali Dinar also placed the Torti under the authority of the Kargeddi king, thus considerably increasing the extent of his power. The Urrti however were less than willing to submit to any external authority.

The British who conquered Darfur in 1916 also looked for one representative, and although they reinstated the Urrti and Torti kings they regarded Jami' Kheir of the Kargeddi as the strongest leader. Malik Mansour Suliman again found himself out of favour, with the British this time, for the involvement of some Urrti in slave trading. Jami' Kheir was eventually made overall king, to be succeeded by his son Muhammed al Sayyah in 1929 (Darfur Province Archives). When Sayyah
died some thirty years later his brother Osman took over the role of regent for Sayyah's son al-Tom. In 1971 the Peoples' Local Government Act abolished the kingship.

Rivalry for power was not simply on an inter-tribal basis. Each tribe was in turn made up of a collection of sections or geographical areas, whose chiefs or *okills* (T.A. wakil, deputy) competed for power, and between which geographical isolation, acts of aggression, and bad feeling created a further barrier to marriage. The Urrti tribe is made up of five such sections, namely the Teukeddi, Usutti, Kindirra, Elkedi and Tamaleka. The Teukeddi and Ussuti formed a political alliance as did the Kindirra and Elkedi under a common chiefship. Although there was marriage within these grouped pairs, marriages between them were described as difficult and are still rare today. The Kargeddi consisted of six sections, the Kondeidi, Kirra, Kinana, Bedyat, Abu Garan and Abidiya. Rivalry, especially for the kingship, was commonest between the Kondeidi and Kirra sections. Due to the autonomy of these sections their chiefs held considerable power, and this increased as the office of kingship declined. Under the Anglo-Egyptian system of administration these sections became *omodiyas*, the tax collecting units, and the *okills* or their descendants became the new *omdas*. At present it is the *omdas* as a group, rather than any royal family, which forms the effective decision making body in respect to matters concerning relations between the Meidob and other tribes. However within this group factions still form along the basis of the Kargeddi Urrti division.
It is difficult to define the exact role which section membership plays today or has played in the past, in that these sections do not act as corporate groups, nor is the membership of an individual fixed at birth. Prolonged residence in another section may lead to identification with that section. Secondly repeated intermarriages over several generations, as has occurred between the Teukeddi and Usutti, may mean that many individuals have kin in both sections. There was some confusion by those listed in my census as to which section they belonged. Shared access to grazing and water resources, and therefore a limited area in which movement between hamlet sites can take place, could perhaps be taken as a common denominator of section membership. However even this is not entirely satisfactory. The area which section members graze is continually undergoing a process of change, and this was accelerated by the years of drought (1969-73). Members of different sections may also have rights of access at the same well. Nor is it entirely satisfactory to see the sections as a confederation of patriclans (T. uginir), as certain of these have minor lineages which have split off into another section. Perhaps the answer lies more in the past when we look at population movements during and after the Mahdia. The fragments of evidence seem to suggest that during this period the sections acted as corporate groups competing for water and land. It may be that they now have no need to act as a whole except in respect to the payment of taxes, but that the legacy of past hostilities and political alignments has resulted in a pattern of in-marriage, and thus the concentration of cognatic and affinal kin within the section, perpetuated to the present day. It is thus a historical phenomenon that we are dealing with.
These sections are further divided into ugginir and dirria which together with the tertî (matriclans) are dealt with in the following chapter. Here it is sufficient to say that it is the matriclans which formed the common link between all these divisions and between the three tribal groups themselves. Succession to the kingship was matrilineal until the time of Malik Jami Kheir of the Kargeddi who came to power in about 1890, and thus certain clans held considerable power. The original Kargeddi dynasty represented a section of the Tesetti matriclan, although later the kingship fell to the Arangiddi (clan of the baboon) to which many of the maliks of all three kingdoms belonged.

Incorporation into the World of Islam

Early accounts of the Meidob (Arkell, 1947 and MSS; Lampen, 1928; MacMichael, 1918) stress the pagan nature of the indigenous belief system, describing the worship of God (T.u. Tellî, T.k. Delli) through offerings of milk, fat, flour and meat before sacred stones and trees, the resorting to wise women as oracles (T. toedi), and the seasonal festival of the Bazza (T.u. Baraja). This Bazza seems to have been the most important ritual, celebrated by all the Torti, Urrti and Kargeddi in successive months. It was a festival celebrating the initiation of youths into manhood which took place after the harvest and included a long competitive race for the initiation.

The Bazza no longer takes place. It was reportedly banned among the Kargeddi by Malik Muhammad Sayyah about forty years ago because of its pagan nature, and because it included a procession round a
rock, which he saw as an imitation of the procession around the Ka'aba at Mecca. The Urrti stopped performing the Bazza some time earlier. During the period of fieldwork informants were initially unwilling to talk about such rituals or sacred stones because of their incompatibility with Islam. 'Of course we are all Moslems now' was used as a defensive statement against such past follies. Indeed the Meidob now adhere to the five tenets of Islam as closely as any of the other peoples of Darfur. All the main Islamic festivals (A.'id) especially the birthday (maulid) of the Prophet, are celebrated by prayer and the making of karama. All adult Meidob who are able to, fast during Ramadan, and many men manage to make the pilgrimage to Mecca in later life. Mosques are present throughout the Dar, though many are simply a plot of cleared land demarcated by stones, and although the system of koranic schools (A. masūk) is not as established as amongst the Fur, some children have the opportunity of attending a khalwa before school and continuing their knowledge of the Qur'ān in government schools.

It is when one looks at the 'rites-de-passage' that one realises that, as with many societies brought into the world of Islam, the indigenous belief system does not simply become replaced, but rather works alongside Islam. Marriage is perhaps the best example of this with the making of the contract at the rub al-dinar representing the formal Islamic side, and the soubu with its ritualised aggression between the kin of both sides, fertility rites and ceremonies accompanying the entry of the house, representing the traditional side.

A karama in the sense in which the Meidob use the word is an offering made to God to beg his favour, mercy or kindness. The offering is made in the form of meat or less frequently millet porridge or tea, which is then consumed by those who have made the offering.
Seven days after the child's birth, at a ceremony known as the aguga (A. samaya), the child is given an Arabic name. However in addition a Tiddi-n-al name may be given shortly after the birth, and such names persist especially among women. Commonly the Meidob name describes the condition of the birth or the child's temperament. Making a karama is a socially acceptable response to any serious sickness, but for infertility and minor ailments women generally look towards more traditional solutions. Divining with cowrie shells (T. kochi) and by making marks in the sand is common among the Meidob as with many peoples in the Sudan, and specialists receive a small gift for the consultation. The making of karama to ensure rain although it now takes an Islamic form and is common among other Arab groups is probably pre-Islamic in origin.

This coming together of indigenous tradition and Islam is far from unusual and indeed it would be impossible to find a form of orthodox Islam in the Sudan which had not been shaped by local beliefs and customs. What perhaps is unusual is to find a society which continues to recognise matrilineal affiliation in the face of Islam. In a comparable situation Stevenson notes how among the Tegeldi of the Nuba Hills a similar kinship structure was modified by the relaxation of former marriage proscriptions (Stevenson, 1963:1-20). In the Meidob situation such changes have not occurred. Examples of the co-existence of matriliney and Islam are hard to find, but where they have co-existed one finds that matrilineality has been weakened and the base for a bilateral society has been created. It is arguable that the same process has occurred in the Meidob kinship system. For example, the patriclans

13 For other examples see Trimingham, 1949.
14 For example see Dube, L., 1969.
may conceivably be a relatively recent innovation, though evidence suggests that they were in existence before the Mahdia. At any rate it is certain that Islam has played an important role in affecting attitudes to groups of kin, and the property holding group especially, in that sharia law prescribes patrilineal inheritance.

For the Meidob incorporation into the wider society has meant incorporation into the world of Islam, and it is Islam rather than any other external influence which has had most effect in moulding the nature of its society. The question that remains is how did Islam penetrate Dar Meidob. Part of the answer to this perhaps lies in the way in which Darfur became an Islamic state.

The introduction of Islam is traditionally connected with the beginning of the Keira Fur Sultanate, and was ascribed to a certain Ahmad al Ma'qur (Ahmad the hamstrung), an Arab from North Africa. He showed the people the civilised customs of Islam, for example in connection with eating. His descendant Sulayman Solong duo (Solong, that is, the Arab, in the Meidob account) became the first historical ruler of the Keira dynasty (1650-80) (O'Fahey & Spaulding, 1974:110-112). The important point is that Islam came first to the court, and although the state became Islamic in name, the Fur peasants for the most part retained their own beliefs. The importance and influence of Islam grew as commercial ties with Egypt increased, and by the eighteenth century Darfur had important links of trade with Egypt along the darb-al-arba'in (the forty days road). However perhaps the single most important factor in increasing the influence of Islam was the influx of fuqara' (s. faqih) religious leaders (O'Fahey, forthcoming). As an
emerging Moslem state the Keira Sultanate acted as a magnet to these travelling fuqara'. Many made their way to the court where they played an essential part in the running of the state as katibs (scribes), qadisi (judges) and imams (prayer leaders). They also set up religious centres away from the capital, and from these the word of Islam gradually spread through the countryside. Because of the important role these religious men played within the administrative structure of the Sultanate they were often rewarded well, some being granted estates (A. hakura) thus furthering their influence.

The problem remains of fitting Dar Meidob into this picture. Being on the periphery of the Sultanate, the Meidob were too far from the court to feel its direct influence, and beyond the territory in which hakura were granted. It also seems unlikely that there were any religious centres set up in the Jebel. It would seem however that Islam was first accepted by members of the royal families, though there was no one large centralised court which could support a large number of itinerant fuqara'. Involvement of Meidob in the court affairs of the Sultanate, long distance trade, contact with neighbouring Arab peoples, and the events of the Mahdiyya, all served to increase the influence of Islam and the Arab world. During the Mahdiyya for example many Meidob lived in Omdurman where it is likely they would have been strongly influenced by the religious fervour of the period. As among the Fur the two religions, the old and the new, probably co-existed for quite some time, but with the Meidob it would seem that Islam spread more evenly throughout the entire population, although the Urrti reportedly gave up the old religion before the
Kargeddi. The barrier that persisted was not (as with the Fur) between court and commoner, but between men and women. It was the men who were involved in the politics of the central court, trading with foreign peoples and contacts with Arabs and Moslems. It was, and still is, the men who acquired a knowledge of Arabic and the practices of Islam. To this day few women (excluding the younger generation of schoolgirls) have more than a crude knowledge of Arabic, and although all Meidob are Moslems and women like men keep Ramadan, women seldom pray and only visit the mosque at the time of the Maulid. As in much of the Dar-al-Islam it is the women who have held longest to the indigenous customs and practices, and perhaps most significantly it is the kin links perpetuated by women which are most incongruous within an Islamic society.
CHAPTER 2

KIN CATEGORIES AND GROUPS

Having given a general background picture to the Meidob I shall now take up the first of the three main themes of this thesis, being that of kinship. In this chapter I shall be setting out the basic outline of the kinship organisation as described by the Meidob and observed during fieldwork. However the way in which the various groups come into play will not become fully obvious until they are dealt with in the following chapters. The Meidob kinship system stands apart from that of neighbouring groups, in the recognition of matriclans and the localised group of descending kindred. The importance of the former will become fully apparent in the chapter on marriage, and the latter in considering the developmental cycle of the domestic group. On first analysis the structuring of kin relations may appear complex. However through the development of this thesis, I hope to demonstrate how this complexity of ties allows for a degree of flexibility in the pattern of residence and co-operation, essential for the economic survival of small fluid groups of inter-dependent families.

One of the dominating features of the Meidob kinship system, is that due to the preferred marriage between close kin (as outlined in the following chapter) many individuals, especially within the one hamlet group, are linked by various ties of kinship and marriage, and there are no exclusive terms for affinal and consanguineal kin. The general term used for someone with whom a kinship
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relationship is recognised is ugudie, which means near in a kin or more general physical sense, and is comparable with the Arabic qurba. The term involves the concept of physical and social as well as cognatic closeness. Within this group of ugudie there are three ways of identifying the exact nature of the kinship link. There is overlap between these categories, and the way a particular relationship is traced may depend on the circumstances of the case. Only one of these is exclusive of affinal ties.

The first of these categories is that of the ugginir, or patriclan. Uggi means animal pen or enclosure, -n is the genitive suffix, and ir means person, or as in this case people¹. Literally translated the term means those people who share an animal pen, and by inference those who have rights in a common herd, live in one hamlet, and keep their animals together as one herd. The ugginir is a patrilineal descent group, generally of no more than about six generations in depth. The people who consider themselves to be of one ugginir are obviously too numerous to share either a hamlet or joint herds. However they conceive of themselves as the descendants either of one man or one original settlement, owning animals which have descended from the original herd. The ugginir may be named after the original ancestor or hamlet site, and the fact that the hamlets are conceptualised as containing the children of one man means that there is no contradiction in these two alternative forms of naming. In reality the situation is rarely as straightforward, for the elders of a hamlet may be

¹ijeti is the usual plural form.
less closely related, and those who can trace their patrilineal
descent back to the original settlement, cannot always describe
the exact nature of their kin ties to one another. There is there-
fore an element of fiction in equating original hamlet members
with the clan ancestor.

Within this group the segmentation process is not concept-
ualised as continuous or mechanical, and only a few can attempt
an explanation as to the way one or two *ugginirs* are related.
The creation of a new *ugginir* is explained in terms of one
brother dividing his herds from his siblings', making a new hamlet
site and a new *uggi* (animal pen). Such a split may be the product
of disagreements between brothers, or father and elder son, over the
question of herd management, or it may be necessitated by a shortage
of local resources such as water. When this happens the original
group preserves its identity and the new branch will adopt a new name,
often that of the originator, although for a time this branch may
remain in association with the parental one, as a sub-section of it.
When such a process occurs today the new hamlet may attract relatively
distantly related kin whose descendants could in time produce the new
*ugginir*, identified with the hamlet founder. The use of animal brands
is perhaps the best indicator of the degree of this process of segmentation.
Each *ugginir* can be identified by its use of a particular brand
(*T.eedee*). However where sub-sections break away from the parental group
they may use different or additional animals brands.
The ugginir group is generally locationally concentrated. Where branches are found in other tribal sections this is accounted for by the movement of a brother(s) to a new area, where for a period of time his agnatic descendents may remain identified with the original patrigroup. This regional concentration of the group is the result of three interconnected sets of factors. Firstly, the group is highly endogamous, which helps maintain unity as well as being a product of that unity, and the predominance of patri-virilocal over uxorilocal marriage inhibits dispersion. Secondly, although most Meidob are nomadic, dry season movements are contained within a certain radius of the wells to which families have rights of usage. As such rights are usually inherited within the patriline this again preserves the social cohesiveness of the group. Thirdly, inheritance is dominantly patrilineal, with the greater part of animal wealth being passed from one generation to the next 'inter vivos'. However the passage of animals from father to children does not automatically mean the immediate physical division of the livestock, and agnates may be held together by their common interest in shared herds.

The political representative of this group was traditionally and still is the ugginir-or or uggin-or, literally the head of the ugginir. Many of these heads have now become sheikhs (a government created office), responsible for the collection of taxes. The sheikh collects taxes from the localised group of ugginirs of which he is the senior representative, although individuals if they wish can choose to pay taxes with another sheikh and thus with another ugginir group.
Other matters concerning the *ugginir-or* are the settlement of disputes.

*Ugginir* membership is passed on from the father to his children, and in the next generation to the children of sons. Within this group men may be identified as the children of one man in opposition to the children of his brother. Due to the high incidence of polygyny it is obvious that matrifiliation could be an important differentiating aspect. However divisions created by different maternal origins are not structurally important within the agnatic group. Maternal differentiation may divide children during their parents' lifetime, and this is more likely where co-wives do not take up residence in the husband's hamlet. (This is dealt with in greater depth in the developmental cycle). However where new *ugginir* divisions are created, segmentation is as likely to arise from a split between full brothers, as between those of one father but different mothers. Of the cases for which I have accurate accounts, it was a split between full brothers which caused one to move away and make a new hamlet, which formed the basis of a new group. It is interesting to compare this with a patrilineal society such as the Tallensi, where we are told that the children of different wives of one man remain together during the father's lifetime but divide on death. This is the converse of the Meidob situation. With the Tallensi we are told that different maternal origin is the basis of patrilineal segmentation. However this is the limit of the importance of maternal origin which,

'has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent as the polar opposite of paternal origin' .

(Fortes, 1945: 202).
Other matters concerning the *ugginir-or* are the settlement of disputes.

*Ugginir* membership is passed on from the father to his children, and in the next generation to the children of sons. Within this group men may be identified as the children of one man in opposition to the children of his brother. Due to the high incidence of polygyny it is obvious that matrifiliation could be an important differentiating aspect. However divisions created by different maternal origins are not structurally important within the agnatic group. Maternal differentiation may divide children during their parents' lifetime, and this is more likely where co-wives do not take up residence in the husband's hamlet. (This is dealt with in greater depth in the developmental cycle). However where new *ugginir* divisions are created, segmentation is as likely to arise from a split between full brothers, as between those of one father but different mothers. Of the cases for which I have accurate accounts, it was a split between full brothers which caused one to move away and make a new hamlet, which formed the basis of a new group. It is interesting to compare this with a patrilineal society such as the Tallensi, where we are told that the children of different wives of one man remain together during the father's lifetime but divide on death. This is the converse of the Meidob situation. With the Tallensi we are told that different maternal origin is the basis of patrilineal segmentation. However this is the limit of the importance of maternal origin which,

'has significance only within the frame of patrilineal descent as the polar opposite of paternal origin'.

(Fortes, 1945: 202).
Within the Meidob social structure maternal origin has great significance, but not within the ugginir structure\(^2\).

The second of these categories, of equal importance to the patrilineal descent groups, are the matriclans. They are called tert in Meidob, a word which perhaps not significantly also means seed. There are sixteen tert in all and they are dispersed throughout Dar Meidob, so that members of all clans are found in the three tribes. Each has a descriptive name and a totemic emblem, most of which are wild animals or insects. According to the Meidob, when they first came to their Dar they divided themselves up and each group took a sirr (A. secret, mystery or sacrament). However as some of these totems, such as the baboon which was associated with royalty in ancient Egypt, have a wider occurrence, it is not unlikely that they brought their sirr with them from the east. The Meidob themselves could not say what the significance of the particular totems was. There are however stories accounting for the origin of the various matriclan names. For example the matriclan Tesetti was so called because the women of that group were very industrious farmers and grew much millet.

\(^2\) R. Patai makes a similar point in his article on "The Structure of Endogamous Unilineal Descent Groups". 'While complimentary fission exists and plays a considerable role in Middle Eastern social structure, it is not the primary mechanism by which segmentation of the lineage is brought about'. (Patai, 1965: 338).
Tesetti is thus derived from tesi, green or the colour of plants, and iddedi, women. Most of the other names are similarly descriptive of a type of woman.

The tertai are sub-divided into un-al (from ut-n-al) the mouth or door of the house, which is directly translatable into the Arabic khashm bayt. The matriclans are conceived of as exogamous groups, although only the un-al are strictly exogamous. Of the 167 marriages where I had accurate information as to the tertai membership of both spouses, eighteen per cent of these were between members of the same tertai. However sixty per cent of these represented marriages between members of the royal clan Arangidi, which has ten un-al and is the most extensively segmented of the matriclans. In addition to this rule of exogamy men are forbidden to be married to more than one wife at any one time from the same un-al.

As divisions within the ugginir are conceived of as originating from the split between the sons of one man, the origin of the un-al is related to the division between the matrilineal kin of the daughters of one woman. In some cases, however, the un-al are named after other tribes, and their origin is traced to marriage with non Meidob, women who became fictitious members of one of the existing matriclans. Arangiddi has two such sections, Suli-n-unal (T. suli = Arab) and Peyti-n-unal (T. peyti = Berti or slave).

3. For a list of matriclan names and their totems see Appendix 1.
4. This is equivalent to the Islamic bar of 'unlawful conjunction', which means that a man is not allowed to have as co-wives two women so closely related that if either of them were male they would themselves be within prohibited degrees of marriage.
These two groups the *ugginir* and the *terti* represent the two opposing principles of patrilineal and the matrilineal descent respectively. They create cross cutting ties of kinship group membership in every family, and just as the children of a woman married to two or more successive husbands may be divided according to their *ugginir* membership, the children of the polygynous family will belong to different *terti* groups.

As well as passing membership through one sex, each group is very much identified with that sex. Although the sectional representatives of the *terti*, the *terti-n-or* are men, it is the *ugginir* within which a man may gain most political power, and through which he acquires status and wealth. This identity with the patri-group begins in childhood when the boy most closely identified with his father (except when the mother does not join the father's hamlet), remaining under his authority until the father dies. He later gains a position of leadership in his own family through the control he exerts over his own children and their labour. The most important occasion when his or his father's *terti* membership comes into effect is in relation to his choice of wife, and the fact that she must belong to a different *terti* from his mother's, that is his own, and subsequent wives must be taken from different *un-al*, means that he never forms a

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5 Paris describes a similar feature in the functioning of kin ties amongst some sections of the Nuba of Southern Kordofan, Sudan. He finds, '...what may be termed a basic sex emphasis, that is, a fundamental cultural association of males to patrilines and females to matrilines amongst the South Eastern Nuba (Paris, 1969: 243-54).
concentrated alliance with any one matriclan. The nearest he may come to this is by marrying into his *pan-terti* (T. father's *terti*), to his father's sister's daughter for example.

Women are identified with the *terti* as men are with the *ugginir* and it is not insignificant that in recalling genealogies a woman's matriclan membership can be remembered when her name cannot. A girl has closest ties with her mother, sister's and mother's sisters. Even though marriage often takes her away from these close matrikin the importance of the relationship is not diminished. When a daughter moves out after marriage she often sends a child back to be fostered, and the widowed mother often moves to her daughter's hamlet. Fostering of children also occurs between more distantly related *terti* members.

Matrification thus creates bonds of kinship irrespective of residential proximity or dispersion, and it is the links through women that help bind the *ugginir* groups together.

The third important groups is the *dirria*[^6] which encompasses some members of both the *ugginir* and the *terti*. The *dirria* is a group of descending kindred, whose members can trace descent to one male ancestor through male or female links, or a combination of both. It is from three to five generations in depth and takes its name from the remembered ancestor. Whereas membership of *terti* and *ugginir* are determined by matri- and patri- filiation respectively, an individual may choose to identify with one of a number of *dirria*, for they have

[^6]: It is possible that the Meidob word *dirria* is derived from the Arabic *thurriya* meaning descendants.
overlapping memberships, and unlike the matriclans and patriclans they do not form mutually exclusive segments. However if one's kin group is highly endogamous the choice of ancestors is limited as cognatic links converge.

For an individual to be recognised as the ancestor head of a dirria group he must have produced numerous offspring, but political power and prestige are also important. Such features appear to go hand in hand, and were common to the ancestors of dirria with which I was most familiar. The production of numerous children presents the ideal situation in the next generation for parallel and cross-cousin marriage, thus ensuring the social and geographical cohesiveness of the group. However the point is reached when growth and movement out breaks up the group, and dirria form around new ancestors. The dirria thus undergoes a process of development at the end of which there is no mechanism to determine which ancestors, if any, will act as a focus for the new group.

The factor of residential locality plays an important part in the identification of an individual with a dirria, for it functions as a localised group of cognatically related kin. When a member moves away his membership ceases to be effective. Where an individual's parents identify with different dirria, membership is to a considerable extent determined by the residence of one's mother. If the mother lives virilocally then the children will identify with the father's dirria. If however she stays in her parental hamlet then the children will identify with her dirria. In some cases, of course, both parents being cousins identify with the same dirria. In others they live in hamlets where both parent's dirrias are represented and they are most
likely to identify with the father's group. The dirria therefore has a patrilineal bias. This relationship between dirria membership and the localised group is explained most fully with the aid of hamlet genealogies in Chapter 8 on the hamlet and the hamlet cluster. Dirria development depends on the co-residence of daughters as well as sons within the parental hamlet, and the way this occurs is demonstrated in most detail in the chapter on the developmental cycle.

Due to the high frequency of close kin marriages the number of tertí represented in any particular localised dirria tend to be limited, with marriages between particular tertí replicated within and between succeeding generations. The usual pattern found is for there to be about six tertí represented, with the dominance of two or three. (Some indication of this can again be seen in chapter 8). The dirria members may also tend to be concentrated within one uginir. Due to the endogamous nature of the patrilineal descent group (figures are given in the following chapter), daughters tend to marry agnates, and thus many grandchildren through daughters as well as through sons share a common uginir identity. However this does not mean that the dirria can be seen as a sub-section of the uginir, for the children of co-resident daughters are essential to its development, irrespective of their patriclan membership. Its span and pattern of development is also very different from what one would expect of a minor lineage, and the dirria ancestors are not necessarily of any importance in terms of lineage segmentation or headship.

Having identified these three groups one is faced with the problem of classifying the kinship system. The descending kindred represented
by the dirria is a group generally characteristic of societies
without unilineal descent groups. However the tertii and uginir
are unquestionably such groups, and the society could perhaps be
classified as having a double descent system. Before concluding this
it is important to look at the role which these latter two groups play,
and to see to what extent they are corporate, especially in respect to
the ownership and transmission of property.

Although these three groups are considered to have always existed,
the changing political, economic and religious environment have altered
their roles. Over the last century the uginirs have gradually gained
importance, in some respects causing the function of the matriclans
to decline. Much of this change can be related to the adoption of
Islam by the Meidob. This began about one hundred years ago with the
Mahdiyya, although it must be assumed that the Meidob had some experience
of Islam before then, with neighbouring Arab Moslems and the court of
the Fur Sultanate. The most important change was a gradual shift
from matrilineal inheritance and succession to the patrilineal mode.

Before Islamic codes of inheritance were adopted, on a man's
death his property would be claimed by members of his tertii, his siblings
and his sister's sons. A man would provide some of the animals
necessary for his son's marriage, but other animals given to sons,
thus disinheriting the tertii, were considered ill fated and bound to die.

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7 For a full discussion of this problem see Goody, 1969: 91-112
Succession to office passed between members of the tertii in a similar way. The present system of inheritance theoretically follows Islamic doctrine with the majority of animals following the patriline, a son receiving two animals to every one given to a daughter. However the majority devolve from one generation to the next in the form of anticipatory inheritance, thus giving the individual more power over deciding the way his or her wealth is to be divided. It would appear that the majority of animals do in fact pass on to sons and daughters, although a few are given to siblings' children and grandchildren, especially where they have helped in herding the flock. Thus is is now the ugginir and not the tertii which is the property holding group, although animals are also given to non patrilineal kin within the dirria. One interesting aspect of this is the use of animal brands, for although the ugginir have their own characteristic eedae (T. mark), there is no evidence of the widespread use in the past of such marks by the tertii. Only the Kargeddi maliks used brands for their large herds of camels. One cannot however conclude from this that the un-al were any less corporate in respect to the ownership of property than the ugginir are today.

Apart from being the group within which animals were inherited, the tertii were also important in the judicial sphere. It was the matriclan that gave and received animals involved in the payment of compensation for death or injury. Payment for death of a woman was theoretically four hundred sheep or goats (or forty camels or cows), and that for a man was three hundred. Informants explained that womens' lives were considered of higher value since they produced children for the tertii.
The blood-money payment was called kot (T. land) from the procedure of bargaining over the exact amount of payments with token stones on the ground. It is a system analogous to the dia system which exists elsewhere in the Sudan. (Cunnison, 1972: 105-125, Holy, 1974; 132-142, Asad, 1970: 107-120). The matriclans were each represented by a head (T. terti-n-or) in each territorial section, and these representatives might be called in to discuss any matter of dispute between members of their respective matriclans. After the kot had been agreed upon, the heads of the offender's tertti were responsible for the collection of the animals, which would be handed over as a group to the representatives of the injured tertti. They would then be responsible for distributing this payment among the matriclan members.

The extent of the group of matriclan kin which made or received such payments had no fixed limits. It might extend to all members of the clan dispersed throughout Dar Meidob, and this was most likely if the offence concerned members of the different political groups or if the payment was substantial. On the other hand lesser payments between members of one section might involve only the localised group of matriclan members.

That such groups came into action in respect to payment of blood money was used as one explanation of the exogamous nature of the matriclan. Disputes often arose from affinal ties and in a situation where husband and wife belonged to the same tertti or terti-n-unal there could be no division between donors and recipients of dia. It is interesting to note also that a suitor would not be accepted until all kot payments owed by his close matriclan kin to his wife's tertti had been paid.
At different times in the past prolonged feuding between different un-al, revenge attacks, and incomplete dia payments prevented any marriages taking place between certain matri-groups.

Homicide is now a matter to be dealt with by the State and adjudication follows the Sudan Penal Code. This does not mean however that the practices of dia have been abandoned, for the courts may recommend dia payments in addition to imprisonment, with a corresponding reduction in the term of sentence recommended. Only in some cases of murder where the sentence is death is there no question of dia. Throughout the Sudan dia is treated by the courts as a tribal custom, whose payment may be recommended where considered appropriate to local practice. However the difference today in Dar Meidob is not only in the role that the state courts play, but in the constitution of the group which is involved in kot payments. Just as the ugginir group has assumed a greater role in the devolution of property, it is also now involved in compensation payments. Instead of kot being collected and divided in terms of the _terti_, half the sum assessed is now the responsibility of the ugginir and half remains the responsibility of the _terti_. The same pattern exists in division of the payment, and the assessment of dia and the decision on when it shall be paid no longer rests with the _terti-n-or_. The ugginir-or plays just an important a role.

It would seem therefore that at no stage have the Meidob had a truly double descent system in terms of there being two corporate, that is, property holdings groups in co-existence. In the past property was owned by and transmitted within the exogamous matri-clan, and the ugginir group had little, if any importance.
Now it is the ugginir which controls property movements and with which the herds, with their common brands, are identified. However the tertí still has residual rights in respect to dia payments and is very important in terms of marriage contracts. Secondly, the strength of the ugginir, at its lower levels, has been limited, due to the important role that daughters and their children play within the extended family group and the development of the dirria. It is this co-existence of a recognised patrilineal descent group and the descending kindred that is perhaps most unusual, and which is perhaps a system of compromise in the evolution of the system towards a solely patrilineal form.

The patriline is again emphasised through the system of naming, in that the Meidob have adopted the Arabic system whereby an individual takes his or her father's and grandfather's name after his or her own. Many individuals can reel off a string of names (A.nīshā) relating them to an earlier ancestor. However for the wider range of kin remembered laterally as well as lineally, links through women are as well remembered as links through men. The exact relationship with another individual is recalled through the shortest cognatic link in the following form:

'His father's mother's father and my mother's mother were from one mother and one father.'

Finally when we look at the kinship terminology (as outlined in Appendix 2) we see that terms of reference and address of a more precise nature than the terms dirria, tertí, pan-terti, un-al, and ugginir, do not emphasise the importance or otherwise of any of these
There are separate terms for mother, father, mother's brother, mother's sister, father's brother and father's sister, and apart from the first two these may be used for a wider range of mother's and father's male and female kin of the parental generation. However there are also precise compound terms to describe the exact nature of the relationship with each of these more distant relatives. There is however no difference between the terms of reference or address for the grandmother or grandfather on the mother's and father's side. The term for brother and sister does not differentiate between half and fully siblings, and is used as a term of address for a wider range of kin of the same generation, although again there is a compound word (for example, son of maternal uncle) for the term of reference. There is no general Meidob term for affinal relative, as one might expect when many affines are kin, although the Arabic term nasib is sometimes used. One's closest affines, that is, wife, husband, mother-in-law and father-in-law are never directly referred to but as mother or grandmother of my children, for example.

