MICHAEL J. CASIMIR

GROWING UP IN A PASTORAL SOCIETY

Socialisation among Pashtu Nomads in Western Afghanistan

KÖLNER ETHNOLOGISCHE BEITRÄGE
Herausgegeben von Michael J. Casimir

Heft 33

2010

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MICHAEL J. CASIMIR

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Dedicated to the nomads of the Shoraw and their children — and to all the boys and girls of Afghanistan in the hope that they may enjoy greater peace, security, and justice, and work for the common good.

and

To the memory of Bernt Glatzer

(1942-2009)

PREFACE

For many reasons, publication of this description and analysis of the socialisation process among the Pashtu nomads of western Afghanistan is considerably overdue. The fieldwork was carried out already in the late 1970s. The present booklet grew out of an article originally written for an edited book that finally became too long and was withdrawn. Once again, it took a long time to partly rewrite and expand it. Nevertheless, even some thirty years after the fieldwork, I think that the data presented here are still valid for three reasons: First, it can be supposed that many of the patterns in the way in which children grow up in a Pashtu nomad camp in western Afghanistan have not changed dramatically — despite the terrible events and socio-political changes that the country has gone through since 1979. Second, even if these dramatic changes have influenced and altered many or some of the values and norms on which the socialisation process is grounded, the information presented here can be understood as a document describing how it was 'once upon a time'. Finally, the information might also be useful for future cross-cultural and comparative studies on the socialisation process in different societies because very little information is available on nomadic pastoral societies.

The fieldwork in Afghanistan, sponsored by the German Research Foundation (DFG), to which we are most grateful, was carried out together with Bernt Glatzer over a period of about ten months during the winter of 1975/76 and the summer of 1977 in the districts of Bala Boluk (Farah Rud) and Shindand in the province of Farah. The data analysed and communicated here were collected either personally or, because our language capacities were not good enough for more detailed interviews and discussions, through the assistance of our friends and counterparts Mohammad Saber, Hedayat Hedayatullah and Mohammad Azim Safi who also helped us in many other ways. We are most grateful to all three of them.

The transcription of Pashtu terms follows the rules of the 'Library of Congress' with the exception of persons' names for which diacritical signs are not used.

Michael J. Casimir

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1 INTRODUCTION

Paradise lies under the feet of the mothers
e.g. Shihāb al-Ahbar, Hadith 82

Enculturation and socialisation can be understood as processes of internalising and accumulating knowledge and capacities that develop from simpler to increasingly complex cognitive structures and behavioural patterns. This Piagetian 'genetic epistemology model' of adaptation in early childhood through assimilation and accommodation enables the growing child to interact with his or her natural and social environment in such a way that the next stage and/or level can develop, once a particular equilibrium has been reached. Piaget termed this series of cognitive structures 'schemata'. 'Learning, according to Piaget, involves the construction, organisation and alteration of existing schemata to form new schemata that incorporate more complex cognitive sequences at the action, symbolic, and operational levels of development' (Schiamberg 1970: 114-115; see also Jahoda and Lewis 1988). These phases of cognitive development have been proven to be universal in their sequence, but can be shorter or longer depending on the child's specific cultural environment. By supporting and amplifying the process through training, the next stage can be reached at an earlier time than the average at which the pattern emerges in the majority of children, or it can be delayed if the environment does not provide the relevant cues (*décalage*).

To analyse enculturation and socialisation in a child's early years, we first have to know the culture-specific values, and these are intertwined, in turn, with the worldview of the adults. We must also observe the behavioural patterns corresponding to the child's age and sex/gender. Furthermore, we have to understand the emic concepts of what we call 'enculturation' and 'socialisation' that guide the behaviour of the child's attachment figures and caregivers towards him or her, and we have to know which knowledge, capacities and skills will be desired and expected when the years of childhood are over.

In the following, I shall draw on the example of the enculturation and socialisation process in a nomad pastoral community in western Afghanistan. I shall describe and discuss the interaction patterns between caregivers and children and the culture-specific values and norms governing these interactions, and discuss the process of cultural learning that prepares the child for a life as a mobile Afghan herder. I shall consider the inculcation of culture- and group-specific norms and values as well as the gender-specific skills that a nomadic pastoralist has to learn to cope successfully with the larger Afghan society. I shall conclude with some general remarks on the problem of formalised schooling education and pastoral nomadic populations.

30B Cultural Learning, Enculturation, Socialisation and Education: Some Terminological Considerations

Both ‘enculturation’ and ‘socialisation’ refer to cultural learning and to the intergenerational transfer of non-genetic information. However, a differentiation is possible and necessary. Influenced by the Culture and Personality debate, Herskovitz coined the term ‘enculturation’ in 1948. The exact meaning of this term and how it differs from the term ‘socialisation’ have been discussed for many years. As part of the general process of ontogenetic development, the term ‘enculturation’ was used mainly by anthropologists. While it relates to the process of learning, ‘there is not necessarily anything deliberate or didactic about the process; often there is learning without specific teaching’ (Berry *et al.* 2002: 29). Even in the 1970s, Mayer’s (1970: xiii) definition of ‘socialisation’ — which relates to the process of the inculcation of norms and values and of knowledge about social behaviour patterns that enable a child, later in life, to perform given social roles as well as to learn culture- and role-specific skills — did not mention how this process takes place. It was, for instance, only quite recently that a more unifying concept became established that took emotional arousal into account and linked it to the different features of childrearing practices (Quinn 2005; for a historical overview of socialisation studies in anthropology, see Schwartzmann 2001).

The term ‘socialisation’, used mainly in sociology (e.g. by Emile Durkheim and Talcott Parsons; see Blasche 1973) and social psychology, relates specifically to the process of the ‘deliberate shaping, by way of tutelage of the individual’ (Berry *et al*. 2002: 30, cf. also Mead 1963; Shimahara 1970). A further differentiation of the socialisation process was then addressed through the term ‘re-socialisation’. Here, the cultural transmission of group-specific knowledge, social behaviour patterns and skills takes place via influences coming from outside a given culture or group. In sum, the process of cultural/social[1] learning in all human societies was and is considered to proceed through a mixture of enculturation, socialisation and, in times of globalisation, more and more by re-socialisation.

There is a further relationship between the concept of ‘socialisation’ and the term ‘education’, the latter referring to that part of a child’s socialisation in which cultural learning takes place through a formalised program organised by schooling institutions. Whereas the processes of enculturation and socialisation are phases in the life of all humans in all groups

[1] There is still some confusion in the differentiation between ‘cultural’ and ‘social’. Here ‘culture’ or ‘cultural’ relates to all processes and phenomena that are based on innovation (by invention or diffusion) and tradition — the intergenerational transfer of non-genetic information. Social values, norms and behaviour patterns are part of a given group’s culture. The process of enculturation and/or socialisation concerns this non-genetic transfer of information — *that which* is transferred, the content, is culture.

and societies, formal education is typical for ‘developed’ societies, with literacy, an elaborate division of labour and a broad range of role specialisations aiming at a basic consensus related to the norms of the ‘burger’ and ‘citizenship’ (Seymoor-Smith 1986: 90).

2 THE WEST AFGHAN NURZAY PASHTUNS

The pastoral nomads in this study are Durrani Pashtuns belonging to the Badrzay and Milarzay subtribes of the Nurzay clan. From September to April, they stay in the Dasht-e Shoraw steppe (33°06' N, 62°25' E), a region situated at about 1260 m some 15 km to the southeast of Shindand (West Afghanistan) between the Koh-e Anjuman, Koh-e Naratu and Koh-e Shotur Mountains and the Herat-Kandahar paved highway (Fig. 1).

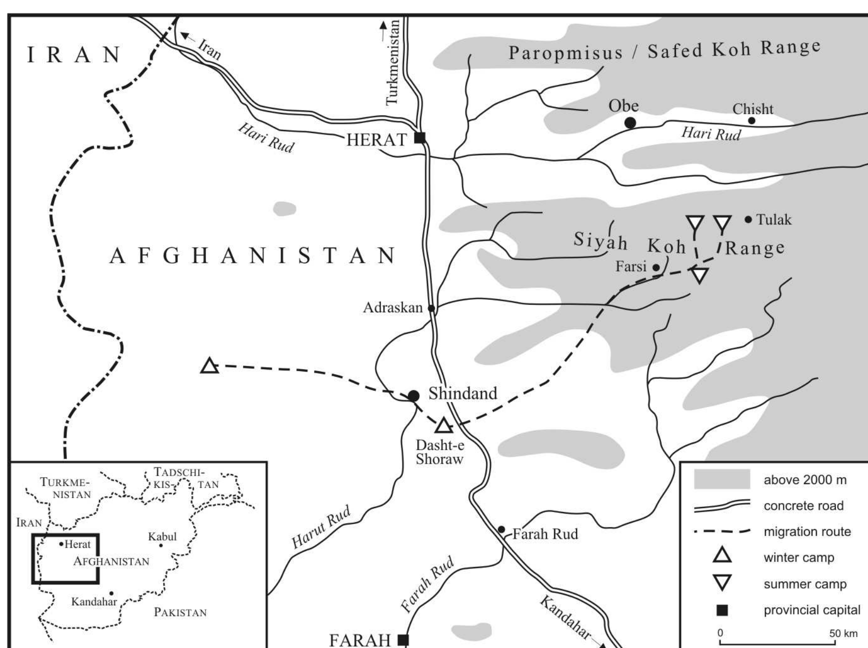

Fig.1
Migration routes of the nomadic Nurzay Pashtuns in western Afghanistan (adapted from Glatzer and Casimir 1983).

The nearest point recording climatic data is the Shindand Meteorological Station where records began only in 1976. These show an average annual rainfall of 198 mm. An interpolation, using data from two more stations — Herat in the north and Farah in the south of the Pashtuns’ winter area, but lying in about the same climatic zone — yields a theoretical average annual rainfall of 159.8 mm for the area with an extreme interannual variability. Between January and March and again between September and December, temperatures can be as low as about –10^{0}C. They can be as high as about 30°C before these nomads leave the Dasht-e Shoraw. During April, they migrate towards the mountainous northeastern corner of the province of Farah and remain in the area of Farsi Tulak (2000 m to 2500 m above sea level) until between mid-August and mid-September when they return to their winter pastures (Fig. 1). Although no statistical climate data were available for this summer area, our own observations showed that between the middle of May and the middle of August, when the

nomads were staying in the mountains of the Siyah Koh Range, night temperatures were between 10°C and 20°C, and the daily maximum could reach 45°C in July and August (for further information, see Casimir *et al.* 1980).

The Badrzay and Milarzay are bilingual, speaking Pashtu as well as a western variant of Persian, and they adhere to the Sunni denomination of Islam. Pashtuns believe themselves to be patrilineal descendants of an apical ancestor whose sons and grandsons were the founding fathers of all Pashtun clans and subtribes. In West Afghanistan, Pashtun clans and subtribes do not form corporate groups, despite a notion that all patrilineal descent groups at various levels ought to be represented by chiefs (*khān*) (Glatzer 1977: 137-184). Political leaders or ambitious pretenders operate from bases in the sedentary population. Only near provincial or sub-provincial centres, like Shindand, do *khānān* succeed in gaining influence among nomads. They build a constituency by advocating the nomads' interests before the state administration, particularly in cases of pasture disputes. Nomads, fearing that access to pasture may be endangered (for details, see Glatzer 1992), tend to become clients of a *khān* who resides near an administrative centre and who is known for his influence with local officials. Kinship ties between *khān* and client are not necessary, but they are helpful. The client does not pay for or otherwise compensate the *khān*'s services, but in cases of conflict, clients are expected to show at least passive solidarity with the *khān.* At the level of the camp, there is only one political position: that of the *sarkhel.* Each spring, the herding units regroup, establish themselves formally and elect one representative *(sarkhēl)* for the coming year. As a rule, his is the richest (in livestock) household of the unit, for one of his duties is to host all the unit's visitors. He is spokesman for the group to the outside world, but has no right to make decisions for others. Decisions relevant to the whole unit, as when and where to migrate, are reached by consensus at informal meetings in which all male adults can take part.

The Nurzay live all year round in black tents of goat hair of the Durrani type (Ferdinand 1959/60). For transportation, they use up to four camels per household. They breed the camels themselves and also make use of the camels' wool. A few transport their goods and families in trucks over greater distances, but all still use their camels for shorter movements in the periods between the long migrations. Camels are also used for transporting their products to the villages and markets, and are leased to villagers for agricultural transportation.

2.1 The Social Environment

Pashtun nomads in general, and the Nurzay in particular, do not consider themselves as a distinct ethnic group, but rather as belonging to the Pashtun majority of Afghanistan, which is

mainly agricultural and sedentary. For the nomads, pastoralism is an occupational specialisation that implies no social distinction from the rest of society. Being producers of livestock and animal products with a market orientation, they are involved in manifold relationships with agricultural villages and bazaars. They produce little for their own immediate consumption, however, and have to obtain the greater part of their consumer goods, particularly agricultural goods and textiles, externally. To a small extent, these goods are obtained by barter for animal products; the larger part is purchased with cash obtained from the sale of pastoral products (Casimir 1991a, b; Glatzer and Casimir 1983).

Social relations with sedentary populations go far beyond mere economic relations, and their nature depends partly on existing kinship ties. The western Afghan nomads classify themselves into two categories: those with relatively strong kinship and other ties to villages, called *watanī māldār* ('animal owner of his native land'); and those who do not use the same winter pasture every year and maintain neither consanguineous nor affinal ties with the villagers of the region, called *kuchi māldār* ('wandering animal owner'). Both types are migrant herders living with their families in transportable dwellings and permanently in reach of their herds. More numerous are the *watanī māldār*, who are tied to the local sedentary population by manifold kinship relations. They consider their winter area as their *watan,* their 'homeland', and are believed to have originated from the local village population. Each *watanī māldār* calls a certain village the home of his ancestors, or his birth place. From there he prefers to choose spouses for his children and he would also prefer to settle there if forced to give up nomadism. There is also an oscillation of personnel between the sedentary and the nomadic sectors. In times of ecological crisis (droughts, extremely severe winters, epidemics), the *watanī māldār* show a tendency towards sedentarisation in their 'home village'. This happened, for instance, in the drought years of 1971/72. In prosperous years, however, when climatic conditions for animal husbandry are advantageous, the general trend is towards nomadisation with members of prosperous families diversifying their economy through mobile animal husbandry or the re-nomadisation of those household members who have spent the critical period in the village.

Economic relations between sedentary and nomadic families do not necessarily run along kinship lines. One sells one's herd products wherever one can obtain the highest prices and where transportation is not too distant; one buys agricultural products where the quality-price ratio is most advantageous (for a list of goods exchanged with the sedentary sector, see Glatzer and Casimir 1983, Table 6).

2.2 Camp Composition and Herding

Herd animals (*māl*) are the property of a household. Small stock are marketed, milked, sheared and sometimes slaughtered by their owners for their own household use and profit. It is useful to have a core or basic herd (*ramah*), comprised of one-year-old and older fertile female sheep and goats. These are not for sale, but form the basis for breeding; they also provide milk and wool, the raw materials for various important products in the household budget. With few exceptions, male animals are castrated about six months after birth and sold. Only about ten males are kept for breeding, this being considered enough for a basic herd of 500. Male animals, even when kept for breeding, are not counted among the basic herd. The size of the *ramah* is calculated exclusively by the number of female animals aged one year and above.