What we appear to have therefore is a kinship system that does not impose universal barriers, through kin terminologies or group classifications, on the actions or relations of individual actors, but rather, recognises the role of different groups in different social spheres. It appears to give most recognition to cognition at the lowest levels, that is within the range of descending kindred,
to be more strictly patrilineal at the higher levels of political organisation, and to link the three tribes together only through the recognition of matriclan membership. In the following chapters I hope to demonstrate by considering such questions as those of marital choice, residential patterns through the developmental cycle, the role of children, and the development of the hamlet groups, the forces which lead to the survival and co-existence of these groups. In this way I aim to link the three main themes with which I am concerned, kinship, residence, and marriage, and to show how the first of these, which at this point may appear complex, makes sense in terms of the social and economic organisation of Meidob society.
CHAPTER 3

THE CHOICE OF MARRIAGE PARTNER

In this chapter I shall be dealing with the question of the kinship range of marriage partners. This is interesting in several respects. Firstly, where there is a high rate of kin marriage the choice of spouse, perhaps more than any other social fact, demonstrates the importance of certain ties of kinship. In Dar Meidob most marriages are between people who recognise themselves as related or ugudie, and the kin group is ideally though not exclusively in-marrying. Thus consanguineal and affinal kin, with the exception of tertii relatives are one and the same. This brings us to the second point, which is that by looking at the degree of marriage within certain groupings of kin, it may be possible to understand the nature of their cohesiveness and continuity. The third point is that by comparing the Meidob figures of kin marriage with other Islamic and Middle Eastern societies, it may be possible to draw some conclusions as to how a difference in the formal kinship structure is reflected in different patterns of marriage. Finally, I shall also be looking into the question of the difference in range of spouses selected at first and subsequent marriages. By doing this I hope to demonstrate the relevant factors that come into play, especially the influence of close kin, and how effective these are at different stages in an individual's marital career.

The question arises as to whether one can refer to this kin marriage as endogamy, for the term has been freely applied to similar societies where marriages occur between members of the same descent group. However as in none of these do such marriages occur as the result of a prescriptive rule, but rather in terms of preferences, the term is not strictly applicable and I shall substitute the term in-marriage or kin marriage.
The pattern of marriage among the Meidob has certain resemblances with that common throughout the Middle East, the features which identify this group of societies being a stress on marriage within the larger agnatic group, and a preference for marriage with the father's brother's daughter. I shall start off therefore by briefly reviewing some of the statistics on marriage patterns in certain Middle Eastern and Sudanese societies, to compare with those obtained from a census among the Meidob. The figures in general show a considerable degree of similarity in frequency of marriages between cousins, as well as some correspondence in the pattern of marriage with those more distantly related. An important difference, however, is that the Meidob proscribe marriage with the matrilateral parallel cousin, and more generally with the matriclean. Exogamous descent groups are not present in other parts of the Middle East. However as figures for marriage with the mother's sister's daughter are generally low throughout the area this does not invalidate the comparison. The following few examples will serve to show the main features of the marriage pattern.

Among the Kababish we find that 82 per cent of all marriages are between agnates and 14.3 per cent are with the father's brother's daughter (Asad, 1970:251). For another Sudanese example, this time for a village suburb of Khartoum, Burri al-Lamaab, the figures are 11 per cent with the father's brother's daughter, and 79 per cent for marriage within the agnatically based village (Barclay, 1964:11'12). Peters (1951) reports for the Cyrenaica Bedouin figures of 72 per cent of marriage within the section, and 48 per cent for the classificatory father's brother's daughter, and Ayoub gives figures
for a Lebanese mountain village of 9.1 per cent with the father's brother's daughter, and 40.6 per cent within the lineage (Ayoub, 1959: 268). Barth gives a figure for father's brother's daughter marriage in Kurdistan as high as 42 per cent (N=21), with 81 per cent village endogamy (Barth, 1954:167). Finally, we find that among the Berti, the Meidob's nearest neighbours to the south, the figures (for first marriages) are 15.2 per cent with the real and 33.6 per cent with the classificatory father's brother's daughter (Holy, 1974:74-75).

The following Table 3.1 divides the marriages of my sample into categories recognised by the Meidob, and gives some indication of the levels of in-marriage within the different degrees of relatedness. However a direct comparison between the Meidob and the above mentioned societies is complicated by the fact that the figures for in-marriage refer to different types of group, such as a village, a tribal section and a lineage. Moreover the *ugginir* may well be of broader extent than the recognised agnatic group of the Kababish or the Lebanese, for example, whilst there is no group directly comparable with the Burri village or the Bedouin section among the Meidob. The small size of Meidob hamlets would make a figure of in-marriage within the residential group of no comparable value. It would seem therefore that the most reasonable group with which to make comparisons are the *ugginir* and the tribal section.

All the Meidob tribal sections were and still are in-marrying to a high degree, although as pointed out in the first chapter there are a few exceptions, with many marriages occurring between Elkedi and

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2 I do not have figures of in-marriage for a higher level of social organisation. However I came across very few examples of marriages which crossed tribal boundaries (i.e. between Urtti, Kargeddi and Torti) and fewer still with non Meidob.
### Table 3.1 Types of First and Secondary Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marriage Type</th>
<th>Total Number</th>
<th>% First Total</th>
<th>% Other Total</th>
<th>% First Total</th>
<th>% Other Total</th>
<th>% Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(from male ego)</td>
<td></td>
<td>for H'band</td>
<td>for H'band</td>
<td>for Wife</td>
<td>for Wife</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBD</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>17</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBD</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBD</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZD</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.1</td>
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<td>Total-range 1st cousin</td>
<td>85</td>
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<td>60</td>
<td>33.2</td>
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<td>21.0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZSD</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZDD</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FBD</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FMBSD</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FZSD</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBSD</td>
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</tr>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MBSD</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total-range 2nd cousin</td>
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<td>41.1</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>47.6</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>31.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total within Ugginir</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total within Section</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>81.3</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total sample sample</td>
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<td>100.0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All percentages are reduced to one decimal point.

3 The original sample was 366. However in 66 of these marriages it was not possible to confirm the exact nature of the relationship between the spouses. They were therefore omitted from the final sample.
Kindirra, and between Teukeddi and Ussuti, in the Aicho area of Dar Urrti. Due to the difficulty of identifying many members of these groups with one section or another I have treated each of these pairs as a single section. The resultant figures for marriages occurring between members of the same section is 81.3 per cent of all marriages. This figure is interesting in that it demonstrates the importance of location to marriage choice. Although those belonging to one section may live in relatively distant hamlets, the important point is that throughout the year they are generally moving within a limited area, using the same well centres, and are in relatively constant interaction. Two reasons were given by the Heidob for this intra-sectional concentration of marriage. The first was that marriage out of the section and subsequent removal of the bride was discouraged, in that the girl might move far from her natal family, and would only be able to make infrequent visits home. The second reason was that past hostilities between certain areas created a momentum still extant, whereby all preferred marriage partners would be resident within the section.

From the total marriage sample almost 29 per cent represent marriages within the ugginir, and the remaining 71 per cent between ugginir. What perhaps is more relevant is the degree of agnation within which these marriages occur. Just over half the number of marriages which take place within the patrilineal descent group occur between the children of brothers and almost 85 per cent are between agnates descended from a common ancestor three generations back. It would seem therefore that the most actively in-marrying group is not the ugginir as such, but a small section of it.
Father's brother's daughter marriages represent almost 15 per cent of all marriages and the figure rises to almost 18 per cent for first marriages for men (see Table 3.1). This figure is comparable with that calculated for other societies where marriage between the children of brothers is the ideal choice. Such marriages represent just over half of those which occur between the children of siblings, which again roughly corresponds to the other societies considered. (For example among the Berti marriages between the children of brothers represent 15.2 per cent, whereas those between the children of brother and sister represent 13.4 per cent of the total for first marriages (ibid)). Mother's brother's daughter marriage represents 10 per cent of all marriages, a figure which again increases, to 11 per cent, when we look at first marriages for husbands and wives. The third category, father's sister's daughter marriage represents almost 3 per cent of all marriages, with the percentage among first marriages for husbands only slightly higher than this. Marriages between the children of sisters is forbidden, although there are a few marriages between children of half sisters, that is of different mothers and thus different tertii.

The following Figures 3.1 and 3.2 show the kinship distance of marriage partners within the range of second cousin from male and female egos' point of view. They demonstrate that the equal frequency of marriages between the children of brothers to the children of brothers and sisters does not override the preponderance of spouses taken from the father's relative to the mother's side of the family. From the point of view of the male ego (Fig. 3.1) 84 spouses were taken from the father's side and 39 from the mother's. From the
Fig. 3.1. Number of Marriage Partners within the range of Second Cousin from Male Ego

37 Spouses

Members of Male Ego's terti

Members of Male Ego's pan-terti

84 Spouses
Fig. 3.1. Number of Marriage Partners within the range of Second Cousin from Male Ego
Fig. 3.2. Number of Marriage Partners Chosen within the range of Second Cousin from Female Ego

Members of Female Ego's tertí

Members of Female Ego's pan-terti

23 SPOUSES

100 SPOUSES
female ego (Fig. 3.2) the difference is a little greater, with 100 from the father's and only 23 from the mother's side of the family. This can partly be explained by the barrier of tertium membership, which as the diagram shows, bars marriage with many close members of the mother's family. This analysis, based on the diagram, however conceals the fact that often the mother and father are agnatically related, so that a direct matrilateral link is often at the same time a more distant patrilineal one.

As Table 3.1 shows the total percentage of marriages occurring within the range of second cousins is 41, and within the range of first cousin is over 28. This would seem to draw attention to the fact that although there is a high frequency of marriage within the ugginir, and especially within the local three generation agnatic family, the in-marriage group may be even better understood as the cognatic group descended from a common grand-father. That this is the correct interpretation is suggested by the fact that the relationship between spouses is often described in cognatic terms, even where an agnatic description would be available; for example where a cross cousin is a member of ego's ugginir as a result of cousin marriage in the parental generation.

This analysis poses the question of whether the creation of a bilateral descent group, namely the dirria, is unique to the Meidob, or whether such a kin group is the expected outcome of marriage within the patri-group. As Murphy and Kasden point out in relation to agnation and what they term endogamy;

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4 Ayoub (1959:226 footnote) comments: 'It may be questioned whether a society in which the preferred type of marriage is within the kin group can properly be termed anything but bilateral.'
'Patrilineality is an essential element of Arab ideology but it is a patrilineality that cannot segregate out relations of alliance through marriage. One of the problems... (is) how the Arab system maintains its formal patrilineality and blocks the realisation of bilateral tendency inherent in the structure. Here we must again return to the genealogies which are as wonderful for falsification and forgetfulness as they are for ordering the people of the present against a social grid cast deep back in time.' (Murphy and Kasden, 1967:10).

Perhaps what differentiates the Meidob kinship system from other Middle Eastern kinship systems is the fact that relations through women are not deliberately excluded. Among the Meidob it seems unlikely that patrilineal descent has been of major significance until about a hundred years ago, and present relations are not moulded into the grid of a patrilineally organised society. It is true that the names of patrilineal ancestors are preserved in an individual's nishā (A. series of patrilineal ancestors), and the equivalent female ones are more easily forgotten. However the most important ones are those formed by descent from a common grandparent or great-grandparent, and within this range the female links are remembered equally to the male ones. This becomes obvious when asking individuals to relate their genealogies, for it was the dirria group which was revealed. Secondly many of the marriages between more distant kin within the ugginir were seen in relation to
dirria membership rather than through the agnatic link. For example in Aicho there were repeated alliances between three dirria which I have named A, B and C. Within the two junior married generations twelve couples represent marriages between A and B, six between B and C and five between A and C. These three ancestors all belonged to one ugginir but many of the marriages recorded were between the children of daughters, some of whom who had married out of the ugginir. An important point in this example is that all the members of the dirria, irrespective of their ugginir membership, made their hamlets within a certain locality. The marriages were therefore mostly between closely residing kin. The exception was a group of brothers, the sons of a daughter of A, who had moved to a market village, but still recognised their dirria membership and sought wives from the area.

Such cases of repeated marriages between neighbouring dirria are not unusual. The process may be initiated by marriage between the children of distantly related men, who through time became dirria ancestors, and who as neighbouring important men in their lifetime sought alliance through marrying their children, despite the absence of a close kin link. As this alliance is repeated by marriages between their descendants, the two groups become bound together by affinal links. An alliance such as this may last over several generations, bringing the respective dirria groups into a closer relationship than one might expect considering the original link between the two ancestors. These groups may in time justify this pattern of inter-marriage by talking about their ancestors as cousins, thus reducing
the width of the original relationship. The ancestors of A, B and C were referred to as sister's sons, though this could not be proved, genealogically. From this one could conclude that in many cases marriage is a reflection of close kin links, and in others it creates the fiction of an originally close link. In both cases what is demonstrated is that being ugudie, that is related, and marrying are conceptualised as going hand in hand.

The question still remains however of explaining the predominance of certain types of marriage within this group, especially that between the children of brothers. Several theories have been put forward for the importance of father's brother's daughter marriage in Moslem societies. Two recurring explanations are that such marriages serve the function of keeping property within the family (Grangvist, 1935 and Patai, 1959) and the other has to do with the maintenance of political solidarity. Barth, for example, argues that among the Kurds,

'...father's brother's daughter marriage plays a prominant role in solidifying the minimal lineage as a corporate group in factional struggle. Marriages of this type thus serve to reinforce the political implications of the lineage system, not, as in most African systems, relative to the relations between whole lineages, but here, on the contrary, relative to the first potential lines of fission and segmentation within the minimal lineage itself'.

(Barth, 1954:171).
Neither of these two arguments seems particularly appropriate for an understanding of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage among the Meidob. In respect to keeping property within the family, it would seem that where brothers negotiate the marriages of their children they do so as heads of separate families, no longer sharing a common property. The majority of animals are devolved from the parental generation during the father's lifetime, and it is most unlikely that at the time when a man is negotiating his son's marriage his own father would still be alive. It is true that the more valuable livestock, the camels and sheep, may be kept as a joint herd, but this seems to have a stronger influence on immediate residence patterns than on long term marriage strategy. The second important point is that although in theory in Moslem societies women inherit the equivalent to half a brother's share, in practice this rarely happens. Meidob women are perhaps the exception in that they do own some livestock, but not all these animals come from the father, and it is unlikely that such limited wealth would be an important factor, encouraging marriage with the patrilateral parallel cousin.

Another type of property which might however be more relevant to the choice of marriage partner are the dry season wells, which are a scarce resource. The rights to use a well are inherited by men and women, but non residence in the well area may lead to that right being over-rulled by the practical exclusion of others by the residential group. Where marriage is within the well-sharing group neither spouse is in danger of losing such rights of usage. Where the wife marries outside the group she often forfeits the right of
use of the parental well, and movement away may mean that it is no longer within a convenient distance of her hamlet. The wife brought in from outside may also lose her share in her family well, and the animals she brings into the marriage put an increased burden on the husband's rope (share in the well). In this sense in-group marriage might be the preferred form, and especially that between patrilateral parallel cousins, as it is most likely to be within the well sharing group, although such a group may also represent the wider agnatic family. On the other hand it can be advantageous for a man to marry within the group sharing the local wells, but not the same well, especially where the bride's family has access to a good source of water, and his family is sharing a poorer well with many other kin. However such reasons for marriage choice were never overtly stated, and an argument such as this cannot be used to explain marriage between the children of sons, nor in-marriage in the wider sense. One can only conclude that it is a factor which may play an important role, and the same is perhaps true of inherited group rights to winter pools and local farmland, to which women and men claim an equal share.

The second theory, concerned with political solidarity, is again not very convincing in the Meidob context. Unlike the Kurdish lineage system, for example, the Meidob ugginirs are not subject to a constant pressure towards segmentation and fission, and competition for political power is not based on the support of close agnatic kin. Marrying one's daughter to a brother's son and thus gaining his allegiance, if this would be the expected outcome anyway, does not have the same value in political terms. Perhaps in a wider sense
father's brother's daughter marriage does help the consolidation of
the localised agnatic group. Although brothers may make different
hamlets, their children may join in marriage, and a certain unity
is maintained which acts as one factor in the long term stability of
the ugginir sub-section. Marrying children within the group may thus
be used to confirm and strengthen pre-existing alliances. However
what is obvious in the Meidob situation is that the emphasis must
be placed on the unity of the cognatic rather than just the agnatic
group. We should therefore perhaps turn to look at cross-cousin
marriage and see how similar or dissimilar the effects are in relation
to patrilateral parallel cousin marriage.

Murphy and Kasden (1959:22) argue that father's brother's
daughter marriage is an essential factor in the structuring of Arab
society, and that agnatic endogamy, 'deepens the gulf between
collateral branches by turning affinal bonds inwards'. They
demonstrate this by the use of Diagram B, (reproduced below in Figure
3.3) which, 'illustrates the convergence of father's and mother's
lines in an ideal system of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage'.
They point out that the effect of this is the social isolation of
agnatic kin groups. They argue that in contrast, cross-cousin
marriage is a means by which kin groups inter-relate and thus become
integrated into the larger society. They point out that the 'sporadic
occurrence' of cross-cousin marriage would however fail to break
down the social isolation of the agnatic group. This is demonstrated
in Diagram C (again reproduced below in Figure 3.3). They point out
that the cross-cousins are at the same time agnatically related,
and hypothesise that the relationship would be interpreted this way.
Even in a society where patrilineation is as dominant as the Bedouin example which they use I would dispute the relevance of this argument. Where father's brother's daughter marriage is stated to be the preferred form it rarely accounts for more than about 20 per cent of all marriages, and their diagram B is therefore too hypothetical to be of any practical use. Secondly if one looks at the wide spectrum of such societies it would seem that the percentage of cross-cousin marriage rarely falls much below the percentage given for patrilateral parallel cousin marriage. If the effects of the two types are as Murphy and Kasdan suggest, then one would expect the effect of cousin marriage on integration to be as great as that on isolation. I would argue that in fact cross-cousin marriage, and thus matri-links, may be equally active within such

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5 Barth's material from Kurdistan is perhaps the exception with 9 out of 21 marriages in one village occurring with the father's brother's daughter (Barth, 1954: 167).
Arab settlements. Emrys Peters (1965:140-146) demonstrates this clearly in the residential groupings of the Cyrenaica Bedouin. It seems that while only the agnatic group is recognised as the social and political group in the Bedouin camp, the composition of the local group is frequently of a markedly cognatic form. Cross-cousin marriage may have the effect of 'integration into the wider society', but I suggest that this is by no means the necessary result. The converging principle of cross-cousin marriage can be equally strong, and the effect is most evident where such marriages are repeated between generations, as Figure 3.4 shows.

Fig. 3.4  Cross-cousin Marriage

The Meidob case is perhaps an extreme example in that cognatic links do receive equal recognition to agnatic ones, but I doubt whether the overall effect of cousin marriage is very dissimilar to that found in other Arab Moslem societies. In Dar Meidob in-marriage (that is the combined effect of patrilateral parallel cousin
and cross-cousin marriage) results in the consolidation of the localised dirria group which has numerical preponderance in its locality. However there are objections to seeing this process of in-marriage as leading to 'isolation'. One is that it begs the question of how little out-marriage there must be for a group to be isolated rather than integrated. The other more fundamental one is the matter of the population structure of the group. Even a large dirria cannot sustain a level of more than about seventy per cent of its marriages within the group. Some out-marriage is inevitable and there need not be a high level of out-marriage to provide strategic marriage alliances with neighbouring and more distant groups.

I regard the over emphasis of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage as one aspect of a general over simplification of kinship systems which stress in-marriage. Another aspect which reduces the explanatory scope of these arguments is a failure to consider the implications of polygyny. Here again the Meidob may differ significantly from other Moslem societies in the Middle East in their rates of divorce and polygyny, but even so it is a factor which cannot be ignored in the wider context.

Where men and women are involved in two or more marriages in their marital careers one often finds that the trend of kin marriage varies considerably in respect to first and subsequent marriages. This can be seen in the case of the Meidob in Table 3.1. The percentage of marriage falling within the range of first cousin is 33 per cent for first marriages compared with 21 per cent for subsequent marriages by men. For women the figure is only fractionally lower, 30 per cent.
for first marriages compared with 19 per cent for subsequent ones. This difference is most marked in relation to patrilateral parallel cousin marriage. For men such marriages represent almost 18 per cent of all first marriages and only 10 per cent of subsequent ones. For women the figures are 16 per cent and 4 per cent respectively. Figures of marriage between the cognatic descendants of a common ancestor three generations back show a similar percentage decline between first and subsequent marriages. Secondary marriages for men and women are therefore shown to take place within a wider range of kin and non kin. In looking at explanations for patterns of marriage the reasons for this difference must be sought.

None of the above explanations for father's brother's daughter marriage give any reason for a decline in its incidence, and the spreading of the affinal net in respect to second or other subsequent marriages. The answer to this would seem to lie in the question of who instigates the marriage choice. This is particularly relevant in a polygynous situation where first marriages are instigated by parents and subsequent ones by the individual. However even where the vast majority of marriages are monogamous and divorce is rare this is a relevant factor. Patai (1955:371-390) for example talks about cousin right in relation to the brother's son claiming his right to his father's brother's daughter, from his father's brother, without mentioning the role played by his own father in this choice.
Murphy and Kasden (ibid) talk about brothers negotiating marriages between their children without mentioning the role that the children play in the process. In discussing his data from a Turkish village, Keyser (1974:293-308) concentrates on explaining marriage policy in relation to the spouse's father's objective. If we are talking about objectives of marrying within the group it must be clarified whose interests are concerned in the particular and in the general, the wider groups', the spouses', or their parents.

The effect of who chooses the spouse on the pattern of kin marriage can be seen very clearly in the marriage figures for the Berti for example. Holy (1974:71-79) reports a fall in the rate of kin marriage from 79.7 per cent in first marriages to 17.7 per cent in subsequent ones. Father's brother's daughter marriage shows a similar decline from 15.2 to 2.3 per cent. Holy explains this difference in terms of the father's role. In first marriages it is the father who pays the bridewealth and who therefore has the right to choose the bride for his son. The choice is based on factors of kinship, the ideal spouse being seen as his brother's daughter. The son's choice of spouse has more to do with personal preference, but this can only come into effect in secondary marriages, where he himself pays the bridewealth, and therefore controls the choice.

The young Meidob man like the Berti must respect his father's choice of spouse, although the different role that the father plays in relation to first and subsequent marriages is not so
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The young Meidob man like the Berti must respect his father's choice of spouse, although the different role that the father plays in relation to first and subsequent marriages is not so
absolute. Meidob say that a man is under his father's authority as long as his father is alive, and this authority extends to the choice of a son's spouse, be this a first one or not. In reality however the system is more flexible, for it also reflects the economic position of the son. At the time of a son's first marriage his father's influence is often a critical factor, although some young men are now developing an independent source of capital through labour migration. They are therefore able to personally finance their first marriage and perhaps have a greater say. For the majority, economic independence only comes after the first marriage when a man heads his own family, and at this stage he himself can initiate the request to a girl's parents, subject to his father's approval.

On the girl's side, the mother and father initiate and must approve her first match, although it is also discussed by a wider range of kin. Disapproval of close kin can prevent a marriage, or lead to its dissolution before the girl actually moves from her parents' hamlet. After the break up of this first marriage through death or divorce the girl may have a greater say over the choice of spouse, and personal considerations may play a greater role than those of kinship.

Parents may arrange between themselves the marriage of their young children to take place at some future date. The girl will be betrothed to her husband until she is old enough to have her own house, (that is after puberty). Such an agreement to marry their children is most often made between a brother and sister,
two brothers, or other close kin. This may result in the replication of a marriage between two families, a son and a daughter in one marrying a son and daughter in the other. These are not however exchange marriages as such. The carrying out of one marriage would not be conditional on the completion of the other, and full marriage payments for both would be given and received. Agreements of this nature seem from my data to have been more common in the past than at present, and some informants suggested that they are disapproved of now. However parental influence is not limited to child betrothal, and almost inevitably it is the parents who initiate the first marriage of a man to his wife. (This is generally the first marriage for the woman as well). Indeed at this stage in a man's life he is hardly in a position to object to a spouse chosen by his parents. This is especially true where they provide the herds or money for the marriage, but irrespective of who finances the wedding, few young men can oppose their parents' will and influence. If we are to look for causal explanations of these first marriage choices we must see them therefore in terms of the instigators' objective, that is the parents' and not the spouses'. For secondary marriages we must look to other factors, such as the personal considerations of the spouses.

A strong factor predisposing to close kin marriage seems to be the desire to marry into families one knows and wishes to emphasise the relationship with. The sibling group is the most obvious choice in this situation, and even where relations between siblings are strained, it may be difficult to refuse a request from
a brother for a daughter to marry his son. The pressure on siblings to agree can be seen in two ways. From one point of view marrying one's children can be seen as the ultimate expression of sibling solidarity. From the other, the bonds of kinship can be seen as creating certain obligations, one of which is the agreement to give one's daughter in marriage. Two other important factors are those of residence and resources. Marrying one's children to a close relative in many circumstances ensures that residence with the affinal kin never takes the child far from the parental home. (This is more often the concern of the girl's mother).

Secondly where the dirria group is politically strong and has access to good resources of water and pasture the advantages of in-marriage are increased. Never the less, it may be dangerous to overgeneralise and give too much prominence to factors which may be of different importance in different examples. Perhaps it is therefore more practicable to look at individual cases, and analyse the role of social, economic and political factors.

Yusif had three sons and five daughters by his first wife. His eldest son was married to his brother's daughter. This marriage was arranged between himself and his brother when the children were small, and it was duplicated by the marriage of his eldest daughter to the same brother's eldest son. The next brother was betrothed to his mother's brother's daughter, thus re-emphasising the alliance which his own marriage created. The marriage was looked on favourably by the girl's family, as relations between the two families were close, and the girl would
be moving into her father's sister's hamlet. The daughter was an only child and a few years later her parents moved into the same rains hamlet. The youngest son's marriage was arranged along similar lines, to another mother's brother's daughter. However this son did not like the chosen wife and the marriage quickly broke up about four years ago. If he suggests another spouse who is not so closely related it is likely that his father would accept the choice. He is the youngest and strong willed. The second and third eldest daughters were married to father's brother's sons, who were in fact brothers. They were married to men some fifteen years older than themselves, as second and third wives respectively. The interesting point about these two marriages is that the daughters never moved to their husbands' hamlet, and it is likely that the marriages were arranged with this in mind. A man who has large herds and needs a substantial workforce (such as Yusif) will attempt to keep as many of his elder daughters as possible within the family herding group, because they are most likely to produce child herders before any of their other siblings. This means that for a time the family herds will be supporting a larger growing family, but within a few years the reward will be an enlarged workforce. On the other hand where animals are few with a low milk output it is more advantageous for the daughters to move as soon as possible, where their labour can be spared. The remaining two daughters were married to their father's sister's sons; which had the disadvantage of taking them some thirty miles away to the market village.
However they married politically strong men in a relatively wealthy merchant family. Both husbands were willing to allow a daughter to be fostered back to their wife's parents to help with the lighter herding duties when they were old enough.

All these marriages were arranged in such a way that the cognatic ties which to Yusif and his wife were important were emphasised, and so that some of the daughters could remain within the parental settlement. They all made what might be considered 'good matches', but this is not surprising as Yusif was a much respected man, and his relatives were just as willing to create affinal ties with his family as he was with theirs.

This can be compared with the family of Adam Haroun. Despite past wealth Adam had seen his flocks diminished by drought. He had four young children and four daughters over the age of eighteen. He also had a son, aged twenty-four, whose education had taken him away from the pastoral way of life to a town job. The absence of this son meant he had particular need of his elder daughters' assistance in the herding work. However they had all started their own families, and his lack of wealth made it impossible for him to support them from the family herds.

Adam had only one elder half-brother with whom relations were strained. There was little contact between them and it seemed unlikely that there would be marriages between their children. Of his younger brothers none had sons old enough to marry. His eldest two daughters were therefore married to a sister's son and a half sister's son. The eldest had already moved and was living
about ten miles away. The second daughter had not yet moved. Her marriage was into a family far wealthier than her own, as her father's sister had married an important sheikh. Her husband had been to Libya increasing his personal wealth, some of which had found its way into Adam's family. Relations were particularly good between the spouse and his father-in-law, who was also his mother's brother. However he had no other wife, and as his first wife the daughter would soon move away. The two other sisters had married a mother's brother's son and a father's patrilateral parallel cousin's son. The first was moving that year and the other, her twin sister, as soon as she had delivered her child at home. Their mother was worried at the prospect of managing the younger children and the goats without the help of these daughters, especially as there was no adult son at home. Last year her husband also arranged a second marriage for himself, with his sister's help. This was to a young girl in the market village, from a relatively poor family, and in no way related to Adam Haroun.

What these two examples show us are marriages arranged by parents for their children in terms of the kin links important to the parents. The links emphasised are the cognatic ones and many of the chosen spouses are related to both parents. For example Yusif's second son's spouse was his wife's brother's daughter, as well as being related agnatically to Yusif himself. Adam and his wife were patrilateral parallel cousins, and the spouses they selected for their children were also from a common
pool of relatives. All these marriages were first ones, and it is probable that not many of the children discussed will be in a position to arrange second marriages for themselves during their parents' lifetime. These two examples are fairly typical, but it must be pointed out that not all first marriages are with kinsmen, as Table 3.1 demonstrates.

The different range of partners chosen in subsequent marriages in comparison with first ones, can be partly explained by the following factors. First of all it is likely that the individual rather than his parents initiates the marriage choice. To a certain degree therefore the choice will be determined by the son's own interests, rather than by his parents'. Any relationship re-emphasised by the choice of partner will be in respect to kin links important to him rather than to his mother and father. Secondly, the economic or political standing of the individual rather than his father will be taken into consideration. That is, he is judged as an appropriate spouse in terms of his own reputation and standing. Thirdly, as a man grows older the range of kin and non-kin with which he interacts extends.Fourthly, individual choice may allow for the luxury of a love match, (such as Adam's latest marriage), rather than the choice of partner suitable in terms of family background. The established head of a family has the power to select a spouse irrespective of the wishes of his own kin. Fifthly, the individual may use his own marriage to confirm or reflect a personal, as opposed to kin alliance. In this way secondary marriages of economically or politically powerful men
are sometimes made with the daughters or sisters of other such important men, irrespective of the factor of kinship.

Thus, although a non-relative would be considered an unsuitable partner by a boy's parents, and would be unobtainable for a young head of household who had not yet established his own political identity, for an older family head such a marriage would be possible and desirable. Indeed a young girl's family would be anxious to marry her to such a man, where the marriage created an alliance with an important family. Economic and political considerations may overcome the boundaries of non or distant kinship. Thus a family head may select his father's brother's son's daughter for his son's spouse, but at the same time arrange a marriage for himself outside the umguinir or local group.

Subsequent marriages for women show a similar movement away from the close cognatic group, although perhaps in slightly different circumstances. For a man, preparations for a second marriage often take place when his prestige is high in terms of status and wealth. For a woman the reverse may be true. She can only enter into another marriage after the loss of a first spouse due to death or divorce. Although there is no stigma as such attached to divorce, such a spouse has a lower status. There is also a danger that where the marriage has broken up due to her failure to produce children, another marriage will prove equally barren. For the woman who has been married before, choice of spouse is no longer determined by parental wishes, although they may have
considerable influence if she is still young and her first
marriage never developed to the stage of her moving away from
the parental hamlet. After divorce, remarriage has less value in
terms of creating or confirming alliances between kin. They have
more to do with personal considerations, and I found several
cases where the second marriage was with the lover who helped
break up the initial one. As with men, older women have a wider
range of kin and non kin contacts. The second marriage is of
less importance to her family, and requests for marriage may be
accepted by a wider range of kin. (The remarriages of widows
are considered later on in the chapter on marriage histories).

In all these marriages, both first and secondary, the wider
kin group of both partners, especially the tertii relatives, take
an interest and discuss the matter, but this is particularly
true in relation to first marriages. Indeed it is the duty of
parents to involve kin in the decision-making process, although
one cannot isolate the precise group which is involved in every
case. At one wedding I attended a close tertii relative of the
bride turned up at the celebrations, angry that his opinion of
the match had not been sought. At another rubu dinar the female
dirria kin of the bride gathered nearby whilst the new house was
being built, discussing the pros and cons of the match. In a third
element a girl had been betrothed to her father's brother's son
whilst young. However a more distant relative who also wished to
marry the girl had managed to turn her against the match, and was
trying to persuade her family to allow him to marry her. There
were angry scenes at the hamlet between the man in question who had
come to petition with some cognatic kin, and the close agnates of the bride (whose father was dead). In this final example it was clear that it was the bride's father's brothers, brothers and father's brother's sons who felt outraged at what had happened, and who were working together as a group to prevent this new alliance taking place.

The contrast between first and subsequent marriages is due mainly to the influence of such kin, but especially the parents, and the father in particular, over the choice of spouses. In the third example the girl was young, and not previously married, and the choice of husband was important to her kin group. The man who wished to marry her was in his late thirties, his father was dead, and he already had a wife and children. Although he brought kin to the girl's hamlet to support him, his actions were not determined by their wishes or those of the wider group. The kin group desire is for in-group marriage, but it can only bring pressure to bear on its junior members, and therefore it is these first marriages which most closely reflect this group interest.

In concluding this chapter there are three points which I would like to stress. Firstly, it would seem that by looking at the choice of marriage partners we discover a pattern that is statistically similar to other Arab Moslem societies. This is despite the fact that there is a basic difference in the type of kin groups and links which are recognised. Secondly, it would
appear that of the three groups recognised by the Meidob, the ugginir, terti and dirria, it is the last, that of the descending kindred, which is most effectively in-marrying, and which appears to play the most important role in terms of spouse selection. This dirria group is maintained by a high degree of patrilateral parallel and cross-cousin marriage. However as Meidob statistics for cousin marriage are not too dissimilar from the other societies studied I would suggest that they too must develop cognatic kin groups. The basic difference is that while such a group receives recognition in Dar Meidob, it is hidden behind the formal agnatic structure of other Arab societies. Thirdly, it would seem that to understand the connection between kinship and types of marriage one must look at the actual process of spouse selection, and to understand how it differs between first and secondary marriages. In Dar Meidob it is the first marriages which are most determined by the wishes of the kin group, and which perhaps tell us most about the meaning of kin group membership.
CHAPTER 4

MARRIAGE HISTORIES

In the last chapter I examined the pattern of marriage in relation to the choice of spouse. In this chapter I wish to look at the other aspects which affect the pattern of marriage histories. It will be seen that the choice of spouse may be of considerable importance in the subsequent development of a marriage, and the type of domestic arrangement which results. This however is only one of the factors, others being polygyny, age at marriage, dissolution of the union by death and divorce, and residence. I wish to analyse these factors from two viewpoints, firstly from their effect on the isolated marriage history, and secondly, from their effect on the total social structure. After looking at those factors I consider the basis of the husband-wife relationship and the way this is altered by the presence or absence of co-residence. Finally, in the third part I try to illuminate these factors by presenting a few complete marriage histories.

Firstly however I shall give a brief outline of the processes which lead up to the establishment of a marriage. Negotiations are opened up by the asking for a girl in marriage (T. archannan). In the case of the first marriage it is more likely that the parents rather than the boy himself will have selected the girl, and there
may have been a long standing agreement between the respective families. However, despite this and unofficial approaches the boy's mother may make to the girl's, a formal request must be made, and this is generally done on the boy's behalf by his father or elder brothers. If there is no outright refusal the boy will then pay several visits to the girl's hamlet, to persuade her kin and visit and talk with the girl. It is most important that the girl's parents approve the marriage, but it is also the concern of other relatives, especially the close tertii kin. There must also be general support from the boy's relatives, and the closer the girl is related the more forthcoming this is likely to be.

If there are no strong objections to the match the rub al dinar (A. literally quarter of a dinar, and now paid as quarter of a Sudanese pound) is paid to the bride's father. This is the first official confirmation of the match. The son together with four or five close male kin will come to the girl's hamlet to meet the girl's father and other close male kin. (Usually those living in close proximity). Acceptance of the money, which is only a symbolic amount, is tantamount to accepting the match, and a faqih is called in to formalise the contract. A karama is then made to be shared between the bride's and groom's kin.

After this ceremony, the girl's female kin and neighbours begin work on building the bride's house. However, there may be a period of as much as a year before the actual soubu (wedding celebrations)

---

1 A religious man, knowledgable in the Koran
2 For definition see Chapter 1. footnote 12.
and if the groom wishes in the meantime to sleep with the girl he must gain approval of her _terti_ to 'open the house' to him.

It is during this period that the girl and her female kin may make any opposition to the marriage felt. The marriage gifts will still have to be agreed upon, and until the couple are actually co-habiting the women are still in a very strong bargaining position. Once the husband is allowed into the house he brings his bride small gifts of tea and sugar, and equipment for the new home. It is during this period between the _rub al dinar_ and the _soubu_ that marriages are most vulnerable to breakdown.

The _soubu_ is a public occasion and time of much festivity. All marriage payments must be made at or by this time. _Tobs_ (lengths of cloth) are given to the bride and her close _terti_ kin, money and cloth to the father, and traditionally sheep and goats to her closest _matri-_ and _patri-_ kin. Four or five lactating animals, either cows or camels are given to, or set aside for the use of the bride, and the groom must provide tea, sugar and a camel to be slaughtered for the wedding feast. The bride may also be given dresses, shoes and _hijabs_ (amulets). Several hundred guests may attend, with the bride's and groom's kin making separate camps for the three days of feasting, dancing and camel racing. The celebrations culminate in the ritual entry of the groom into the bride's house.

After the _soubu_ the marriage is complete, it can only be terminated by divorce, and the husband has the right to set up a joint household with his bride, moving her away from her mother's hamlet.
This move (T. tichirran) may be delayed for up to four years in Dar Urrti, although it normally occurs within one year in Dar Karkeddi. Before moving his wife the husband visits her in her mother's hamlet, and in some cases this becomes the established pattern, with the husband and wife never forming a joint residential household. I classify this type of residence, characteristic of all marriages in the initial phase, as 'non-residential initial'. Where the visiting relationship becomes the established pattern I use the term 'non-residential established'. Other possible forms of residence are virilocal, uxorilocal, duolocal and neolocal. They are all dealt with in greater depth in the chapter on the developmental cycle.

**Plural Marriage and Polygyny**

The figures for male and female marital status and experience are set out in the following tables, (Tables 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, and 4.4), taken from my census material. Experience refers to the total number of marriages contracted and status to the number of wives still married at the time of the census, or in the case of women whether they are married or not. The age categories for male and female samples start at 25 and 15 respectively, due to this being the lowest age at marriage for men and women. The average age gap between spouses is 10 years and one can therefore expect there to be some correspondence between the same columns in both sets of tables. Both sets of figures, that is from the male and female centred data, refer to the same
Table 4.1 Male Marital Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55 - 64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 wives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 wife</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 wives</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 wives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total No

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men</th>
<th>57</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>48</th>
<th>46</th>
<th>26</th>
<th>222</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Wives

| 69  | 66  | 74  | 79  | 38  | 326 |

Mean No wives per man.

| 1.2 | 1.5 | 1.5 | 1.7 | 1.5 | 1.5 |

No of wives died

| 0   | 1   | 7   | 4   | 3   | 15  |

As % of total ever married

| 0.0 | 1.5%| 7.4%| 4.4%| 5.5%| 3.9%|

No. of wives divorced

| 4   | 1   | 13  | 8   | 14  | 40  |

As % of total ever married

<p>| 5.5%| 1.5%| 13.8%| 8.8%| 25.5%| 10.5%|</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55 - 64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 wife</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 wives</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 wives</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total No Men: 222
Total no Wives: 381
Mean no. wives per man: 1.7
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>15 - 24</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarried</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no Women</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total no husbands</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of husbands died</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As % of total ever married</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>42.1% 11.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of husbands divorced</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As % of total ever married</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>20.8%</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>25.4%</td>
<td>26.3% 21.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 4.4 Female Marital Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>15 - 24</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 husband</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>78.7%</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>67.4%</td>
<td>58.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 husbands</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.0%</td>
<td>14.7%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
<td>18.6%</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 husbands</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 husbands</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>83</th>
<th>75</th>
<th>94</th>
<th>43</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>331</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>women</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>88</th>
<th>96</th>
<th>138</th>
<th>63</th>
<th>57</th>
<th>442</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>husbands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean no.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1.1</th>
<th>1.3</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>1.5</th>
<th>1.6</th>
<th>1.3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>husbands per</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
geographical area in which I made my census. However a proportion of spouses fall outside this area, and the wives enumerated in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 only partly overlap with the female sample in Tables 4.3 and 4.4. Only complete marriage histories were included in the data giving a total of 222 for the male sample and 331 for the female sample. These marriage histories were taken from the total sample area, and thus in 14 per cent the spouses are resident in one of the two market villages, the remaining 86 per cent residing in small hamlets. Ideally I would like to have dealt with these two types of population separately, and perhaps drawn conclusions as to the changing trends of polygyny and age at marriage between the traditional and new sectors of the population. However the sample size of the village studied population was too small to allow any meaningful conclusions to be drawn.

By comparing Table 4.1 and 4.2 it can be seen that although the marriage experience of men increases with age, the actual number of wives still married levels off the older age categories. There is a gradual rise in the rate of polygyny among older men and husbands with four wives, the maximum permitted number, are only found in the age categories over 45. However the difference between the youngest and oldest categories is not that great that one could talk about older men having a monopoly of wives. Similarly for women (see Tables 4.3 and 4.4) total marriage experience increases with age, but the number of women actually married falls dramatically in the age category 55+, where women whose marriages have been terminated are not remarried. Half the women in this category are unmarried and many have lost husbands through death rather than divorce. Within the total sample the average number of marriages experienced per man
for all age groups is 1.7 and the average number of wives is 1.53.

Although actual figures of polygyny are useful for comparison with other societies, in collecting data it was often difficult to identify polygynous marriages separately from ones which represented serial monogamy. Marriage histories are complex affairs and are related by individual men and women in order of the different marriages entered. Whether two or more wives co-existed at the same time is not conceptualised as a factor of over-riding importance, but rather the fact of the marriage, whether the alliance lasts or not. A second problem of identification was that marriage does not necessarily entail co-residence, and thus polygyny rarely receives expression in the form of an expanded polygynous household (The question of co-residence is dealt with in greater detail further on).

Against the background of rates of polygyny and replacement of spouses the next point to consider is the ages at which first and subsequent marriages occur. The figures shown in Table 4.5 represent the average of the total ages, a figure which is only really meaningful for first marriages. For others, the deviation from this average is high. The figures do not refer to the entire census as it was not possible to find out exact ages of many informants at the time of their marriage apart from using crude estimates. As this was a particular problem with older men and women the sample is possibly weighted towards younger members of the community.

3 This corresponds to the figure which Dorjahn calculated for all of Sub-Saharan Africa, where he found that the mean number of wives per married man is 1.5 and the ratio of married women to married men is 3:2 (Dorjahn, 1959: 105).
Table 4.5 Average Age of Spouses at First and Subsequent Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Order</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd</th>
<th>4th</th>
<th>5th</th>
<th>6th</th>
<th>Total N.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>199</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Women</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By comparing the figures for men and women the most obvious difference is that of the considerably lower age at first and subsequent marriages for women. Such young women are highly valued as spouses, and although some women within the sample have remarried as late as 55 years of age, remarriage after the loss of a husband occurs most rapidly for younger women. For men the first marriage is relatively late, and the taking of subsequent wives is generally spaced out at intervals of several years. However there is no absolute rule, and the average figures are perhaps rather misleading in this context.
For example one man included in the census married two additional wives within the space of one year, whereas another took a second wife after thirty years of monogamy, when the first wife had ceased to produce children. The way in which individual marriage histories can deviate from the average is most clearly shown in the examples at the end of this chapter.

These facts and figures although interesting for comparative purposes tell us very little about the way in which polygyny functions. First of all it is important to identify what are the factors encouraging polygyny in Dar Meidob, and what are the social and economic effects. The distribution of polygynous societies has been related on the one hand to women's role in the economy, (Goody, 1969b, Boserup, 1970 and Clignet, 1970), and on the other to the production of children as heirs and additional labourers in the family workforce, (Goody, 1973 and 1976). Goody (1972:12) has pointed out that:

(In the Middle East and elsewhere in Asia) 'polygynous marriage is often an heir-producing device, though factors relating to sex and status are quite important. In Africa, south of the Sahara, it is much more central to the household economy and the structure of domestic groups'.

The Meidob do not fit exactly into either of these cultural areas in terms of the functions of polygyny, although they share aspects of both. Some of the factors which encourage polygyny can perhaps be found by looking at the role of the Meidob wife in terms of the economy and the production of children, for the two are inextricably bound together. Although the wife herself makes a considerable contribution to the domestic economy, it is only through
the addition of children that the viable domestic unit is created. As the family and its herds mature, young herders are essential to fulfil the family labour requirements. The alternative is dependence on the children of other kin, or in extreme cases the hiring of non kin, and in return the loss of some of the increase of animals outside the nuclear family. Thus the child is not valued so much as the 'heir', that is in terms of the role and property that he will inherit from his father, but rather in that he allows the father himself to take on the most sought after role, that of manager of the family enterprise. Indeed the owner-heir relationship is not one which gains full expression in Meidob society, in that the devolution of property from one generation to the next is something which occurs gradually from the time when representatives of that next generation are born.

The way in which the wife's role is most highly valued in terms of her child producing abilities is perhaps best demonstrated by the ambiguous attitude which society shows towards the union in which no children have yet been born. Generally at this stage of family development a joint household has not been formed, and the married couple are not fully accepted as a social unit by society. In other words a women's role in relation to her husband, as mother of his children, is fully acceptable (and indeed is often referred to by him by the teknonym 'mother of the eldest child'). However her role as the women he cohabits with is not so.

This is not to say that the childless woman is rejected, and indeed childlessness in itself does not inevitably lead to divorce. The husband in fact has little to gain by such action when he has the alternative of simply taking an additional wife. Such women as a result
of their freedom from child care, can divert their energies into other profitable activities, such as selling sugar, grain and other foodstuffs from their houses to the neighbouring community. In this case the woman herself receives the profit of her economic activities, whereas, where there are children it is the husband as much, if not more so than the wife, who benefits from the labour of his children.

Clearly a man whose first wife is childless has a strong interest in contracting another marriage in the hope that it will produce children as herders and heirs. However the question arises as to what is the value of taking a second wife when the first one has produced offspring and fulfils all the obligations which marriage involves. In such cases it would seem that plural marriage may also be motivated by the desire for prestige in the community and sexual gratification, though even here they would seem to be subsidiary to the main aim of increasing the number of herders.

This brings us to the question of residence (which is dealt with in detail further on in this chapter), for the usefulness of additional offspring depends to a great extent on the location of the matrifocal units of the polygynous family. Briefly it would seen that the husband who does not move a second wife to live in his hamlet will not benefit from the labour of her children or herself to the same extent as he would were she virilocally resident. However at the same time he will not be bound to show the same degree of economic support. Later on however the sons of such wives will help him with the more arduous work of animal care beyond the hamlet domain.
When considering the benefits of polygyny it is interesting to consider the different types of role played by wives of settled versus nomadic Meidob, and wives taken at widely spaced intervals in a man's marital career. Although the settled wife has the same function to fulfil in terms of the procreation of children, she and her offspring are less likely to be fully involved in the domestic economy, as animals are more likely to be herded away from the village, and the family income to be based on the husband's work, whether this be teaching, trading or whatever. It is such men who most frequently manage to bring their wives together into one compound. Here the attraction of polygyny is one of prestige to a greater degree than is true of his nomadic counterpart. The man is seen as head of a large co-resident family. He may have his own house central to the compound and around which are arranged the houses of his separate wives. With this enlarged co-resident female workforce he can increase his prestige by holding feasts for neighbours and kinsmen, and by housing guests. The wives freed from the labour of constant well visits and pastoral work can thus devote more time to caring for the children and food preparation. At the other end of the scale, the nomad seldom brings his wives together, and even if co-resident within a hamlet they do not work co-operatively in the one compound. He rarely holds a monopoly over their labour and benefits only come later on as the sons grow up.
Wives taken at separate stages in a man's marital career may also play different roles. The first wife in producing children often provides the opportunity for the husband to break away from the parental herding unit. A second wife taken within the next ten years or so may ensure at some future date a large workforce of sons to care for the family herds. However a wife taken in later years is not likely to fulfil the same functions, and it is unlikely that children born to such a marriage will grow to maturity during their father's lifetime. Such a young wife is often more appreciated for her own qualities, rather than in terms of her ability to produce children. She is a luxury taken by a man in his old age. This type of marriage may also seem attractive to the wife. Her husband is more likely to be well off and she will not have to face the labour demands imposed on the first wife, when she and her husband must work hard to create an independent and viable herding unit.

It would seem therefore that in understanding the importance of polygyny we must separate out the advantages to be gained firstly in having more than one wife, and secondly in having an increased number of children. An additional wife may be valued as a sexual partner, in respect to her child-bearing capacity, and in terms of her labour, which is equally important in the domestic domain and in respect to the care of herds. The last of these three is perhaps the most variable in terms of benefit to the husband, for he can only reap the rewards of a wife's labour where she lives in permanent co-residence with him.
As is shown further on co-residence of more than one wife is the exception rather than the rule. However the existence of other wives works in some respects as a safety system. If the senior spouse dies or is divorced the husband has the option of moving himself or his second wife so that she is drawn into co-residence with him.

The same perhaps applies to the existence of many children. As herders children are an essential element in the family workforce. The young offspring of non-residential established households may make little contribution, if any to the care of their father's herds (as opposed to their mother's and matrikin's). However they provide a potential pool of valuable labour which at some stage can be utilised by the father, and allow him in time to take over a managerial role in respect to the family herds. Heading a large polygynous family, provided he has the wealth to support all the offspring, also places a man in time in a strong political position.

The third aspect which I discussed in the last chapter is the effect of such secondary marriages in forming alliances and re-establishing pre-existing links with other families. The head of a large polygynous family also has the option of furthering such alliances through arranging the marriages of his own children.

As the figures in Table 4.1 demonstrate, within the sample population, for every two married men there are three married women. The question must therefore be answered as to where the surplus of women comes from, for demographic data (Hales 1978) confirms that there is no significant
difference in size between the male and female populations.

Henin (1969: 239) concludes from his comparative analysis of two nomadic and two settled populations in the Sudan, that the nomadic populations (Blue Nile Nomads and Baggara) have lower sex ratios than the settled ones, due to the migration of adult nomadic males to the more developed areas of the country. However it is unlikely that the pattern of temporary or permanent out migration from Dar Meidob would create a similar pattern of imbalance between males and females of marriageable age. Although Meidob men leave the Dar for work and trade, this in no way alters the de jure population, or the number of men seeking wives, and permanent out migration occurs for both men and women. Young men often marry before leaving the Dar for labour migration, leaving small children and young families. Others use their wealth from such visits to marry additional wives. Rather than such movements leaving a surplus of single girls, it leaves many wives, who see little of their husbands, but are not available to other men as second spouses.

It would seem therefore that the potential for polygyny must be accounted for by different patterns of marriage and remarriage for the two sexes. The average difference between ages at first and secondary marriages for men and women is about ten years. This is effect means that within the family daughters will be available for marriage to older men before their brothers are contemplating their own marriages. However this would not account for the surplus female population were it not for some population growth. Without such an increase the number of males aged 35 would equal the number of females aged 25 and any surplus would have to be accounted for elsewhere. However assuming a population growth of three per cent per annum, (the figure
calculated for Kutum East Census Area in the 1955/56 population Census),
then over any ten year period the number of children of both sexes
will increase by 34.4 per cent. This means that if we assume a ten
year age difference between the marriage age of men and women,
so that for example men born in 1950 are marrying women born in 1960,
the number of available wives will exceed the number of men seeking
first spouses by 34.4 per cent, and this additional percentage will be
available as second spouses.

A second factor is the actual percentage of time of his or her
marital career that a husband actually remains married. As Table 4.3
demonstrates, between the ages of 15 and 54 the over all percentage of
unmarried women remains below six per cent. This is due to the fact
that the young wife whose marriage is dissolved through death or divorce
is unlikely to remain single for long. On the other hand a man who
has been widowed or divorced may take considerable time to find a
replacement. This is not revealed in Table 4.1 because polygyny means
that such losses do not inevitably leave a man without a wife, but
rather, tend to reduce the period of time when two or more wives
co-exist. Another contrast between the sexes is that although a man
may remain unmarried until thirty, the younger age of his wives ensures
companionship in old age. For women the end of childhood is marked by
marriage, but the later years of life are often ones of widowhood.

The next factor to consider is the interrelationship between
status, that is an individual's standing within the community, and
polygyny. It seemed from my observations that there was a difference
between the polygynously married men with two wives, and those
with three or four. The latter were marked out by seniority in age
and political position, relative wealth, and were much respected by the
community in general. However it is difficult to separate status from
polygyny, to determine whether it is prestige that paves the way towards
multiple marriage, or the large growing family which brings prestige.
I think it would be more accurate to assume the former.

In contrast to mens' prestige which is community wide, womens'
is more important within the settlement, and is reflected in the role
they play in directing women's co-operative work within the hamlet,
and decision making within the family. A wife's status has therefore
as much to do with seniority within the hamlet as her husband's position.
However the co-resident wife of the head of a large polygynous family
may be treated with more respect as her home is used to entertain her
husband's relatives and guests. In theory all the wives in a polygynous
family should be treated as equals, and the terms iddi kori (T. large
or senior wife) and iddi sangachi (T. small or junior wife) refer more
to relative age and order of marriage than to status and seniority.
However in reality the iddi kori has greater prestige than the junior
ones, and this becomes particularly apparent where the two wives share
the same hamlet, although it also depends on the number of children born
to each wife. Where wives live separately such comparisons are
rarely made.
Many *iddi sangachi* live with their parents in 'non-residential' residence. They are therefore seen as members of their family of origin, rather than of their husband's family, and the status of the former is the one which may effect the way they are seen by others. Women who live thus are considered of no lower status in the eyes of the community than those who live in permanent co-residence with their husbands. This may however be due to the fact that they are often members of large families wealthy in animals, an inter-relationship which is considered further on.

It is perhaps appropriate at this point to say something about the effects of polygyny on the degree of co-operation between women (though this consideration only arises in relatively few cases where co-wives are resident in the same hamlet). There are two types of co-residence to consider. The first, as is found in the settlements of the nomadic section of the population, where the wives of one man live in a common hamlet, but their houses are in no way physically joined, and the second where their houses are built within the walls of a common compound, as is found in the market villages of the settled population. In the former type the physical and social constraints for the two wives to work in co-operation are less than in the latter. In that the co-residential group may be small interaction may be unavoidable, but not necessarily more intense than with other members of the hamlet group. However living within a compound implies greater co-operation within than without. In such settlements a greater proportion of a woman's time is spent in the preparation of food, and when the husband is entertaining several guests the wives will be expected to work together.
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Another effect of living within one compound is that on the relations that develop between half brothers and sisters of a common father. It is the compound walls which form the boundaries of early childhood, and there is freedom of movement between the domain of the different wives. As the children grow up the half brothers may often share a common hut in which they sleep and keep their possessions. Daughters remain within their mother's house. In the hamlet the settlement site is the playground for all the children, and sons and daughters sleep inside or outside of their respective mothers' houses.

In conclusion it would seem that where there is a compound, the boundaries of a man's polygynous family are far more clearly marked, and a higher degree of co-operation between wives and their respective children than those outside the compound is inevitable. In the hamlet it is the hamlet group itself which imposes social constraints, and within this group co-wives and their children may show a greater or lesser degree of co-operation with each other than with other women, depending on a wide range of factors. There is less the feeling of belonging to one family and no physical demarcation. In both cases the division of labour by sex leads to an inevitably closer relationship developing from co-operation between half-brothers than between half-sisters.
Polygyny and Residential Implications

Just as marriage does not always entail the setting up of a joint household for husband and wife, polygyny does not necessarily involve the bringing together of co-wives in the same hamlet. In Table 4.6 it can be seen that for the polygynous men of all age groups \( N = 91 \) just under half (43) had two or more wives living with them in the same hamlet, and just over half (48) had not brought their wives together. These figures refer to the present residential patterns of the total polygynous population. However co-residence of wives is not simply a feature which is either present or absent in a marriage, but occurs as a temporal feature. This is partly indicated by looking at the breakdown of figures according to age groups. Not surprisingly the figure is lowest for the youngest category of married men. It is likely that within this age group many of the marriages would not have passed the 'non-residential initial' phase. The incidence of co-residential polygynous families is highest (64.3. per cent) for men aged 55-64. However there is not a steady increase between these two age groups. This can partly be explained by the small size of the sample. However other factors such as losses of spouses through death or divorce, and increase due to widow marriages have a fluctuating influence. Not surprisingly the rate of co-residence falls somewhat in the category 65+ with an increased loss of wives due to death in old age. One only finds the co-residence of three of four wives in the oldest three age categories, but the co-residence of four wives is noticeably absent in the senior age category. Members of this group
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Table 4.6  Polygyny Residence Patterns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55-64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Men with wives living separately</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>35.7%</td>
<td>44.4%</td>
<td>52.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men with 2 co-resident wives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>31.8%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>39.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men with 3 co-resident wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>5.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men with 4 co-resident wives</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
<td>0.0%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of men with co-resident wives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>64.3%</td>
<td>55.5%</td>
<td>47.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of existing polygynous families</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>99.9%</td>
<td>100.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
are most likely to have had the maximum number of co-resident wives, but are also likely to have lost some through old age.

When we look at such co-residential polygynous units in relation to the total male based sample, (see Table 4.7), we see that the over all incidence is just below 20 per cent. In the age category 25-34 only 3½ per cent of married men have two wives co-resident, whereas almost 40 per cent of men in the age category 55-64 have established such co-residential polygynous families. The incidence of married women living in co-residential polygynous families is considerably higher, with an over all figure of over 29 per cent. This is due to the fact that marriages to polygynous men account for a disproportionately large number of wives. It is also likely that in terms of individual marriage histories a much larger percentage of women experience co-residence with another wife at some stage in their marital career. What Table 4.7 does not indicate are the ages of the co-resident wives (who are tabulated according to their husband's age). It is unlikely however that the incidence of residence with co-wives increases with age, as a young wife is equally likely to join an older co-wife.

As pointed out earlier the sample covers both men living in hamlets and those in the large villages, and it is interesting to note that the two examples of families where four wives lived together, and three out of the five examples where three wives lived together, came from the village based sample. Such large co-residential families seem to be the exception rather than the rule in the hamlets, although co-residence of two wives does seem to be a fairly common phenomenon in the nomadic section of the population.
Table 4.7  Number of Spouses Living Within a Co-residential Polygynous Household

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Category</th>
<th>25 - 34</th>
<th>35 - 44</th>
<th>45 - 54</th>
<th>55 - 64</th>
<th>65+</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of married men</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number with 2+ co-resident wives</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number with co-resident wives as % of total</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>39.1%</td>
<td>19.2%</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of married women</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number living with co-resident wives</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number with co-resident wives as % of total</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
<td>51.9%</td>
<td>31.6%</td>
<td>29.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There are two possible explanations for this. One is that the section of the market village based population studied represented members of families, who through involvement in trading for example, had accumulated capital and moved out of the traditional nomadic way of life. The very fact of their increased wealth meant that they were able to marry more wives, and more importantly had the financial means to support them independently from their families of origin. The second explanation has to do with the question of settlement size. Hamlets are usually very small and interaction between all co-resident women (including co-wives) is by necessity more intense than in large villages. The greater number of neighbours and friends in the market village whom a woman may visit will easily compensate for the restrictions of compound life. The common term of reference for co-wife is pergeddi. Tiddin-al for enemy, and it is an accepted fact that problems arise when such women are co-resident and constantly forced on each other's company. The smaller the size of settlement the more serious this problem tends to be. Co-wives are likely to be more willing to live together in the larger residential groupings. Taking this argument one stage further it would seem that the reduction in average hamlet size due to the effects of climatic deterioration has led to a reduced incidence of co-resident wives. This is not to say that in the past co-residence was the norm, but certainly the evidence from marriage histories of the last generation (that is the parents of the present senior generation)
do seem to indicate a higher incidence of co-residence, and this would seem to correlate with the larger hamlets they occupied.

A third factor is the actual proximity of the various wives' parental hamlets to that of the husband. Where the hamlets are neighbouring, a husband may be able to split his time between the house of his two wives, without actually moving both of them to one settlement. In this way he may gain the best of both worlds. Firstly he will not have to deal with the potential conflict caused by the co-residence of two wives in a small hamlet, and secondly he will be able to maintain a position of control over his wives, their children and their herds. Indeed this co-residence of wives within one locality or hamlet community in the nomadic sector of the population appears to be fairly common. In contrast many polygynous men who live in the villages often turn to distantly resident kin (who have not moved from the traditional family area) to find wives. Where such women do not move to the village to live virilocally they see their husbands infrequently, and visits mean long journeys for their spouses. The pressures towards co-residence are therefore greater.

4 It would be interesting to see whether there is a similar correlation between such co-residence and settlement size in other communities. For example Strathern (1972: 54-55) notes that among the Malpa, "Polygynists tend to live in settlements rather than homesteads... This means that men with more than one (co-residential) wife are living with them along with their fathers and/or brothers and the wives of these men. The result is that wives married polygynously usually reside in groups where there are women married to other men. Although it has not been stated to one in quite this way, we can see that this prevents co-wives from being forced exclusively on their own company".
J.R. Goody (1972:12) makes the comment of polygyny in general that,

'Although there are the occasional advantages in the dispersal of wives, polygynous marriage is difficult to sustain unless the women are living with or near their common husband'.

The validity of such an argument depends to a large extent on whether there is an acceptable role and location in the society in question for the married woman who is never permanently co-resident with her husband. In Meidob society these exist, and it might be argued that such separate residence of spouses is essential for the development of the localised expanded family and dirria group.

There are two possible strategies that a man can pursue where he is wealthy in livestock and wishes to increase his family workforce. Firstly, he can marry additional wives and move them into his hamlet, so that their children will in time work with his herds. Secondly, he can bring in wives for his sons, and arrange some of his daughters' marriages in such a way that they too remain within his hamlet. In this way by the time all his own children have grown up there will be grandchildren to do the lighter herding work. Both these strategies are followed to some extent, but the second alternative is more usual. The reason for this is that as long as both sons and daughters remain with their parents the family herds need not be divided.