A nomad household in West Afghanistan usually consists of a nuclear family — more rarely of a fraternal joint or extended family — and averages 5.3 members. Several households cooperate as herding units, pooling their livestock to arrive at a herd size of between 450 and 600 sheep and goats. Below this range, it is difficult to hire a shepherd (*chopān*), because he is paid 10 per cent of the lambs and kids that are born and survive for a year. Also, as Swidler (1972: 74) points out, sheep seem difficult to herd in small flocks. Since the number of livestock an individual household owns changes constantly, the size of the common herd is unstable. In order to maintain an optimum herd size, the composition of herding units has to be rearranged from time to time. Each spring, the herding units are reconstituted, though such arrangements may also take place throughout the year. In the winter of 1975/76, the camp in the Dasht-e Shoraw started with eleven households. After two months it split, with some households joining other camps and others taking in newcomers. During the eighteen months of our research, we found the initial eleven households had, in various combinations with other households, formed twelve different camps. By the time we left, our eleven households were living in four different camps, totalling twenty-six households. The criteria according to which herding units and camps group and regroup are primarily economic; secondary in relevance are kinship ties. Fathers, sons and brothers tend to stay in the same herding unit as long as conditions permit. However, we never met any herding units consisting exclusively of close agnates. All herding units possess some households having no, or only remote, kinship ties with other unit members. Outside the circle of primary and secondary agnatic kin, matrilateral and affinal kinship are equally important for local group formation (for details, see Glatzer 1996a).

From April to mid-August, the herding unit hires a special shepherd (*lǝ̄rba*) for the lambs and kids. Another man (*sarwān*) is hired to care for the camels. Normally, except for

the assistants (*waṛigaṛey*), who are related to the households and are sent out consecutively for the night to assist the shepherd (*chopān*), these men are not recruited from among the households owning the herd, on the suspicion that they would favour animals from their own households.

2.3 Household Composition, Labour Capacity and Wealth

Most scholars of nomadic pastoral economies agree that 'herd size or wealth is adjusted to the demand of labour available and the consumption demands of the tent' (Bates 1973: 169). Indeed, 'unlike some other forms of production, animal husbandry is directly affected by the amount and quality of labour invested' (Beck 1980: 337; see also Irons 1972, Konczaki 1978; for a detailed analysis of the situation among the Nurzay, see Glatzer and Casimir 1983). But studies on pastoral production vary in their reports on the relative amount of work different categories of household members contribute. Bates (1973: 181), for example, holds that among the Yörük, 'the number of adolescent males, females, and children (ages 8-16, 0-7 respectively) does not correlate on a significant level with variations in wealth when taken alone.' Other authors stress the importance of children's work in pastoral societies (e.g. Bolton *et al.* 1976; ODI n.d.; Rao 1998: 102-110). Barth (1964) depicts Basseri women as mere consumers, whereas Schinkel (1970) attributes the lion's share in productive labour to women in East African pastoral societies.

Among the Nurzay, tasks differ between men and women. Male labour is connected mainly to herding (i.e. animal care) and dealings with the world beyond the household. Women's labour includes milking, processing animal products, preparing food, producing textile work (e.g. weaving tent cloth and carpets), pitching tents and infant care (e.g. Fig. 2; see also Tapper 1977).

Fig. 2
Women's work: Cleaning kitchen utensils and bathing children.

The sexual division of labour, is, however, not absolute. In the absence of women, men can and do perform some women's work; but girls or women never work as shepherds or assistant shepherds, because these tasks would keep them outdoors overnight — unthinkable in this part of the world. Women do, however, help care for stock animals on cold winter nights when the animals are kept in the tents. In the spring, lambs and kids are also kept in the tents and have to be brought daily to their individual mothers for nursing. During March and April, this work keeps men, women and children busy every day. For the household economy as a whole, women's work is no less important than men's work, but in the herding sector, the labour portion of women is clearly less than that of men. However, overall, it can be said that among the nomads (as in so many 'traditional societies'), the lion's share of work is performed by the women. Men are quite aware of that fact — as Babu Benares, one of the elders, one day said: 'Among us, women and children do most of the work' and when asked about the most important qualities and capacities a girl must have if marriage is discussed, it was said unanimously that bodily strength to perform hard work is the most important factor.

3 THE CAMP, THE HOUSEHOLDS AND THE CHILDREN

As already mentioned, camp composition is highly flexible for a variety of reasons (for a detailed analysis, see Glatzer 1996a). In the ten months we spent with the Nurzay, no less than twelve fusions and fissions took place in the camp. In principle, there were 109 people belonging to twenty-one households with an average of 5.3 household members who joined the camp at one time or another.

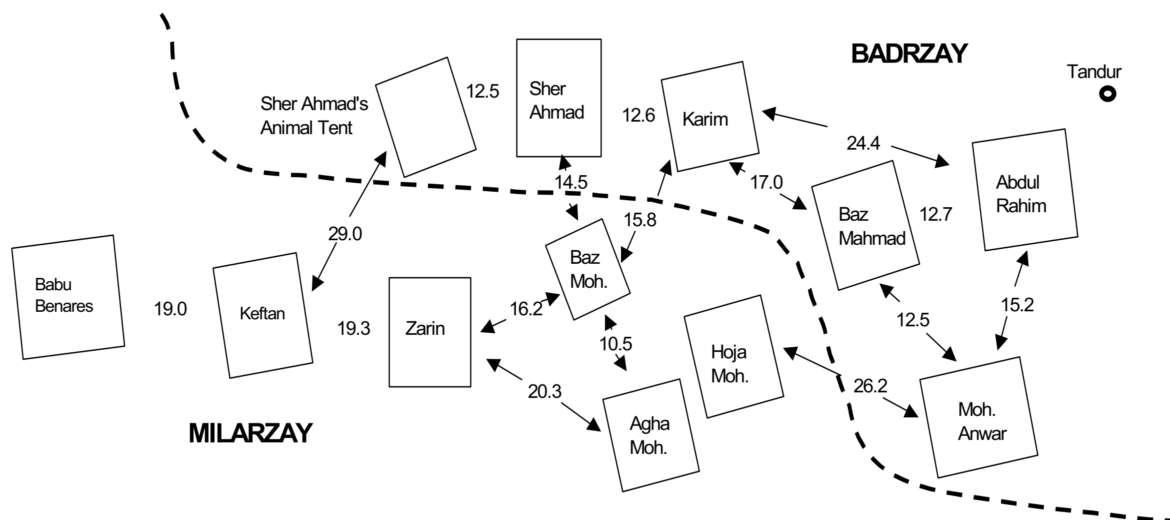

Fig. 3 Organisation of the winter camp 1975/76 along the lines of the two Nurzay subtribes, the Badrzay and the Milarzay. Distances are given in meters. Mohamad Anwar's tent is outside the picture (photo: Glatzer).

Usually, the camps were organised in such a way that the two subtribes, the Badrzay and the Milarzay, were separated from each other, and each group used their own earth oven (*tandūr*). Thus, the next neighbour of a given household always belonged to their own group. In the

winter camp 1975/76 for instance, as can be seen in Fig. 3, the two subtribes were separated by a gap of some fourteen to thirty meters.

The following diagram (Fig. 4), shows the kinship and marriage relations between members of the Badrzay and the Milarzay who joined the camp at one time or another.

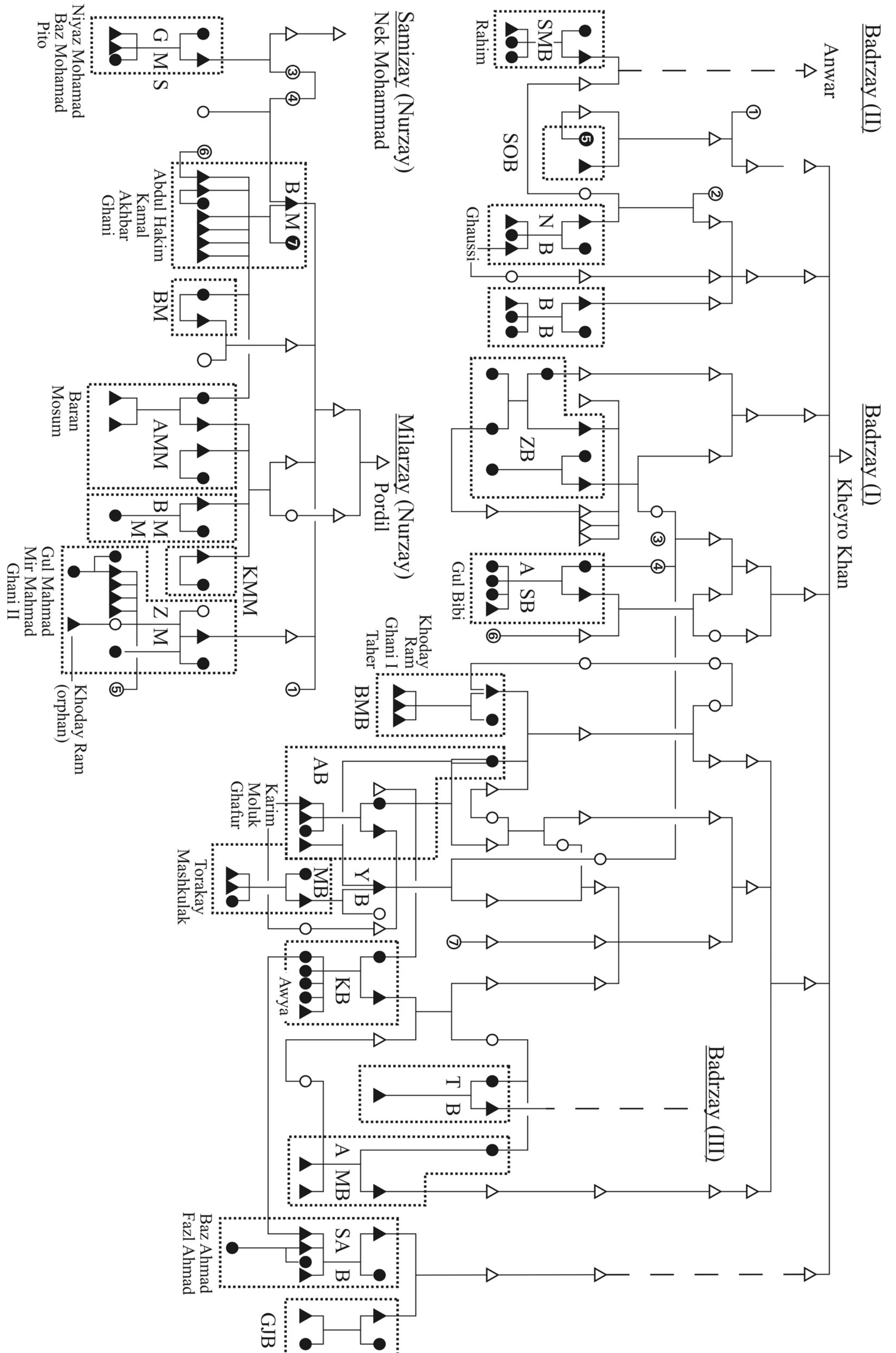

Fig. 4 Kinship and marriage relations between members of the Badrzay and the Milarzay who joined the camp at one time or another. Full triangles and circles: males and females living in the camp. Open symbols: males and females not living in the camp or dead. Broken vertical lines: number of genealogical steps unknown. Enclosed areas designate households with abbreviated names of heads of households and the names of some of the children (for details see Glatzer 1996a).

The total number of unmarried children was fifty-nine, and the average number of children per household ranging from zero to five years of age was 2.4 ± 1.1. However, the majority of children were located in the age range from zero to seventy-two months (Fig. 5).

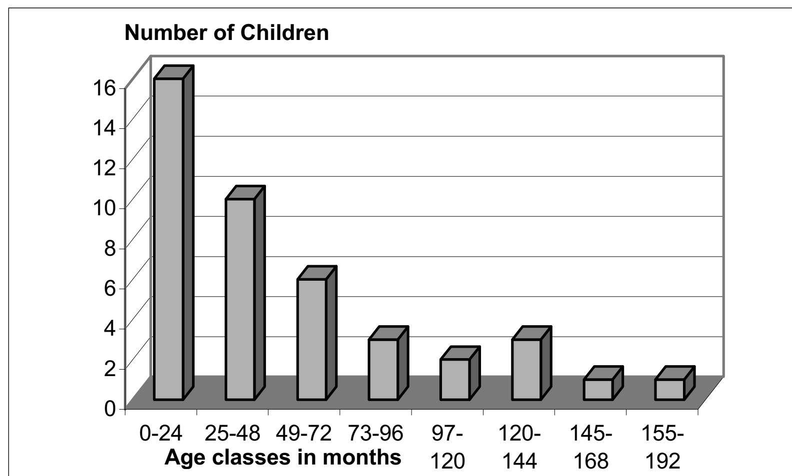

Fig. 5
Age-class distribution of the fifty-nine unmarried children.

It can also be seen that the 40:19 ratio of boys to girls was extremely lopsided, which might mirror the strong preference for boys (see also p. 30).

In order to find out how nomad children view their life in the camp, we provided them with paper and coloured pencils. However, without giving them special instructions, they always drew flowers, teapots and tea glasses, paintings they often saw on the walls of tea houses on their migration routes. It was only when we insisted that they should draw something related to their life in the camp that some boys drew tents, adults, children, camels and dogs as in the drawing by nine-year-old Ghani (Fig. 6).

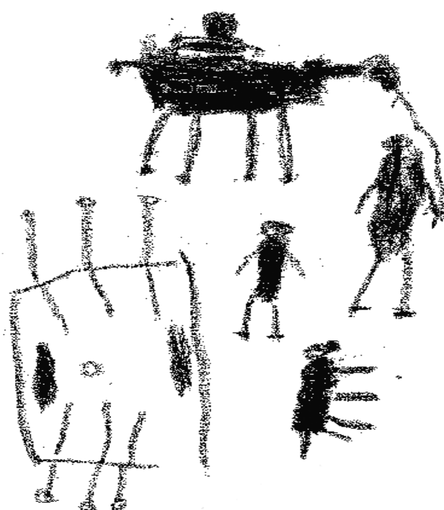

Fig. 6 Nine-year-old Ghani's drawing of camp life with an adult leading a camel on the migration, a child, a dog and a tent. Note the aerial view of the tent, a perspective often used by children of his age class all over the world (see Alland 1983).

4 NURZAY CHILDREN AND THEIR ENCULTURATION

Everywhere in the world, a child's enculturation process is accompanied and governed by the culture-specific ideas about how to inculcate values, norms and behaviour patterns that enable a child to become a fully respected member of society. These ideas, which are put into practice not only by caregivers, parents, other adult members of the family and friends but also by older siblings and members of the peer group, have been termed differently by various authors. In this context, Sigel (1985) spoke about 'parental belief systems' whereas Harkness and Super (1996) preferred 'parental ethnotheories' in dependence on Quinn and Holland's (1987) 'cultural model' theory.

In the following, I shall thus describe the children's behaviour in relation to the caregivers' ideas about how children develop, the way they should be cared for and how they learn the roles they have to play in later life.

4.1 From Birth to Weaning

4.1.1 *Giving Birth*

As in many 'traditional' societies, giving birth is spaced in a roughly two-year interval triggered by a forty-day post partum taboo and, to a certain extent, by a depression of ovulation during the period of intensive suckling (Agyei 1984; Jones 1989). The time or season of birth is related to climate factors, social status and workload in not only pre-industrial (Mosher 1979; Spencer and Hum 1977) but also industrial societies (Pasternak 1978; Warren and Tyler 1979). For pastoral nomadic populations, Leslie *et al.* (1999) have shown this in detail for the Turkana of Kenya. In Afghanistan, there is a widespread belief that the best time for becoming pregnant is season-dependent. However, Macey, Hunt and Safi (1975: 84) point out that opinions vary on which season is the best for conception. Recollection data, together with the eight births that occurred during our study, show that twenty-five children (67.6 per cent) were born between November and April, and only twelve (32.4 per cent) in the months May to October. This means that the majority of children were born in the winter camp; especially in the summer months May to July, only three children were born. The nomad men and women themselves explained this seasonality — along with other phenomena related to biological processes — by pointing out that herd animals also give birth in late winter and spring — and, hence, this is something that is natural and obvious.