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5 This is a different situation from the one where a wife may live apart for the initial period of the marriage, or after the years of childbearing for which E. Goody (1973: 155-170) uses the term 'terminal separation'.

and the production of children by elder daughters and sons may provide a gradual supply of young herders, daughters marrying and producing offspring generally before their brothers. Secondly, by the time the family is in need of young goatherds the head of family is often past the stage when he would consider taking another wife, and the greater part of the herds have been allocated to his sons and daughters anyway. Thirdly, the resultant three generational family is often the ideal form in terms of the division of labour. The development of such a localised extended family is the first stage in the development of the dirria, the group of descending kindred.

In order that such daughters will remain in the parental hamlet after marriage certain strategies must be pursued in relation to marriage policy. Firstly, such girls are never married as iddi kori (senior wives) as this would inevitably lead to their moving to their husband's hamlet. It is generally only junior wives who are found to live away from the husband, the senior one and her children joining him and helping him to create an independent and viable domestic unit. Secondly, it would seem that in such marriages where the wife remains with her parents, the spouses are often closely related. This may be because it is easier to make such arrangements with close kin, (the question of residence usually being decided upon before the soubu), and a husband may be more willing to leave a wife in her parental hamlet where she is living with relatives of his anyway.\(^6\)

\(^6\)As the relationship between 'non-residential' marriage and the kin link of spouses did not occur to me during fieldwork I did not pursue this question, and I only suggest this as a possible explanation.
This pattern of marriage and residence means that polygyny does not have the effect on the total social structure that one might expect, that is the development of polygynous expanded families based on the co-residence of matrifocal units. Instead, it allows for the development of extended families through continued residence of sons and daughters in the parental hamlet. Rather than finding the co-residence of co-wives one finds the co-residence of married brothers and sisters, and the parental and sibling bond is strengthened at the expense of the marital one. One also finds two distinct forms of marriage, one involving co-residence of spouses and the other involving separate residence. (This is dealt with in greater depth in the chapter on the developmental cycle).

The question of residence of co-wives however is not simply decided on this basis of the wishes of the bride's father. Where a junior wife's parents are not in desperate need of her labour and that of her children, the husband may be in the position to sum up the relative advantages and disadvantages of bringing his family together. It is only by moving all his wives to one hamlet that he has direct control over the family and herds. On the other hands he bears the full responsibility of supporting them without the help that comes from the wife's family in exchange for their daughter's and grandchildrens' labour. He must therefore have the necessary capital and income to support such a large family, whether this is in the form of herds or income from trade. It should also be noted that many polygynists fall in that section of the
population which shows the greatest awareness of the advantages of education, and therefore have a large family to support whilst forfeiting their children's labour for much of the year.

Against this the husband must consider the problems that co-residence of wives can create. He has to make a greater effort towards equality of treatment of wives and their respective children than where they live separately and his treatment of them is not so vulnerable to comparison. However if he decides to leave subsequent wives in different hamlets he is faced with another set of problems, that of running a dispersed family. In actually keeping up contact with these wives he will have to spend time in travel. This may be less of a disadvantage to the herder for whom surveying a pasture and discussing herding policy with other kin may take him in the direction of these wives' hamlets anyway, than to the merchant for example, for whom the efficient management of the shop involves long periods of residence in the settled village.

Termination of Marriage; Death and Divorce

From all the recorded marriages of the sample population, the incidence of those terminated by death and divorce appears to be relatively low, especially in the male based sample. Tables 4.1 and 4.3 show the average divorce rate to be 10.5 per cent and 21.0 per cent for the male and female based samples respectively.7

7This is equivalent to Barnes Ratio A (Barnes, 1967:61).
It became obvious in the latter stages of fieldwork however that the number of marriage breakdowns recorded was far from complete. As the marriage histories of an inner circle of informants gradually revealed a considerably higher incidence of divorce. With most informants there was a general reluctance to give a full account of divorces, and marriages of short duration were not readily remembered by those not directly involved.

By looking at Tables 4.1 and 4.3 it is difficult to identify a definite trend, such as a period of the individuals life cycle when marriage breakdown is most likely. This may be due to the fact that certain types of marriage breakdown occur which are not always recognised as or formalised by divorce. The first is the type which occurs in the initial stages of visiting before the joint household has been created and before the soubu. Breakdown at this stage of the marriage appeared to be fairly common during fieldwork, but few such cases were recorded by older informants. The second type occurs in the later stages of a marriage where the wife has never joined her husband's hamlet, and his visits to her house become gradually less frequent. This is generally towards the end of her child bearing, and there is little pressure from either partner to formalise the separation. The wife is past the stage when she would consider remarriage. 'Terminal separation' is however very unusual between co-resident spouses.
One factor of divorce which the census material does reveal is that of childlessness. For example, although the divorce rate (male based sample) is 10.5 per cent, within the sample of childless marriages (N = 87) the figure rises to 25.3 per cent. From this one cannot conclude that childlessness is always the direct cause of the divorce, because such marriages are of short duration and are therefore less likely to produce children anyway. They also represent marriages between the time of the soubu and tichirran where co-habitation is temporary. However in talking of their own marriage careers some men did give childlessness as a cause of divorce. The following is one such typical statement, 'I had three wives at that time but left (that is divorced) one because she bore me no children'.

Other stated causes of divorce were unreasonableness of the wife's behaviour, which one can perhaps interpret as the wife putting pressure on the husband to divorce her, and the refusal of a wife to move to a husband's hamlet and create a joint household with him.

The institution of polygyny means that there is less pressure for a dissatisfied husband to instigate a divorce when he can simply take an additional wife. The wife however cannot find an alternative spouse until divorced. Because it is less socially acceptable for her to instigate the divorce she may get around this by putting the husband in such a position that he has no alternative but to divorce her. I noted several cases where the wife, in an attempt to break up the marriage, made life very difficult for the husband, by refusing to carry out her normal duties or by wasting expensive commodities which he had bought for the household.
Such dissatisfaction often occurs where a husband who has been monogamous for the period of the marriage decides to take an additional wife, and the first wife feels bitterly about the money spent on the marriage, or the animals which the husband will remove from the household herds.

Divorce during the middle years of marriage is however less common than one might expect. This is mostly attributable to the presence of children over whom the father has legal rights. A woman is less likely to want a divorce where it means leaving her children behind, and the husband is faced with the problem of finding someone to care for them before separating them from their mother. It is a task which a second wife is unlikely to welcome, but such children are often an essential element in the family workforce.

In that many marriages are between close relatives, once the union has become established there are pressures from common kin towards reconciliation rather than divorce. For example the marriage of Ibrahim to his father's brother's daughter reached a crisis point where divorce seemed inevitable. After thirty years of monogamy the husband, complaining that his wife was no longer sympathetic towards him, took a second young wife. The senior wife felt very bitter about this, and complained especially about the amount of money to be spent on presents for the bride and her kin and the wedding celebrations. There were continuous arguments between her and her husband. Eventually a much respected elder common relative (A) heard about events, and together with (B) and (C) came to act as
an intermediary and discuss the problems. (See Figure 4.1 below for the relationship of A, B and C). He criticised the couple for allowing things to deteriorate to this stage without bringing their problems to him and after lengthy discussions he managed to reconcile them.

**Fig. 4.1** Kinship Diagram to show the relationship of intermediaries to the Spouses in a case of threatened divorce

![Kinship Diagram](image)

It is perhaps this in-marrying nature of the kin group which prevents a higher occurrence of divorce, the stability of marriage being related to the fact that one does not marry into one group out of another, to which one can return if the marriage fails. As in the case above, many spouses have kin in common, in whose interest it is to present the break-up of the established marriage.

Due to the tendency for men to marry women younger than themselves a larger percentage of wives than husbands see their marriages terminated by the death of a spouse. Although the elderly widow is a fairly common phenomena, the widower is not, and I have only one such example. In this case the man had only one wife who had died when he himself was too old to consider marrying again,
and he depended on his daughter to look after him. For other men
polygyny or the possibility of remarriage meant that the death
of a wife did not leave them without a spouse for long. Loss of a
spouse by either sex whilst young usually leads to remarriage within
a short space of time.

As Table 4.3 demonstrates the percentage of women whose husbands
have died increases with age, and there is a relatively large proportion
of widows in the age category 55+, where half the women are unmarried.
Of the 24 women recorded whose husbands had died, six had remarried
and three of these marriages were to a dead husband's brother. There
is no 'widow inheritance' as such, but because the husband's elder
brother automatically assumes the role of guardian over his dead
brother's children he is often the preferred spouse. However the
presence of children is not the sole determining factor, and in one
such marriage there were no children born to the first husband.
Where the children are themselves married, and no longer need
a guardian for their inheritance, the widow is freer to marry else-
where. Not surprisingly however the widows who remarried were
mostly younger women. Of those who did not remarry the majority
remained in their dead husband's hamlet. (This question of the
residence of widows is dealt with in greater detail in terms of
the developmental cycle).
The Husband-Wife Relationship

It is perhaps appropriate at this point to comment upon the nature of the conjugal relationship in Meidob society. The first point is that for men entering a marriage there is no sudden role change, and the conjugal bond develops very gradually. From the initial marriage contract until the tichirran (bride removal) a period of up to five years may elapse, and even after moving, the bride's ties with her family of origin remain strong. Similarly for the husband no sudden change occurs, and even once he has moved a wife to his hamlet he may still spend a considerable amount of time in his parents' house, to the extent of entertaining his guests there and feeding them from his mother's kitchen. He will as often turn to his mother and sisters to do jobs for him as his young wife. A high degree of co-operation between spouses only occurs at a later stage as their own family develops, and as ties with their respective families of origin loosens, and only where they are co-resident. Significant in this respect is that there are no Meidob terms for the unit of husband and wife such as married couple or parents.

The three main influences on the nature of the conjugal relationship would seem to be residence, that is whether the co-residential household is set up or not, whether the husband is polygynous, and whether the spouses are closely related. The first of these would seem to be the most critical. In 'non-residential' marriage the ties of a wife and her children to her family of origin are bound to remain far more important than the marital ones. The husband-wife bond remains more formal with each spouse operating to some extent within different
local networks of friends and relatives. The husband can visit
the wife when he likes, but she cannot or would not choose to visit
him if it entailed going to a co-wife's house. She remains highly
dependent on her family of origin, especially her father and brothers,
to carry out many of the tasks which would fall to a co-resident
husband. The non co-residential wife is in a sense the head of a
household in a way in which a co-resident wife never is, and this
is especially true as she grows older and is less under parental
control. Although her husband bears certain financial responsibilities
towards her and her children, she takes care of her own family finances
and family herds, deciding on herding and marketing policy.
In contrast to this, where spouses are co-resident, the wife participates
in but does not control such decisions. The relationship which
develops however is one of greater familiarity as they work along side
one another with the family livestock. In theory the husband and wife
still have separate control over their own animals. The wife can
market her own for personal cash, and the husband can use his to
marry again. In practise however the joint herds are treated as common
property. The type of working relationship which develops means
that even after the children are grown up the couple remain together
and late divorce is a rare phenomena. This can be contrasted to the
situation where spouses have always lived and worked apart and the husband
gradually stops visiting the wife once the children are grown up.
Where the woman is one of two or more wives there is also likely to be less interaction for her and her children with the husband, although this again depends on the pattern of residence. Where two wives are living together the husband is more likely to divide his time equally between them, so that both marriages are equally 'diluted', than where one is co-resident and the other living at a distance in her parents' hamlet. In the latter case the relationship with the senior wife may not be all that different from that of a monogamous marriage. For the junior wife, interaction with her parents and siblings remains more important, as long as she lives apart.

The third factor is the degree of relatedness of the spouses. Where cousins marry they already share a common network of close kin and a common interest in family affairs. For the wife, movement to her husband's hamlet, although involving separation from her mother, may mean residence with kin with whom she already has close links. This equal involvement of both in a group of kin tends to lead to greater co-operation and sympathy between husband and wife. Neither is the outsider, and involvement of each in their families of origin does not pull them apart.
Some Marriage Histories

At the time of the census Idries had just celebrated his fourth soubu. His first marriage, to a father's brother's daughter, a union which produced no children, ended in divorce. Although he could not say how long the marriage had lasted one can assume it was only for a few years as she has now borne three children by her second husband. Shortly after the divorce, his elder brother, married to his father's brother's daughter, died and Idries remarried the widow, although there were no children over whom he had responsibility to encourage such a union. They set up a joint household in the hamlet where her parents and siblings lived and where Idries had also been brought up. (His own father was now dead). This continued to be his main home, although perhaps due to the absence of children he and his wife never formed a close co-operative unit, the wife working mostly alongside her family and her husband concerning himself more with the care of distantly pastured camels. Working in Libya also keeps him away from home for lengthy periods of time, and the wife fostered one of her sister's young daughters as a companion. Whilst at home Idries showed little interest in this girl, and relations between him and his wife seemed very strained. His third marriage was to a non-relative who had a daughter, but the mother and child both died and she and Idries never set up a joint household together. (It was never clear whether the dead child was Idries' or not). The latest young wife was from a different geographical section, and having been visiting
her since the rub-al dinar some eighteen months back he was anxious about her not having conceived. His whole marital career was plagued by the absence of children.

In contrast to this is the marriage history of Adam who had two wives and a large number of children. He is now aged 45 and married the two wives, his mother's brother's daughter and his father's half brother's daughter in his early and late twenties respectively. The elder wife moved to live with him virilocally, and his widowed mother now plays an important role in helping him with the youngest of her eight children. The younger wife has remained in her parental hamlet. However because both wives live in relatively close proximity Adam has established a close working relationship with each, dividing his time equally between their two houses. Although that of the senior wife could perhaps be considered as his main home he has strong links with the other wife's hamlet, which is also that of his dead father's brother. With the increasing help of growing children in each of the hamlets, he and his respective wives have established two relatively independent family herds, and the elder half brothers come into relatively frequent contact with each other.

The third example is that of 'Ali who at the age of 65 has four wives, married over a period of 35 years, taking his first when he was 30 and his fourth just before he turned 60. Consequently each of his four families is at a different stage of development, and the type of relationship he has with each varies accordingly.
Because of his political role he spends much time travelling, but his main home is the house of the senior wife whom he moved into virilocal residence with him shortly after their marriage. All the children of this union are now grown up and married. The other three wives never joined his hamlet and still reside with their families of origin, although the parents of the second and fourth are no longer alive. Their respective hamlets are spaced at some considerable distance and although 'Ali's work involves him in travelling near their hamlets, they rarely receive a visit more than once a month. Visits made to the second wife are even less frequent. The only child born to this marriage is now married herself and 'Ali rarely visits her mother. This is perhaps an example of a marriage which has effectively ended, but where divorce is unnecessary to the wife, who because of her age would not consider remarriage, and to the husband unless he wishes to be free to marry another wife. The third wife is in her thirties and is very much the head of an independent household. She and her children co-operate with her siblings and parents over the care of the family herds. All her children have a close relationship with her parents, and at different times one or two have lived with the grandparents, who reside in the same hamlet. Her father however treats his grandsons as their own father would, with a degree of authority. The grandparents have over the last ten years marked out animals in the flocks to be inherited by these grandchildren.
Despite this close relationship the eldest son is now showing an increasing desire to be with his father, and whilst at school visits him at the house of the senior co-wife.

Although the husband in this example is a relatively wealthy man it is unlikely that he would have the finances now or in the past to support all his wives and their various offspring, independently from their maternal families, and he never attempted to bring them together. Instead he provides his junior wives with some animals, and money for basic commodities, and he supports his children through school. The staples of grain, meat and milk come mostly from the wife's own labour and from their family herds and farms. It is possible however that he may now attempt to move his youngest wife into co-residence with the *iddi kori*. Her own parents have died and with only one co-resident sister and four young children it is difficult for her to support an independent household. It is unlikely that there will be any serious rivalry between the two wives because of the large age gap.

One can compare the favourable situation of 'Ali with that of his nephew Yacoub, who at the age of 35 has not managed to set up an independent household, and who lives in an empty house alongside that of his elderly mother. He contracted his first marriage eight years ago to a close cousin, a union which was supported by both his and her kin. However the wife did not take to her husband, despite the generous gifts he brought her, and the *soubu* was never celebrated. She eventually married another man. Certain problems then presented themselves in terms of there being no available female kin whom he might marry, and because his father who might have helped him in this matter died.
Eventually he found a spouse more distantly related. However, as her parents live some distance away they hope to delay the *richirran* until the first child is born.

My first two marriage histories of women are examples drawn from either end of the age scale. Khadija although only 24 is now married for the second time. She lives in her mother's hamlet and as yet has no children. Her first marriage, arranged by her parents, was with a man whose *dirria* had many affinal links with her own. She had no real interest in the husband and the presence of a lover encouraged her to do her utmost to destroy the marriage so that he divorced her before the *soubu*. The lover was asked to repay the wronged husband for all that he had so far invested in the marriage. However he did not as is often the case marry the girl, either because he was too slow in paying the *rub-al-dinar*, or as seems more likely her parents were unwilling to see this marriage go through. In the meanwhile they received a proposal and accepted the *rub al-dinar* from the divorced husband's father's brother's son. This second marriage has not yet produced any children and no joint household has been established.

This can be contrasted to the marriage history of Zahara now aged sixty, whose present and only marriage, again to a member of a linked *dirria* has lasted 45 years. Zahara and her husband formed a joint household after their *soubu*, living at that time in one of the older large villages where her parents and his father were resident, her husband having been brought up in his mother's village a short distance away.
The marriage produced eight children, four of whom live with their own children in their parent's hamlet. The husband was also at one time married to a second wife who lived nearby but never formed a joint household with him, and although this marriage produced three daughters it ended in divorce. Zahara and her husband are typical of the long established co-resident couples in that they work together very much as a team. Their married children living near them still spend a considerable amount of time in the parental house, and several grandchildren have at different times in the past been fostered from nearby and distantly resident sons and daughters, their household now containing two such youngsters.

One of Zahara's co-resident daughters, Asha, now aged almost forty has like her mother experienced only one relatively long established marriage. However, unlike her mother she is a second wife, and her husband has set up a joint household neolocally with the senior co-wife in a hamlet some distance away. Either he has never attempted to move this wife, or it was agreed that she would stay in the parental hamlet, where her three sons help with the family herds. The husband makes very infrequent visits every three months or so to this wife, although he keeps up more regular contacts with his sons, who spend about half the year at school near his hamlet. In terms of day to day living the marriage seems to hold little importance for the wife, and it seems probable that if there were any question of remarriage for the wife, which is unlikely considering her age, there would be a divorce.
The final example is the marriage of Zeinib who is now aged sixty. Her first marriage was at the age of 13 as she recalls it, although it is unlikely that she moved into a separate house at this age. She was her husband's second wife, and some years younger than him. However the first wife died childless, and shortly afterwards, at about the age of 25 she moved into his hamlet with her younger daughter Amma. This was the only surviving child and Amma later married her father's brother's son, thus remaining in her mother's hamlet. Zeinib now has nine grandchildren and she and her daughter work together very much as a team, her son-in-law spending much of the year working abroad. Zeinib's first husband died when she was about 45, and she married again as a distant relative's second wife. She never moved to his hamlet and seemed embarrassed that I knew about this marriage. The second husband, now an old man, is an infrequent visitor to her house, and this marriage has not altered in any way the importance of the link to her first husband's family, in whose hamlet she now lives.

These marriage histories demonstrate the many different factors which may influence the course of an individual's adult life, but for women especially they would seem to confirm that the most important single factor is that of residence, that is, whether she joins her husband or not. It is this move, or its absence, which is the deciding factor in the strength of ties which develop with the husband and his kin in relation to those with the family of origin. The dividing line between the two types is not however always clear cut as cases of hamlet in-marriage demonstrates, or examples such as Adam's second marriage where separate residence did not prevent a close affinal relationship developing.
Secondly the relative importance of affinal versus cognatic links may alter over time as in the case of 'Ali's youngest wife.

These two marriage types, the co-residential and the non co-residential would seem to be a way of reconciling the fact that young men wish to have many wives and children but rarely have the financial means of supporting them, and older men who have the wealth to support a larger family are reluctant to loose all their daughters and their children. It is a pattern which makes sense in that to an extent it allows for the residence of wives and their children where there are animals to support them and where demands on their labour are greatest.

As well as being a critical factor in the individual life history, these alternative forms of marital residence have an important effect on the total social structure. They allow cognatic and affinal ties to work alongside one another without necessarily competing, so that women and children are not pulled between the husband's and the parental hamlet. The fact that the first marriage usually culminates in virilocal residence, allows for agnatic continuity and the perpetuation of the localised uuginir, at the expense of the bride leaving her family. At the same time cognatic groups can and do flourish, not through uxorilocal residence, (although there are some such examples), but by separate residence of husbands and their junior wives, and thus the presence of adult daughters as well as sons with their children in the parental hamlet. It is this which forms the potential nucleus of the dirria group. This whole process of residential change, and the occurrence rates of the different types of marital location, is taken up in Chapter 6, concerned with the developmental cycle.
CHAPTER 5

RESIDENCE AND THE CO-OPERATIVE UNIT

In the last three chapters I have concerned myself with the questions of kinship and marriage. I outlined the three main kinship categories, the terti, uginir and dirria, discussing the role they play, their development, and the way they affect and are affected by patterns of marriage. In Chapter 4 I turned my attention to the other factors affecting marriage, such as polygyny and residence patterns. In the following two chapters I shall be shifting the emphasis of my analysis from kinship to residence, from the conceptual kinship groupings to the practical ones of everyday life. In this chapter I consider the basic units of family, house and hamlet, and the way they come into play in terms of production and consumption. In Chapter 6 I explain their formation and development in terms of stages in a developmental cycle. By looking at these units both synchronically and diachronically I hope to explain how certain kin links receive physical expression, and to demonstrate how marriage and associated residential patterns become the key factors in the development of the co-operative group.

In this Chapter I support my arguments by census data based on 64 dry season hamlets from Aitcho and Kondeidi, and the marriage histories of those living in them at the time of the census. I omit the communities living in the market villages of Malha and Mareiga, thus dealing solely with the traditional sector of the community, (a total of 315 households).
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Residence - Family, House and Hamlet

The two basic categories of residence which the Meidob language incorporates are the house (T. ot) and the hamlet (T. karr). There is no word for the 'family' consisting of a man, wife (or wives) and children, and indeed this group does not necessarily correspond with any residential unit. However the inhabitants of a house, which may consist of such a family can be alluded to in greeting by using such a term as 'Adam kosi-redi;' literally, the people with Adam. Similarly, the wider family group can be alluded to as the children (T. iyal) or the descendents (T. dirria) of Adam, though the latter is only used when Adam is dead. There is however no term for the unit of husband and wife, or father and mother.

The Meidob house is built by the women with neighbours help for herself, her children and her husband when he is in the hamlet, and in a very real sense the house and woman identify as one. As with the Arabic beyt the Meidob word ot is used as a euphamism for wife. When asking a man if he has a wife the question is phrased, 'do you have a house? One asks a man how many houses rather than how many wives he has, and the most commonly used verb to marry means literally to enter a house. The word ot refers to the dome shaped construction based on a framework of timbers, built mostly of wood and sometimes thatched. Internally it is divided by grass screens into sleeping, cooking and storage compartments. The sleeping area is the largest and it contains a fire for tea making. It is used for the entertainment of guests in the daytime. The kitchen area is used solely by women, and the children
either sleep with the parents or in the storage area to the right of the door. Outside, the boundary of the house may be extended by building a low fence, though there is no marked out compound as such, and no way in which two or more houses are physically joined. Well worn paths indicate the houses between which there is most interaction.

The limited size and privacy of the house means that in effect it can only contain one married woman, and daughters with visiting husbands, whether they have children or not, must build separate homes. However a married son who is not permanently resident with his wife, may sleep at the entrance of his mother's or sister's house (should his mother be dead), when not out the herds. Where two co-wives are brought to the one settlement they build houses which are as separate as any others in the hamlet and there are no joint polygynous households contained within a single boundary fence.

All houses follow the same basic design, although size and internal completeness depend on the age of the woman and the number of children living with her. For example the house of a young married girl will be relatively small and undifferentiated inside, apart from the screened off sleeping area, as she will continue to share her mother's kitchen. As the marriage becomes established she will become more independent, with her own cooking and storage facilities. Having thus established her own equipped home she will not return to sharing her mother's, even if divorced and childless. She will maintain her own home even when old and feeble, and the nomadic way of life means that
throughout her lifetime she will repair and build many new houses. Men never build their own houses and are always attached to a women's, whether this be a mother's or a wife's.

When using the term household I am referring to the inhabitants of one house. The minimum household consists of one woman (or very infrequently a widower), more usually a woman and her children, and in just over 70 per cent of my census sample a husband is more or less permanently attached to the house. The other 30 per cent represents what I have called non-residential marriage, that is where the husband does not permanently reside with his wife, and the houses of widowers. The average household composition is 2.9 persons. Though many houses contain several children, the average is kept low due to the frequency of houses occupied by young wives with no children and no permanently resident husbands.

The Meidob word karr literally means place, but to ask a person his karr is to ask him to identify his hamlet. Three types of site are differentiated in Meidob; sagan-karr, the staying place, that is the rains hamlet, itchin-karr, the winter place, and pargan-karr, the dry season hamlet. Some Meidob stay in the same hamlet the whole year, but for the majority different locations are used during the different seasons, positioned to cope with climate and the availability of water and pasture. The rains allow for the longest stay before local resources are exhausted, and generally only one rains season hamlet is used. During the winter and dry season families may move between as many as seven sites in an attempt to find good pasture and adequate water. Where new migrational paths are followed new hamlets
must be constructed, but in most cases old sites are revisited and houses tidied up and re-used year after year.

The actual size of the hamlet group varies between seasons, families dispersing to find sufficient pasture in the dry season and gathering when conditions are more favourable in the rains. Over two thirds of the dry season hamlets contain between two and five houses (68.5 per cent), the average being 4.9 houses per site. The average population of these settlements is 14.2 persons including adults and children. I do not have precise figures for a large number of rains hamlets but some are three times as large. Each hamlet is spatially separate from the next, often twenty minutes walk away. Although the settlement has no man made boundaries and some houses may be as distant as fifty yards from their nearest neighbours, it is not difficult to identify the hamlet group within which there is most interaction, and which identified with the named site.

In a sense the most meaningful group falls half way between the concepts of house and hamlet, that being the extended family, or group of houses which originated from one house. The co-residential extended family group generally consists of the house of a mature couple and those of daughters and/or daughters-in-law. It may represent the entire hamlet but more often it is a section of it.

In an attempt to analyse the types of extended family groups which occurred most frequently, I classified the constituent households of each hamlet into ten types, according to the way in which they were related to another household of a different generation.
The household types are as follows:

1. A married couple (and children)
   A senior household within the hamlet in that neither
   spouse has a senior parental family within the hamlet.

2. Their married daughter (and children).
   The husband's main home is elsewhere, that is non-residential
   marriage.

3. Their married daughter and her husband (and children).

4. Their son and his wife.

5. Their married grand-daughter (and infants).
   The husband's main home is elsewhere, that is non-residential
   marriage.

6. His dependent mother.

7. Her dependent mother.

8. His dependent father.

9. Her dependent father.

10. His dependent sister (and children)
    Dependent in the sense that she is not co-resident
    with a husband.

Table 5.1 Household Types

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</table>

(N = 315)
As Table 5.1 and Figure 5.1 indicate, the most usual form of the generationally extended family is that of the mature couple (Type 1) and their married daughter (Type 2). Of less frequent occurrence is the co-residence of a married son and wife (Type 4) in the parental hamlet. This is especially interesting when seen in the light of stated ideals of co-residence, which point to sons and not daughters living in the same settlements as their parents. This can partly be explained in terms of the fact that many sons are in their thirties by the time their wife joins them, and they can thus set up an independent household in the parental hamlet. They are therefore less likely to still have two surviving parents in a separate house than their sisters,
who may build their own houses in their late teens. The co-
residence of a married man with his mother (Type 6) is more usual in that
she is likely to outlive the father. The fact that the co-resident
son and wife (Type 4) is more common than the co-resident
daughter and husband (Type 3) would seem to confirm that virilocally
residence is more common than uxorilocal, and that the majority
of co-resident daughters represent non-residential initial or
established marriages. (This pattern becomes clearer when residence
is looked at diachronically in terms of the developmental cycle).

Within the family group the sibling bond is of equal importance
to that of parent and child. Within the census sample over 60 per cent
of settlements had two or more siblings who lived in separate houses within
the one hamlet. The average number of houses thus related being 3.6.
Such expanded families did not only exist where one or both of their parents
were alive, although such cases did represent the majority (54 per cent)
The other 46 per cent of co-resident siblings had remained together,
despite the fact that there was no surviving parent to maintain the
unity of the family and the herds. Of those with co-resident parents,
41 per cent lived with a mother only, but only 9 percent with a single
father.

What all these figures tell us is that the bonds of the minimal
family unit are very strong, and as I pointed out in the section on the
developmental cycle even marriage does not automatically remove daughters
from that group. It is not only the ties of children to parents
that persist but those between siblings, and the reason for this is
perhaps explained when we look at the co-operative unit that works in terms
of production, consumption and the care of children.
Units of Production

When considering production one can classify four main activities. These are herding, farming, preparation of food and the collection of water.

The ideal herding unit is that of a man, his wife and children, so that only those who own or have rights of inheritance in the animals are involved in their day to day care. In this case the herding unit would be the household, although it might also include the households of married daughters who are still living in their parents' hamlet, and the households of married sons and their wives. The limits which family structures impose on the family labour force means that at certain periods of development the single household is not a viable herding unit. The main limitation is the lack of child herders, and whilst the children are still infants, or are married and starting their own families, their parents must turn to other houses for assistance. The most usual forms of co-operative herding groups are extended family ones where two or three households combine. These may be the houses of parents and their married sons or daughters, so that the grandchildren, that is the son's or daughter's house herd the goats of both houses. Alternatively a married daughter as yet without children may still herd the animals of the parental house. The other usual type of combination, and indeed these two types may work together, is that of siblings' houses, where brothers and sisters, whether the parents are still alive or not remain as one herding unit.
This type of co-operative group may be particularly necessary or advantageous due to the differential marriage ages of men and women. The delayed marriage of men means that they are often well into their thirties before they have children old enough to look after family herds, whereas their sisters may be in this position some ten years earlier. Thus a sister's house may often be able to help out on the production side, a situation which may be reversed when the sister's children are married and the brother still has young herders in his family.

Such co-operation within the extended family is the type that might be expected in terms of the developmental cycle. That is, the group which was originally one house continues to function as if it were still one house in terms of production. However the house and later the extended family is often the focus of tension and arguments, so that the family and its herds divide, and where co-operation is necessary it occurs between less closely related kin. This latter type of co-operation may also be due to the fact that the greater differentials in animal wealth may be found between more distantly related houses, so that whereas one family may be in need of herders the other may have many children but lack sufficient milk and meat to feed them all. Combination as a production team of symbiotic nature thus occurs.

The herds of camels and to a lesser extent sheep are in a sense less directly related to the house and more to the extended family. They are not divided up as readily as the less valuable goats, and the production group, in terms of those who undertake the herding of these animals, does not necessarily in any way correspond to the residential group. These animals do not 'belong' to the hamlet, nor do they return to
it nightly as do goats and cows. Indeed those kin who own animals in
a joint herd are often scattered between settlements. This means
that in effect family fission and herd fission do not necessarily
coincide. Indeed working together as one herding production team,
even though individual rights of ownership and usage are recognised
within this team, often holds together elements of a family, despite the
fact that their hamlets may have moved apart. Secondly, as with the
settlement based herds, more distantly related kin not of the original
house may bring their camels and sheep together to form economic herds,
especially where the number of animals owned by individual households are
small and do not justify the herding input necessary.

It should be noted that in terms of herding, the above outlined production
units do not necessarily, nor usually, coincide with the consumption
unit.

Although most Meidob are involved in seasonal farming activities
to a greater or lesser degree, cultivation is less central to the
economy than pastoralism. The harvests from Meidob farms are poor,
rarely meeting domestic demand and never giving a marketable surplus.
Partly because of this, but perhaps due more to the fact that neither
produce nor land are inheritable commodities of any value, farming as
opposed to herding is considered of less importance.

In comparison with those for herding, farming production
units are small and relatively temporary. The fact that any adult man
or woman can make a farm and work it by himself means that in reality
the formal production unit consists of one person only. However, informal
co-operation groups do occur whereby people from one hamlet or neigh-
bouring hamlets will travel together to the goz farms and work in turn
on each other's land, especially when it comes to the harder work of weeding. Such people may be close relatives or simply neighbours, although it often occurs that brothers and sisters who no longer live in one hamlet, cultivate neighbouring farms and help each other out with weeding and harvesting. (However this correspondence between the layout of farms and the genealogical links of their owners is not nearly so precise as in a agricultural community where land as a scarce resource is inherited within the family).

As has been pointed out there is not necessarily a correspondence between the hamlet and the farming production group, and indeed the latter may reflect the co-operative elements of one original house (as does camel herding) who have dispersed their hamlets. It may also interestingly represent future alliances which have not yet taken residential effect. For example a young bride who has not yet moved to viri-local residence may farm with her husband's siblings.

The co-operative herding unit at minimum consists of husband, wife and children, where the spouses are co-residential. That is, by definition the house is, or is part of, the production unit. In farming activities this is not necessarily so. A husband and wife may work together on a farm or on neighbouring farms, but more often they work independently, co-operating where necessary with other kin and often on different farm areas. (For example the Urrti group farm two traditional areas of northern goz at Ekendi and Sirgi, a day's travel away from each other. Within many households one spouse went to a farm at Ekendi and the other went to Sirgi. Several reasons account for this phenomena. The first is the unreliability of and local variation in rainfall, which often means that one area may be far more successful than the other.
By spreading its risks the household is more likely to ensure a minimum return. Secondly the rains which herald the need to go and plant, and mark out the subsequent dates for weeding expeditions, generally fall in one area before the other. This means that if spouses are farming in separate areas it is unlikely that they will have to leave the hamlet at the same time, thus one adult will always be around to look after the home based herds and the rest of the family. However if one farming area is really successful, as many members of the household as can be spared will go and help the planter to get all the weeding and harvesting done.

With herding it was demonstrated how the production unit was generally larger than the consumption unit. With farming the reverse is generally true.

Except on feast days marked out by the Islamic calendar and at family 'rites-de-passage' where food production is a hamlet matter, the unit of food production is generally the house. The second most common production unit is that of the houses of a woman and her married daughter, who during the initial period of married life continues to share her mother's kitchen. The activities which I include in food production are the husking, souring, drying and grinding of millet, making the two main meals of the day which consist of millet porridge and milk or sauce, cooking of meat, making tea, and the treatment of surplus milk to make oil. Every house (except those of newly married girls) has its own basic tools for these processes.
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Thus preparation by each house for the house is the normal pattern, and indeed most kitchens have hardly enough space for two women to work alongside one another. However on certain occasions greater co-operation does occur. For example at the onset of farming when large quantities of flour must be prepared to take from and leave in the settlement, all the hamlet women will often gather together to work in one house. They will bring their grinding stones together and work as a party, gossiping and singing the grinding songs which celebrate the deeds of living and dead men. On some occasions each is grinding her own millet, but often it is ground together, dividing the flour according to how much each woman brought. Secondly, when a woman is sick and there is no daughter to take over her role as food producer for the family, neighbours and/or close kin will help by grinding adequate flour for the day's needs. Generally however, production for the household occurs within the house, where the eyes of others cannot observe the quantity of stocks, and the most treasured items such as tea and sugar are tucked away in leather bags hung in the house rafters. The kitchen is also screened off within the house so that visitors cannot generally see in.

The last but no means least time consuming productive process, for women especially, is the collection of water. Pulling water for the main herds is the concern of the herding unit and I shall not consider it here. However a similar amount of energy is spent in bringing water back to the hamlet for domestic consumption, and for watering young goats and sheep too weak to travel with the adult herd. During the dry season
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water must be fetched every third day, and it is this activity which requires the greatest amount of co-operation between women. Because it is virtually impossible to keep any of the young animals away from the troughs when water is brought back to the settlement, it is only practicable for all the households to visit the well on the same day, and to water their respective young animals in the hamlet together.

The work on well day involves rounding up the donkeys and cows which generally roam free from supervision in herds, taking them to the wells if they have not already made their way there independently, drawing water and watering these animals. The water skins must then be filled and loaded them onto the donkeys which are then driven back to the hamlet. They are then unloaded in the settlement, and the young flocks are watered. Any remaining water is emptied into the house containers for domestic use. Most of this work requires co-operative effort, especially at the busy wells where there must one to pull the water, one to supervise the animals, and another to fill the skins. Two women need to co-operate to actually load up the donkeys. The only effective way of getting through the work and back to the settlement (often as much as three hours away) before it is too hot is to work as a team. This therefore is the one example in which the entire hamlet works as a productive unit, and those too old or house bound for other reasons must depend on the other women to bring them water.
When we look back at all these productive processes it can be seen that the effective co-operative unit is generally small, and that there is no unit which is effective in every sphere of production. Sometimes the group which works as a team is the household, sometimes the hamlet, and sometimes it falls between the two. Certain activities are the concern of one sex only and others involve the co-operation of husband and wife or brother and sister.

The most interesting point to note however is that where co-operation involves the entire hamlet, it is the women and not the men who are working together. Men will as often co-operate, for example in relation to herding camels and sheep, with kin from other hamlets. Rarely however do they work together as a co-residential group. This greater female co-operation would seem to go against what one would expect to find in an ideally agnatic settlement where the men originate from one house, but women are brought in as wives, and do not necessarily have the same kin links. Because of the importance of women's co-operation it would seem that the residential group must be based on the ability of the women to work well together, rather than for the men to be able to do so. (This may be particularly relevant to the fact that co-wives are rarely found living together). This is again emphasised when we look at the way women work together in respect to looking after the children of the hamlet.

Few houses are self sufficient to the degree that they can care for their offspring independently of others. It is to the women that the burden of responsibility usually falls in respect of child care,
and yet this section of the family is equally involved in the economy, in farming and herding, (especially where the husband lives elsewhere or is on migrant labour), as well as in the more female orientated tasks such as food preparation and water collection. It is true that women work more in the settlements than men, but much of their work also takes them away; work such as visiting wells, herding when there is no one else to do the job, looking after their cows, and visiting their farms which may keep them away for days at a time. On such occasions small babies can be carried on their mothers' backs and teenagers can look after themselves. Where there are adult daughters they can take care of their younger siblings, but there are many years before a family can reach this level of self reliance. Before then, young children must be left with another household. They are generally left with a woman of the older generation who is more or less home bound, for such women are less inclined to farm, and depend on their children to bring them water from the wells. An elderly women in the hamlet may therefore provide a second home for the younger children whether they are her grandchildren, through a son or daughter, or less directly related youngsters. In return other households will help to keep the house stocked with water and firewood. Co-operation also occurs between women who have dependent children, so that each may be freed from the hamlet to make visits to other kin and distant neighbours.

Such co-operation between women is in a sense essential to the survival of the hamlet, and those who are given the freedom to leave the settlement and their children, in turn help those who are not strong enough to make the frequent trips which the present economy necessitates.
Units of Consumption

In looking at the productive processes I came to the conclusion that the hamlet group came into effect most often in respect to the women, and that men's co-operative groups showed less correspondence to residential patterns. It is interesting to see whether the same applies in respect to the process of consumption.

In terms of the use of animal produce, meat and milk, the effective consumption unit is the household, whether it is involved or not as part of a larger productive unit with joint herds. Rights of disposal over animals and animal produce are never confused in a joint herd. However such produce is frequently passed on to other households, especially those less well off in animals, or those making a greater contribution to the work of herding than is warranted by the number of animals they own in the joint flock. Such distribution is especially common within the hamlet group, but it is always made at the discretion of the house in question, which has rights of usage over the animals.

The same applies to the distribution and consumption of water. Although the women at the wells work as a group, each has rights of disposal over certain water skins, with the contents of which she ensures that her family and the young animals of the household receive sufficient water. However any family within the hamlet running out of water before the next well visit may ask for some from a household which still has plenty. Such gifts of water within the hamlet,
unlike those between hamlets, need not be repaid in kind.

As with production, the food consumption unit is generally the household. Those who eat the meals prepared in the house are households members and any casual visitors. Young married daughters will also eat in the parental house, in which food is also prepared for the visiting husband who eats separately with the men. However the group which eats together most regularly is that of the mother and children. The husband may often be away from the hamlet looking after the herds, in which case he prepares his own food, or visiting and eating in the house of another wife.

Before the break up of the large villages the men ate together in the darra, a special enclosure or house for the men of the village. The women contributed dishes towards their communal meal only if their husband was spending that particular night in their house, that is, co-wives did not need to contribute food every day. Nowadays, especially when many visitors are present, a group of men may eat together on the periphery of the hamlet forming casual groups, but it is just as usual for each man to eat within his house with his wife and children.

Festive occasions which celebrate special days in the Islamic calendar, 'rites-de-passage' within the family, or the making of karama are the exceptions, and the people tend to eat as a group. If the feast is provided by one house then the men will congregate near the house to eat, and the women of the hamlet will eat together cramped up inside the house. Guests from neighbouring hamlets joining in such celebration will similarly divide into male and female eating groups, all the young children eating with the women.
In the event of a joint versus house feast, for example at one of the main Islamic festivals, food will be prepared within each household, and then the men and women will gather in different places, each bringing a contribution from his or her house. When animals are killed at such an event, the preparation of tea and meat for men's consumption will often be carried out by the men themselves, again on the outskirts of the hamlet.

The basic difference in cutting up an animal and cooking meat inside the house by women, and outside by men is one of privacy versus prestige. By preparing meat inside the house, some can be stored for future house consumption, although few households will consume and preserve a whole animal without giving contributions to others. However, contrary to this may be the desire for public notice that an animal is being killed in honour of an event or a guest. The meat prepared in the privacy of the house can be consumed by the house or the extended family. The animal killed and cooked in public will be consumed by the hamlet or wider group, and requires the slaughter of animals in relation to wealth in herds or desired status. It allows for redistribution of meat within the wider group.

The only time when women like men may come together out of the individual houses to prepare a joint meal is when they hold a karama independently from the men, usually in the early afternoon when there are rarely men around. At such occasions, each woman will contribute flour and sauce ingredients for the common pot. However,
once the food has been prepared it will be divided up and the women will eat in small family groups in individual houses.

It could perhaps be argued that the reason why women do not eat regularly together is due to the fact that their first responsibility is towards ensuring that their own children receive enough. The house contains the raw supplies and has rights to animal produce with which to feed its members. If women were combining their food as well as their labour, inequalities in consumption by different sized groups of children would render the task of fair consumption impossible.

However this does not fully explain why in the past, and why in certain circumstances today, men eat in groups whereas women do not, for houses with two or three adult men and teenagers can easily take more out of the communal bowl than they provide. The answer to this would seem to lie in the political and social importance of sharing a meal. The hamlet group of women are in constant interaction, and throughout the day have the opportunity to work along side one another and exchange news and gossip. However the evening meal may be the only time when the men come together to talk, and when visitors in exchange for hospitality and a meal will pass on all their news. This was perhaps more important in the past when the villages were larger and stronger political units, and policies concerning the village group could be worked out after the evening meals.

When dealing with consumption units it is important to understand what exactly hamlet membership involves, for there is a basic difference in the type of reciprocity that occurs within the hamlet from that which occurs between hamlets. Basically there is an obligation to help members of one's own hamlet which does not normally extend to members of
other residential groups, (although certain kin links outside the hamlet may produce similar obligations). This comes down to that fact that those within the hamlet who have not, can turn to those who have, and expect help. For example, a household without milk can expect gifts of milk from other houses in the hamlet, and one without tea or sugar when guests arrive can beg from neighbours. However the most frequent type of begging occurs in relation to water. One can compare this to the pattern of inter-settlement borrowing where loans must be directly repaid. For example, one can borrow a waterskin full of water, but when one next visits the well the same skin must be filled and returned as borrowed.

It is understandable therefore, especially in present day times when the drought has created shortage of water, milk and money for tea and sugar, that a household which constantly begs from others puts a great strain on intra-hamlet relations, and houses which do not find the obligations of co-residence to mutual advantage will go their ways at the next move, to form new settlement groups.

In a sense the old larger settlements were perhaps more adaptable to such give and take. The head house, often wealthy in animals could afford to subsidise others in terms of milk and other foodstuffs in return for herding contributions. Village hospitality could be at the expense of the head house, and political leadership could be bought with the resources to entertain and support a number of dependent households.
Production, Consumption and the Polygynous Family

As Chapter 4 demonstrated the incidence of co-residential polygynous families is low, and even where co-wives build their houses within the one hamlet, their households may be as independent from each other as any other household within the settlement. The degree of co-operation between co-wives is a reflection of their ability to get on well together, and the same applies to the relations between any women in the hamlet.

Within the co-residential polygynous family each house forms an independent unit of consumption, the husband eating within the house where he is spending that night. There is a greater chance that the wives' households will belong to the one productive herding unit. However as in any extended family sharing one hamlet, where animals are herded jointly, the individual houses of the polygynous group have certain animals to which they have exclusive milking and consumption rights. The male part of the polygynous family and the animals which generally fall under the care of men and teenage boys, such as camels and sheep, more usually form part of the one productive group. Most work involved in the care of these herds is outside of the settlement, and in a sense outside the domain of the separate houses of each wife. Such work does not increase the need or otherwise for direct co-operation within the hamlet. In terms of production therefore the most co-operative elements of the polygynous family will tend to be the teenage sons working together with their father on distant herding work. (The same applies where the co-wives are not co-resident).
On the other hand the women of the polygynous family and the young children which fall under their care work far more in isolation, and the home based herds of goats and cows which they tend are often cared for by their separate houses. The daughters of different mothers, unlike their brothers, do not have cause to work side by side. Their interests in the joint family herds of camels and sheep are less, and their identification with the house is stronger than that of their brothers.

Looking back at these units of production and consumption it is obvious that the most important ties are those of consanguineal kin, especially the ties of parents and children and of siblings to one another. Husbands and wives only work as a co-operative unit after several years of marriage, and only after the birth of children and the establishment of the co-residential household. Even at this stage co-operation between co-resident siblings may continue to dominate. Where the polygynous family is created it rarely functions as a joint productive and consumptive unit, although the sons of different mothers may in time join their fathers as members of the same herding team. In the following chapter I demonstrate how the development of residential patterns reflects and creates the foundations for this type of effective grouping.

The second point of interest raised in this chapter is the way in which men and women function as groups within and beyond the boundaries of the hamlet. All co-residential women work in co-operation with one another, but most frequently found working together are
usually matrilineal kin, that is, members of the same tertí-n unal. The tertí links which exist beyond the hamlet in the neighbouring community come into effect in the ritual sphere, but have little importance in terms of daily production and consumption.

For men, the most important co-operative unit may again be found within the hamlet, but important links often extend to agnatic (i.e. uğginir) kin resident in other hamlet groups. This is particularly true in respect to camel herding. The basis and functioning of this wider kinship group is demonstrated in Chapter 8 when the hamlet cluster is analysed in terms of the regional uğginir, tertí and dirria links.
CHAPTER 6

RESIDENCE AND THE DEVELOPMENTAL CYCLE

In this chapter I am concerned with the interlocking questions of family development and residence. The way that I treat the subject is to identify five stages of family development, and then to look at the types of household residence patterns in commonest association with each.

The four main stages which I originally identified were those of no children, expansion, fission and replacement. However, as in many cases the phase of expansion and fission overlapped, I introduced a fifth stage, namely that of expansion and fission. The stage of no children is self explanatory, and occurs at the beginning of all marriages. In certain cases however children are never born and the family never moves from this stage of development. The stage of expansion covers the period of procreation, when the family group is expanding through the birth of children. The limitations on this period are those of the wife's fertility. In some cases it was difficult to work out whether this stage had terminated or not, and I took as my deciding factor whether there were any children under the age of five. The stage of fission starts with the marriage of these children and continues until all are found spouses. In some families this phase starts whilst young children are still being added to the family workforce, hence the seemingly contradictory stage of expansion and fission,
which may produce a numerically stable family group. The stage of replacement covers the period from the time when all the children are married until the death of both parents, and is so called because the families of the children gradually replace the parental one. The main determining factor in the movement between stages is the age of the wife and therefore her children. Thus a polygynously married man may have different families at different stages of development.

Associated with each of these stages is a parallel cycle of herd development. Ideally family and herd expansion occur together. With family fission, rights over sections of the herd begin to receive expression in terms of separate household consumption units, and with the phase of replacement comes the physical division of the original family herd. Also associated are changing patterns of family and non family co-operation in order to maintain viability, and changing rights over labour. The most obvious changes are however to do with patterns of residence, and it is with these that I shall deal in greatest detail. Through looking at the different types of household residence I hope to give some indication as to the most usual patterns of co-residence, and thus co-operation associated with family development. I shall also attempt to outline the processes which lead to a change in residential pattern. To do this I consider the pushes

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1 In using the term 'viability' I shall follow the definition given by Stenning (1958: 92).

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and pulls which prevent or contribute to such changes, and point out how they are affected by social, economic and viability factors at each of the stages of the developmental cycle. In this way I hope to demonstrate that it is more profitable to consider these changes as a balance of divergent forces within and beyond the household, rather than the result of a simple decision making process, or as points in a natural evolutionary pathway.

Through discussing residence in the light of the family developmental cycle, I hope to demonstrate how the types of residential continuity and change associated with diachronic development set the foundations for the evolution of the ugginir and dirria and the maintenance of tert " links. Secondly I aim to show how marriage plays a key role in this developmental process, although the effects on family development are often delayed for several years after the soubu (wedding celebrations), and thirdly how polygyny allows for two alternative forms of developmental cycle.

Before going on to look at each of these stages in detail I shall define the terms of residence which I use. The households are classified according to their residential arrangements in the dry season, when hamlets are at a minimum size, and co-operation within the residential group is most intense. I have used six categories and they are as follows. The first two, prefixed by the term non-residential, describe the situation where the husband is not a permanent resident in his wife's hamlet. That is,
his domicile is elsewhere, and his relationship with this wife and her household is one of a visitor. Non-residential initial describes the situation after marriage when the husband visits his new bride in her hamlet. If this is his first marriage he will still be living in the house of his mother, that is he will not have set up an independent household elsewhere. This is recognised as a temporary arrangement to be terminated when the couple set up a joint household, usually in the husband's hamlet. If he is already married it is likely that his domicile will be the house of the senior wife. The period of non-residence after the marriage may again be seen as temporary, although it may become the permanent arrangement. Where this type of residence occurs within a few years of the marriage and the girl is still dependent on her mother's household to a certain extent I keep the term non-residential initial. Where it becomes the established pattern, that is the bride sets up an independent household in her mother's hamlet, I use the term non-residential established.

In uxorilocal residence the husband moves into the wife's hamlet, thus establishing a joint household in the same hamlet as the wife's kin. I use the term duolocal to describe the situation where both spouses are living in a hamlet in which prior to the marriage both were resident with their respective kin.²

²I consider this more appropriate than the term bilocal which Holy (1972: 62) uses in this context, but which Goodenough (1956:22) uses to describe a situation where a married couple have a choice between the wife's and husband's hamlet.
The remaining two types of residential arrangement involve the wife moving out of her parental hamlet. I use the term *viri-local* for residence in the hamlet in which prior to marriage the husband but not his wife was living. This is complicated by the fact that the husband could have been living in the hamlet of his mother and separate from his father, though most cases in this category are *patri-viri-local*. *Neolocal* describes the situation where the couple reside in a hamlet in which prior to marriage neither spouse was living. It is usually the result of a positive move away from co-residence with the kin of either spouse.

Certain problems present themselves when applying such fixed categories to fluid residential patterns, when the hamlet group is undergoing a continuous process of change. For example, as Goodenough warns, if we were to take as our criterion of residence the movement of the bride on marriage, simply by taking the present pattern of household residence and not considering past movements of other kin, we would no longer have a reliable basis for classifying individual residence (Goodenough, 1956: 28). This is especially true in respect to the Meidob hamlet, which changes not only from year to year but from season to season. Meidob residence is also complex in that the pattern which exists immediately after the wedding (*T.soubu*) or bride removal (*T.tichirran, A. rahula*), is not necessarily the final one, but may only represent one stage in the evolution of residential patterns.
In classifying households into residential types I did not simply depend on observing the present pattern of co-residence. I also looked at patterns of co-operation, the reasons behind certain types of hamlet groupings, and the history of movements of other members of the co-residential group. For example in one situation where both sets of parents of the couple were living in the hamlet, I discovered through looking at the history of co-resident families that the wife had originally moved to her husband's settlement. The wife and her husband had formed an interdependent herding group with his parents, which continued to function as such to the present day. The wife's parents had recently joined their daughter for several reasons, one being that the mother had been ill. By joining her daughter's hamlet one or other of her grandchildren was able to help her with her daily tasks. The wife's parents were also given milk from the joint herds as their own animals were in poor condition and producing little. I classified the residence of the young couple however as virilocal not duolocal, because they had made the positive decision to live in the hamlet of the husband's parents. It is only incidental that the wife's parents later moved in temporarily. They did not form a co-operative herding group with their daughter, and it was the tie with the husband's parents which continued to be the important one in terms of viability.

The second point to note about this classification is that when talking about certain types of residence I am referring to the hamlet group and not to a physical location. This is because many co-residential groups change the location of their hamlet from season to season and from one year to the next, as new migrational paths are followed, and new sources of pasture exploited. Thirdly, classifications such as duolocal,
uxorilocal and virilocal do not depend on the survival of the spouse's parents. A household in the replacement phase may still be termed virilocal if it remains with the original parental hamlet group or its descendants.

In the following section I deal with the five stages of the developmental cycle in turn, and consider the types of residential pattern found in conjunction with each, basing my discussion on the data set out in Table 6.1. I shall attempt to explain these figures in terms of the various ties which exist within and between households of the extended family, with the aid of case history material.

No children

The majority of households that fall into this category are those representing the initial period of marriage, and it is this which I shall deal with first. In considering the question of residence in the last chapter I pointed out how the house only provided privacy for one married couple, and thus the presence of a visiting husband necessitates the building of a separate home in the girl's mother's hamlet. During these first few years of marriage however, apart from the fact that she sleeps in a separate house, the new bride acts in every way as a member of the parental household, helping in the production of household food, eating her meals there, and working as a member of the household team. Her animals are in no way physically
Table 6.1 Residence and the Developmental Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Residence</th>
<th>No Children</th>
<th>Expansion</th>
<th>Expansion &amp; Fission</th>
<th>Fission</th>
<th>Replacement</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential Initial</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>56.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential Established</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uxorilocal</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duolocal</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virilocal</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>24.4</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>48.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolocal</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>100.1</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6.1 contd.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total of Non-Residential Initial &amp; Established</th>
<th>75.7</th>
<th>38.8</th>
<th>40.0</th>
<th>17.2</th>
<th>18.2</th>
<th>39.6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uxorilocal, &amp; Duolocal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of Duolocal &amp; Virilocal</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>44.2</td>
<td>56.3</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>46.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
separated from the main household herd. The strength of the link with the parental family is demonstrated by the fact that if the family group are making fairly short stays in hamlet sites between migrations, and the new husband is unlikely to be visiting, (for example, if he is making a trip to Libya), then often the girl will not bother to make a new home where there is not one already there, but will move back in with her mother. Similarly for the husband these first few years involve no radical change in terms of relations with his family of origin, if this is his first marriage, or with that of other wives, if they exist, He probably spends more time in their hamlet than with the new wife, and continues to function as a member of the same production and consumption group.

The couple therefore do not in any way form a new independent household or co-operative unit, and the husband only temporarily joins his wife's consumption group when he visits her hamlet. This type of arrangement receives expression in the residential pattern which I have termed non-residential initial, and which accounts for just over 56 per cent of all childless marriages (see Table 6.1). The total incidence of such separate residence within all stages of the developmental cycle is 17.2 per cent. This would seem to be rather high taking into account the fact that I apply this category only to marriages in the initial stages, that is, it represents a short phase of the family developmental cycle. This can be explained by the fact that many marriages break down during these first few years, and therefore only receive expression in this type of residential pattern.
The childless marriages which are represented by other types of residence (44 per cent), are those which have passed this initial phase and still failed to produce offspring. This imposes certain limitations in the creation of a viable herding unit. Without child herders of their own, co-operation with close kin is essential to form a suitable herding production group (unless the husband has children by another wife). Thus one finds a total absence of such households in neolocal residence. Almost 5 per cent fall in the category of non-residential established. Where a joint household is created residential choice depends on several factors. If the couple live in the same hamlet there is no question of a change in residence, at least until children are born. Where they come from different hamlets there is the choice to be made between the husband's parent's hamlet (virilocal) and the wife's parent's hamlet (uxorilocal). Due to the fact that the greater part of the household herds are likely to come from the husband's family, and the fact that the new household cannot manage the animals alone, the most likely preference will be for virilocal residence. Indeed this type represents over 24 per cent in comparison with 3.7 per cent for uxorilocal.

Although a wife without children may not make a large contribution to the workforce of the co-operative family group, she will be valued as an additional member of the female workforce. The desire to move such a wife into virilocal residence may also be based on the hope, that once the couple form a permanent co-operative household, the chances of the wife conceiving may be considerably increased. Cases of uxorilocal residence of such couples are more often due to necessity than choice.
For example the husband may have no suitable kin with which to form a viable herding unit, whereas his spouse may have siblings with children. (The full range of factors concerning the choice of residence past this non-residential initial phase are considered after outlining the stage of expansion).

Expansion

The stage of expansion marks the period of development of the family. Ideally it begins after the soubu and lasts for many years. In practice it is often of a more limited time span. With the addition of children comes the potential for the formation of a herding family group, which can maintain viability to a greater or lesser degree, independently from other related households. The structure of the expanding family however is rarely such that it can function entirely independently from other kin. The age of the children is probably the main limitation. Boys and girls are generally six or seven years old before they can take out the herds of goats, and in their teens before they can help with the camels and sheep. However once the family does have some working children there is generally more freedom of choice in terms of co-operation, allowing for greater flexibility in the hamlet group.

With the birth of children there is a greater likelihood of the formation of the joint household, and non-residential marriages account for 29.5 per cent of households in comparison with 61 per cent in the no children stage. This period also brings
about the separation of livestock from the original family herds, and the establishment of an independent household with its own animal pens. This process may not occur immediately on the birth of the first child, and hence 13.2 per cent of households in this stage still fall under the category of non-residential initial.

Where the wife remains in her parent's hamlet, but establishes an independent household in non-residential established (16.3 per cent) and uxorilocal (3.9 per cent) residence, this change takes the following form. The daughter sets up a completely independent household with all the necessary equipment for self sufficiency. She has her own storage containers for water, milk, and flour, grinding stones and other cooking utensils. She prepares family meals in her house and her household constitutes an independent consumption unit. Attached to the house are its animal pens, and although the household livestock may be herded together with those from related households, they are penned and milked separately.

In non-residential established marriages the herd will be made up from animals she has received from her family and some milking animals given by her husband at marriage. In uxorilocal marriage the husband will bring his herds with him and they will form joint herds with the wife's livestock.

Where the wife moves to the husband's hamlet, virilocal residence accounting for just over 48 per cent of expanding households,
the break from dependence on the mother's household and the establishment of an independent unit is more sudden. At the time of tichirran (bride removal) she should be provided with all the necessary equipment for storage and food production, and her husband's hamlet based animals will be separated off from his family herds. The bride may bring her own livestock with her, but in certain cases this is delayed until she feels secure in the new marriage and hamlet.

Despite the creation of a separate consumption unit, there is often a high degree of interdependence at this stage with co-resident kin, especially the parental household where it is still in existence, in terms of herding, marketing and the care of children. However some households do break away from the parental group, either because they have sufficient herders to form an independent viable unit, or because they chose to co-operate with less closely related kin on a temporary basis. Neolocal residence accounts for just over 13 per cent of households.

Within these two periods of development, the no children and the expansion stage, we find the full range of residential types. It is perhaps appropriate therefore at this point to discuss some of the factors which come into play in determining the residential locality of the newly independent household.
Virilocai Residence

As the commonest form of residence is virilocal I shall consider the factors relevant to such a choice first.

Perhaps the greatest desire to move the wife into his parent's settlement comes from the husband himself, and to understand the reasons for this it is helpful to look at the role of the visiting husband. Within his wife's hamlet the new husband is a visitor, but unlike any other visitor he must avoid his bride's mother, and this generally means avoiding her house. This is very often one of the senior houses in the hamlet, where the father-in-law might be expected to entertain his guests. However if the husband is to eat with his father-in-law it must be in another house or outside. His very position is ambiguous. He will pay frequent visits to the hamlet, but his business there does not generally extend beyond the purpose of visiting his wife. Because he and his wife do not form a socially active unit, and this is especially true if there are as yet no children, his position is extremely awkward. However his feelings of discomfort or otherwise will depend very much on the type of relationship he has with his father-in-law and his wife's siblings, and may be easier if they are close relatives of his.
Not only is he anxious to escape the situation where sleeping with his wife involves visiting her hamlet, but also he will be keen to move her away, so that at least he may set up an independent household. This will be especially true if his wife has borne him children, for he will want them to grow up alongside the animals which they will eventually herd.

Pressures to move the young wife may also come from the husband's kin. They will be particularly keen to have the girl move in if she has children and the hamlet is short of herders, especially if the family is wealthy in animals. It is doubtful whether the offspring of the marriage will as yet be old enough to make any contribution, but they provide future potential herders. Secondly, the husband's mother may be glad to have another member of the female workforce, especially if she has no daughters of her own, or her daughters have moved or are planning to move to their husband's hamlets.

Such a move may be equally attractive to the wife herself, especially if she considers the husband's settlement a better place to live in than her own. For example many girls are keen to move to the market villages, where living standards are considered to be much higher, and fetching water ceases to be a regular chore for women in better off households. Thus girls who have married into such sedentary families need little persuasion to make such a move. A man's first wife will also be encouraged to move by the fact that her house will become her husband's main home, and that through time she will gain prestige as the iddi kori or senior wife.
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If she stayed in her own parental hamlet her future might be far less promising, and by delaying her move she might lose her position to a younger wife.

There may also be additional disadvantages to her staying at home. For example if she is the eldest of a large family she may be given a lot of work and responsibility, although one rather cynical new father-in-law did make the comment that, once a daughter has a house of her own, she ceases to do any real work for her parents' household anyway. In the many cases I have observed this is far from true. However within that family group she and her young children will put an additional strain on the family food supplies. For as long as she lives with her parents, (unless this is the established form of residence), they must provide for her and her husband when he is visiting, although the latter will make some contribution. Once it is accepted that the girl will move at some future date, and generally before her children are old enough to make any herding contribution, her parents may not be too anxious to support her and her growing family. However a mother especially is always reluctant to lose a daughter.