No method or ritual is practiced to influence the sex of an unborn child. It is said that 'it's God's will and it is bad to try and do so'; certain mullahs are reported to sell amulets (*tawīz*) for this purpose, but this is considered bad. No woman who is ill should enter the tent

of a pregnant woman for fear of an evil spirit, a *jin*, 'leaping over'. No special ritual is performed before delivery. However, if from the beginning of the fifth month of pregnancy, a woman experiences pain, the mullah gives her a *tawīz* to facilitate the delivery; and if the baby does not come at the right time, the mullah places a *tawīz* in a glass of water which the woman then drinks (cf. Martynowicz 1977). When a woman is in labour, all male members of the family have to leave the tent; only women, especially older experienced women and preferably from the same household, assist in the delivery[2] give birth in a squatting position, supported by bricks or stones wrapped in cloth or covered with a pillow. One of the older female relatives or, if there are none present, another experienced woman in the camp acts as a midwife (*dāyi*) (for a detailed description of birth-giving practices and rituals and the *dāyi* methods and abilities, see also Hakin and Kohzad 1953: 174-177; Macey *et al.* 1975: 29-57).

The umbilical cord is cut by one of the women present and the placenta is buried at a certain distance from the camp site (for the different ways of disposing of the placenta in Afghanistan, see Macey *et al.* 1975: 38). If the newborn infant shows signs of hunger, it is suckled immediately. It is never cleaned or washed before it is about one week old, but there is no fixed time for this (cf. Donaldson for Iran 1938: 31). Twins, specially two boys, are welcomed, but no special rites or rituals are performed for them either. At a boy's birth, three gunshots are fired, but not always — for example not even when Karim's wife gave birth to their long awaited son, the first after three daughters.

After some days, a mullah comes and whispers '*Allah šaraḥa*' (meaning: may Allah open the heart so that Islam is accepted and absorbed — derived from the Arab root *šrḥ* - to explain) into the child's ear, and the bystanders answer '*āmīn*'. Sometimes, especially when the father is rich, a feast will be given, but if the household is poor, only some sweets are distributed. At the end of the feast, the father will take the child to the mullah again who will whisper the *āzān* (the call for prayer) into the child's ear. Often this feast is delayed for several days because the parents are afraid of the evil eye, and sometimes it is not held at all for the same reason (for many of these practices at child-birth in Iran, see Donaldson 1938: 24-34).

4.1.2 *Giving a Name*

Name-giving is an informal affair. A name can be proposed by the father, mother, some relative or even just neighbours or friends. After about a week, a mullah is called and the

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[2] Asked about the dangers of parturition, Nurzay women said that death in childbed was very rare, and all the eight births that took place during our 15-month presence were without major problems (but see Lindholm 1982:163 for the Pashtun peasants in the Swat Valley in Pakistan where the death rate during childbirth is very high).

father of the child tells him the name that has been suggested; the mullah may also be asked for a suggestion. Sometimes accompanied by some of his pupils (*talibān*) or some other men, he then enters the tent and calls the child by this name and says a short prayer. Guests are not specifically invited; only some sweets are distributed among those who are present and the mullah receives approximately 50-100 Afghani. When a boy is born after many years, a sheep or goat may be slaughtered as a religious offering (*kheyrāt*) and its flesh consumed together. The mullah is not called for daughters. The father or the mother just proposes a name, and the girl is then named accordingly. After the birth of the first child, the parents and specially the mother will be addressed and referred to according to the name of this child — for example 'mother of Gul Bibi'.

In principle, names of siblings follow an alliterative pattern. If, for example, the first son is called Abdur Rahim, the next may be called Abdul Hakim and Abdul Karim; or as in the case of Sher Mahmad's sons: Bāz Mahmad and Fazl Mahmad, or similar to the sons of Tawakul, Sakhi Dad, Khoday Dad and Wali Dad. Often sibling names can follow a pattern with a symbolic meaning. Thus, in the case of Aga Mohammad's two boys, the first boy was called Mosum (season) and the second then Bārān (rain). Girls are mainly given the names of flowers — for example Gul (flower) or Nargis (narcissus). Particularly when a child is very young and the family members are very fond of the little one, it will receive a nickname — such as Mardan's one-year-old son who was called 'Mashkulak' (little butter-bag). A mullah or a holy man (*faquīr*) is only asked to give a name under special circumstances. This was the case with Karim, who already had three daughters and longed for a son. He frequently visited a holy man to get help through prayers and amulets, and when a son was finally born, he went back to this holy man and asked him for a name for the baby.

4.1.3 *The Not-So-Swaddled Soul*

In the first eight to ten days, the infant is not laid in its hammock (*zango*) but kept close to the mother. It is covered with a blanket (*tiltak*) or a sheet of cloth, which is often stretched across willow sticks bent crosswise and planted in the ground over the child's head, so that there is no danger of the baby being asphyxiated.

> When Nek Mahmad's wife gave birth to Ghawsi on April 21st, she sat for the following two days, still quite weak, all day long next to her newborn son who lay on a blanket covered with pieces of cloth. Whenever the baby began whimpering, he was immediately lifted (but not taken out of the 'cocoon') and breastfed for two to five minutes. About once every hour he was unwrapped and cleaned, but immediately afterwards swaddled again and laid on his blanket.

Usually after a few days, the baby is swaddled (*ghumdāk kawạl*) with a blanket (*tiltak*) that is wrapped around it twice and then fixed with strips of cloth (*siznī*). Swaddling continues for about one year, and for roughly the first weeks, it is tighter and includes the arms and legs so that the baby is relatively immobile. After about the first six weeks up to the end of the swaddling period (cf. Shalinsky 1980: 264, fn. 2), the child is swaddled less tightly, with its arms and legs free (Fig. 7). It is also said that if an infant is sick it can be swaddled even longer. This 'cocoon' is unwrapped in order to change nappies and sometimes for breastfeeding. Most of the time, the baby lays in its hammock, attached to the tent poles, its face covered with a dark cloth. When adults are busy outside the tent, the hammock is rocked gently with a string tied to it by children or neighbours who are not busy (Fig. 8).

After being breastfed, the infant is often leant against cushions or sacks for a longer period of time. It watches the work done in the tent and the older children at play who come

Fig. 7 Children are swaddled for the first six to eight weeks.

and caress the little one. There are no differences in behaviour towards an infant boy or girl until about the time when it can walk alone. Alternatively, the infant is carried around by older siblings, and if there is an older sister, she will take care of it most of the time (Figs. 9 and 15.

Fig. 8 Older brother and father rocking the *zango*.

Asked why infants are swaddled, women explained that 'the newborn baby's flesh is *oma* (lit. unripe) like uncooked meat, and that only by swaddling will it become strong (*chakahosī*) and solid like cooked (*pokh*) meat — all people in Afghanistan do it like that.' This, in principle, is the same explanation as that proferred for instance among the Swat Pashtuns in Pakistan (Lindholm (1982: 168), the Lurs in southwest Iran (Friedl 1997: 60), the Bedouin of Kuwait (Dickson 1951: 179-180) and all the ethnic groups in Lebanon where, besides other explanations, a great number of mothers explained that swaddling keeps the baby's 'body firm or legs straight' (Prothro 1967: 58). This explanation is also given by Navajo mothers who tie their babies on a cradleboard (Leighton and Kluckhohn 1948: 23). Turkish mothers report that the main reason is that the baby feels protected and that indeed swaddling also protects against the evil eye (Delaney 2000: 131-132).

Fig. 9 An older brother taking care of his swaddled youngest sibling.

The custom of swaddling is based on classical concepts (e.g. Soranus of Ephesos, who lived at the beginning of the second century) and was accepted by Muslim doctors. Quoting Qayyim al Jawziyya, who lived in Damascus between 1292 and 1350, Gil´adi (1992: 27-28) noted that it was common knowledge in the tenth and eleventh centuries that swaddling serves to firm up the body and prevent malformations. From about the beginning of the nineteenth century in the West, swaddling was thought to restrain a child to such an extent as to exert a negative influence on the maturation of its motor capacities and psychological development. Influenced by Freudian theories, authors of the Culture and Personality School, especially Gorer (1943, 1949) and also Wolfe (1951) in his paper 'The Swaddled Soul of the Great Russians', asked whether the Russian national character was mainly formed by this practice. Margaret Mead (1954: 405) convincingly explained that American anthropologists were obsessed with this notion of negative effects of swaddling because it was 'peculiarly horrifying to Americans, one of whose major commitments is to freedom of movement.' However, it seems that neither the maturation of the child's motor system is drastically delayed (Cisholm 1978/2008; Danzinger and Frankl 1934; Schenk-Danzinger 1972), nor can a negative or even specific influence on the developing personality

be related to the custom of swaddling. Lipton *et al.*'s (1965) data comparing swaddled Navaho children to non-swaddled children of European descent even show that the swaddled children were more relaxed, less irritable, slept more and were quieter. These positive effects can be attributed and explained by the fact that swaddling elicits a feeling of security. This positive effect of the feeling of being constrained in movement may arise from the fact that in the millions of years of primate and human evolution, babies were most of the time pressed to their mother's body or tightly held in her arms. Swaddling can therefore be explained as a psychological surrogate for mother's physical protection, along the same lines as the soothing effect of a cradle or other rocking device (cf. Knowles 1959) can be explained as a substitute for the mother's or another caretaker's body movements. Both signal the presence of a primary attachment figure, thus reducing insecurity and the fear of being neglected (cf. also Hollender 1970). This concords with the observation among Nurzay nomads that a baby sometimes started whimpering or even crying when it was unwrapped from its 'cocoon' for feeding and/or cleaning purposes and was immediately quiet when wrapped and tied up again.

This is also corroborated by the information given by many Nurzay themselves. As mentioned earlier, the rules of swaddling — that is the period and strictness with which it is done — vary greatly. As Karim and his wife explained,

> 'Swaddling is good because the *zango* will not be soiled and further it makes the bones strong. However, children are only swaddled if they are tired anyway and want to sleep — they are much quieter then and sleep much better. Our son was swaddled only for some months but many people do it for one year'. And, Karim stressed, 'Children *like* to be swaddled'.

It should also be mentioned that, in recent times, swaddling has become fashionable, specially in the United States, as can be seen from numerous web sites. Also more recently, there has been a debate on whether swaddling has a positive effect, especially on 'crying' (Caiola 2007; Franco *et al.* 2005; Gerhard, Harris and Thacht 2002; Long 2007; van Sleuwen *et al.* 2006) as well as on possible negative effects such as displasia of the hip (Mahan and Kasser 2008).

4.1.4 *Breastfeeding*

Though none of the nomads can read or write, all or most of the traditional behaviour related to child care and feeding practices for the child's first two years concur with many of the prescriptions found in the Qur'ān, the Hadīth and in the texts of Muslim physicians of the Middle Ages who, in turn, were influenced by Hellenistic writers.

Unlike the Swat Pashtuns (Lindholm 1982: 168), who believe that nursing infants too long may lead to disease, all informants agreed that it is good for a baby to be breastfed for a long time (for an overview of the benefits of breastfeeding, see Dettwyler and Fishman 1992;

cf. also Van Esterik 2002). One woman explained: ‘Children have the right to be suckled three and a half years, but usually they are weaned after two years, because then they can eat normal food and further suckling will harm the teeth’. This is in accordance with the Qur’ān where (in case a divorced wife has a young child) it is said in Sura 2:233:

> Mothers shall give suck to their children for two whole years if the father wishes the sucking to be completed. They must be maintained and clothed in a reasonable manner by the father of the child. None should be charged with more than one can bear. A mother should not be allowed to suffer on account of her child, nor should a father on account of his child. The same duties devolve upon the father’s heir. But if, after consultation, they choose by mutual consent to wean the child, they shall incur no guilt. Nor shall it be any offence for you if you prefer to have a nurse for your children, provided that you pay her what you promise, according to usage (The Koran — translated by N. J. Dawood 1956/1974; also Sura 46:14; see also Abdelkebir and M’Daghiri 1995; Adamek 1968; Roberts 1925/1971: 41)

Infants are nursed on free demand: whenever a baby or child starts whimpering, crying or getting angry any time of day or night, it is suckled immediately (cf. Hanifi 1971: 54, 1979; cf. also Lindholm 1982: 168; Shalinsky 1980: 256). Crying is normally understood as a signal for hunger, and it is said that ‘a child who does not cry will get no milk’. Friedl (1997: 103) made a similar observation in western Iran where they say ‘the more noise, the more food’ and ‘even young birds in the nest know this’.

This constant feeding on demand may also be the reason why thumb sucking was never observed (cf. Kehoe 1971, 1972; Raphael 1972). However, when a baby was not nursed immediately, sometimes it put some object (e.g. the corner or a tassel of a blanket) briefly into its mouth. Observations of forty breastfeeding episodes show that, as is typical for free-demand breastfeeding, each nursing episode is relatively short and lasts between one and ten minutes with an average of 4.7 ± 2.3 min (cf. for the Turkana, Gray 1999; for the Tamang of Nepal, Panter-Brick 1992). Here, as in some other societies (e.g. LeVine 2004: 154, 156, quoted in Lacy 2007: 274), it was observed that during suckling, mother look very ‘absent-minded’ and only look at the baby when some problems arise.

During its first eighteen months, an infant is never left alone, and if its mother is not nearby, a sibling or another person will gently rock the hammock; if it cries, it is taken out and comforted by rocking in the caregiver’s arms or lap, accompanied by speaking and sometimes by singing soft songs. But if this has no soothing effect, this person either calls for the mother or takes the infant out of the hammock and carries it to her to be fed. When the mother is too far away or unable to nurse the baby for other reasons, it is sometimes given to its grandmother, who puts it to her breast to console it.

If the mother cannot suckle her child or does not have enough milk, any other woman even from another clan, can act as a wet nurse; and if no woman is available to do it for free, a

wet nurse may be hired. Such a wet nurse becomes ‘a mother’ to the child and, following Islamic incest avoidance rules, marriage between this infant and her own children is forbidden. If no wet nurse is available, the baby is given sheep or goat’s milk, either from a bottle with a soft nipple (*godarah*) made from some plastic material, or sometimes by being put directly at the animal’s teats.

Since the early 1960s, many studies have shown that for a variety of reasons (for an overview, see Gray 1994, 1999: 165-166), breastfeeding is the main determinant of the time span between consecutive births. Asked whether they know that a woman rarely becomes pregnant while breastfeeding, women replied in the negative. However, when we asked a mother who nursed her child for about two years, and thus longer than usual, why she did so, she answered: ‘Because I do not want another child’.

6.3.7 Weaning

Weaning in many cultures is a time of stress for both mother and child, and various strategies are resorted to from complementary feeding (cf. Van Esterik 2002: 268) over a longer period of time accompanied by a long period of breastfeeding to abrupt weaning strategies. Depending on the different weaning practices of different cultures, the corresponding psychological situation ranges from a fairly stress-free situation to intensive psychological problems for the child as Fouts (2004, see also 2005) has shown for the example of Bofi foragers compared to the farmers of the Northern Congo Basin (Central African Republic).