The wife on the other hand may be as reluctant to move as her husband is keen to move her, and there are several factors which explain this. The most basic of these is that the wife is in an emotionally more secure position in her natal hamlet group, where her husband rather than herself is the outsider.
She is working with close kin who are bound to be more sympathetic towards her than her husband's family, and she is naturally reluctant to leave her mother and siblings. Secondly once a woman has broken from that group, taking her animals with her, there is in a sense no going back. She can no longer break up the marriage with the same ease. Because of the uncertainty which the woman may feel about the future, she may, as I have pointed out, delay the moving of her animals, leaving them with her parents until she feels happier about the future role that she is to play.

Her family may be equally reluctant to lose a female worker, especially if her mother is dead and there are siblings or an elderly father dependent on her. This is particularly pertinent where she is the only girl in the family, with brothers not old enough to marry, depending on her house for food and water. The case of the only child being a daughter also creates problems, although if she did decide not to move she would find herself in a difficult position without brothers to help with her animals. If she does move then her mother, or in some cases both parents, may wish to follow her at some future date. The important point is that as long as she is living within the parental hamlet, even though she has her own house, she is a useful worker whose loss will be felt.

The other side of the coin is that a daughter needs a mother to help her, especially in relation to giving birth and the care of young infants. Although a mother-in-law will happily nurse her son's children the girl may find herself moving to a situation
where there is no such woman. Because men marry later than women, husbands are less likely to have mothers alive, and more likely to have elderly parents who may be more of a burden than a help. Thus the young bride may find herself with ageing in-laws as well as her own children to look after.

Both the bride and her parents will be less keen for her to move if the husband's hamlet is a long way from the bride's, in that she will be unable to make frequent visits home. However it is likely that this problem will have been considered before the marriage was finally agreed upon.

To see how these different forces come into play it is useful to look at a particular case. Zahara was married to her father's brother's son when she was seventeen, and within three years of marriage had borne him two children. She was still however living in her parents' hamlet. As the hamlets of both sets of parents were fairly close it was easy for her husband to visit her there, and there was not the initial pressure to quickly move her. However the husband was the second of five sons. His mother had no daughters, and she lived for much of the year in a one house settlement. The eldest son had not moved his wife, and that marriage looked far from secure. The husband's mother was therefore more than anxious for this son to bring his wife to her hamlet. At the same time the young bride had no desire whatsoever to move. She had two small children to care for
and found this easiest in her mother's hamlet with the help of her mother and her five younger sisters. There was the second advantage that the mother's hamlet had many houses with a large female workforce which co-operated well. She had no desire to live in a two house hamlet with a dominant mother-in-law, where her work load would be increased, and she would have no other female company. The only advantage would be the increased number of animals over which she would have milking rights, and this could not be ignored, as the demand on the milk of her own family herds was already stretched. Eventually the husband threatened divorce. If she would not move to his hamlet then he would find another wife who would. The wife was then in an impossible situation. If she was divorced her family would not continue to support her and the children, which she would have eventually to give up to her husband anyway. Thus she conceded, and with much grumbling on both sides moved. Now she makes frequent visits home, bringing all the gossip from her husband's hamlet and complaining of her new hard life.

Non-Residential Established

The last section talks about the pushes and pulls which operate where the establishment of an independent household involves the young wife in leaving the parental settlement. However as pointed out earlier separation may also occur within the parental hamlet. Dependence of the daughter's household on the mother's
gradually declines, and residence in the maternal hamlet is no longer seen as temporary state, but the established residence pattern. It therefore remains to explain what the factors are which encourage or discourage the establishment of this type of residence.

The first point to note is that although 41 per cent of men in the sample over the age of 25 years were married polygynously only 47.3 per cent of these actually managed to bring two or more wives together within the one settlement. The wife moved to reside virilocally is usually the first one, subsequent spouses often being left in their parental hamlets in non-residential established residence, although this pattern may be slightly altered if a second wife produces children and the first wife fails in this respect.

Three parties are involved in such a residential choice, the wife, her kin, and the husband. As pointed out in Chapter 4 on marriage histories there are inherent difficulties in co-wives living together within the confines of a small settlement, where there is by necessity a high degree of interaction, and most women would try and avoid such a situation. Although some co-wives can apparently get along well together, the more usual relationship is one of envy, especially in relation to what is seen as the preferential treatment by the husband for one wife or her children. Where wives live together as neighbours a

3 See Table 4.1

4 See Table 4.6
tense situation may therefore be the result, and the second wife may often prefer to remain in the parental hamlet.

The second interested party is that of the girl's parents. Where they have the necessary livestock to support a co-residential daughter and her children, and can benefit from their labour, they may often plan the marriage with her future co-residence in mind. Knowing that the pressure on second wives to move into their husband's hamlet is much less than on first wives, they may purposefully arrange to marry their elder daughters as junior wives, and some agreement as to their future residence may be reached before acceptance of the rub al-dinar. (A second alternative is to attract a husband to join the hamlet and the question of uxorilocal residence is dealt with further on).

Where the husband already has a wife and children herders, and his need for young herders is less acute than that of his wife's parents, and the means of supporting them less adequate, the arrangement may be of mutual advantage. By leaving his wife in her parental settlement, he can assume that she and her children will continue to receive economic support from them for the part they play in that herding group. This means that for the moment the husband does not have to bear the full burden of supporting a second expanding family, and at the same time the wife's family can benefit from the labour of the young children.

\(^5\) For a fuller discussion of this see Chapter 4.
As these children grow up however the sons may move out of this productive unit into the father's, helping with the herds of sheep and camels, work which takes them out of the domain of the hamlet. In making such a decision a husband is therefore not fully sacrificing the labour of his children, and may look forward to working alongside his adolescent sons at some future date. In the meantime he must provide such non-residential wives with some milking animals, but his resources are not as stretched as they would be were such wives co-resident.

Duolocal Residence

Obviously where the two spouses come from the same hamlet there is not the usual question of where the separate household will be established. The pulls will be the same for both spouses to remain with the parents, although there may be a greater degree of co-operation with one of the parental households. This situation where the newly married couple are living within the hamlet of both spouses is uncommon today because of the smaller size of settlements. In the past the larger villages made a higher degree of settlement in-marriage possible.

Uxorilocal Residence

The last and most infrequent type of choice made in the formation of the separate household (see Table 6.1) is where the husband actually moves into his wife's hamlet. This may be the only course left open to him because there may be a
shortage of herders in his settlement and no kin he can turn to. (This may occur for example where he is an only child). Moving a wife into his hamlet, if she has no children or only infants, will not therefore alleviate the problem. The only way for the couple to form a viable herding unit may thus be for him to move into his wife's settlement, and depend on her kin for help with the herding work. Secondly he may have no female kin alive in whose house he may stay, for example if his mother has died and his sisters moved out. This means that he is in effect forced to create a joint household with his wife, but the conditions of his hamlet are hardly attractive to a young woman with infant children.

Another possibility may be that he wishes to move out of his parental hamlet because of family conflict, but does not yet have the resources of livestock or labour to set up an independent hamlet group. Moving into his wife's hamlet, especially where the couple are close agnates, may seem attractive in such circumstances. Such a move may also be in response to a request made by the wife's family, who may be fairly wealthy in livestock but in desperate need of male labour 6. Where there are no sons in such a family they may be willing to be extra generous to a son-in-law to encourage him to join them. Such was the case of Ibrahim who had been visiting his wife for four years in her parental hamlet, where she had borne him two children. Ibrahim's family had lost many of its animals during the drought and the greater part of his family had travelled south to find alternative work and make farms. His wife was an only child and her family had good herds but were short of labour. They

6This situation is not however as clear cut as Holy describes for the Berti. (Holy, 1972:69).
"...rich families owning large herds and lacking the necessary man-power to take care of them usually insist on uxorilocal residence for their daughters."
were therefore trying to encourage Ibrahim to join them.

In such a position however a man like Ibrahim may feel a certain reluctance to join his wife, for he would not have the same authority over his wife and children as he would were he to move her away, and both he and his wife would have to follow the wishes of her father. Secondly, due to the rule of avoidance between mother and son-in-law there would be a certain barrier between the households in the one hamlet, although this would probably be eased over time. Thirdly, a son-in-law who moves into such a situation benefits from his in-laws herds and owes some loyalty to this family group. When the time comes that his own family and herds could form an independent viable unit, he may find it difficult to break away, finally moving his wife into neolocal residence.

The ideal is for a man to bring his wife and children to his father's hamlet from where the majority of their livestock originates, and uxorilocal residence, except where it coincides with living with close agnates, is generally avoided. This does not mean however that all brides of such men will eventually leave their parents. The presence of non-residential marriage means that where there are pressures from the girl's family for her to remain in their hamlet, rather than moving in with her, the husband can set up a joint household with another wife.

Expansion and Fission

Households which fall within this stage of development, that is they have children under five years but some old enough to be married, are in the minority. In that their children cover a wide
range of ages, they are in a more favourable position than many other households, in terms of being self sufficient in labour. Although it is likely that they have one or more daughters married, and perhaps moved away or looking after young children, elder sons are less likely to have been lost to the family work-force. Even if married, it is unlikely at this stage in the parental family developmental cycle, that a son would have set up a separate household and herd with his young spouse. Coinciding with the large family group one is therefore most likely to find large herds as yet undivided through the separation of sons, (married daughters having received a smaller portion), and the family is more likely to form an independent herding group than at the stage of expansion, with an increased percentage of neoliclal residence (28 per cent).

There are no longer any marriages at the non-residential initial stage (see Table 6.1), and a lower percentage of households in the category non-residential established, (12 per cent in contrast to 16.3 per cent at the stage of expansion). This latter figure can be explained by the fact that a lower percentage of non-residential marriages would appear to produce a large number of offspring, born over a wide range of years. It is difficult to explain the increased incidence of uxorilocal and duo-local residence, and the slight fall in virilocal residence is not significant. One point which should be noted however is that by this stage of development few spouses have both parents still surviving, and virilocal or uxorilocal residence is more likely to be with the mother or siblings of the husband or wife than with the father. Co-operation in respect to herding is therefore
most likely between the households of siblings in relation to separate herds, and thus between separate consumption and production units. The one exception to this may be in respect to camel herding, such livestock being more likely to be kept as a joint herd.

Fission

The stage of fission marks the break up of the family and family herds, as sons and daughters marry and receive a portion of the family livestock, with which to support their own developing families. However, even after the marriage of all the children, the original household maintains a share of the livestock and an independent position. Fission of the original household does not necessarily infer physical separation, and one is perhaps most likely to find the household heading a co-resident extended family. As the household labour force and livestock are decreased one is likely to find greater co-operation with other households, most frequently those of children, and grandchildren are looked to to help with lighter herding work. During this stage there is no fundamental change in the pattern of residence, and most changes within the hamlet are due to the movement of married offspring and their husbands and wives. Whilst both spouses are still alive it is unlikely that all the married children, and the sons especially, will move away.
Replacement

Few married couples survive to see the marriage of all their children, and many households in the replacement stage are represented by widows, and much less frequently by widowers. After the death of the husband comes the final division of the household herds. With their share of the inheritance and what remains of their own original livestock, most widows are left with sufficient animals to remain self sufficient in milk and meat. However they must turn to other households to find suitable young herdsmen, and often a young grandchild moves into the house to help with the lighter tasks. It is perhaps not insignificant that such women have a higher percentage of cows than other households, as cattle are more frequently allowed to graze freely without herding supervision than other types of livestock.

The main problem which elderly widowers have to face is finding a household on which they can depend for food and water, for although men will find water for themselves and cook whilst out with the herds, it would be considered shameful for them to undertake such tasks within the settlement.

Table 6.1 shows the incidence of residence types for all households in this final stage of the developmental cycle, with a high degree of virilocal and neolocal residence at 36.4 and 45.4 per cent respectively. What is perhaps more interesting is to look in detail at the residential fate of the single surviving spouse in this replacement phase. Table 6.2 considers the fate of widows (N=32), and shows that 4 (12.5 per cent) have actually moved to join a daughter, who is living either virilocally or neolocally. The other 28 (87.5 per cent of the sample) have not made such a move.
### Table 6.2. The Residence of Widows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kin with whom the Widow now lives</th>
<th>Son</th>
<th>Daughter</th>
<th>Son and Daughter</th>
<th>Other Kin</th>
<th>Total No.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moved to join a married child</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remained virilocally resident</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>53.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remained neolocally resident</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remained duolocally resident</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remained non-residential established or uxorilocally resident</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4(with siblings)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The majority, 17 or 53 per cent, have remained in virilocal residence, that is within the dead husband's hamlet. Of the 17 living virilocally, 9 are co-resident with a married son, one case of which was a fostered son, and only 4 with a daughter. This would seem to indicate that in old age women who remain virilocally resident are most likely to be found living with sons, whereas those who move after their husband's death are more likely to join daughters. The figures for neolocally and duolocally resident widows do not prove the case one way or the other, though it is interesting to note that in one of the cases of the former the woman had sons of two different marriages living with her.

These figures seem fairly consistent with the norm of virilocal marriage whereby most daughters eventually move out but sons bring their wives in. It might be further suspected that those women who remain in non-residential established marriage are most likely to be found with married daughters, as sons join agnates at or before marriage. However the figures are not sufficient to prove or disprove this.

From the census sample the incidence of widowers is much lower, with only one unmarried widower to 33 widows. This particular man was old and frail and living beside his daughter's house. The absence of such elderly single men is not surprising, for due to the marital age difference it is likely that husbands will die before their wives. This is especially so as men may take young wives until about the age of sixty. Secondly, if a man does find himself without a wife he may remarry, a course of action which is not open to a woman past the menopause, (although, through fostering she may bring
children into her house to help her). Thus the period of widowerhood is likely to be a temporary one. Although I have only two cases of elderly men marrying after the death of a wife, because of the uncertainty of the temporal sequence of death and remarriage, it is possible that there are many more cases.

From Tables 6.1 and to a lesser extent Table 6.2 we can draw several conclusions as to the relationship between residence and the developmental cycle. Firstly by looking at the final column of Table 6.1 it is obvious that the commonest type of residence is virilocal at just over 40 per cent, followed by neolocal at 20.2 per cent. However if we add together the first four residential types which indicate that the daughter remains in her parent's hamlet the resultant figure of 39.6 per cent is not insignificant. This can be compared with the 46.2 per cent of households remaining in the husband's parental family group, (the total of households in duolocal and virilocal residence). Without considering the temporal dimension it would seem therefore that the maintenance of the link of daughters to their parents, as expressed in the form of co-residence, is as important as that of sons to their parents, and especially fathers.

However looked at diachronically we find a slightly different trend emerging. By summing the first four types of residence we can see that the incidence of wife's residence in her parental hamlet decreases throughout the developmental cycle. In the no children stage it is as high as 75.7 per cent, but declines to 17.2 per cent in the stage of fission and 18.2 per cent in the replacement stage. Thus it would seem that a woman's ties with her family of origin,
although strongly maintained during the initial phase of marriage, are soon weakened by separate residence and involvement in a different production and consumption group. This means that by the stage of widowhood she remains mostly in virilocal residence, and there is no institution of 'widow return' to uxorilocal kin. In contrast to this is the residential link of the husband to his family of origin. We can gain some insight into this by summing the incidence of duolocal and virilocal residence, although this does not give us a very exact figure, as many non-residential husbands especially in the no children stage are also living virilocally. However it would seem that the residential ties of husbands to their families of origin remain relatively constant, if anything declining over time at the expense of neolocal residence.

More light can perhaps be shed on this by looking at the types of co-resident family groups which develop. In Chapter 4 I demonstrated how the most usual form of generationally extended family is that of the mature couple and their married daughter, followed by the co-residence of a son and wife. The same pattern generally follows where three generations of married individuals are co-resident in a hamlet. In my census sample there are twelve such hamlet groups. Six are matrilineally linked, that is they are the houses of mother, daughter and daughter's daughter, compared with four of mother, son and son's daughter, and one each of father, son and son's son, father, son and son's daughter, and mother and father, son and son's daughter.
These patterns of family co-residence however tell us more about the effect of differential marriage ages than the relative strength of matri- and patri-links. Due to the late marriage age of most men, and the inevitable delay before a co-residential household is established, it is most unusual to find the three generational agnostic family, with the houses of father, son and grandson in one hamlet. Indeed the grandfather would have to be at least 75 years old. That patrilineal continuity does not receive this expression of co-residence however does not weaken its long term importance, as residential change within the developmental cycle demonstrates. In contrast to the patrilineally extended family the matrilineal one is quite common. Due to the relatively young age at which daughters marry and set up their own households, it is quite possible for a fifty year old woman to have a co-resident married grand-daughter who has built her own house. Such extended families however do not indicate long term residential maintenance of the matrilineal bond. Some are the result of a widowed grandmother joining her married daughter in the later years of life. In many the co-residence of the grand-daughter is a temporary phase of non-residential marriage. That is they reflect the importance of the mother-daughter bond in the early years of married life, but as Table 6.1 demonstrates the bond weakens within the developmental cycle.

**Marital Co-Residence within the Developmental Cycle**

Every marriage must include a certain period of co-habitation for the procreation of children. However the pattern of living together can take one of two forms. Either the husband is a visitor
in his wife's hamlet, or together they form a more or less permanently co-resident household. With the latter he may spend nights elsewhere with other wives or on visits, but he keeps his possessions in his wife's house, claims membership of the hamlet in which she has built that house, and entertains guests within it.

All marriages pass through the stage where the husband has the status of a visitor, which I have termed non-residential initial. However beyond this stage permanent co-residence may or may not develop. As already explained it is most likely to occur with the first wife, the iddi korĩ, and less likely with the second, the iddi sangachi. In Chapter 4 I considered the residence patterns of polygynous families, that is the number of spouses brought together into extended polygynous families and the number left with their families of origin. In this section I want to take a more general look at the incidence of marital co-residence, and to do this I have broken down the residence figures into two tables, Table 6.3 and Table 6.4.

Table 6.3 indicates the incidence of co-residence within the entire census sample, that is covering all stages within the family developmental cycle. The incidence of separate residence is calculated by adding the cases in the categories non-residential initial and non-residential established, and co-residence by adding those in the categories uxorilocal, duolocal, virilocal and neolocal. From this one gets a figure of almost 28 per cent for separate residence and just over 72 per cent for co-residence.

7 Widows are included in the separate residence category if they ever established a joint household, and the co-residential category if they were living in permanent co-residence with their latest husband.
### Table 6.3. Frequency of Co-Residence within Total Marriage Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Residence</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categories indicative of Separate Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential Initial</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>17.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-residential Established</td>
<td>39/102</td>
<td>10.7/27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories indicative of Co-residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uxorilocal</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duolocal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virilocal</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>40.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolocal</td>
<td>74/264</td>
<td>20.2/72.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6.4. Frequency of Co-Residence within Mature Marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Residence</th>
<th>No. of Cases</th>
<th>% of Cases</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Categories Indicative of Separate Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Residential Established</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Categories Indicative of Co-Residence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uxorilocal</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duolocal</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virilocal</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neolocal</td>
<td>74/264</td>
<td>24.4/87.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>303</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
However these figures do not take into account the fact that separate residence and co-residence may occur at different stages of the one marriage. To find the true frequency of co-residence it is important to analyse the residence patterns of mature marriages, that is, those in which the residential pattern has been more or less finally established. This thus excludes the category non-residential initial, and the resultant figures are shown in Table 6.4. As might be expected the final incidence of co-residence within mature marriages is higher than that taken from an overall sample, being just over 87 per cent. Separate residence is established as a permanent phenomenon in just under 13 per cent of all marriages. This means that the great majority of women enter marriage with the expectation of setting up a joint household with their husband at some stage in the future. This is perhaps disguised by the fact that there appear to be many young wives who are either living in a separate hamlet from their husbands or whose spouses are away on labour migration. However in looking at the residential implications of marriage it is the long term trends in the developmental cycle which matter. It is these which determine the type of residence in which the children of the marriage come to maturity and which form the foundations of the uginir and the dirria.

It therefore remains to see what conclusions can be drawn from looking at these patterns of residence and their changes within the developmental cycle. The residential group is obviously affected by many inter-related factors, viability of the extended family and hamlet group in terms of production and consumption, the availability of close kin and spouses with children, marriage policies, and the
ability of the hamlet group, especially the women, to work together as a team. When living within units as small as the Meidob hamlet such factors have to be very carefully balanced, and residence perhaps tells us more about effective kin ties than any other sphere of social behaviour.

Looking at these residence patterns important points are revealed in respect to the ugginir and tertí groups, and the way in which members of these two types of clans are dispersed or concentrated. The figures show that despite the presence of uxorilocal marriage, the dominant form is virilocal, which helps explain the concentration of agnatic kin. Even where neolocal residence is sought a son rarely moves as far away from his father's hamlet as a girl may do on marriage. Secondly, non-residential established marriage does not break up the continuity of the ugginir group, as sons of such marriages often rejoin their father before they set up their own households, and such marriages are often made with agnatic kin anyway. The solidarity of the agnatic group is probably more obvious in expanded rather than extended families due to the fact that sons may be in their thirties before their wives join them virilocally. What is a more common pattern is the co-residence of mothers, daughters and grandmothers. Although such links are apparently dominant in the family group, they only occur at certain stages of the developmental cycle, and for most daughters the split must eventually come.

These patterns of residence also demonstrate how polygyny does not have the expected result of being a means by which a man expands his co-resident family group. Instead it allows for two
alternative forms of developmental cycle. Where the husband and wife set up a co-residential household, as is the usual outcome in first or monogamous marriages, the nucleus of a new family group is created. The girl is lost to her family of origin, although at some time in the future her children may return in fosterage. Where no joint household is created the development of the girl's family of origin is uninterrupted by her marriage. By encouraging the marriage of daughters as non-residential second wives the father can thus create a strong family group which may through time develop into a local dirria. However such unions do not normally interrupt agnatic continuity, as sons of such marriages often join their father's productive group in their teens. Neither type of marriage however allows for the long term residential concentration of the matriclan (terti). In co-residential marriage the stress is on virilocal residence, and the time when a married girl can remain co-resident with close matri-kin is generally limited. Non-residential established marriages do allow for the perpetuation of the mother-daughter tie, but even the localised dirria group has a limited time span, and there is no guarantee that such matri-links can be maintained for more than two or three generations.

These alternative developmental cycles can perhaps be most usefully seen as the outcome of a process of balancing the pulls of consanguinity and affinity. These conflicting forces are expressed most clearly in the arguments that surround the question of bride removal. For women, the aim is generally to hold onto the ties of consanguinity as long as possible at the expense of affinal ones,

8 For a full account of this see Chapter 7.
thus remaining with tertj kin. For men the opposite would seem to be true, with the goal of marriage and independence as soon as a viable herding unit can be created, but agnatic kin ties continue to be very important. The only way in which these conflicts can be resolved is through the marriage of close kin and duolocal residence. The former is more frequent than the latter, although many brides do manage to remain fairly close to their mothers' hamlets.
CHAPTER 7

CHILDREN

In the last chapter I pointed out how the birth and growth of children was one of the key factors in the family developmental cycle, affecting the degree to which the domestic unit could achieve independent viability, and thus the type of co-residential unit which was sought. In this short section I wish to take a more general look at the role of children, both in terms of the economy, and of the family and wider kin group. To do this I look at three related topics. The first is that of children's role in the domestic economy. The second concerns the rights and responsibilities over children that marriage brings, and the third how such rights and responsibilities of parents and the wider kin group are expressed in fostering.

Children's Role in the Domestic Economy

In an economy such as that of the Meidob, which depends to a large extent on pastoralism, children have a vital role to play. For most Meidob, working in terms of marginal returns, the labour bank is the family, and the main variant within the family is not so much the number of wives, who make a less direct contribution to the herding economy, but rather the number of children of working age. From the age of about six years children start to help with the herds, first with the young animals
which are too weak to leave the hamlet, then with the settlement based animals which they take out to pasture each day. By their early teens many boys progress to working with the more valuable herds of camels and flocks of sheep, returning infrequently to the hamlet. These children continue to work in this way with the family livestock until their marriages, and the development of their own herds and families occurs. For daughters this process may start as early as sixteen years. With the birth of their own children they cease to make an important contribution beyond the domestic domain, although they may remain for many years within the parental hamlet. For sons marriage is generally delayed until the mid twenties, and even after marriage young men continue to work with the parental herds until they have co-resident children/herders of their own.

The ideal division of labour is for the wife to be in charge of the domestic domain, and care of young animals kept in the vicinity of the hamlet, and for the husband to be responsible for supervising the herding and marketing of the adult herds. The wife may also play quite an important role in respect to the home based goats and cows, supervising all the milking and sometimes supervising the herding, but the care of distantly pastured camels and sheep falls entirely to men. Ideally the herding work away from the hamlet should fall to sons, working under their father's supervision, with teenage boys accompanying the sheep and camels and the younger ones herding the goats, thus leaving daughters to work alongside their mothers. However the
rising number of children, and boys especially, attending school has altered this traditional division of labour, with daughters playing an increasingly important role in the herding economy away from the domestic domain.

At the time of fieldwork from a sample of 149 households it was found that within the group of children of potential school age, that is between the ages of 7 and 24, just over 57 per cent of the boys were attending school in contrast to 23 per cent of the girls\(^1\). However a much higher percentage would have received some education before the age of 24, the pattern for many children being one of several years of intermittent attendance. Many Meidob parents see as the ideal education for all their children, but where they cannot forfeit their labour send their sons in preference, as education means qualifications for town jobs at a time when the future of pastoralism looks far from secure. These schoolchildren do make some contribution during their school holidays, but an increasing workload is placed on their siblings who stay at home. In return such children who do not attend school are given a larger number of animals with which to develop their own herds. One often finds therefore that girls manage to build up quite substantial herds, while their brothers involved in full time education are not so rewarded, and the few animals they do receive are used up in paying for the incidental expenses involved in secondary school education.

All adult individuals own animals, but only about half the number of existing households have resident children old enough

\(^1\)Information concerning the education of children was only gathered within the Aicho sample.
to herd these animals, meaning that in terms of labour there is a chance that they will be more or less self sufficient. For others, the absence of children necessitates a greater dependence on, and co-operation with, other households. For example, a woman who gives birth to her first child at sixteen will have effective herders in her family by the age of twenty-two, whereas her brother married at twenty-six will be thirty-two before he is in the same position. On the other side of the coin the brother may still have young herders when his sister's children are all married. It is factors such as this which make sense of the common pattern of co-residence of siblings, and their functioning as a co-operative unit, as outlined in the chapter on residence and the co-operative unit. The need for child herders also encourages the development of the three generational co-operative unit, and it is this desire of older parents to have young herders which leads to manoeuvres to keep children, and daughters especially, with their grandchildren within the parental hamlet.

Marriage: Rights in and Responsibilities over Children

Considering the central role that children play within the economy one might expect this to be reflected in the payment of high bridewealth, conveying rights to the father over his childrens' labour. In reality the picture is more complex, and the payments made to the bride and her kin are relatively low, with no additional payments being made in respect to the birth of offspring. As pointed out in Chapter 4 all marriages begin with the husband in the
position of visitor in his wife's hamlet. Until he removes his bride he neither benefits from his childrens' labour nor does he bear the absolute responsibility to provide for their needs, although the marriage payments to the bride include some milking cows or camels to provide milk for them.

In almost 13 per cent of marriages this pattern of separate residence never changes and the wife remains in her parental hamlet. In the other 87 per cent of cases the wife and her children at some stage form a joint household with the husband and he becomes directly responsible for supporting them, at the same time benefiting from their labour. However another factor to be considered is that some husbands, whether they have formed a joint household with their wife or not, spend lengthy periods of time working abroad. During the period of fieldwork many husbands were working in Libya, having taken their camels and sheep to sell there, and found short term jobs on agricultural schemes. The Aicho area may have lost a disproportionate number of men this way, but in 1974 almost 23 per cent were away for part of the year in Libya, 44 per cent of men in the age category 25 to 34 having left. The fact that the family was without a father did not have much effect on those wives and children who had remained in the parental hamlet anyway. For those who had moved, the husband's father and brothers generally took over the responsibility of ensuring that the wife and children had sufficient food and money.
However in none of these alternative residential situations do the actual rights of the father in respect to his children change. He has absolute authority and over-all responsibility. This is perhaps most clearly expressed in the situation of divorce where he controls the destiny of his offspring, whether at the time they are co-resident with him or not. However the degree to which he can benefit from his childrens' labour and the amount of support he can provide determines the extent to which he can utilise those rights. To put it simply, where he has many herds and needs herders he will insist that his wife and children move to his hamlet. The children will work with him, being given animals with which to build up their own herds, and the father-child bond receives constant expression. Where the wife is a second one and he already has herders, and his wife's family have sufficient animals but need herders, he may be willing to leave his wife with her kin. In this situation he will provide money for clothes and commodities such as sugar, but apart from the animals which he has given on marriage, the herds which support these children are normally the mother's and her parents'. Gifts of animals frequently come from these maternal grandparents rather than the father himself in return for labour, so that the link is strongest with the mother's family. However once the sons of such women reach their teens, and their father is often better endowed with herds, they may start to work with him on the distant herding work. Such sons often end up bringing their wives to their father's hamlet, although the link with the mother's kin remains strong.
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This option of leaving the wife and her children with her kin thus works rather as a safety system. It allows for the balancing of herds and herders. It permits the wife's family to benefit from their grandchildrens' labour when they are most in need and the husband is building up his herds, and for the husband to benefit when he is wealthier in animals and the grandparents, if they are still alive, have fewer animals under their care. This system also allows for the transference of animals to the children of daughters as well as through the normal agnatic line.

In both these types of residence the mother's role in respect to her children remains one of nurturing and education, especially in respect to her daughters. Although she does not bear the ultimate responsibility of economic support, nor does she have the rights over them which the father does, it is often with the mother that closest relations develop. However the way in which this role can be substituted whereas that of the father cannot is most clearly revealed when we look at the question of voluntary and crisis fostering.

**Voluntary and Crisis Fostering**

Given the importance of children within the family one can understand how infertility and infant mortality within the marriage can be a severe problem. Of the marriages within the census sample over 29 per cent were without surviving children. As almost a third of these childless marriages were those where
wives were in the age category 15 to 24, one might expect the percentage of mature marriages which proved barren or had no surviving children to be somewhat lower. Within marriages where the woman was aged over 45 just over 8 per cent had no surviving children. The way in which men and women react to this problem is different, and perhaps tells us more of the nature of the parent-child relationship as viewed by these two groups.

The aim of the typical Meidob man is to gain economic independence and viability by the ownership of a large number of animals and sufficient children, preferably sons, to care for these animals, so that in time he can take on a managerial role in the care of the family herds. Due to a relatively late marriage age and the possibility of polygyny he can expect to have some unmarried children into old age, and the period of life when he envisages himself being dependent on the children of other kin is during his twenties and early thirties. It is thus with this view to developing his own family that a man enters marriage. If his first wife fails to produce children within a reasonable period of time, he will where it is financially possible take additional wives until a child is born. As infertility is automatically blamed on women, and the search for remedies centres on them, such actions by him are not questioned.

However barring the taking of other wives there is little positive action that a husband can take, as there is no system of adoption, as fostering arrangements are made between and for the sake of women. The only options open to him are to hire labour, or to turn to the children of close relatives and preferably
agnates for herding assistance. In return he can make gifts of animals, but he does not have the same degree of control that he would have over his own children's labour. That there is no institution of adoption is perhaps related to the fact that the childless man cannot appoint an heir. There is a series of prescribed heirs from whom property cannot be alienated on his death. Like any other individual he does have the option of disposing of much of his wealth during his lifetime, although he will be expected to pass much of it on to agnates. However unlike other men he will be unwilling to give away many of his animals until old age, when he has finally abandoned all hope of fathering children.

A woman's approach to childlessness is somewhat different. If she feels that the fault lies in the marriage she will try and obtain a divorce so that she is free to marry again, but most women will not resort to this, accepting their barren state as one of the harder facts of life. A girl's life is geared towards the production of children, the highest role that a woman can achieve being as head of large three generational family, and it is considered wrong that any woman should live alone without the presence of children. However her attitude towards the desire to have children is somewhat different from her husband's. She is looking not so much towards having children who will tend the family herds, as towards companionship and help with domestic tasks. The solution to this problem is the institution of separating (T. aiyannan), or voluntary fostering of young children.
There are two types of aiyannan. The first and commonest involves separating the child from its biological mother, when it is just weaned, between the ages of one and two. The second type involves moving the child when he or she is old enough to be helpful around the house, between the ages of five and eight. There is no fixed period of time in either of these two types before the period of residence with the foster parent terminates. Sometimes the child will not leave the foster home until marriage, although this is more likely to happen where the child fostered is a girl. A boy is more likely to rejoin the parental household after a few years to work with the father and family herds, and the commencement of schooling which affects more boys often means separating the child from the foster parents. Whilst the child is being fostered the mother may make frequent visits, and after the child returns home ties with the foster mother usually remain close. Thus relations with both the biological and the foster mother are generally maintained.

When a woman wishes to foster a child, whether this is because her marriage has produced no children, or her own children have grown up, she may approach any close tertí relative who has children of her own and who could possibly spare a child. Taking into account factors such as the distance the child will be moving from its biological mother and the labour demands within the family, no reasonable request can be turned down. Indeed such a move may be initiated by the biological parents.
This practice of aiyannan is not simply for the benefit of the foster mother. One of the commonest forms is for a woman to foster her daughter's first born child when there is another baby in the house or another due. The young mother is thus relieved of some of the work of caring for her young children, when they do not as yet contribute to the family workforce, and where there are many demands on the young wife's time in terms of the developing family herds. In most cases children are fostered from homes where there are a large number of children, or the young marriage is proving to be fertile, and there is the likelihood that there will be several children born. In this sense fostering may also be seen as advantageous to the child, in that it may take him from an overburdened household to a situation where he will receive more care and attention. This is especially so when a child goes to live with its maternal grandparents, as both will take a keen interest in the child. In other younger households the situation may not be quite so positive, as the foster father does not have the same kin link with the child, and may show far less interest than his wife.

In a sense a foster mother can take over the role of a real mother, but her husband cannot substitute for the biological father, who maintains his rights over the child. The affective mother role can be passed on to the pro-parent or shared between matri-kin but the legal authoritative father role cannot. For him a non-biological son or daughter cannot fulfil the role that a true agnatic descendant could, in terms of the father-child
relationship, and whereas the wife sees the fostering in of a child as the solution to her problems, the husband does not. He will continue to seek other wives to produce children for him, and if he is successful, it is on these children that he will concentrate his attention. This is not to say that he will not gain from the presence of a foster child, for once the child reaches the age of seven he or she may well be out herding the family goats every day. However to the husband this child is in a sense a misfit, a member of his household and yet not a true member of his family.

Out of the original total of 366 marriages I collected detailed information on the children of 300 existing households. Of this total 22 or 7.3 per cent were fostering out one or more children, and another 22 or 7.3 per cent were fostering in a child. Only five of these cases were ones of crisis fostering (which I consider further on). However these figures greatly undervalue the incidence of fostering, partly because they omit the cases of fostering which these households have been involved in, in the past. A more accurate representation is perhaps given by the figures I

These two sets of figures, households fostering in and households fostering out were taken from the same census sample, and due to the fact that biological and foster parents often live within the same area, some of the children are involved in both sets of figures.

The only way of gaining a completely accurate record of the incidence of this phenomenon, would be to take a large sample of adults, and to enumerate those brought up at some period of their childhood within a household other than the parental one. Such a method of analysis would take into account the temporal aspect of fostering. However it would have the disadvantage of illuminating the past rather than the present occurrence of fostering, and I suspect that due to the influence of education the pattern has changed considerably over the last twenty years or so.
gathered from the hamlet in which I was most familiar with families and their past histories, although even here I cannot assume to have full information. The hamlet contained in the rainy season a total of fifteen households. Of these, five were at the time of the census or had in the past fostered out one or more children, and five had or were fostering in one or more children. That is, 66 per cent had been or were involved in fostering. All of these were cases of voluntary aiyannan.

The recorded cases of voluntary fostering have several interesting features. Firstly, they demonstrate how aiyannan occurs most frequently at certain stages in the family developmental cycle. Children are generally fostered out from households during the initial period of family development when the children are young and the family is expanding. They are fostered into households at two stages, after about seven years of marriage when hopes of producing children are fading, and in the latter stages of marriage, sometimes after the husband's death, when the children born to the marriage are themselves grown up and married.

Secondly, the examples show that in most cases (there were two exceptions) aiyannan occurs within the group of closely related matri-kin, with the commonest type being the fostering of a child to his or her mother's mother or mother's sister. The former type most frequently occurs where the daughter has left her mother's hamlet and moved some distance away. The fostered child thus helps to maintain the link between them, and in a sense compensates the grandmother for the loss of her daughter. Fostering
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between sisters seems to be quite a natural choice in that a child's mother's sister is considered like another mother anyway. There are also cases of the relationship between the foster and biological mother being more distant, but in reality it is not the entire tert-i-n-unal group which is coming into effect, but a smaller group of closely linked matrilineal kin. The fact that the child is fostered by tert-i relatives means that he or she will follow the same marriage prohibitions as would children born to that household. Despite a change in residence the child is thus remaining within that matri-group out of which he or she will eventually marry. If it did occur that foster and biological children were brought up within the same household they would therefore automatically be barred from marriage.

The third fact which these cases reveal is that only five out of the twenty-five children fostered were boys. This is partly due to the fact that a girl is considered to be of more help to a woman around the house and hamlet. However fathers are also more reluctant to allow their sons to be fostered out. It is also I think another aspect of the way in which boys and girls are identified with different kin groups, daughters being identified most directly with the mother and her matrikin, whereas for boys the father-son bond and their position within the uginir group is more important.
Crisis fostering differs not only in that it is necessitated by the loss of a parent, but in that it is a matter for men to arrange within the agnatic group. This difference of the group concerned in these two types can perhaps be explained in terms of the respective role of mother and father, and the kin groups with which they are mostly involved. To the mother falls the role of nurture and early education, and to the father authority and economic responsibility. In cases of voluntary fostering the mother, but not the father, abandons her role. In times of crisis where both parents have died, both roles must be replaced. However the most important, that of caring for the child's economic welfare, in terms of managing his herds before he is old enough to inherit, and looking after his needs for food, money and clothes, the role which the father fulfilled, falls to the agnatic group. It pivots on the dead father's closest uginir relative, often his brother. In cases where only the father has died the same can be said to be true. The young widow is faced with the choice of remarrying within this agnatic group, or remarrying out and leaving her children within the group in which they have rights of economic support and inheritance. She alone is unlikely to have sufficient wealth to safeguard their future. Where only the mother has died, then the husband may seek to provide a step-mother by remarriage, where there are no other co-wives within the family. In practice such solutions where the mother's role is replaced in this way rarely work, and young children having lost their mother by death or divorce may turn to their matrilineal kin, sometimes running away from the changed home situation.
Thus it would seem that in respect to the care of children the matri- and patri-groups have different roles to play. Those kin who have a right to claim a child in voluntary fosterage are the tertî kin, but those relatives who have the duty to accept the role of foster parent in a crisis are members of the ugginîr. Perhaps the answer to this lies in the fact that the agnatic group has fixed rights over and responsibilities towards its children, and this does not need to receive expression in the movement of children between agnatic kin. The bond which links agnates in fact receives much stronger expression in the marriages that occur between their children. In that the tertî group is exogamous ties between its members cannot receive the same expression, and instead it is the fostering of children which reaffirms the links of kinship. It is true that aiyannân does often benefit the child and his biological as well as his foster mother, but more importantly it is an expression of the bond between the latter two.

The unity of the ugginîr group is more or less assured by its control over inheritance and the dominance of virilocal marriage. For the matri-kin there is no such bonding factor, and once the daughter has left her mother's hamlet on marriage it is unlikely that she will return even in old age. However in sending back a child the links with the tertî kin are maintained, for even once that child leaves its foster home the link formed in childhood is never forgotten.
CHAPTER 8

THE HAMLET AND THE HAMLET CLUSTER

In this chapter I wish to look at the hamlet and the group of hamlets or hamlet cluster, firstly in terms of the economic and ecological determinants which make the dispersion of limited sized settlements necessary, and secondly in terms of their kinship structure. In the section on residence and the developmental cycle I gave a brief introduction to the hamlet and the extended family, showing the commonest forms of co-residence to be based on the extended or expanded family, and I explained the way in which this small unit functioned in terms of production and consumption. In this section I wish to look beyond the minimal unit to explain the varying links of kin and non kin which tie people together into patterns of co-residence and neighbouring residence. I shall also be looking at the ways in which the hamlet cluster divides and reforms throughout the annual cycle of migration between settlement sites, and analysing the factors which hold some groups together and encourage others to separate. By doing this I hope to demonstrate the role which the uuginir (patriclan), terti (matriclan) and dirria (bilateral descent group) play in this evolving pattern, and how by looking at the hamlet cluster in terms of the dirria one can make most sense of the localised kin group.
Firstly therefore I shall look briefly at some of the economic determinants of co-residence. In his thesis on "The Pastoral System of the Meidob" J.M. Hales (1978) demonstrates the strong relationship between the composition of the productive group and the number and type of animals owned. He finds that there is a basic distinction between those productive groups where 'the core is a single parental family, and those where the core consists of two of more siblings'. In the first type he finds a high proportion of families whose herds consist of home based animals rather than animals pastured at a distance, a system which he terms 'split herding'. In the second he finds a predominance of production groups which have both camels and sheep in split herds. In this latter type as well as predominance of sibling groups he finds that the grandparental generation is still represented, and thus one is dealing with a larger co-residential family group. Between these two extremes, where one finds a smaller percentage of 'split herds' and a balance of goats and camels or goats and sheep, the majority of family groups appear to be of the filial type, where households have as yet no children or whose families are developed but as yet have not lost children through marriage.

These different types of extended or expanded family groups can thus be partly explained in terms of the types of animals owned by the families, in that different types create different demands for numbers and age of herders, and the degree to which interdependence between households is necessary to create a viable herd with sufficient herders. The contrary however is not true. One cannot explain the type of animals owned in terms of family structure, for conversion from one animal type to another is difficult and rarely attempted.
Put at its simplest, goats are perhaps the least demanding of herds in that they can generally be pastured within a few hours reach of the hamlet and tended by young children with little parental supervision except on watering days. Most households are likely to have sufficient animals to form a viable goat herd. In contrast to this the work involved in the day to day supervision of camels is more strenuous and requires more skilful herding. The camel herders must also be able to sleep out, cook for themselves and survive on little water, as they spend long periods of time away from the hamlet, and visit the wells only when essential for the herd. It is work only suitable for men and older boys. Secondly, the demands of camel herding require a division of labour in terms of searching for the best pasture, tending the herd, which may cover large distances, and searching for strays. Few households have the required labour to supervise such a herd, nor in fact sufficient camels to make up the optimum sized group. A greater degree of co-operation is necessary. Thus one finds that where property in the family is predominantly in the form of goats, fission between father and sons and between siblings occurs at an early stage, and the single parental dwelling unit is most likely to occur. Where camels and sheep are owned however it is in the interest of all members of the family to keep the animals together as a large herd, cared for jointly by the several households. Family fission is thus delayed.
In this relationship between the degree of family co-operation and the type of herds owned, we have some explanation of the type of family group which occurs, and the fact that most of the more valuable sheep and camels are inherited within the ugginir explains why in the larger co-resident families it is the agnatic group which generally dominates. However as I pointed out in the section on residence and the co-operative unit, although the extended or expanded family may explain the pattern of co-residence of a section of, or perhaps the whole of, the minimal hamlet group, that is the minimal viable herding unit, it does not explain the larger pattern of co-residence which is often found in the rains hamlet, and the ties which exist between neighbouring hamlets of the hamlet cluster.

Before going on to consider this question I shall briefly outline the typical annual cycle of movement of the hamlet group and hamlet based animals (as distinct from split herds). This transhumance may cover as many as thirty kilometres, and is in the form of a series of moves between fixed hamlet sites, which are occupied for varying lengths of time. Movement of the hamlet group throughout the year is determined by the availability of pasture and water. Sources of water are most readily available and widespread during the rains, becoming more localised during the winter, and only being found in man-made wells in the dry season. The general locality of the hamlet group in the dry season especially can therefore be explained in terms of the rights to use wells, rights which are generally inherited from father to son, although they may also pass on to daughters who remain in the parental hamlet group.
Access to wells is therefore a limiting factor in hamlet movement and a factor which has generally led to kin groups remaining over several generations in one locality, although there are certain circumstances in which a move may become necessary, as some of the examples in this chapter show. However, the positioning of the hamlet cannot solely be determined by ease of access to water. This is because pasture generally deteriorates the closer one approaches the water source, as it becomes a focal point for herd movement. The importance of good pasture in the vicinity of the hamlet depends to a degree on the number and type of animals to be grazed locally, and the number of 'split herds' which move in a different migration path from the family group. Good pasture locally is especially important for young animals which must find grazing around the periphery of the settlement, being too weak to travel with the adult herd. Thus the respective demands of people and animals for water must be balanced against the need for good pasture, and to satisfy both most families need to move between several hamlet sites within the year. A third factor is that of climate. Rainy season hamlets are generally built well clear of the valley floors where flash floods can prove very dangerous, and usually on well drained ground. In the winter the sites selected are often in more sheltered areas, against the lee of a hill, where there is protection from winter winds for the houses and penned animals. It should also be noted that not all vegetation flourishes, or is most nutritious, after the rains, and hamlets are generally situated where they can take advantage of the best seasonal vegetation.
The Meidob are of the opinion that large villages are good for people but not for animals. In practice (and especially in the post-drought context) one finds large areas dotted with tiny settlements. As was shown in Chapter 5 the average size for the *seyf* (dry season) hamlet is 4.9 houses, with an average population of 14.2 persons. This dispersal can be explained by the fodder requirements of the settlement based herds. In that these animals graze each day within a limited radius from the hamlet, the dispersal of families and their herds allows for the best possible use of the available grazing in a particular area. The problem is perhaps most acute in relation to calves and goats, who in the dry season depend mainly on the pods and leaves shed by trees which have a limited distribution. Thus even if adult herds from one large hamlet could possibly move further from the water to find grazing, vegetation for the infant herd would prove a limiting factor.

Problems such as these ease off in the wet season allowing social determinants to predominate and thus one often finds the formation of larger co-residential groups. However even at this time of year one does not find the convergence of families into the large villages which were characteristic of the past, and whose shells remain as evidence of different residential patterns. These large settlements were characteristic of a period before the deterioration of the climate and progressively greater overstocking. The ratio of animal to human population was more favourable allowing for more selective milking.
This resulted in a stronger adult herd and a greater percentage of the milk going to the young animals. They were therefore healthier and stronger and hence able to accompany the adult herd at an earlier stage in their lives. Due to the operation of larger co-operative groups and the combination of herds, a more efficient system operated, whereby many more animals were taken a greater distance from the village. There was not therefore the same degree of competition for local resources and pasture. These old villages formed the basis of some of the newer hamlet clusters, as they broke up.

In order to understand the way in which the hamlet cluster (that is the group of neighbouring hamlets) operates today in response to ecological constraints, and the kinship factors which come into play, I have selected three examples which I have named Hamlet Clusters A, B and C. The first two, A and B, originated from one of these large old villages. Their kinship composition is shown in Figures 8. Ai and 8. Bi referring to the wet season grouping, whereas Figure 8 Ci for Hamlet Cluster C refers to the winter pattern. ¹ In these and other figures in this chapter I have not included children in the kinship diagrams, as I am mainly concerned with the kin links of the adult group.

The following section is divided into two parts. In the first I consider the changes in groupings of kin that occur throughout one annual cycle as observed in the year 1974-75. Each of these hamlet clusters is made up of a small number of neighbouring hamlets.

¹ Figures 8 i to iii for A, B, and C are all included at the end of this chapter together with Figure 8.2 and Map 3.
They in turn are made up of one or a number of households, which in terms of herding requirements form independent blocks. I have called these 'family herding units', and I shall identify these units and try and demonstrate the links of co-operation and interdependence that exist between them. I shall then trace the different paths that each follows throughout the annual cycle. In this section I shall deal only with Clusters A and B, as I visited most of the sites and moved with the families, whereas with Cluster C I only visited the area in the winter, and for the rest of the year I had to depend on their reported distribution. All hamlets of Clusters A, B and C are shown on Map 3, on which are also traced the migratory paths of the herding units of Clusters A and B.

In the second part I again look at these hamlets to demonstrate the features of kinship and marriage which form a common theme linking these separate units together. In this section I deal with all three clusters, demonstrating the various links of ugginir, terti and dirria in Figures 8, i to iii for A, B and C.

Hamlet Cluster A (see Figure 8.Ai) consists of seven family herding units which I have labelled 'a' to 'f', and which in the rains of 1974 came together to form one large hamlet (Hamlet 3) consisting of 13 houses, and a neighbouring one-house hamlet (Hamlet 8). These two hamlets can be seen on Map 3 lying to the west and southwest of Aicho Wells. I have numbered the constituent households 1 to 14, and in the following section show how they are related to the senior male member of the hamlet. Unit 'b' consists of the household
of the head of the hamlet (household 2), and those of his three married daughters and second eldest son (households 3, 4, 5 and 6). Unit 'a' consists of his eldest son and spouse, and Unit 'c' his younger son's parents-in-law. Unit 'e' contains three households, that of his wife's brother and spouse (household 10), the spouses's sister (household 11) and her mother (household 9). Unit 'f' is headed by his brother's son and spouse (household 12), and also contains their married daughter (household 13). Unit 'g' contains the same brother's daughter and her husband (household 14). (The other kin links which tie these households together will be considered in greater detail later on).

The factor which characterises each of these units (apart from 'c') is that the constituent members co-operate in the care of the hamlet based herds of goats, sometimes share the use of common goat pens, and where they own sheep and camels usually keep them as one herd. In effect therefore in Hamlet 3 in the rains there are six different herds of goats looked after by six different family groups. Unit 'c' is the exception in that it joined unit 'b' in a more or less dependent position and does not have a goat pen. The husband had been temporarily away on labour migration, and his wife who had been very ill came with only a few of her cows to live near her only daughter, in order that a grandchild could help her in the house, and she could be provided with milk from 'b''s herds.
The nature of independence between and dependence within these units became apparent at the end of the rains in October, when the hamlet members started to move to new sites. (See Map 3 for the migration paths of the groups, and the accompanying Figure 8.2 for the timing of the moves, and thus an indication of which units moved together). There were two general trends of movement. Family herding units 'b', 'c' and 'd' remained in the centre of the Jebel. The other four units ('a', 'e', 'f' and 'g') moved to the southern edge of the hills. These two movements were determined above all by the source of dry season water. Although all these groups had in the past depended on inherited rights to use water from Aicho wells for the hamlets and local based animals, and Surief wells (beyond the northern extremity of the map) for 'split herds', the shortage of water during the last four years made it no longer feasible for so many groups to drink from the declining supplies. Units 'a', 'e', 'f' and 'g' had searched further afield, and had been given permission to use Kargeddi wells at Awinol (bottom right hand corner of the map), where the wells are shallower (4 metres) then at Aicho (20 metres). They therefore chose to follow a longer migratory route.

It might have been expected that the close kin links connecting 'a', 'e' and 'f', and their shared final destination might have caused them to follow a common migratory route, and indeed they moved together on the first two legs of the journey.
The women worked as a team in relation to collecting water, and there was general co-operation in terms of herding and marketing. However early in the year the wife of Unit 'a' (household 1) fell ill and the others, unwilling to wait for her recovery, moved on. This and other disputes caused some bitterness and 'a' never again formed a joint hamlet with 'e' and 'f'. It might in fact be questioned why in the first place 'a' decided to follow a different route from his parents and siblings as he had equal priority in the use of the family well at Aicho. The reason given was a desire for independence from his father with whom there had been arguments and tension over herding policy. However although his goats and sheep were split off from the family herd, the break was not absolute, and he and his wife kept their camels in a common herd with those of household 3 of Unit 'b'. Although he had made this move for independence, his house could not be completely self sufficient in labour, especially where work with the camels took him away from the hamlet. He and his wife therefore sought more distant kin to form a common hamlet with. Not insignificant was the fact that they joined two other units rich in cattle, as the wife had twelve cows of her own. The subsequent movements of the new hamlet group they formed were largely determined by the pasture and water requirements of the cattle which were pastured together.

Meanwhile Units 'e' and 'f' moved southwards together, the need for co-operation between them increasing with the onset of the dry season, and the increasing labour demands of well work.
Both family units had herds of goats and some sheep, and both were relatively short of labour. The only two teenage sons of household 10 were working as herders for a merchant relative, their father having insufficient animals to support them, and the sons from households 12 were at school. Unit 'f' was however relatively better off in respect to the ratio of animals to herders, and in the joint care of their herds the husband of household 10 of Unit 'e' put in a greater amount of work in return for additional milk and meat for his family. He was regularly involved in the work of watering their joint herds of goats, whereas the husband of household 12 concerned himself more with the care of his sheep. Both families had lost camels in the drought, and the condition of the few which Unit 'f' still owned was poor, as they were kept within reach of the hamlet without supervision, their numbers being insufficient to make the work of herding them economic. Unit 'e' was totally dependent on 'f' for the use of a baggage camel to make the moves between hamlet sites.

In contrast to this, Unit 'g' which followed the same southern route remained self sufficient, forming one house hamlets for most of the year. They had a medium sized herd of goats and a few camels, both of which were grazed within the vicinity of the settlement. They had two children old enough to herd the animals, but the wife as well as her husband had to put in a share of the herding work so that they might form an independent viable unit.
When they shared a hamlet site as in the wet season they joined a household of non-relatives, the descendants of slaves, and the benefits were only ones of companionship, not of co-operative work.

The migratory route which Unit 'b' followed was over a shorter distance, between only two sites. The reason for this was partly a dependence in the dry season on Aicho wells for the settlement based population, and partly the fact that the co-operation between a larger number of kin, who held a common interest in the family herds of sheep, goats and camels, allowed for a greater diversity of herding. There was less dependence therefore on finding good vegetation within the vicinity of the hamlet than with Units 'a', 'e', 'f' and 'g'. The sheep and camels were kept away from the hamlet, being taken to separate distant pastures, where the vegetation was most suited to their separate requirements. Only the goats were kept near the settlement and they provided sufficient milk, so that the few cows (whose calving and milking rate was low anyway), could be taken off and left where the fodder was more suitable. This unit is a good example of the type where one finds the co-residence of siblings' and father's households, all of which have a share in the livestock of 'split herded' camels and sheep. Unit 'g' exemplifies the other extreme where the single parental household is tending only home based herds composed mainly of goats.
Throughout the winter and dry season day to day co-operation was only found between units which moved and lived together, such as 'b' and 'c', and 'e' and 'f'. However, other more temporary co-operative groups did form when kin with common interests found themselves in neighbouring hamlets, or moved near each other to form temporary alliances. For example, towards the middle of the dry season, household 12 of Unit 'f' formed a temporary co-operative group with a father's sister's daughter's household, when the two families found themselves in neighbouring valleys. They combined their two small flocks of sheep when the work load was heaviest, thus freeing one herder to search out new pastures or tend to other herds. Whatever alliances were formed, however, the minimal co-operative group was usually the family herding unit. Even within this there were sometimes tendencies for the separation of houses where the hamlet group was small and tensions arose between families. Such splits were commonest where co-wives were moving together throughout the year, and the small hamlet size meant that they were in constant interaction. In the case of Cluster A there were no such co-resident wives but there was a tendency for a split to occur in Unit 'e' between households 10 and 9 and 11, so that the son and mother-in-law were not, so to speak, living on each others' doorsteps. At one stage the respective herds of goats were divided into separate pens with a daughter from household 10 helping to herd the animals of households 9 and 11, which were childless. However they were often taken together to common pasture, and the work of watering always required the co-operation of the entire unit. These splits generally
led to the houses being built with sufficient spatial distance for privacy, such as on opposite banks of a tree lined wadi.

The effects of the drought made dispersal to utilise different sources of water and pasture essential, and thus such units as did come together during the winter and dry season only did so out of necessity. In contrast to this the rainy season hamlets were large, not because of the need for greater co-operation but, as pointed out earlier, because people preferred to live in larger groups. The co-operation which occurred between the constituent units was of a different nature and had less to do with the requirements of herding and watering. For example, the hamlet women worked as a group for tasks such as the gathering of wild grass seeds for food, and similarly to collect certain tree fruit pods for processing hides. Flour grinding parties were arranged in preparation for visiting the farms and for shared karama. During the cultivation season women from Units 'b', 'e' and 'f' went farming together, as did the men from 'e' and 'a', and whilst many adolescents and adults were away farming there was greater co-operation over the care of children.

The second example is the rains hamlet cluster which I call Cluster B, and is related to and neighbouring that of Cluster A (see Fig 88). Hamlet 12 of Cluster B is like Hamlet 3 of Cluster A in that it is a relatively large co-residential group, made up of several independent family herding units which separate after the end of the rains, whereas Hamlets 17 and 18 like Hamlet 8 of Cluster A remain on separate sites throughout the year.
There are six units in this hamlet cluster which I have labelled 'h' to 'm', and a total of 14 households. Unit 'j' consists of three households. Household 5 is that of the senior male member of the hamlet and his wife. (Other members of the hamlets will be described below by their relationship with him). Household 4 is his widowed mother and household 6 his married daughter. Units 'h' and 'i' contain the households of the two wives of his half brother. Household 1 is that of the senior wife, household 2 her married son and household 3 the junior wife. Unit 'k' consists of his wife's brother and spouse (household 7) and his father's brother's son and wife (household 8). Unit 'l' consists of another son of the same uncle and spouse (household 9) and their married son and spouse (household 10). Finally Unit 'm' consists of a third uncle's son and spouse (household 12), widowed mother-in-law (household 11) and two married daughters (household 13 and 14). (The other kin links which unite these families will be examined later).

The migratory paths of these units are shown on Map 3, and the relative timing of their movements from one site to another can be read from the right hand side of the accompanying figure 8.2. Due to the fact that they had access to better wells at Aicho than the families in Cluster A, none of these households were forced in the year 1974-75 to follow the southward migrations of 'a', 'e', 'f' and 'g'. However 'h', 'i', 'j' and 'l' generally moved over a greater distance than 'b', 'c' and 'd' of Cluster A.
As with the previous example the herding units were characterised by their separate use of goat pens and continuous co-operation within the family group. This was particularly obvious in Unit 'm' where there was a good deal of co-operation between the three generations of females. Much of the local herding work in this unit fell to the women because the husband in household 12 was in Libya for most of the year and his elder sons were at school. The widow in household 11 took over many of the lighter responsibilities tied to the hamlet, caring for the younger children and supervising the family cattle which were pastured nearby. In return her daughter and grand-daughters took charge of the more arduous well work, bringing her her domestic water. Because of her age she did not go farming, but whilst the other women visited the farms she supervised the care of the cattle and goats, (at a time when pasture was plentiful and this was not a difficult task), and cooked for the young herders. She was very much the head of the female hamlet group in which several of the women were linked by tertii membership. (The working of matrilineal links will be considered further on).

Unit 'j' is a comparable three generation extended family. However, in this instance the husband's mother was old and made little contribution to the family work force, although she still managed to tend her own few cattle. Again the husband of household 5 was away for much of the year in Libya. However, there were eleven children and the family was able to be self sufficient, herding their goats and sheep efficiently in split herds, even though they did not join
forces with another unit. In matters where co-operation was mutually beneficial, for example in respect to marketing, Unit 'j' worked with that of 'h' and 'i', the two households of half brothers.

Units 'h' and 'i' spent a few months of the winter together, but for much of the dry season they used separate hamlet sites. Nevertheless there was considerable co-operation in respect to the joint family herds of sheep and camels, which were split herded and tended by the sons of the two wives. The reason for this separation was the antagonism which existed between the co-wives and their unwillingness to share a small settlement. During the three months in 1974, when the two halves of the family did actually share a hamlet, the wives built their houses as far apart as possible. Throughout the year each unit maintained its own separate goat pen and there was never any co-operation between the two in respect of the hamlet based cows and goats, some of which the wives themselves had brought into the marriages.

In Unit 'k' the basis of co-operation was the close link that existed between the husband in household 7 and the wife in household 8. These two were half siblings through a common mother, who was divorced by the father of the sister and later married to the father of the brother. The husband in household 8 was away in Libya for much of the year, and with only one small child and no surviving parents, the young wife depended very much on her brother's support.

As in the large rains Hamlet 3 of Hamlet Cluster A, the nature of co-operation between units in Hamlet 12 in the wet season had less
to do with the requirements of herding, and more with the desire of kin to live together. Groups of neighbours went to farm and gather wild produce together, and to carry out other tasks where co-operation was not essential, but which made the work more pleasurable. At the same time it differed from Hamlet 3 in that it had lost a large percentage of the male work-force on migrant labour to Libya, and therefore the pattern of residence was more orientated towards co-operation between female kin.

Having looked at the constituent units which make up the hamlet group, and the ecological and economic factors which make division between and dispersal of these families essential, I shall now take a wider look at the hamlet clusters and analyse the factors which unite these family herding units. By analysing the various links of kinship I shall try to demonstrate the ties which hold these families together, so that where possible they move within the same region, or at least return to it in the rainy season.

As Map 3 partly shows, Hamlets 3 and 8 which I identify as Cluster A, and 12, 17 and 18 which I identify as Cluster B, form but a small nucleus within an area liberally dotted with hamlets, the members of which have some links of kinship and/or marriage with their nearest neighbours, so that there exists a complex network of ties. The reason I selected these particular five hamlets was because they have long been associated with each other, even though the rainy season sites occupied over the last two generations have changed, and I was most familiar with the history of, and ties
between, the constituent families. However it is important to note that I could equally have selected another linked cluster of hamlets, as information on other localities confirms the existence of similar patterns throughout Dar Meidob. Both Cluster A and Cluster B originally formed the main part of a large old village (marked X in the north-western corner of the map), in which lived the two main ancestors, who were reportedly sister's sons. This group then split into two main divisions, with Cluster A containing mostly the descendants of A, with the addition of a few descendants of D, (a distant relative of A who as a young orphan was taken into the household of A and brought up as a son), and Cluster B the descendants of B. Rains Hamlet 3 of Cluster A had existed more or less in its present form for the last fifteen years. The inhabitants were able to identify the previous owners of occupied and deserted houses of the senior dead generation as belonging to some of the wives and children of A. The group of families found in Hamlet 12 of Cluster B had a similar tradition of long association, although the present hamlet site was relatively recent, and one could not trace the development of the group through constructing a history of house occupance. In more recent times some reorganisation of settlement between Clusters A and B had occurred, with household 10 of group A for example, moving from his father's hamlet in Cluster B some ten years ago. Most movements between the two groups were associated, however, with marriage.