Hanifi (1971: 54) generalises that weaning among the Pashtuns takes place ‘abruptly, either late in the second or early in the third year and is often accompanied with emotional upset’, and also Lindholm (1982: 168) reported an abrupt weaning for the Swat Pashtuns in Pakistan. Shalinsky (1980: 256) described for the *mohājerīn* community in the Kunduz area in northeastern Afghanistan (mainly immigrants who have come from former Soviet Uzbekistan during the Stalinist period) that they: ‘… wean their children from the breast gradually, giving fewer feedings and augmenting the diet with small portions of solid food at around nine months. Finally, when the child is one and a half or two, the mother begins to prick her child with a needle at breastfeeding time or puts a foul tasting substance on her nipple. ’

A two-year breastfeeding period is in accordance with the recommendations of the Qoran (Sura 2:233; 31:14), and among the Pashtun nomads, weaning normally takes place when an infant is about eighteen months old (cf. CINAM 1973, Vol. II: 154-155) — as they say, ‘when the child begins to walk’. However, already after about five months, while the baby is still being nursed, it is given morsels of soft bread dipped in milk or *quraṭ-o-ghoṛī* —

a heated, thick paste made with dry bread soaked in water and diluted dried casein with a dash of ghee. Over the whole period of breastfeeding, more and more solid food is given but without any compulsion. This is the way, the Nurzay say, to find out when the child can eat ‘normal food’. When the time of weaning comes, more and more sheep or goat’s milk, ghee with some sugar and some bread dipped in *quraṭ-o-ghoṛī* are given together with fresh fruit if available. Here, apricots are preferred, and weaning is sometimes postponed until the families reach their summer campsite where ripe apricots are available. An abrupt transition from breastfeeding to the ‘nomad’s food’ is dangerous, the nomads say, ‘because this may cause fever’. Only in rare cases when weaning problems are severe, do mothers smear their nipples with pepper or snuff (*naswār*) as a repellent (cf. also Prothro 1967: 76-77). This also sometimes takes place during the last phase of a new pregnancy, when, as they say, the milk is ‘not good any more’ and might even be dangerous for the baby (cf. for Bhutan, Bohler and Ingstad 1996: 1810).

Normally, however, there is a smooth transition, as in the case of Nek Mahmad’s son Ghausi, who was weaned without any problem three months before his little sister was born. Their mother said that she had very little milk left and that for months, most of the food Ghausi was given was part of the usual diet (for details on the Nurzay diet, see Casimir 1991: 89-111).

In principle, all these patterns observed are in accordance with classical recommendations and with those of Muslim doctors who emphasised gradual weaning. Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, for example, recommended starting with ‘bread dipped in hot water and fresh animal milk, then soup without meat, and, eventually, tender meat well-minced or chewed’ (quoted in Gil´adi 1992: 26). After weaning, baby boys in particular receive great attention from both their parents. As one mother explained:

> When a boy is weaned, he gets more attention from his father and he wants to be with him. But the mother is still always there for him; she shows him everything, she teaches him the language and she also shows him who are his father and his brother [i.e. who the relatives are]… This is like with the herd animals; the mother knows its young and shows it everything.

60308''*Circumcision*

It is said that after circumcision a boy’s bones will grow stronger more quickly, and it is felt that circumcision should be done at the earliest when a boy is three months old; this, they say, is the best time, because at this age wounds heal quickest. Usually, however, it is done after the boy is one year old, although often they are as old as three years and even older up to six years (cf. Shalinsky 1980: 259).

Circumcision is often done by members of one of the peripatetic 'Jat' groups of Afghanistan (cf. Rao 1982). After the preputium is cut off and thrown away, food is served and the 'Jat' entertain the guests with their music. Usually, however, the rite is performed in autumn when the Nurzay camp in the neighbourhood of the village Shahrabad where some of their relatives live as farmers. There it is performed by the village barber (*nai*) and celebrated with a big feast.

604"" The Few Rituals of Childhood

No big celebrations or rituals mark the individual stages of childhood. As mentioned above, the birth of a son is usually announced by three gun shots and an offering of some sweets to neighbours and friends, but no bigger festivity takes place.

After forty days, a feast (*uj alwēshtey*) is given if the child is a boy, and all the neighbours come together bringing fresh bread covered with ghee (*ghōṛī*). Here, only the women are present. One or several of the flatbreads are held about half a metre over the ground, and the child and an old woman (not necessarily a relative) turns the child three times round the breads without saying a word. This ritual marks the end of the post-partum period for the parent.

When the child's first teeth appear, the mother prepares *koch,* wheat grains cooked in water, and distributes this dish among the neighbours; sometimes, some sweets are also presented after the first haircut. When the child looses its first milk teeth, these are often placed in a mouse hole, and it is said that then the new teeth will be small and regular like those of a mouse. For the entire region (cf. Donaldson 1938: 185-189), clipped nails, lost teeth and cut hair are always buried outside the camp, because *jin* or humans with magic powers can use these to do harm to the 'owner'.

5 ATTACHMENT AND CARETAKING

Eye contact is one of the most important communication signals between humans that already develops a few days after birth and establishes a most powerful communicative link. Farroni *et al.* (2002: 9602) argue that this leads to the 'major foundation for the later development of social skills' (p. 9602). Unlike western societies in which eye contact between mother and infant occurs very frequently during breastfeeding (e.g. Farroni *et al.* 2002; Robson 1967), this is rarely observed among Nurzay women. Mothers look down at their infants mainly when some problem arises, and as among the Sebei agro-pastoralists of northern Kenya (Goldschmidt 1976: 247) and the Gusii mothers of southwestern Kenya (LeVine 2004: 156), here too, nursing mothers rarely look at their babies or do so only very briefly. Perhaps in contemporary western societies in which women often only have one or two children, greater attention is given to these few babies compared to societies in which multiple pregnancies and births follow one another, and thus nursing a series of babies for many years is the normal and constant 'burden' of almost every woman. This contention appears to be supported by the case of a Nurzay mother who looked at her baby almost continuously while nursing it — this was Bāz Mahmad's wife who nursed her first baby, a girl, then about six weeks old.

For the first month, all babies sleep, still swaddled, with their mothers; they are nursed, it is said, three to four times every night. Our observations indicate that sleeping arrangements are related to socialisation patterns, insofar as there is a marked difference between girls and boys. The general rule is that both sexes, who spend the daytime in the *zango* up to the age of about one year, sleep with their mothers at night. After this, boys sleep near their fathers till they are about nine or ten; thereafter, they sleep alone. Girls, however, always sleep together with their mothers until they leave the natal household after marriage. This difference also mirrors the strong difference in the identification patterns of the two genders. Whilst girls continue to sleep close to their mothers till they are married, there seems to be no strict schedule for boys. While some parents said that boys may sleep next to their mothers up to the age of ten, others said that they sleep next to their fathers after they are about three years old. When the boys are asked about their sleeping arrangements, most said that from the age of about five years, they either sleep next to their fathers or alone.

The discussion on caretaking/caregiving strategies in human societies ranges typologically from 'mother-centred' to 'multiple caretaking' and has two foci: 'the continuous care and contact model' and the 'caretaker-child strategy model'. The proponents of the first model, which is now obsolete, had argued that caretaking practices are shaped predominantly by phylogenetic factors and conform to a species-prototypical form. The proponents of the latter model argue that phylogenetic constraints are but one of many factors that shape

caretaking practices, and that a variety of different practices exist. (Tronick *et al.* 1987: 96; see also Fernandez-Duque *et. al* 2009, Hewlett 1994). Among the nomads, depending on the time of the year and related specially to women's workload, different members of the family take care of children and often, in times of leisure, groups of women and men sit together and conjointly take care of children of all ages (Fig. 10).

Fig. 10
Groups of adults often sit together; some work (e.g. spinning) and joint caretaking of children goes hand in hand.

In many societies such as those that Whiting and Child (1975/77: 70-113) have termed 'simple', the household's workload is largely transferred to children aged between three and five years, and if there are older siblings in the household, they take care of the younger ones for most of the time. In general, among nomadic pastoralists, due to the women's workload which is much higher than that of men — especially in the period of intensive milk processing from about the end of February till the end of August — men often sit idly or simply watch their herds together with their younger sons. This pattern seems to be typical for most societies in which mothers are the most productive members. As Weisner and Gallimore (1977) found in a HRAF survey across nearly 200 societies, 40 per cent of infants and 80 per cent of toddlers were cared for primarily by someone other than their mother and most commonly by their older sisters (see also Lancy 2008: 127-131).

Women, especially in the milking season, are very busy and spend a great part of the day outside the tent; men take care of the infants more often than women do: rocking the *zango* by pulling the string attached to it, playing with the very young or carrying them around while they are watching the herd.

The father's role in the socialisation of children differs strongly in various societies (e.g. Lamb 1997). When Pashtun men were asked who takes care of young infants, men invariably explain that this, just like the chores of cooking, milk processing and carpet- or tent-cloth weaving, is exclusively women's work. They say that the father is only responsible

for the education of a boy, and that too only when he is older, because boys have to learn everything concerning animals and herd management from them. Girls, they say, are brought up exclusively by their mothers, and men never take care of them. Karim also said this, even though he sat with his two-year-old daughter on his lap, cuddling and kissing her. Such statements illustrate the typical discrepancy between norms and behaviour, for it was obvious that men cuddle and play with their little daughters as often as they do with their little sons.

Observations showed that, with the exception of the first few weeks, babies, and later also young infants have more body contact with their older siblings than with their mothers, and that they are also cuddled and cared for more by them. The following analysis of a protocol made at noon on April 10th, 1977 in Nek Mahmad's household is typical for such a situation: The mother was cooking, with her five-month old baby lying in the *zango* about four metres away:

Carer(s)	**Activity**	**Minutes**
Eldest brother	rocking *zango*	14
Older brother	playing with baby	3
Younger brother	playing with baby	1
Older sister	rocking *zango*	5
Girl from neighbouring household	rocking *zango*	11
Boy from neighbouring household	rocking *zango*	8
Father	rocking *zango*	3
Hired shepherd	rocking *zango*	1
Mother	nursing baby in two episodes	5
Mother	baby laid on her stretched legs after second feeding episode	4
Mother	puts baby back into *zango*; baby sleeps	
SUM (minutes)		**55**

This shows that of the fifty-five minutes in which interactions were observed, only 3 per cent consisted of interactions between mother and infant, siblings cared as much for the baby as neighbouring children did (twenty-three minutes and nineteen minutes respectively) and the father and even a hired shepherd who was present reacted immediately when the baby in the *zango* started whimpering. Interactions with the mother took place only when she nursed the baby for two and three minutes respectively, and she looked down to her child only twice when she took it to her breast and at the end of the nursing episodes. No eye-to-eye contact was observed over the whole feeding period.

The next example from April 18th, 1977 between 11:00 a.m. and 02:34 p.m. can also be considered as fairly typical for the interaction with an older boy who is about seven months old and still being breastfed:

Carer(s)	**Activity**	**Minutes**
Mother	nursing in three episodes	13
Mother	carries child around	5
Mother	sits next to child	2
Mother	feeds it (some solid food)	8
Mother	washes child's face	1
Father	holds, carries child	20
Father	child sits next to	15
Eldest brother	carries child around	2
Eldest brother	child sits next to	9
Older brother	caresses child	2
Eldest brother	carries child	4
Eldest brother	child sits next to	1
Older brother	child sits next to	1
Eldest brother	child sits next to	1
Older brother	sits next to	7
SUM (minutes)		**91**

In the second example, where the child is already a toddler, he had 91 min of close contact with others during the 214 min of observation. He wandered around, played alone or slept for the rest of the time. Here the father is much more involved in taking care, possibly because he is a boy, and both parents had about the same amount of contact with the child (mother: 29 min, father 35 min; 31.9 and 38.5 per cent of the total contact time respectively). In the remaining time, close contact took place with older siblings (27 min; 29.7 per cent). Thus, unlike infants, toddlers were in close contact with their mothers, fathers and siblings for about equal amounts of time.

The hypothesis that enculturation in societies with extended and large households and multiple caregiving may lead to weak emotional ties between adults was first formulated by Mead (1928), and it was also suggested (Whiting 1961) that such situations lead to infant indulgence. Both hypotheses were subsequently questioned, and many studies have shown that such simple causal relationships do not exist (for a comprehensive overview, see Seymour 2001) and that many different parameters must be considered when investigating causes for eventual connections between weak ties among adults and infant indulgence. Based on attachment theory, Ainsworth (1967; see also LeVine and Norman 2001) postulated the overwhelming importance of the mother or other carers as the primary attachment figure. But

drawing on the work of Tronick, Morelli and Winn (1987), Seymour (2001: 18) questions this and observes:

> Instead of assuming relatively continuous care and physical contact by the mother or principal caretaker with her infant … [Tronick, Morelli and Winn 1987] argue that there is no universally optimum caretaking strategy for humans, but rather that societies develop different caretaking strategies that are compatible with their social and environmental conditions, that draw on relevant cultural information and practices, and that accomplish three universal goals of child care: child survival and eventual reproduction, economic self-sufficiency, and enculturation.

In the patrilineal Pashtun society, the strong and early expressions of attachment between fathers and especially sons may be related to the relations between spouses that are often marked by little demonstration of affection. Normatively, men sometimes even deny that their wives are of any emotional importance to them. In this vein, Abdul Karim said one day, when his wife was critically ill and he was asked to take her to a doctor, 'It does not matter. If she dies, I shall marry a new one'. Undoubtedly, this was an extreme and eventually a unique case, and it may only mirror the general normative macho attitude expected of men towards women, while indicating little about the real feelings of husbands towards their wives.

There were indeed major differences in spouse relationships, and great affection between partners was also observed. Thus, for example, Karim and his wife always ate together — normally men and women eat separately, the latter together with their children after the men have eaten. They always discussed everything with each other, and she was always included in all conversations, even when other men were present. This was not viewed negatively by the other households, and especially the other women said that Karim's marriage was a good one.

5.1 Sibling Rivalry

Sibling rivalry was observed rarely, and only when the age difference between the child weaned and the newborn baby was no more than about one and a half years. It was only seen when the mother nursed the baby and the older child sat close to her observing the baby being breastfed. Then this child tried to pinch the baby or gave it little slaps on its feet or legs. The mother noticed that and usually pushed the child gently aside or gave him a gentle slap on its back.

> Once the two elder siblings of Mardan's youngest baby watched their mother nursing the baby and without any apparent reason started quarreling with each other. When the younger of the two was hit by the elder one, he crawled to his mother who gently patted his head. Suddenly, he hit the suckled baby twice on its head and was in return hit by his mother on his back. He started crying loudly and was carried out of the tent and pacified by an older boy from the neighbouring household.

More frequently, just weaned older infants were seen to start crying a little when they noticed their young siblings being breastfed; they were then often taken away by an older sibling or by the father, cuddled or distracted through play.

6 NURZAY CHILDREN AND THEIR SOCIALISATION

6.1 Values, Norms and the Goals of Socialisation

The self-image of the Pashtuns is related fundamentally to the concepts of honour, shame, pride, manliness and courage, and the resulting feeling of being superior to members of other ethnic groups in the country. 'The Pashtuns', Zarin remarked 'are different from the non-Pashtuns, because they keep their word, stand together, support their *khān* and never run away in a fight', and he narrated the following story as an illustration:

> Once I camped alone; the other tents were far away and only my son Sher Ahmad was with me. Suddenly two Taymani came and started to beat up my son. I fought them and wounded them with my knife. So the Taymani ran away and went to the *wulạswāl* (sub-governor). I said to the Taymani 'I shall kill you wherever I find you'. That's the way we Pashtuns are: we never run away and never desert our relatives and friends.

and Lal Mahmad added:

> If somebody has *pashtunwali*, he loves his *watan* (country) and defends it when the enemies come. In a war the king would order the Farsiwan and the Taymani to fight in the first row. But when the war started, they would all run away and the Pashtuns would come forward.

When asked about the most important qualities of being a good Pashtun (*ghairatman*), courage and hospitality were the two most frequent answers. It was said that to be *ghairatman* means that 'when many enemies are coming, one stands up to them'; and their belief that they are extremely hospitable but others are not was expressed by saying: 'When a guest comes, the Aylat (Persian speakers) hide but the Pashtun drags him into his tent'.