In addition to Clusters A and B I selected a third example, Cluster C, which contains the descendants of C, occupying six hamlets
east of Aicho wells. I have numbered these hamlets on Map 3 from 22 to 28, and they contain 25 households (numbered 1 to 25 in Figure 8.Ci.). These hamlets were visited during the winter, and I have not tried here to identify their constituent family units, which co-operated throughout the year, and shared common goat pens. However it should be pointed out that unlike the two other groups there was no large rains season hamlet. In the rains of 1974 the only case of merging on one site concerned hamlets 28 and 25. The other hamlet groups moved between two or three sites with very few changes in their hamlet group membership. Like those of Cluster B they all depended on Aicho wells for domestic water during the dry season, with some of the herds of sheep and camels being taken to drink at wells further north.

In considering the ties of kinship which operate within these three groups I shall look at ugginir, dirria and terti links, and try and identify their importance in terms of group identity, marriage and inheritance.

Looking first at Cluster A, in Figure 8.Aii, the letters T and U stand for the two ugginirs represented. Where a spouse has neither symbol this indicates that he or she belongs to another less well represented ugginir. The outstanding feature is that the two main ancestors A and B belong to the same ugginir T, and there is a high proportion of their agnatic descendants within the hamlet group. Uginnir group U, that of the orphaned relative brought into A's household, is only represented by a non-resident spouse (household 8), who is unlikely to take up residence within this group. Information
from the senior living members of the group confirmed that the agnatic ancestors from the previous two generations lived within this residential grouping. Thus we have evidence of agnatic or ugginir residential continuity. However it is not possible to trace ugginir ancestry beyond this point. The only information available is that ancestor A was in fact fathered by an Arab, his mother having been captured into slavery as a young girl and subsequently having escaped back to Jebel Meidob whilst pregnant. One can only assume therefore that A's membership of ugginir T was fictional.

Although the children of households 1 to 14 are not included in the kinship diagram, it is obvious that apart from those of households 8 and 13, they will all be members of ugginir T. This can be accounted for by the fact that although there is a high proportion of married daughters, not just sons, resident within the hamlet group, they are all married to agnates, and there will therefore be no change in ugginir affiliation in the next generation (see households 1, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 14). In fact seven of the fourteen households represent marriages between the children of siblings, (households 1, 3, 4, 5, 7, 12 and 13). However it is only father's brother's daughter or father's sister's daughter marriage, and not mother's brother's daughter marriage which guarantees that ugginir membership will be passed on to the grandchildren. Thus we find that in household 13, an example of mother's brother's daughter marriage, any children produced will belong to another ugginir. It is perhaps not insignificant therefore that the spouse was preparing to leave the hamlet and take up residence with her husband elsewhere.
If we look at Cluster B (Figure 8.Bii) we find a similar picture emerges with the dominance of ugginir T. Considering its common origin with Cluster A, this is not surprising. There are however a larger number of members of ugginir U represented, and the children of household 7 (Unit 'k') will represent this patriclan in the next generation. As the kinship diagram shows the bond between these co-residential ugginirs has been strengthened by marriages between the two agnatic groups. (See households 1, 5 and 7 of Cluster B, and household 8 of cluster A). Again we find that several daughters have married and remained resident within the hamlet group. As in Cluster A their spouses are of the same patriclan, and therefore their marriages will not bring children of a different ugginir into the residential group. (See households 6, 10 and 14). A further three marriages (in households 2, 8 and 13) are between more distantly related agnates.

With Cluster C, a third ugginir group, X, is introduced, and it can partly be seen from Figure 8.Cii that the agnatic descendants of C originally dominated this group of hamlets. However, many of their descendants represented by the present households, are either the children of daughters married out of the ugginir, or female agnatic descendants who have themselves married into other patriclans. This means that of those households representing the junior generation, in only twelve out of the seventeen will the children be members of ugginir C. In another two households the children will belong to ugginir T, (households 6 and 7). The male heads of the other three junior households (9, 24 and 25) belong to other ugginir.
If we look at Cluster B (Figure 8.Bii) we find a similar picture emerges with the dominance of uginir T. Considering its common origin with Cluster A, this is not surprising. There are however a larger number of members of uginir U represented, and the children of household 7 (Unit 'k') will represent this patriclan in the next generation. As the kinship diagram shows the bond between these co-residential uginirs has been strengthened by marriages between the two agnic groups. (See households 1, 5 and 7 of Cluster B, and household 8 of cluster A). Again we find that several daughters have married and remained resident within the hamlet group. As in Cluster A their spouses are of the same patriclan, and therefore their marriages will not bring children of a different uginir into the residential group. (See households 6, 10 and 14). A further three marriages (in households 2, 8 and 13) are between more distantly related agnates.

With Cluster C, a third uginir group, X, is introduced, and it can partly be seen from Figure 8.Cii that the agnic descendants of C originally dominated this group of hamlets. However, many of their descendants represented by the present households, are either the children of daughters married out of the uginir, or female agnic descendants who have themselves married into other patriclans. This means that of those households representing the junior generation, in only twelve out of the seventeen will the children be members of uginir C. In another two households the children will belong to uginir T, (households 6 and 7). The male heads of the other three junior households (9, 24 and 25) belong to other uginir.
We can in fact make more sense of these hamlet clusters, and Cluster C in particular, if we view them in terms of the dirria group, that is the group of bilateral descending kindred. Indeed rather than talking in terms of the ugginir the people of this latter group identified themselves as being of dirria C (C being the apical ancestor), as opposed to those of Cluster A who were known collectively as dirria A, and those of Cluster B as dirria B. The fact that the dirria rather than the ugginir was used to identify these three groups may be due to the fact that they only represented sections of the patriclan which had members elsewhere, whereas the dirria was specific to the area. It is true that dirria members had also migrated, but in doing so they did not carry their dirria membership with them to a new area, in the way in which patriclan members had done, thus setting up new clan sections.

The dominance of dirria membership over ugginir membership in Cluster C is perhaps more obvious than in Clusters A and B. In Figure 8.Cii all the members of dirria C are given a common symbol. Of those spouses actually resident in the hamlet group (N=35) twenty-four of 69 per cent belong to dirria C. A further three belong to dirria A, one to dirria B, and for seven other wives brought into the hamlet I have no record of their dirria membership. The important point however is that as long as one of the parents (spouses) identifies with dirria C, the children who remain resident in the Cluster C will similarly recognise their dirria membership.

One of the interesting features of this group of hamlets in Cluster C is the high rate of cousin marriage made possible by the
large number of children which ancestor C left. This is a pre-requisite of dirria formation. Ancestor C had seven wives, and in fact not all his children are shown in the kinship diagram, only those who themselves reside or have children residing in the hamlet cluster. Of the twenty-five households, eleven represent marriages between cousins.

The two important points in strengthening the dirria group in contrast to the ugginir are firstly the ability to maintain the effective ties between brothers and sisters, and this becomes apparent in the high rate of cross-cousin marriage, irrespective of whether the sister's children belong to the same ugginir or not, and secondly the ability to keep daughters as well as sons resident within the hamlet cluster. This generally means that either a husband is found for the daughter within the group, or she remains in her parents' hamlet, with a husband who lives uxorilocally or in non-residential marriage. Both of these solutions generally mean cousin marriage, and a high rate of such alliances is only made possible by the marriage of cross-cousins as well as patrilateral parallel cousins. Thus we find that in Cluster C, seven of the marriages are between cross-cousins (households 6, 8, 12, 13, 15, 18 and 21), one marriage is between the children of half sisters, (household 1), and three between the children of brothers (households 4, 5 and 6).

Turning back to Cluster A (Figure 8.Aii) we find the dominance of dirria A perhaps less obvious than in the last example, for although dirria B is identified with Cluster B, there are several representatives also living in Cluster A. The dominance of dirria A may have been more
obvious in the past, before an out migration of many of its members over the last twenty years to a market village, where they have formed a community of successful merchants. The core of this group were the four sons of a daughter of A. Since their move they have married grand-daughters of A, who following them away from their parental hamlets, have caused further losses to the localised dirria group.

At the present time thirteen of the twenty-two resident spouses identify themselves as dirria A and four as dirria B. It is likely however that the children of the marriages between members of dirrias A and B, as long as they remain resident in Hamlet Cluster A, will identify with the dominant dirria, namely A. Again we find a high percentage of cousin marriage, eight out of the fourteen marriages shown being between cousins, although in this example we find a larger number of marriages between the children of brothers (six in all) than between cross-cousins (only two). This perhaps explains the greater apparent strength of the ugginir ties in comparison with the dirria ones.

The dirria membership of members of Cluster B are shown in Figure 8.Bii. Of the resident spouses (twenty-two in all) twelve belong to dirria B, and a further two to dirria A. The remaining eight identify with other dirria, and only four out of the fourteen households are representative of cousin marriage. In comparison with Cluster C the rate of cousin marriage is low, and the dirria does not dominate the co-residential group to the same extent. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, unlike ancestor A who left ten children
and C who left nineteen children, B only had two sons. Secondly, although there were many more children born in the next generation, more than half were to non virilocally resident wives, so that few grandchildren now remain in the hamlet cluster, the majority residing in two other areas of the Jebel.

I have already pointed out that Clusters A and B originally made up one large village. Their close relationship still finds expression in links of intermarriage. In Cluster A two of the fourteen households represent marriages between dirrias or Clusters A and B, and in Cluster B there are a further two examples of such intermarriage. These alliances are not only symptomatic of the close kin links between the two groups, but are partly the reason for them, and may be characteristic of a certain phase of dirria development.

We know that the ties between ancestors A and B and their respective families were close, although it is not until the second or third generations that we see the relationship expressed in marriages. No dirria can be entirely self sufficient in finding spouses for its members. Turning to neighbouring hamlets with which the link of kinship already exists, seems an obvious solution, with a two way movement of spouses. It is possible that within another generation the dirria will have grown to the extent that it can be in-marrying to a greater extent. However at this stage it is also likely to have divided to form new hamlets and new hamlet clusters which identify with more recent ancestors, and a new set of inter- and intra-dirria ties could become important.
One could perhaps see Clusters A and B as representing a certain stage of residential group fission. The ties which were first effective when they were of one village, such as intermarriage, sharing of common resources of pasture and water, and attending each others festivities, are still effective. But it is also obvious that they now have two separate identities. It is hard to conclude anything along these lines because we are not studying a continuous process of settlement growth, division and regrowth. Any aspect of the developmental cycle of the hamlet cluster has been so affected by ecological changes over the last fifty years that one cannot identify any continuous pattern. However perhaps the conclusion that one could draw from studying the links of the dirria and the ufinir between and within these groups, is that although the actual hamlet group may change, the effective kin ties do not. The hamlet cluster is a unit sensitive to environmental factors, which can respond to changes of a seasonal or more long term nature, such as those associated with the Sahel Zone Drought. It does this by altering the size of its constituent units. However the same ties of kinship remain effective whether they be between kin who share a large village or are dispersed in numerous tiny hamlets. The only difference is, that where one finds small kin groups moving from one hamlet site to another, the actual pattern of residence is a clearer indicator of the effectiveness of kin links, than where one has a large more or less settled village.

Whether dispersed or gathered together in one settlement, the links expressed in the pattern of residence are dominantly those of the
patrician and the bilateral descent group, and the reason for this can partly be explained in terms of inheritance of livestock and access to local resources. The transmission of animal wealth from one generation to the next occurs mostly 'inter vivos', and is concentrated within the agnatic group. With the herds of camels and sheep separate ownership does not always mean division of the herds, and thus one finds a group of agnates whose interests in a common herd keep them in residential proximity. The same is true to a lesser extent in respect to the herds of goats, but here we find the bilateral descent group playing a larger role. The need for young herders puts a greater value on the co-residence of daughters and their children. In return for herding contributions the grandchildren receive a share in their mother's family's herds, with their mother continuing to work alongside and herd with her parents and her siblings. Where we find a predominance of cousin marriage and hamlet group in-marriage there is no contradiction between these two patterns. However where the daughter is married outside the group there is, for her children cannot equally participate in their mother's dirria and their father's agnatic kin group. The usual consequence is therefore a movement of sons in their teens or on marriage, from their mother's to their father's hamlet group, with only the daughters remaining with their mother, and this may only be until they marry.

The rights to use local resources have a similar pattern of dual inheritance. The rights to use a well are generally passed on to the agnatic descendants of the original builder, but where
daughters continue to participate in the parental family group, they also maintain their rights of access, which they can pass on to their children. Where the daughter has married within the hamlet group her children will often inherit rights to the same well through both parents. However where her husband is outside the group, and her sons' main inheritance also comes from outside, they will have to look to their agnatic group for watering rights in respect to these animals. The effect of this is a general concentration of agnates and dirria members within reach of wells to which they have a common claim, and the co-residence within one hamlet group of those who share a 'rope' in a well thus watering their animals together. These two patterns are reinforced by the in-marrying nature of the ugginir and dirria groups.

The rights to use other sources of water are not quite as rigid. Although each hamlet cluster has traditional rights to use the various sources of water which remain for a limited period of time after the rains, these can be shared by others who live within reach of them. They are not physically made by any group, and there can therefore be no claims for priority of use. The same applies over the use of pasture land. Each area of settlement traditionally grazes within a particular area, but as the migration of units 'a', 'e', 'f' and 'g' of Cluster A demonstrates, there is nothing to stop the exploitation of different areas of pasture, as long as there is reasonable access to local sources of water.

The third important resource is that of farmland, but this has little bearing on the pattern of residence. This is because the
majority of farms (for people living in Aicho) are made on the plains on the northern edge of the hills, over a day's walk away. Even with local farmland there is little pressure on the use of land, with new areas available for cultivation when needed. The choice of settlement site does not therefore take into account the availability of farmland, and people who farm together do not necessarily live together.

The third kinship group which I have not yet considered in relation to the pattern of settlement is that of the matriclan or tertii group. Tertii are dispersed throughout Dar Meidob, and one would expect little correspondence with the pattern of residence. However if we look at the three hamlet groups in Figures 8.Aiii, 8.Biii and 8.Ciii certain interesting features are revealed. Due to the high rate of polygyny, and the fact that the different wives of one man and therefore the half siblings automatically belong to different tertii, or at least different tertii-n unal we find a new set of meaningful ties which cross cut those of the ugginir and dirria. If we look at Cluster A for example, in relation to tertii iv, we find an additional set of links which help explain the close co-operation between the hamlet units 'a', 'e' and 'f'. The dead husband of household 9 is the mother's brother of the wife of household 1, and there is also a less direct link with the wife of household 12 and her daughter.
I have presented this and other kinship diagrams following the description of several informants as to the way in which hamlet members were related. This was in terms of the main ancestors and their respective children and grand-children, and of the way in which they were linked through marriage. However, by looking deeper into tertí membership patterns it is possible to throw further light on the close relationship that exists between certain hamlet members, especially women. In Cluster B for example I noted that the wives of households 1, 2, 5, 6, 13 and 14 formed a close unit in various contexts, visiting weddings and funerals together and often being found in each other's company. By noting their respective tertí membership it was obvious that they belonged to one matriclan, and the sisters of households 1 and 5 turned out to be linked through their mothers to the grandmother of Unit 'm'.

Despite the presence of at least sixteen matriclans throughout Dar Meidob, hamlet group membership does indicate a certain concentration of two or three tertí in each of the residential groups. This is partly due to the co-residence of mothers and daughters. (In Cluster A see household 2 and the daughters in households 3, 4 and 5, household 9 and the daughters in households 10 and 11. In Cluster B see the three generational female family in households 11, 12, 13 and 14, and in Cluster C the mother and two daughters in households 23, 24, and 25 for some examples). A second factor encouraging the concentration of tertí members is the quite frequent occurrence of marriages by men and women with their pan-terti
(father's tertia). Through marrying back into the father's matriclan the marriage alliance between tertia is repeated over generations, and where the new household is established in the parental hamlet the matrilineally related group is enlarged. The most direct form of this is marriage to the father's sister's daughter or the father's sister's son, such as the marriages of household 13 in Cluster A, that of household 10 in Cluster B, and households 8 and 15 in Cluster C. The link between spouses may not always be quite as direct however, as the marriage of household 11 in Cluster A demonstrates.

In conclusion it would seem that in every cluster or group of neighbouring hamlets there exists a complex network of kin ties, those of the ugginiir, dirria and tertia, and each of these forms a different layer of association. Those of the ugginiir and tertia continue beyond the limits of the hamlet cluster, linking it to neighbouring hamlets and kin who have moved further afield, whereas the identity of the dirria rarely stretches beyond a certain limited locality. It is difficult and perhaps futile to separate these layers as I have tried to do, and to analyse the meaning of, and effect on, residence of these different groupings. Perhaps what is more important is to recognise that together they form multiple links between family units, which are effective even in a situation of residential fluidity and minimal co-residence, such as we find in this area of Dar Meidob for much of the year.
Roman numerals indicate Terti group membership.

FIGURE 8AIII. TERTI LINKS WITHIN STAMEN CLUSTER A.
Roman numerals indicate Test group membership.

FIGURE B8III  
TEST LINES WITHIN TRAMLET CLUSTER B
Roman numerals indicate tertii group membership.

FIG 8C(iii) TERTII LINKS WITHIN TERTII CLUSTER C.
MAP 3. MIGRATION PATHS OF FAMILY HERDING UNITS

KEY
- HAMLET
- WELLS
- GELTI
- VOLCANIC MOUNTAINS
- MAJOR WADIS
- MIGRATION PATH OF FAMILY HERDING UNITS

KILOMETRES

AW/NOL WELLS

HAMLET WELLS GELTI VOLCANIC MOUNTAINS MAJOR WADIS MIGRATION PATH OF FAMILY HERDING UNITS KILOMETRES
FIGURE 8.2 MOVEMENT OF FAMILY HERDING UNITS BETWEEN HAMLET SITES
CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

The Meidob kinship system presents us with certain problems and complexities, in that one finds the recognition of three different types of kinship group, and perhaps what is more unusual in this cultural area dominated by Islam, the dual recognition of matriclans and patriclans. It would seem that there are two approaches that one can adopt to understand such a system. The first is the historical approach, which explains the development and role of kin groups in terms of external influences and internal adaptations. The second is to look at the role which these different groups play in present day society. The former approach cannot be entirely neglected, and in fact one cannot fully understand the present system without some insight into the effects of Islam on changing patterns of succession to office, inheritance and payment of dia, (as outlined in Chapter 2). However what is perhaps more valuable is to look at the way certain groups are conceptualised and function in contemporary society. It is this latter approach that I have adopted in my thesis through a study of kinship, marriage and residence.

In this analysis I am perhaps subject to criticism through my concentration on the lower levels of social organisation, the household, the extended family and the hamlet cluster, and a relative neglect of higher levels of political organisation. My defence of this is that through involvement in every day village
life this is how I observed the system to work, and that it is only through an understanding of relations within the family and the closely knit co-residential group, that one can understand the foundations on which the larger kin groups are based.

The problems that seemed to present themselves in understanding this system were firstly, how could the conflicting pulls of patrilineal and matrilineal descent co-exist, when the former had gained a monopoly in so many spheres of contemporary life, and secondly, how to explain the existence of recognised groups of descending kindred within a society which stresses patrilineal descent and the co-residence of agnates. I was also particularly concerned to understand the ways in which kinship ties operated in such a highly segmented and fluid population, and the apparently anomalous situation whereby many wives seemed to live apart from their husbands. I hoped to do this by tracing the role of the ugginir, terti and dirria within different spheres of social action.

In the second part of my thesis (Chapters 3 and 4), through looking at the choice of marriage partners and other aspects of marriage histories, some of these problems are solved, through an understanding gained into the ways that the patriclan, matriclan and descending kindred groups come into effect. The choice of marriage partner, for example, provides a very useful tool through which one can analyse the functioning of kin ties. The figures demonstrate how despite an emphasis on the importance of patrilateral parallel cousin marriage, the persistence of cross-
cousin marriage means that the most actively in-marrying group is the dirria and not the ugginir. This finding perhaps has relevance for other Islamic societies which have similar patterns of cousin marriage but which stress patrifiliation, for it seems highly probable that the potential would exist for similar bilateral descent groups to develop. The only difference in the Meidob system would seem to be the actual recognition of such groups, a recognition which is emphasised in the way in which marriages are described in terms of dirria membership, when they are at the same time between more distant ugginir kin. The marriage figures also confirm the exogamous nature of the matriclans and tertì-n unal in particular, but as I pointed out further on, repeated marriages between tertì and the strength of the mother-daughter tie mean that localised groups of matrikin can and do develop.

By looking at actual marriage histories it becomes obvious that one of the key factors in explaining the apparent anomalies of the kinship system is that of polygyny. In that first marriages usually culminate in virilocal residence this allows for agnatic continuity and perpetuation of the localised ugginir, at the expense of the bride leaving her family. In second marriages however the spouse often remains in her parental hamlet, thus allowing for the maintenance of cognatic links and the development of the dirria. This separate residence of co-wives would seem to be partly in response to the reduction in settlement size, and it is interesting to postulate what the effect on the kinship
structure might be, with a higher incidence of sedentary households in large villages, and an increased emphasis on the co-residential polygynous family. By understanding the role which the married non-residential daughter and her children play in terms of her family of origin, it becomes obvious that such separate residence plays an important role in family development. The marriage histories also demonstrate how marriage does not involve a sudden change of residence even for senior wives, and how ties with the family of origin continue to dominate for many years.

This question of the residential implications of marriage, and its effect on uuginir, terti and dirria development is pursued in greater detail in the third section on residence, in Chapters 5 and 6, which deal with synchronic and diachronic aspects respectively. Through looking at residence and the co-operative unit it becomes obvious that the working bond between brother and sister plays a vital role. Equally important to the co-operative unit is the presence of young children, of both co-resident sons and daughters. Thus we have a system which could not function if residential arrangements did not allow for a certain persistence of the cognatic group. A second interesting fact revealed in looking at patterns of co-operation and co-residence concerns the boundaries of male and female working groups. When co-operation involves hamlet members it is women, especially matri-kin, who work together. However in terms of economic co-operation the effective terti group is limited to co-resident hamlet members. In contrast men's co-operative groups exist beyond hamlet boundaries and the effective uuginir group is much larger.
In looking at residential changes in terms of the developmental cycle we gain a deeper insight into the functioning of male and female bonds, especially the ties of mother-daughter and father-son. Looked at synchronically the maintenance of the former seem almost as important as the latter, so that tertii links would appear to be as persistent as ugginir ones. However looked at diachronically the latter undoubtedly dominate. With co-residential marriage the stress is on virilocal residence, and although non-residential established marriages allow for the perpetuation of tertii links and dirria development, these matrilineal links cannot be maintained for more than a few generations, as the dirria has a limited development span.

Through understanding the various types of family developmental cycle one can therefore understand the co-existence of these apparently contradictory kinship groupings. The different roles which they have to play are however perhaps more clearly seen when we look at rights over and responsibilities towards children, especially in respect to fostering. It is the child's father and the immediate agnatic group which has the strongest rights over, and which bears the ultimate responsibility towards its children, and it is the father's agnates who have the duty to look after a child when his father dies. However in the voluntary fostering situation it is the female tertii kin who are most active. Rather than reflecting kin rights in children this voluntary movement of offspring serves as an important bonding factor, in reaffirming the links of matrilineal kinship.
For agnates such links are reaffirmed through the marriages of their children. Thus the female tertii and male ugginir kin reflect the role of the mother and father respectively, and the way they express rights over their children is instructive in understanding the basis of development of these two groups.

The final section of this thesis on the hamlet and hamlet cluster helps to solve the fourth of my initial problems, that is how kinship ties work in a highly segmented and fluid population. By looking at the kin ties that operate within a neighbourhood of small hamlets it is possible to identify some of the factors which hold the constituent households together, and which give the group a common identity. At first analysis I had expected the ugginir group to be dominant, due to patrilineal inheritance of livestock and resources. However detailed analysis of the three hamlet clusters showed that although long term residential continuity is more strictly patrilineal, the dirria is more central to local identity. To explain the dominance of groups of descending kindred one has to turn back to the question of marriage patterns. The development of the dirria depends on the ability to keep daughters as well as sons within the local community, either by finding husbands within the group, or by having daughters remain in the parental hamlet in non-residential or uxorilocal residence. Both these solutions result in cousin marriage, and it is the dominance of cross-cousin marriage, irrespective of ugginir membership, which ensures the development of the dirria rather than a more strictly patrilineal group. Analysis
of these hamlet clusters also demonstrates the importance of tertii links to the localised group, especially the women.

The question remains as to what relevance these findings have to an understanding of other societies, especially within this cultural area. The first point I would stress is that in looking at societies which are described as patrilineal or matri-lineal one should not ignore the fact that other forms of kinship grouping, whose importance can only be understood by detailed analysis of the actual working of kinship ties, may well exist. The second point is that the Meidob kinship system is representative of a certain stage of development in terms of Islamic influence. An understanding of the present role of matrilineality and patri-lineality may therefore be highly relevant to other societies at present coming under the influence of Islam. One such group is that of the Nyaro Nuba of Nyaro, Kao and Fungor in the southeastern corner of Kordofan Province in the Sudan, as described by Nadel (1950:330-359) and Faris (1968:45-57). These Nuba peoples are like the Meidob in their dual recognition of matri- and patri-clans, and a stress on virilocal residence. Like the tertii, their matriclans are exogamous and share a collective responsibility in blood feud. However their patriclans are also exogamous and inheritance of property is in both lines. The most interesting point is that although at present all animals pass in the matriline, the current generation of animal owners are discussing Arab inheritance patterns, and the Omda of the three groups, who has
been converted to Islam, 'may uphold patrilineal transmission of animals in future' (Faris, 1968:50). It is possible to predict from the Meidob model that this may be but one of many changes in terms of the different roles that the kin groups may fulfil in the future.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Matriclan (T. Terti) Meidob Name</th>
<th>Totem (where known)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arangiddi</td>
<td>Baboon (T. tamati)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesetti</td>
<td>Large Ant (T. arni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irdiddi</td>
<td>Insect (T. kundikundika)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pologiddi</td>
<td>Sun (T. passar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukudi Sulgi</td>
<td>Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukudi Kerr</td>
<td>Snake (T. kosar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uringi</td>
<td>Ant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgudi</td>
<td>Haraz Tree (T. oori)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirgiddi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukukudi</td>
<td>Monkey (T. tani)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toesal</td>
<td>Cow (T. toe)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurka</td>
<td>Crow (T. korar) (Clan of Fur descendants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akarti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teyngiddi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 This is not a complete list of all the Meidob matriclans. It only includes those tertii whose names were frequently heard during fieldwork and whose members were included in the census sample. Arkell (MSS) records the existence of other matriclans.
Appendix 1  Meidob Matriclans

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<tr>
<th>Matriclan (T. Terti) Meidob Name</th>
<th>Totem (where known)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tesetti</td>
<td>Large Ant (T. arni)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irdiddi</td>
<td>Insect (T. kundikundika)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pologiddi</td>
<td>Sun (T. passar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukudi Sulgi</td>
<td>Fox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukudi Kerr</td>
<td>Snake (T. kosar)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uringi</td>
<td>Ant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urgudi</td>
<td>Haraz Tree (T. oori)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirgiddi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tukukudi</td>
<td>Monkey (T. tani)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Toesal</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kurka</td>
<td>Crow (T. korar) (Clan of Fur descendants)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akarti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teyngiddi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 This is not a complete list of all the Meidob matriclans. It only includes those tertis whose names were frequently heard during fieldwork and whose members were included in the census sample. Arkell (MSS) records the existence of other matriclans.
### Appendix 2  MEIDOB KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consanguineal kin</th>
<th>Meidob (Urrti Dialect)</th>
<th>Meidob (Kargeddi Dialect where different)</th>
<th>Relatives included when used as term of address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Father's father</td>
<td>uba</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Any male in grandfather's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's mother</td>
<td>awa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Any female in grandmother's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's father</td>
<td>uba</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's mother</td>
<td>awa</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father</td>
<td>aba</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's brother</td>
<td>aja</td>
<td>anja</td>
<td>Male relative of father, of father's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's sister</td>
<td>anya</td>
<td>anyiti</td>
<td>Female relative of father, of father's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>iya</td>
<td>ma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's brother</td>
<td>tiJa</td>
<td>tisiti</td>
<td>Male relative of mother, of mother's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's sister</td>
<td>engecha</td>
<td>engeshiti</td>
<td>Female relative of mother, of mother's generation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brother (full or half)</td>
<td>eshi</td>
<td>eneshi/enshi</td>
<td>Man of same age (especially cousin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister (full or half)</td>
<td>erka</td>
<td>ensheddi</td>
<td>Woman of same age. (especially cousin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder sibling</td>
<td>ersi</td>
<td>syedi</td>
<td>Elder man or woman (same generation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Younger sibling</td>
<td>pesi</td>
<td>syditi</td>
<td>Younger man or woman (same generation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's brother's son/daughter</td>
<td>aja-n oochi</td>
<td>anja-n ooshi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's sister's son/daughter</td>
<td>anya-n oochi</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's brother's son/daughter</td>
<td>tiJa-n oochi</td>
<td>tisa-n ooshi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother's sister's son/daughter</td>
<td>engecha-n oochi</td>
<td>engesh-a-n ooshi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son/Child</td>
<td>oochi</td>
<td>ooshedi</td>
<td>Any child of younger generation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>enichi-n oochi</td>
<td>eshi-n ooshi</td>
<td>(especially siblings' children).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sister's child</td>
<td>asi</td>
<td>asiti</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter's child</td>
<td>oochi</td>
<td>ooshedi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son's son</td>
<td>asi</td>
<td>ooshedi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son's daughter</td>
<td>aisi</td>
<td>ooshedi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter's son</td>
<td>aisi-n oochi</td>
<td>asi-n ooshi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Affinal Kin

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term (Meidob, Urrti Dialect)</th>
<th>Term (Meidob, Kargeddi Dialect, where different)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Husband: man</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father of the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wife: woman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother of the children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father-in-law (m/f speaking)</td>
<td>(grandfather of the children)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(grandmother of the children)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son-in-law (m. speaking)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Son-in-law (f. speaking)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daughter-in-law (m/f speaking)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Husband's other wife.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Father's other wife.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terms</td>
<td>Terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sing.</td>
<td>Sing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed/et</td>
<td>oosheddi-n (a) ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oochenn (a) ba</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iddi</td>
<td>oosheddi-n ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oochenn iya</td>
<td>ooshi-n uba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oochenn uba</td>
<td>ooshi-n uba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oochenn aw</td>
<td>ooshi-n aw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>asi-n et</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>owdi</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kan-iddi</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pergeddi</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pan-iddi</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(from uban-n iddi)
ARKELL PAPERS (Rev. Dr. A.J. Arkell). Notes and Photographs concerning the Meidob, in File 26, Box 6, First Batch. School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London.


PLATE 1: Typical Aicho hamlet site showing houses and goat pens situated on the valley side.

PLATE 2: Watering the family herds at a gelti (rock pool) in the Aicho area.
PLATE 3: Watering the goats and sheep from a tamad during the wet season. Water has been reached in this wadi bed by digging down about 1½ metres.

PLATE 4: Women and donkeys laden with water skins head back to the hamlet from the wells, bringing water for the houses and young animals.
PLATE 5: Wedding celebrations. Women dance and men prepare to race their camels.

PLATE 6: Building a small house for the young bride.