The important relationship between brothers (and other male members of the family) relates directly to this code of honour and shame as part of the concept of *ghairatman* and *pashtunwali* (Ahmed 2000/01; Glatzer 1996b; Janata and Hassas 1975; Steul 1981). I shall return to this aspect at some length below. The term *pashtunwali* is not generally known among West Afghan Pashtuns, where the canon of traditional norms is known as *rawaj*, a term also used by the Baluch (cf. Orywal 1996). One of the central terms in this canon is *turā* (the sword) which, in turn, is related to *nang*, a term designating the honour and dignity of a Pashtun. Glatzer (forthcoming) explains:

> *nang*, the honour and dignity of a Pashtun has two sides:
> (1) Courage and gallantry, readiness to fight until self-sacrifice symbolised by *turā*, the sword; (2) The other side is reason, wisdom and social responsibility (*aql*), that is deliberate and prudent behaviour intended to benefit one's family and one's wider social environment up to the entire ethnic group, the nation (if such a notion exists) and even up to the entire Muslim *umma*. It

> reaches from material support to participation in councils, to jurisdiction and mediation in conflicts. These two sides of *nang* are connected with different ages in life: The ideal personality of a young man is supposed to be dominated by *turā*. He may be hot-headed and ready to draw the sword (*turā*) or point his Kalashnikov at someone at the slightest provocation. Aggressiveness is his first reaction, reasoning comes second. The virtue of *turā* does not need to be tempered by the young man's own reasonable thinking, it is supposed to be checked by the wisdom and council of the elders, the 'white beards' (*spin gíri*). Consequently boys are educated to obey the elders.

These codes of conduct are closely related to kinship structures and daily social interaction. Hence, the first manners that children are taught comprise their attitudes and behaviour towards relatives, and these are embedded in the hierarchical structure of this patrilineal society. Respect for the father, but also towards the mother, was always said to be important. There is also a clear rank order of obedience towards relatives. Thus, a boy has to obey his father's brother (*kākā*) and treat him with greater respect than his mother's brother (*māmā*) but to whom, it is said, he is emotionally closer. This was explained by the fact that when a boy's father dies, his *kākā* 'becomes his father'; and on his death, the boy is one of his heirs. A boy must also obey his elder brother(s). An older sister has the right to advise her younger brother and is not obliged to follow his instructions, although it is his duty to watch over her honour, since it would be the worst possible offence were she to bring shame over the family (for a detailed cross-cultural analysis of honour and dishonour concepts, see Casimir and Jung 2008). Were a boy to bring shame over the family by disobeying his father and dishonouring his parents, the worst possible punishment would consist of his being thrown out of the home. Inside the tent, an elder sister has precedence over her younger brother in matters of seating. She may sit closer to the adults than him and thus be closer to the places of honour, which are always towards the back of the tent, the least honourable being next to the entrance (compare Fig. 13).

7 NURZAY CONCEPTS OF MATURATION AND DEVELOPMENT

7.1 'It's in the Blood'

The primary concept concerning the 'qualities' and capacities of a child, and later the capacities and character of an adult, relates to what we would refer to as 'genetic' or 'innate'. These characteristics are principally transmitted, as they say, through 'blood' (*rag*, lit. vein), over generations (for the Bedouin, cf. Unger-Heitsch 1995: 76-77). In many societies, breast milk is equated with blood (cf. Böck and Rao 2000: 11.; Rao 2000: 107-112; Treckel 1998: 25-33) or thought to be formed from residual menstrual blood that has not been shed during pregnancy. This theory, endorsed by Arab writers (cf. Gil´adi 1992: 24), originated in Hellenistic concepts propagated by physicians such as Galenus, who thought that a mother's milk transfers her character and qualities to the child. This general transmitting capacity of mother's milk is also the reason why some cultures hold the mother responsible (through her milk's quality) for whatever may happen to her infant — even sickness or death, as in a case reported from Pakistan (Mull 1992: 1286). West Pashtuns also believe that a child inherits its character traits and hence also its capacities in later life through its mother's milk. Mother's milk is conceived of as transformed blood and thus equated with blood; it is her blood which transmits many of these traits (see Rao 1998: 39-42 for similar examples).

The concept that 'it is in the blood', and that it is this which 'contains' qualities that are passed on from generation to generation in the maternal line, becomes specially clear in the case of twins — here we encounter the concept of 'innateness': Ibrahim, the shepherd, whose wife gave birth to twins, explained that in his wife's family, 'they have the *rag*' for multiple births, and that 'in her family, since olden times, twins or even more children at a time have been born'. The importance of the mother's character for the child's upbringing is also obvious in the Farsi proverb they quote: '*padar khafah bāshi, mādar xatā nē*' (the father may be bad, but not the mother) — for the child to develop well it does not matter if the father is a bad person; the main thing is that the mother is not. The importance of the mother's character for a child's later qualities and capacities was also explicit in the explanation of why Sardar Khān, the influential landlord of the region became so 'big': 'because his mother was such a wonderful woman — his father was a very quiet man, without any *khān*-like qualities'.

Even one of the highest character values of Pashtun society — 'courage' — is transferred mainly along the maternal line, through the mother's milk. Asked about this, old Babu Benares told us the following story:

> One day when Ahmad Shah Baba [the Durrani king] was a baby and his mother was away, he became hungry and an Aylat [Farsi-speaking woman — the Pashtuns believe that all non-Pashtuns are cowards compared to themselves] was brought in to breastfeed the young king. When his mother

> came back she became angry and said that the boy would be cowardly — and indeed, one day in a fight Ahmad Shah Baba ran away. This was the effect of the Aylat milk.

904"'They Can't Understand Yet'

The second concept of the nomads regarding the cognitive and behavioural development of children is related to what we, in Piagetian terms, would call 'developmental levels': 'any subject can be taught to any child only when the method of instruction is in accord with the child's developmental level' (Schiamberg 1970: 115). The nomads always relate a child's capacity to develop 'proper' behaviour and fulfill given tasks to a given age; only then does explaining and some training take place. This is especially true for walking, toilet training and language acquisition. When asked whether a young child should be taught to do this or that properly, the nomads always said that explanation and even corporal punishment (that was rarely observed) have an effect only when the child is old enough to understand.

It was long thought that in most societies, and especially in Europe until the end of the seventeenth century, children were seen and treated as small, but incomplete adults. This theory was formulated by Philippe Ariès in 1960/62 (*L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*) but has recently been seriously criticised by Ketzer and Barbagli (2001), Ozment (2001) and Orme (1999; see also Duffy 2002).

West Pashtuns make a clear cognitive distinction between an adult and a child. 'It does not yet understand' and 'he or she is still a child' are phrases often heard when a toddler or small child does not behave in the way expected of an older one (for a similar concept among the Punan Bah of Sarawak, see Nicolaisen 1988: 205). Education, that is, telling the child what to do and what not to do, starts when the child understands the language fairly well. Children learn the language, they say, at three to four years, and then, as one nomad explained:

> The parents show them everything; this is as with the animals. There as well, the mother shows the young what can be eaten and what not. In the first years, we do not explain to the children what is good and what is bad, because they do not understand.

This is a concept we also find for example in Silva (Egypt) where 'The commonly used word is not the classical word "*tifl*" (infant) but another word which is also classical but literally means "ignorant" (*jahil*) — and thus identifies ignorance with childhood' (Ammar 1970: 227). Children are also said to learn by experience — for example 'when they touch the fire they learn that it hurts'.

9(5''Walking, Toilet Training and the Acquisition of Language

The cognitive relationship between ‘age/levels’ and ‘explanation/training’ surfaces most clearly in the process of toilet training, where it was often observed that when very young children urinate or defecate next to the tent or even in it, they are neither punished nor even scolded. Even when a toddler urinated in our tent — the tent of guests — nothing was undertaken to discipline it. The grandfather and other guests who were present were slightly amused; the grandfather then cleaned the place, took his grandson on his lap and excused him, using the oft-heard formula: ‘he doesn’t understand yet’. Such a view corresponds to the results of recent studies showing that early toilet training ‘does not correlate with earlier completion of toilet training, suggesting little benefit in beginning intensive training before twenty-seven months of age in most children’ (Blum *et al.* 2003: 810).

Toilet training starts when an infant reaches the phase of a toddler. Then, usually an older sister or the mother takes the child out of the tent and leads it ten to twenty metres away. It is only now that parents or older siblings start to explain and scold the child, and even give it a little slap on its back if it does not give notice on time so that somebody can lead it outside. With the very young, the caregiver holds the squatting child, lifts its shirt (which is worn without trousers by both boys and girls up to the age of about four and three respectively) and cleans it afterwards with a stone. In the next phase, the carer just squats in front of the child who by now can lift its shirt by itself and only cleans it afterwards; or the child leaves the tent by itself and only calls for someone to clean it. In the last phase the carer only accompanies the child in case it needs any help. When a boy is about eight years old, he is also admonished not to urinate standing upright (‘only animals do this’, the nomads say) but to squat down as adults do. Muslim men in Afghanistan urinate in a squatting position, but boys of about four to five years do not always observe this rule. When noticed by grown-ups, they are teased by saying: ‘Are you a donkey — only donkeys piss standing upright’.

The general cognitive schema is also applied during the phase in which a toddler starts walking. Training takes place only if it starts on its own, and only then can adults or older siblings be seen holding it upright by the hand to ‘make it walk’ (but see Lindholm 1982: 170 for the Swat Pashtuns). Asked whether it would be good to support the child earlier and train it more regularly from an earlier age onwards, the stereotyped answer was ‘no’ with the usual explanation: ‘it would not understand’.

A variant of Persian is the lingua franca in most parts of West Central and North Afghanistan, and it is the maternal language of most people in the western part of the country. The Nurzay, however, came from the eastern part of the county in the early nineteenth century where Persian is not spoken among the Pashtuns. Many of them settled in the villages, and the

oldest man in the camp told us that when he was young, only Pashtu was spoken in his home and that he did not learn Persian until he was about ten years old. In the villages, most people spoke Persian, and over time, more and more Pashtuns also learnt the language. Many of them bought animals from the peasants, married Tajik women and then became nomadic *māldār* (> Arabic: *māl*, possessions; here: owners of herd animals). As mentioned earlier, Pashtun codes of self-respect and self-esteem never allow them to give their daughters in marriage to Tajik men. If no opportunities for exchanging (*badạl*) daughters and thus also avoiding large bridewealth payments are available, one has to look for a Tajik girl for one's son. Especially men, who are too poor to pay the higher bridewealth Pashtun parents demand, marry Tajik girls, and their children grow up with Persian as their mother tongue. Nek Mahmad, a villager who had decided to leave his land in the charge of some relatives and become a nomad *māldār* some years earlier, had married such a Tajik woman, and their children first learnt Persian and only later Pashtu. Similarly, Babu Benares' children first learnt Persian because, as he said, 'my wife is a Farsiwan, had she been a Pashtun, the children would have learnt Pashtu first'; he also observed, 'it is good if the children learn both languages'. When the children made mistakes while pronouncing words, they were never corrected by the adults (cf. Lindholm 1982: 170).

The first words children form (and there is no difference here between boys and girls) are the consanguinal terms of address: mainly *bābā* (father), *adē* (mother), *kākā* (father's brother), *māmā* (mother's brother), *bābū* (father's father, mother's father, father's father's brother and other ascendants) and *anā* (father's mother, mother's mother, father's father's mother and other ascendants). One of the Persian-speaking women from the village who had married a Pashtun told us, however, that *nān* (Persian: bread) is the first word they utter, because, as she explained: 'children are always hungry after they are weaned'.

906" In the Blood and in the Culture

As described above, ideas about blood and culture are intertwined in such a manner that one could say that the Nurzay are well aware of the interrelationship between what we may call the 'innate' and the 'environment' or the 'nature-nurture' concept. Their concept that character traits and behaviour patterns are related 'to the blood' as well as to upbringing in a given social environment became especially clear when they were asked the following hypothetical question: 'How would a Taymani (a Persian-speaking group they consider inferior) foundling baby boy develop if brought up in a Pashtun family?' The unanimous answer was that: 'When grown up, he would not be as strong and courageous (*delawār*) nor as *ghairatman* as we Pashtuns are, but compared to other Taymani, and amongst them, he would

be the strongest and most courageous'. When the question was put the other way round, they agreed that if a child of Pashtu parentage would grow up in a Taymani household, it would be the toughest among the Taymani, but not as 'good' as a Pashtun who grows up in a Pashtun household. Asked for further explanations, they felt that in the first case, the baby would not have the Pashtun *rag*, but would see and learn how Pashtun men behave; in the second case, the child would have the Pashtun *rag*, but would see and only learn what the 'weak and unmanly Taymani men do'. The same holds true for children of mixed marriages, when for example, the father is a Pashtun and the mother is a Taymani — here only one parent has the *rag*, the vein, with the result that the typical Pashtun traits are weakened, compared to the 'inheritance' effect of the combined *rag* if both parents are Pashtun. Such concepts have also been noted among the Durrani Pashtuns by Tapper (1991: 57):

> Children of such a union are not ordinarily stigmatised — their social identity is unambiguously that of their Durrani father, but it said they are liable to be quarrelsome, and to behave in the 'short-sighted' way typical of non-Durrani. If they are this way, people will laugh and say, 'After all, the mother was not Durrani; one vein is fallen'. Or, children of mixed marriages may be described as hybrids (*du-raga*, literally, 'two-veined', the term used for hybrid animals as well), and sometimes a whole lineage descended from a union between a Durrani man and a non-Durrani woman may be so characterised. Such explanations are usually offered only when a household or larger group of agnates descended from such a union is, for whatever reason, weak and becoming weaker.

Notions of inheritance and education apply not only to 'ethnic' characteristics, but also to status-specific capacities. Thus, for example, when asked whether a boy can be educated in such a way that he can become a *khān*, Nek Mahmad answered: 'To become a *khān* lies in God's hands, and, further, he has to be the son of a *khān* and his fathers' father also had to be *khān*'. The following interview with Zarin also reflects these mixed concepts of innate capacities and acquired qualities:

Q: Does the son of a *khān* always become a *khān*?
A: Only if he has the qualities of a *khān* — not every one.
Q: Does Moluk (son of Sardar Khān's brother) have these qualities?
A: Yes, he is quick, chases the other kids around, throws stones. He has the qualities of a *khān*.
Q: And Karim (elder brother of Moluk)?
A: No, he has no *khān* qualities. He is too quiet — he is like the other kids.
Q: But how about Ghaporak, he is the son of a *khān*?
A: That doesn't matter. It depends on whether he has the qualities of a *khān* and of course whether he comes from a *khān* family.
Q: Would it be possible for Baz Mahmad's children to become *khān* if they have the qualities?
A: No, their father is a *mazdūr* (lit. 'labourer', here, a hired shepherd), and his father was also a *mazdur* and the children will be so too. Even if Baz Mahmad were the head of the Afghan state, his father would still be a *mazdūr*, and Baz Mahmad would still not be a *khān* and his children would also not become *khān*.

Although a highly respected and powerful person, the *khān* (for details, see Glatzer 1972: 173-184) is not seen as someone whom the boys should especially obey and towards whom they should show particular respect. When asked about this, Nek Mahmad and Zarin explained:

> No, we do not educate our children to be especially obedient to the *khān*. We only teach them to be obedient, and specially to show respect to elderly men. They should be quiet when the elders speak, should only answer when asked, and should address all elderly men with respectful names — for instance, not 'Baza' but 'Baz Mahmad Khan' or 'Baz Mahmad Aka' [*aka* = address term for father's brother, also used to address older non-related men]. They should behave respectfully towards Sardar Khan, not because he is a *khan*, but because he is older.

As stated earlier, the Pashtuns consider themselves to be the manliest and bravest people in the country. There was also broad consensus that the nomads were the bravest 'amongst all Pashtuns: two nomads could beat up twenty peasants', it was said. This was also explained by the different experiences members of the two groups have to face in life: 'Nomads pass through many places in the country and always have quarrels and always have to assert themselves against many. The peasants are sh*eyānān* (devils), they always just go [if there is a quarrel] to the government (*hokūmat*)'.

When asked whether there is a special/particular way of educating or influencing boys to become brave Pashtuns, the answer was always that nothing is done specially, only 'from time to time we tell them to be courageous, but it is in the heart whether one is brave or not'. And the proverb 'The heart is a hidden thing. Some are brave, while others are cowardly' was often recited: ('*zṛạ kho pat shey żīnē zṛunah delāwara wi zīnē kamdela*').

907"On Persuasion, Admonishment and Corporal Punishment

Whenever we asked parents how children learn to obey and do things properly, they said that explaining is the foremost method of education. Only when explanations and advice were fruitless — only after being admonished twice — could or should a child be beaten. This, for instance, holds true for toilet training: 'If the child is old enough and able to understand, but nevertheless, still soils its bed, it will be beaten; however, only after it has been told several times not to do so, and then too, only if it still does not stop'. Only one father, who often had problems with his son, once said, 'just beat them, explaining has no effect'.

The socialisation process develops differentially among boys and girls. Educating girls, who spend most of their time in the tent and thus under their mothers' eyes, is generally considered more difficult because, 'they have to be told to be on their guard all the time, and

not to do this and that, to behave properly so that they do not bring shame on their parents'. It was hence agreed that girls are beaten more often than boys, because special care has to be taken to ensure that they behave well, so that when they marry and leave the parental home they do not bring shame over their father and mother. Boys are much freer, spend most of their time outside the tent and often quite far away from their parents, playing, collecting firewood, or tending young animals.

Over the whole time we spent in the camps, we rarely saw children being beaten apart from occasional short, light slaps with the flat of the hand on the back. But such slaps, which did not hurt much, had a dramatic effect; the child often cried for minutes and ran away, and more often than not, it was then immediately comforted by an older sibling or even by the parent who had just punished it. A strong sense of justice also prevailed, and took into account the age and strength of a child. When an adult saw an older and stronger boy hitting a smaller one, he/she held the older child tight and urged the smaller child to hit the defenceless older one on its back. All this differs considerably from what Ammar (1970: 242-45.) observed in the Egyptian village Silwa, what Hanifi (1971) reported for Pashtuns in eastern Afghanistan and also from Lindholm's (1982: 171-172) observations among Pashtun peasants in the Swat Valley where infants and children were beaten severely, even in public, whenever they misbehaved. Annemarie Profanter (2007) has also presented a thorough study on the issue of physical punishment of Pashtun children and youth in Peshawar in the North-West Frontier Province of Pakistan in which she showed that physical punishment is the central means of socialisation and education.

: '''ON SONS AND DAUGHTERS

Children are most welcome and loved, and, in this respect, the nomads see no difference between themselves and the sedentary Pashtuns or other communities. There is a proverb referring to a mother's constant love for her child, even when others say it is ugly: 'Says the porcupine mother to her child — "Oh you, my child of velvet"'. Also comparisons are made with herd animals and their imprinting process which enables the strong attachment between the mother and its young (Casimir 1982). As we shall see later, this is a process that even children are familiar with: 'This is like with sheep; there as well, the mother recognises her children out of the many and kicks away those who are not her own', Bāz Mahmad said. Having children, and especially having many sons who always help each other (Fig. 11 and 12), is considered an important element that is related to power and prosperity; as one informant expressed it: 'I became powerful (*tawān*) once I had many children'.

Fig. 11 Little Mosum serves water to his handicapped older brother.

Fig. 12 Older brothers giving a helping hand.

: 0B''The Importance of Having Sons

In their cross-cultural analyses, Edwards and Whiting (1980) have shown that in most societies the socialisation patterns of boys and girls are quite different and depend on various factors such as social structure and the economy of the group. Also, according to the Trivers-Willard hypothesis (Trivers and Willard 1973), parents should bias their investment in favour of the sex

with the higher reproductive prospect. Thus, in patriarchal and polygynous societies, boys should be favoured; and in societies where girls have a higher reproductive prospect, girls should get more support than boys. In the case of pastoral societies, the former situation was described and analysed by Irons (2000) for the Yomut Turkmen of northern Iran and the latter by Cronk (2000) for the Mukogodo of north-central Kenya, both corroborating the hypothesis.

Among the patriarchal Pashtuns as well, the birth of a boy was welcomed more than that of a girl, and (see also paragraph on birth giving) boys usually got more and better food and greater attention when sick. Sick sons were often taken to a hospital — this was rarely so for daughters. All this might also explain the lopsided ratio of boys to girls mentioned before. However, even if these findings are in line with the Trivers-Willard hypothesis and Iron's (2000) careful analysis of the Yomut Turkmen of Iran, our data could also be biased by the very small sample and should thus be treated with caution. Also, one must be careful with generalisations that leave no space for individual variations (cf. Redondo, Gomedio and Medina 1992). Even among the relatively small number of households, there were great differences in behaviour towards small daughters. On the one hand, there was Karim who often cuddled his daughters and cared for them as much as he did for his little son; on the other hand, there was well-to-do Abdur Rahim with two sons and a daughter who did not think it necessary to send her to a doctor when she was sick, saying that she would get well again if God willed. Here again, we should never forget that in all societies, and thus also among the Pashtuns, there is often a big difference between normative (emic) concepts and factual behaviour. It is always preferable to present normative concepts to foreigners, but, on the individual level, extreme variations can be observed.

One important factor explaining this normative difference is the economic value of sons who also inherit the herd (for details of Pashtun inheritance rights, see Glatzer 1977: 35-38). Baz Mahmad exemplified this situation. He had married again after his first wife and all four daughters had died. Now he had three sons, Tayer, Khoday Ram II and Ghani, and he said: 'It is good as it is because earlier there were no sons — now I have sons who one day will inherit'. Asked about the importance and implications of having sons or brothers, most people cited four main reasons: the first was related to herd management and other economic activities (cf. Glatzer and Casimir 1993) which require many hands. The second reason was the support sons are said to offer their parents in old age. Normatively, a son, or if there are more than one, the youngest, should stay with his aged parents, and good sons are said to do this. In practice, however, this is not always the case, although we were told that in former times a son would never desert his old parents. The third reason concerned the relationship between wealth, the reduction of economic risk, and power. If there are many sons, who, after marriage and

separation from their parents' household, live not too far away from them, then they can help one another in times of severe drought — and they say that one drought will always occur in a man's lifetime — or if an epidemic decimates a herd. The fourth reason given is related to eventual quarrels among nomadic households (e.g. over pasture rights; cf. Glatzer 1992) or between these and sedentary families. If a household has only one or no sons and is poor, it is unable to defend itself against other powerful households. Then, as old Babu Benares said, quoting a Pashtu proverb: '*shirmūskey chē lạ mār sra wurazējī las zaya shkeji'* (If a lizard tries to stretch itself out beneath a snake, it will break up into a hundred parts)[3] He explained why he was powerless and poor (in fact he was one of the rich herders) by telling us the following story:

> When I was young, we were six brothers of whom two died before they were married. I was the youngest, but I carried the 'sigh of a bad year' (*zạ dạ bād kal naṣhah wum*). I stayed with one of my brothers, but the others went away. So we were unable to help one another. At that time, the big *khān* in the village was not yet as powerful as today, but he managed to keep his brothers together. Had our family been able to stay together, we would now have been much richer and more powerful than he is.

It is thus important that sons stay together, but as Babu Benares added:

> A father cannot influence his sons to stay together; it is up to them — if they are clever, they will stay together [in terms of not losing contact], and when one dies, one of the other brothers will take over his role, as he would do when his father dies. Also, one son may become a peasant, one will be a herder and one will serve the government (*hokūmat*). That way they can support one another.

And pointing at us, he added: 'It is like what you are doing here: one is asking questions, one writing this down and one is handling the tape-recorder'.

When the boys were asked about their future expectations and whether they wanted to go to school, they invariably said that they wanted to be herders (*māldār*) and did not want to go to school. One even said: 'I don't want to be rich. I only want to own a few animals; a lot of animals means lots of work, and I also don't want to be a *khān*'. Only one boy mentioned that it would be good to have some land in addition. The idea of living in a mud house, instead of in a tent was especially frightening for them, and some remembered how scared they were when they had to stay for some days in their relatives' houses in the village.

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[3] This conversation related to a quarrel between Babu Benares (of the Milarzay subclan) and the *sarxel*, who belonged to the Badarzay subclan and was the youngest son of the powerful *khān* and landowner (*zamindar*). Babu Benares wanted to split camp and migrate separately to the summer area. However, he had close affinal and consanguinal connections to the *khān* and he knew that he could not go alone. As a result, he had to abandon this intention.

:0B0B'' Learning to Be *Ghairatman*

As in many societies where bravery and manliness is held in high esteem (see Lancy 2008: 180-181), education in bravery and aggressiveness among the Pashtun nomads starts quite early, and little boys, often toddlers, are called upon to fight with the words '*jang wokṛạ*' (make war, fight). They are held close to each other by their respective fathers or other male relatives so that they can hit each other.

As Glatzer (1996: 114-115) observed:

> Fathers romp and even scuffle intensively with their little sons aged three to ten, and even encourage them to hit them with their fists. They gently box back, to encourage the little fighters for a second round. Rough and tumble among the boys is commented on favourably. Upbringing is affectionate, not authoritarian, and the father is conceived of as a role model rather than as someone meting out punishment. [my translation]

Sometimes a father or another relative urges a little boy to fight him. He may then show him how to create anger in the opponent. So when Mohamad Anwar showed his little two-year-old son Mezhey how to pull his lips and eyebrows, and Mezhy did so, Mohamad Anwar defended himself playfully, but so that Mezhey caught him from time to time and 'hurt' him.

Asked how courage can be acquired, and how the Pashtun canon of norms and values is taught, Zarin, Nek Mahmad and Baz Mahmad once explained:

> When something dangerous has to be done, we tell our sons to do it — for instance, to fetch something in the night, or tend the animals. We also tell them that to do this is good and to do that is bad. Or we give them the example of someone who was courageous [cf. Unger-Heitsch 1995: 56 for the same method in Bedouin boys]. We also allow them to be present at the *majlis* [council meeting of the men], and there, sometimes, the courageous deed of someone is recounted and he is praised, and someone else is criticised for his cowardliness. This is how the boys learn what courageous is.

There is also the generally recognised phase between about eight and ten years when boys are expected to be especially naughty (*shokh*) and unruly. Mothers now have great difficulty in getting their sons to help them with work and in making them accept their advice. Boys now throw temper tantrums and can even try and hit their mothers who, however, never hit back, but only try and protect themselves. This unruliness (in a phase corresponding to the German *Flegeljahre*) can have concrete consequences for the group. One occasion was when a good and preferred camping ground next to the river could not be used because of the nearby melon fields of the Taymani. The nomads knew that it would not be possible to prevent some of their boys from stealing melons, and that quarrels and perhaps even physical fights would ensue with the owners of these fields.

The intra-subtribe hierarchy among boys is related not just to the age and thus the strength of the individual boys, but mainly to the combined force of the number of brothers who form a unit (Fig. 13). This strong, affectionate bonding between brothers is idealised in a Pashtu proverb that says 'Brothers fought, only fools believed it'. Of course, in everyday situations, quarrels between brothers can be observed frequently — however, when one of them is attacked by an 'outsider' they always unite. This readiness to fight and the support brothers give one another can be observed every day when the male adolescent peer group meets on the flat open space or near the stream not far away from their parents' tents. Whenever quarrels occur between boys of different households, brothers always stick together, and those who have no brothers, even if they are bigger and stronger, are usually subordinate to them. The answers boys gave when asked whether it is good to have many brothers clearly show that they are conscious of fraternal rivalry and fraternal bonding: Gul Mahmad (son of Zarin, aged twelve), for instance, answered: 'I don't like having many brothers, there are always quarrels'. On the other hand, when Taher (son of Baz Mahmad, aged ten) was asked about his feelings towards his brothers, he said: 'It's good to have many brothers; we can support each other in a fight and we can share the work — if one goes to fetch water the other can collect firewood'. The relationship between wealth and the number of sons (cf. Casimir and Rao 1995; Glatzer and Casimir 1983) was expressed by his brother, seven-year-old Khoday Ram II (son of Baz Mahmad), who explained that a household needs many sons if it has a large herd — or, in the case of peasants, lots of land.

Fig. 13
When visiting the anthropologists in their tent, the boys position themselves according to subtribe and usually also according to age. The further away from the entrance, the more honourable the place is. Note that the orphan Khoday Ram is sitting in the least honourable place, directly at the entrance to the tent.

Ghapor [the young son of Sardar Khan, the great *zamindar* (landowner) and *khān* in the village] said that he only liked the three of his brothers who were the sons of his mother and not those from the *khān*'s second wife. There is a pronounced emotional and behavioural

separation between the sons of different mothers in polygynous households. This attitude is also expressed in a well-known Pashtu proverb saying: ‘If they are not from the same mother, don’t call them brothers’, or ‘if he has not the same mother, don’t call him brother’.

Mutual support (in economic and socio-political contexts, understood as the basis of the future well-being of a household) was always seen when arguments between boys took place. Quarrels usually started with some indignities, but whenever some jostling between two boys started, the rivals were immediately appeased by their brothers. If controversies developed between two boys from the different subtribes, brothers and other boys of the same subtribe immediately joined, and a certain ‘balance of power’ always hindered serious fights. The importance of this mutual support was very apparent when boys had a low socio-economic position and no brothers. This was the situation of the only orphan in the camp. Though Islam (Sura 4:2; 6:152) stipulates that orphans be cared for (for details, see O’Shaughnessy 1991: 35-36), in reality, they are often powerless and largely neglected. Typical for this neglect is the case of seven-year-old Khoday Ram who was an orphan and the son of Zarin’s daughter. He usually stood at a distance from the group of children when they played *bijili* — a game of marbles played with the small vertebrae of goats or sheep. Whenever he stood next to the other children who just watched the game, he was chased away; and when he approached the players obviously hoping to be invited to join them, they simply ignored him. More than once, he was beaten up by boys much smaller than himself (Fig. 14), and all the others boys stood around the fighters encouraging the smaller boy and scolding Khoday Ram when he tried to fight back with full strength. The fights always ended with an ashamed Khoday Ram giving up and running away (compare also Fig. 13).

Fig. 14
The orphan Khoday Ram being beaten by an even smaller boy.

His own explanations for his situation can be considered typical for the importance of bonding between brothers. ‘I’ve nobody here whom I like; I’m poor and have no parents and everybody beats me’. He also complained bitterly about his grandfather who did not look after him; he said that he hated him, and that ‘one day when I’m grown up I shall beat him’. Neglected by the boys in his peer group, he was often seen together with his mother’s brother’s daughter, and he also spent more time with adult men than his peers did. This also explains why he seemed much more mature when talking and interacting with adults, and why his language acquisition in both Persian and Pashtu was much better than that of the other boys of his age.

:04"" The Importance of Having Daughters

As mentioned earlier, daughters are generally considered inferior to sons. However, their importance in the social, political and especially economic fabric should not be underestimated. In the political sphere, ‘giving a daughter’ to the son of a high-ranking family, thus binding the two families, is as important as ‘taking a daughter’. Because of the bridewealth (*wạlwạr*) system, rich and high-ranking families usually exchange daughters among themselves, but often the bridewealth given is equivalent to the presents (which are not considered as a dowry) given to the young couple by the bride’s parents. Since patrilineal parallel cousins are preferred marriage partners, it is thought good to have at least one daughter to ‘give’ in order to further tighten fraternal cohesion. As Glatzer (1977: 146) showed for the Atzaksay Pashtun nomads of northwestern Afghanistan, 13.7 per cent of the fifty-one marriages analysed were such FBD marriages, and also among the Nurzay, such marriages took place whenever possible.

From the economic point of view, the labour capacity of a daughter should also not be underestimated. Until the time they marry and leave their natal families, girls have to work constantly; and the older they are, the more chores they have. Here, as in so many ‘traditional’ societies, the burden of most of the daily work lies, next to children, on the shoulders of women (cf. Small 2002); and even among children, most of the heavier work is done by girls. Pitching and dismantling tents, loading the camels with all the household (*kōr*) items for the migration caravan (*kaḍạ*) is done mostly by the women and girls, and the men usually help only with items that are too heavy for them to handle. As old Baba Benares once said, ‘most of the work here is done by the women and the children’.

Fig. 15 Mainly the girls take care of their younger siblings.

Child and sibling care in most non-industrialised societies is a prominent task mostly fulfilled by children, and in particular by older sisters (e.g. Weisner and Gallimore 1977; Shahbazi 2001: 54-56). This is also the case among Pashtun nomads: When not helping their mothers, young girls either carry their younger siblings around (Fig 15) and talk to them, or play with toddlers, feeding them and assisting them when they defecate.

; '''GAMES CHILDREN PLAY

Psychologists see mother-child play as natural;
anthropologists see it as cultural (Lancy 2007: 273)

Defining 'play' was and is a difficult and controversial enterprise, and as Vygotsky (1966: 6) observed: 'defining it on the basis of pleasure can certainly not be regarded as correct'. If we, nevertheless, use Chick's (1998) typology, based on Roberts *et al.*'s (1995) basic categories 'physical skill', 'strategy' and 'chance' to classify the games played by Pashtun children, we may start to classify them as (a) 'physical skill only', (b) 'physical skill and strategy' and (c) 'strategy and chance'. However, as we shall see, none of these categories are watertight, and, more often than not, the different types and their functions overlap.

As pointed out by Lancy (1980, 2007, see also 2008: 159-165), the issue of who plays with the children and/or with whom children perform their plays depends on various factors. As he showed, the occurrence of mother-child play for instance is particularly variable from society to society, and in most non-industrialised (but also some acculturating) societies, the mother rarely plays with her children. On the basis of a cross-cultural analysis he concluded:

> Not only does one rarely see mother-child play when looking beyond our own society, if we examine the broader context in which children, traditionally, grow to adulthood, we can readily see why this is so. That is, the 'cultural routines' that one commonly observes at work in child care (Lancy 1996) are simply incompatible with mother-child play of great variety, duration, or frequency. (p. 273)

Just like it can generally be said that child-rearing practices vary widely from culture to culture, so do the types of games played by children in different social environments (Garbanio 1989; Gump 1989). Ariel and Sever (1980: 173) have rightly stated that: 'structure and development of individual and social play are not universal, but culture-bound' (see also Bloch and Pellegrini 1989; Göncü, Mistry and Mosier 2000; Jahoda and Lewis 1988; Roopnarine *et al.* 1994; Schwartzman (1980). However, as Harris (1995) observed, the children's play group is universal and he points out that:

> If the number of children in a given locality is small, the play group will consist of children of both sexes and a range of ages; if the number is larger, the children generally divide up into age- and sex-segregated groups… Girls' groups tend to be fragmented – they split up into dyads and triads… – but these unstable dyads and triads are almost always composed of individuals who belong to the same stable social category, as determined by age, sex, and other locally relevant factors. (p. 466)

This is exactly what was observed among children of the Pashtun nomads. Boys often formed large play groups in which all the boys of the camp played together. Girls, however, were never seen in larger play groups. They always played either alone or in groups of two or three. Among the nomads, boys can and do play much more and longer than girls, the latter

being integrated much earlier into ‘real’ work, helping their mothers in the household and taking care of younger siblings. Little boys often get their own little goats or lambs as pets with which they sometimes play for hours (Fig. 16a).

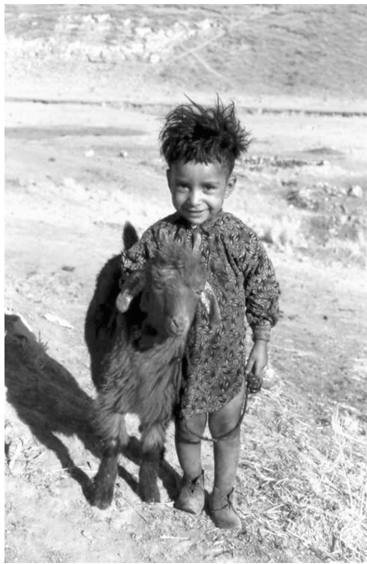


Fig. 16a A little boy with his pet goat.

Fig. 16b A little boy dancing in front of a big shepherd dog who remains in a submissive posture.

The emotional attachment to that pet can develop quite strongly, making a later separation quite difficult when the grown-up animal should be integrated into the herd. Dogs are not usually played with, and only little boys have sometimes been seen having fun with them. For the dog, the members of the household are their pack, and they are lowest in the pack’s hierarchy so that even the smallest boys can dominate them in every way (Fig 16b).

As already described, next to the mother, the whole family and even neighbours are often involved in child care, but (despite handling and caressing their babies until weaning) mothers have never been seen engaged in playing with their children. Also, as described for many societies (Lacy 2007: 277), mothers are often intolerant of children’s play, scolding them and ordering them to fulfil their work duties.

For little boys and girls aged three to four years, games consist, next to swinging (which may be classified as belonging to ‘physical skills’), in playing with stones, sticks and mud (Fig. 17). In these ‘object-centred games’ the different objects are associated as in ‘fantasy games’ with objects in their social or economic environment representting family members, animals, tents or fences. Here, as Vygotsky (1966: 12) has explained, ‘thought is separated from objects because a piece of wood begins to be a doll and a stick becomes a horse’ (cf. also Millar 1973: 158-77; Pellegrini and Gustafson 2005; Schwartzman 1978: 116-120). Mueller and Brenner hypothesised that peer social relations originate during object-focused contacts, but Jacobson (1981: 618) felt that although ‘peer social interaction does not

originate in an object-centred context, object-centred play may enhance its development during the second year'.

Fig. 17 Small boys and girls often play alone or in small groups with stones or sticks often imagining specific domestic work or events.

Little girls have never been seen playing with dolls and it was only once that one of them showed me a very simple one. After I showed interest in it and asked who had made it (the mother), the next day many other girls came and proudly showed me their dolls — which were quickly made the same day (Fig. 18). It seems that, as Lancy (2008: 214) has noted, in societies where girls can play with 'real dolls' as caretakers of their siblings, dolls are not found. However, this does not seem to be a universal pattern as the example of the semi-nomadic Ghrib of southern Morocco shows where quite elaborated dolls are in use (Rossie 1993, 2005). In traditional societies, as Power (2000: 272) pointed out, children mainly imitate the behaviour of adults in their traditional roles. The nomadic children mostly engage in such make-believe or pretend play (Smith 2005) alone or in small groups up to four (Fig. 17). As among the semi-nomadic Ghrib of southern Morocco (Rossie 1993) where children build little tents and other types of structures, small Pashtun children were also often observed building little fences for imagined herd animals. Once, for example, when the hired shepherd tied reeds together to make a mat, little Karim, Moluk and Ghani collected little sticks, took a short string and, squatting about five metres next to the *chopān*, tried to make their own little mats.

Fig. 18 Simple dolls are rarely made.

According to gender-specific work patterns, women are mainly responsible for the domestic sphere and the care of small children whereas men are responsible for herd management. Thus, boys usually imitate the work of the shepherd or other activities concerning animal husbandry, whereas little girls, who always play next to the tents or in the

direct vicinity of the camp, imitate the work of adult women, using sand, stones and sticks to play at ‘cooking’, baking’, ‘washing’ or ‘spinning’ (Fig. 19).

Fig. 19
Awya imitating women’s work: ‘Spinning’ by turning a stone on which some wool is attached and producing a thread.

Older Nurzay boys often also imitate specific new and interesting situations. When one day, for instance, the *khān*’s brother came from the village on a motorbike, the boys gathered flexible branches tying a quarter of their length back to form a round, wheel-like end. With the ‘wheel’ on the ground and the other end in their hand, they ran around for hours, imitating the noise of the motorbike (Fig. 20a). Now branches became motorbikes, and also, when a car appeared, piles of stones became cars. For the next day or two, the boys arranged big, fairly rectangular stones in such a way that they could sit in and on this structure, producing car-like noises, and they played ‘going by car’ (Fig. 20b). Smaller girls rarely participated in such games; most of the time, they stood to one side more quietly, leaving the rougher and noisier part of the game to the boys.

Fig. 20a,b Tied together branches become motorbikes and piled up stone slabs become cars.

Another ‘fantasy game’ was related to the specific role of women when the caravan moves. It is always the wife of one of the influential households who, dressed in her best, leads the first beautifully decorated camel of the caravan when moving to the summer or winter camp.

Fig. 21a,b ‘We are a bridge’ and explaining to the anthropologist ‘I am the limping Zarin’. (photo: Glatzer).

Already during the days leading up to the move, little boys and girls played *lok bāzī* (the ‘leading camel’ game) in which an older child tied two or more of the smaller children together in a line and then led this little caravan around the camp. Often, it is specially boys who initiate specific games in which phenomena or situations are imitated such as, for instance, bowing over a creek and ‘building’ a bridge (Fig. 21a) or specific attitudes and characteristics of individual adults. For instance, to imitate a limping neighbour (Zarin) who supported his crippled right leg with a walking stick, one of the boys once took a stick and shouted loudly: ‘I am Zarin’, and then limped along. (Fig. 21b). As with the ‘motorbike game’, which was invented by one boy, such behaviour was also ‘infectious’ here and led other boys to grab similar sticks. For a while, each tried to limp ‘better’ than the other.

As mentioned before, boys of all ages often form large all-boy play groups. They can play and run around without restrictions (cf. Friedl 1997: 9), even far away from the campsite, and, for instance, bathe naked in the brook (Fig. 22), or they play different games belonging to the ‘rough and tumble’ type (Boulton and Smith 1989; Reed 2005), which was never observed among girls or between boys and girls.

Fig. 22 Boys openly playing naked in the nearby brook. Girls, of course, are not allowed to do this and have to go further away where no man can see them.

Although this was quite a chaotic performance, a mixture of chasing each other around, catching or slapping and affronting and abusing each other, serious hurting was never seen. Some games were more ritualised such as performing in a circle and jumping on one leg only — the boy who lasts the course wins the palm (Fig. 23). Following stricter rules, however, and typical for the whole region was wrestling; which was both a serious sport and a game. In order to find out who is the strongest in the group of boys, wrestling was observed quite often between those who are already fifteen to seventeen years old. The dominance hierarchy among boys in many societies is often established through play-fights (Pellegrini 2003; see also Lancy 2008: 198-200, 277-284). Among the nomad boys, such play-fights were observed whenever a new household pitched their tent on the camping ground of the community and settled. The boy(s) of the new household were invited to wrestle, and very soon, everybody knew the position of the new boy(s) in the rank order of the peer group (Fig. 24). Such play-fights are simple to differentiate from real fights (compare Fig. 14), because, as Fry (1987, 2005) showed in his analysis, specific facial expressions and vocal intention (e.g. laughter) signals are displayed only in play-fight situations.

Fig. 23 Jumping on one leg: The one who lasts the course wins.

Fig. 24 Wrestling established a new hierarchy among the boys (the household of the boy with the dark blue trousers arrived some days ago).

There were only two specifically structured 'physical skill and chance' games played in groups of boys. One is *bijili*, played with the smaller vertebrae of goats or sheep (cf. Oudenhoven 1979: 28, 1980: 130) which is the equivalent of the European game of marbles (Fig. 25).

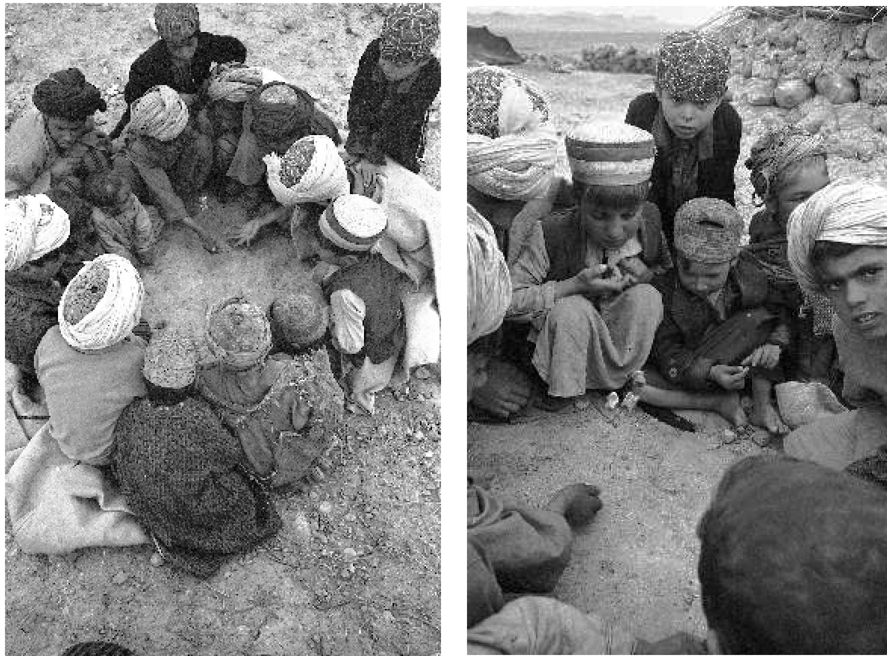


Fig. 25 Squatting around a hole in the ground, the children play *bijilli.*

The second is bocca-like, where the boy whose thrown stone or vertebra is positioned nearest to a big stone positioned some ten metres away wins the game (Fig. 26). 'Playing', 'helping' and 'explaining' usually go hand in hand, and older boys often teach younger ones special tasks such as how to tie a turban (Fig. 27).

Fig. 26 Playing a boccia-like game with stones or the ungulate's vertebrae.

In the first roughly thirty days of the lambing and kidding season, the young animals have to be carried out of a tent every morning when the herd of ewes return from the pasture where they have spent the night. After the lambs and kids have been suckled, they have to be caught and carried back to the tent. This is done mainly by boys and girls. Running after a lamb or kid, catching it and carrying back as many as possible at one go is great fun for the children, but it is equally an indispensable form of labour. As mentioned before, it is specially the young boys who often join their father or elder brother in watching over their herd. This is the situation in which they begin to learn to differentiate not

only the individual goats and sheep belonging to their own herd but, with time, also those of the other households. Asking boys aged roughly thirteen to sixteen to whom a specific animal out of some 400 to 500 heads belonged was invariably answered correctly. It can also be mentioned here that unlike the girls who are not involved in herd management (Glatzer and Casimir 1983: 319), ten-year-old boys could already differentiate and name the roughly twenty different fodder plants and/or those used as firewood. Girls of that age usually knew only the five to six plants normally used to light the earth oven.

Fig. 27 Teaching younger boys how to tie a turban (photo: Glatzer).

Fig. 28 A young girl washing a piece of cloth.

As when carrying young animals, when little girls carry their smaller siblings, feed them and play with them, work is play and play is work. We may, if we stress the ludic part of these activities, classify them as 'physical skill' (Fig. 28). In addition, however, because of their strong economic and social component, the category may be further subdivided — in the case of rounding up kids and lambs, into 'physical and economic'; and in the case of sibling care, into 'physical and social' (for an evolutionary approach cf. Bekoff 1978).

32'''LEARNING BY DOING THE WORK

The possibility of combining work and play and thus acquiring competence (cf. Inkeles 1972) is often neglected, because it was thought that in contemporary Western societies, the workload of adults, especially that of the mother, is rarely transferred to the children. This in fact is the situation in pre-industrialised societies as Minturn and Lambert (1964, see also Bloch and Adler 1994; Katz 1986; Whiting *et al.* 1975: 82-113) have shown, but is also still typical for rural cultures in many parts of the world, including Europe and even for poorer urban environments (e.g. Dybdahl and Hundeide 1998). Also, as Blair (1992) has shown in American households, a significant portion of the labour of all household members is performed by children, and household chores mirror the traditional divide between men's and women's work.

When the Pashtun nomads were asked at what age or when children begin to work, the usual answer was, 'at the age of ten, if they are strong enough', which is about the same age when boys of the Kel Timia in the Niger (Spittler 1998: 237-257) and those of the semi-nomadic Ghrib of southern Morocco (Rossie 1993) start working. In praxis, however, as in many Middle Eastern countries and also among the Pashtun nomads, much younger boys and girls fulfil many smaller household chores, specially taking care of their younger siblings (Fernea 1995: 7), fetching a little firewood or camel's dung for fuel when they are boys, and starting to clean dishes and wash some small pieces of cloth when they are girls (Fig. 28).

Fig. 29 Older boys cutting dwarf bushes for firewood and storing them next to the tent (photos: Glatzer).

Under the guidance of older boys and sometimes also older girls, small children observe how dwarf shrubs (*buṭī*) are cut with a hoe and brought home (Fig. 29) and sometimes, some explaining also takes place. One day, for instance, Khodaydad, aged about ten years, showed and explained to his younger brother Walidad (aged about two and a half years) how to put *buṭī* together: He made up a small pile while Walidad squatted next to him and watched. Tying them together, he explained how to do it. Then he untied the bundle and bound it up again to show how it is done. Walidad then wanted to carry it home. His elder brother helped him to shoulder it and his sister guided him home (Fig. 30), and it was obvious that little Walidad was very proud of being able to accomplish the work.

Fig. 30 A young boy, guided by his sister, carries home a little bundle of firewood.

Here, work and play cannot be separated (Bloch and Adler 1994; Lancy 2008: 242-245). In particular, the playful imitation of adult work is a way of rehearsing work capacities and it plays an important role in promoting socially sanctioned behaviour patterns and the acquisition of skills (Bandura and Walters 1970: 47-108).

320B''How to Handle a Herd

The sons' relationships with their mothers change when a boy is about five years old. When not playing, boys now spend most of their time with the adult men who guard the herds (Fig. 31), and from them they learn which animal belongs to the family herd, how to recognise a sick goat or sheep and what to do in such a case. They usually start off by helping the shepherds (*lērba*) hired to take charge of the herd of lambs and kids (Fig. 32). For this work (*gomari*), every household has to provide one child per twenty lambs/kids per day. Later, boys go as helpers (*dumbālawān*) to the hired shepherd (*chopān*) who tends the combined herds of two or more households (for details, see Glatzer 1977: 49-53; Glatzer and Casimir

Fig. 31 Young boys spend most of their time with their father guarding the herds (photo: Glatzer).

1983), bringing him food and helping him guard the herd (Fig. 33). When the boys are about eighteen years old, they no longer work as *dumbālawān*; they now either become shepherds or *sarvān* who take care of the camp's camel herd. It is only in the first month of the milking season, from about mid-March to mid-April, that everyone, including all the children, helps with herd management (Fig. 32 to 38) according to their capabilities and strength.

Fig. 32 Boy guarding a herd of young animals.

Fig. 33
The shepherd and his young helpers guiding the herd home in the evening.

Fig. 34
Ten-year-old Tayer brings the camels home.

When, in the morning, the shepherds reach the camp with the herd, the kids and lambs that have spent the night in the tents have to be carried to the ewes and supervised so that each finds its mother. After they have suckled for a while, they have to be separated again. To be milked, the milch animals (*barapey*) are tied along a long rope (*wandār*), a task carried out by the boys who start doing this when they are eight to twelve years old. Here again, the younger boys learn how to do it from the older ones who try to teach them even when they are too young. Our field notes recorded how ten-year-old Ghani carried little (about five-year-old) Mashkulak to the *wandār*, placed him between the already tied up goats, held him with both arms and showed him how to tie an animal. Mashkulak, however, was not at all interested in

learning the trick and tried to run away several times. But Ghani always brought him back until he realised that Mashkulak was still too young and then he let him go.

When all the animals are tied at the *wandār*, the women and older girls start to milk them. The men now watch over the little children, and often many of them sit in one of the tents together with most of the camp's children, creating the impression of being in some kind of kindergarten. Girls practice and learn the heavy work of milking (*lwēshạl*) at about the age of eleven or twelve years from their mother or elder sister. Men agree that this is very heavy work, but said that they and older boys help only if not enough young women are available. After the animals are milked, the herd rests, and is typically supervised by all the men, each with young sons in their arms. At this early age, the little boys can already observe what the father is doing — for example, when an animal is sick — and he, of course, tells the child what he is doing and why. The older boys also practice their future profession and help their fathers more or less successfully by catching an animal, holding it down for treatment or feeding individual kids or lambs (Figs. 35, 36).

Fig. 35 An older boy inspecting a sick sheep.

During this time, the girls are together with their mothers in the tents where they pour all the milk (*shīdē*) together so that it can sour to form yoghurt (*mastē*) that will be churned in the early morning when it is still cool. In the evening after the butter (*kuchī*) is separated, the remaining buttermilk (*shlombē*) is processed by boiling it in large vessels to separate the protein (Fig. 37). Small balls are formed from this protein precipitate and dried (*qrạt*) in the sun for future use in the lean season. When enough butter is collected, it is boiled to make ghee (*ghoṛī*) from which most water has been expelled so that it can be stored for a long time without becoming rancid (for details of these processes and nutritional analyses, see Casimir 1991a: 89- 111, 1991b).

Fig. 36 The boys often have to support the young animals when suckling and older lambs and kids are fed individually by hand (photos: Glatzer).

Milk is processed entirely by women with the help of their daughters. The same holds for all the other household chores such as kneading the dough for baking bread, preparing other dishes, fetching water, washing, repairing the clothes of family members, making carpets in the less labour-intensive time in winter for their own use or for sale in spring to itinerant merchants and, from time to time, weaving new tent cloth. All this means that girls are busy and working hard from a very early age, and their work load increases as they grow older.

Fig. 37 Observing mother's work separating milk products.

The only time in the year in which boys are very busy (together with the girls) is when, in the main milking season, the kids and lambs must be separated from their mothers after suckling and the milch animals are tied along a rope (*wandār*) in order to be milked (Fig. 38a, 38b).

Fig. 38a Small boys help to tie the milch animals at the *wandār*. (photos: Glatzer).

Fig. 38b Girls, guided by their mother or elder sisters, start milking the animals at about the age of eleven

The following Figure 39 shows the time spent in collecting the kids and lambs, carrying them to the herd of ewes and nanny goats and then carrying them back to the tent. This is the only time of the year when boys have to work hard every morning. In comparison to girls, they are generally spared for a longer time, and the only more or less regular daily work they have to do all through the year, which they often combine with play, is fetching shrub wood for fuel.

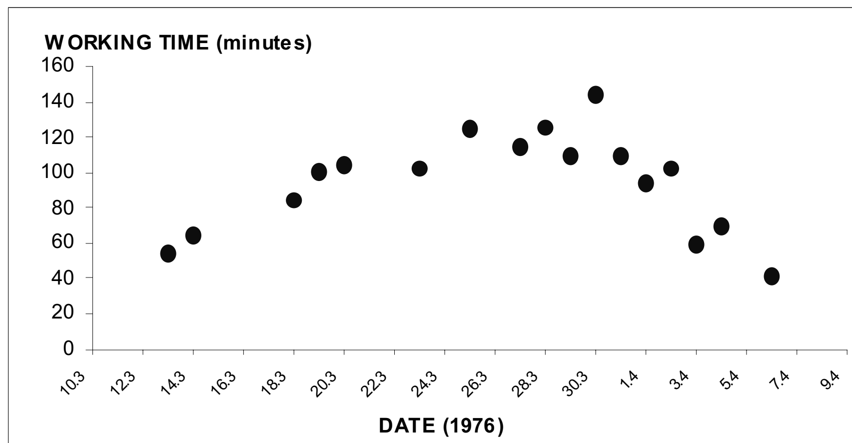
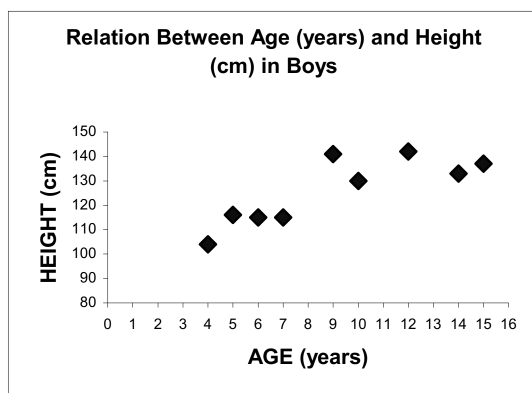


Fig. 39
Time spent by boys and girls in the main milking season carrying young animals to the ewes and nanny goats and back again.

The age at which boys are first introduced to herd management work depends on their physical build. Asked about when boys start to work, it was said that both boys and girls begin to tend the flocks of kids and goats at about seven, but that girls are not allowed to do this after they are about nine years old. A span of two to three years was mentioned, but younger boys often already did such work, while others, obviously older, had not even started. The latter were said to be too young still and/or not strong enough to begin this kind of work.
The following Figures 40 and 41 set out the relationship between age and height, and between height and arm power (measured as the maximum kgs that could be pulled with a spring balance) as measurable aspects of boys' development.



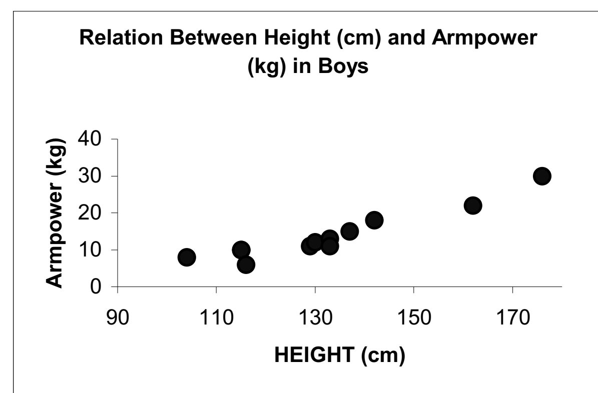


Fig. 40 and 41 Age to height ratio (*n* = *9*) and age to arm power ratio (*n*=*11*) in boys.

These young children then work together with a young lamb herder (*lērba*) who is about twelve to fifteen years old and who shows the children how and where to guide the young

animals so that they find the right fodder; sometimes, they also tend a small herd of young animals alone, not far away from the camp. At about twelve to thirteen years, the boys accompany the helper of the main hired shepherd (*dumbālawān*). Both can now learn from the shepherd (*ej opān*) how to pasture the herd, how to keep the animals together, how to protect the animals against wolves and also how to find their way by the stars in the night. By about fifteen, they can go out alone as *dumbālawān*; and, at about the same age, if considered strong enough, they can also start to work independently as *chopān.*

Around the last week of February, sheep and goats give birth (*lingedạl*), but only the *chopān* and the *dumbālawān* assist the animals in labour. However, even young boys of eight to twelve years are able to help if none of the 'professionals' are available. The following observation, made in February 1976, indicates how well these boys can do this work: When twelve-year-old Khoday Ram and his nine-year-old brother Taher noticed that a goat was in labour, they separated it from the other animals and then quietly squatted some five metres away from the animal so as not to disturb it. When, after a while, the forelegs of the kid appeared, Khoday Ram pulled it (*khalmakash*) out, and then immediately placed the new born in front of the mother for her to smell the offspring. After a few seconds, he blew hard on the nose and mouth of the kid in order to clean it, and then held it anew in front of its mother so that she could now lick it. Khoday Ram and his brother then cleaned the kid further before putting it in its suckling position. The kid drank very little, if at all. After this, it was held in front of its mother several times, and she sniffed it over lengthily. Finally, Khoday Ram carried the kid and walked slowly backwards towards the camp, facing the mother goat all the way. His brother helped the goat on to her legs and also pushed her gently towards the camp; all along the way, Khoday Ram often held the kid out again, for its mother to sniff at (Fig. 42 and 43). Later, in the camp, the adult men were asked about what we had observed, and they explained that all this had to be done so that the mother would recognise her own young out of all the others. In fact, the behaviour of both mother and young relates to the bio-mechanism known as imprinting (Hess 1973) and is necessary for the development of attachment between a mother and her young. If the individual olfactory cues (and later, the mutual recognition of the voices of mother and baby) are not learnt in the sensitive phase immediately after birth, the mother will not suckle her young and may even chase it away (for a detailed analysis, see Casimir 1982).

Fig. 42 Twelve-year-old Khoday Ram and his nine-year-old brother Taher attending the birth of a kid (for further information, see text).

At roughly the same age (ten to twelve years), boys also carry out their first attempt to castrate young male animals using their pocket knives, after having watched how it is done by the men.

Fig. 43
Letting the mother smell the newborn lamb. Taher warns bystanders not to come too close and disturb the mother (photo: Glatzer).

As mentioned before, by the age of about ten, little girls spend more and more time in the tent or accompany their mothers when they go to the river to wash clothes and utensils, while boys increasingly spend their time with the shepherds and the herd. Whereas girls have now stopped learning about animals and fodder plants, boys complete the knowledge necessary for the head of a household who is responsible for the family's capital: the herd. This increase in knowledge can be seen when boys of various ages are asked about the number of plants they can distinguish and name. Out of the ten most important dwarf bushes, boys in the age group three to five knew only four to six plants; at the age of seven to twelve, they already knew six of the ten. All girls asked up to the age of about twelve never knew more than about one-half of the names of the plants.

Fig. 44 Even young girls lead camels in times of migration (photo: Glatzer)

For girls, work in and around the tent begins at the age of about ten. Preparing and kneading dough, forming flatbread and baking it for the family and the shepherd are the most time-consuming enterprises. Very young girls can be seen playfully imitating their mother and kneading their little lumps of dough, but by the age of ten, girls already take their own plates, and their mothers show them how to do it properly; it nevertheless takes quite a long time before they succeed in producing flatbreads in the right quality. Washing clothes and dishes, cleaning the tent and taking care of younger siblings keeps them busy all day long. Here again, young girls often imitate their mothers — they accompany them or go alone with a young sibling to the river, and 'wash' little pieces of cloth in small bowls. When they are

older, they help their mother, thus reducing her workload (cf. Whiting *et al.* 1975: 66-113) and when the households migrate, they also lead the camels (Fig 44). When they are about thirteen, they can also assist the older women of the household by weaving tent cloth and carpets in the winter which are sold to merchants who come from Herat, and when bargaining takes place boys carefully listen and learn how business is done (Fig. 45).

Fig. 45 Learning how to sell the prayer carpet his mother has made over the winter months.

As many have pointed out, most of the cultural transmission in all societies takes place through the child's interaction with individuals other than the parents (for an overview see Harris 1995; see also Maccoby and Martin 1983; Werner 1989; Werner and Smith 1977). Here the children's peer group plays a dominant role with elder children, mainly siblings, showing the younger ones how to perform. This is also true for the nomad children, to whom only special behaviours and skills are explained and taught by the child's father or mother, whereas most of the capacities are learnt through interaction with other children, through observation, imitation and through trial-and-error.

33'"INFORMAL RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The practice of Islam varies considerably among the Nurzay nomads, all of whom are Sunni Muslims. Whereas in one camp, prayers under the guidance of a mullah can be observed every day, in others they are rarely said or only on special occasions.

In the camp we lived in, there was no mullah in the first year, and the men never gathered for prayers in the evening. Sometimes a mullah came and offered his services, but asked for too much compensation and was sent away after long negotiations. It was only at the end of the second year that a mullah's demands were low enough — because he had his own small herd of goats — for him to be hired. And even then, prayers were not very often seen and they were performed mainly by some of the older men. Sometimes, during prayers, young children were seen imitating the mullah's call to prayer and their parents praying, and the mullah's daughter played at 'praying' with her eighteen-month-old brother.

Of course, the '*bismillah*' was uttered before and after every meal, and the name of God was often heard in everyday speech, such as the '*inshā allāh*' accompanying every wish. Asked about what religious education the children should be given, Nek Mahmad explained:

> Boys and girls should learn how to pray when they are about ten years old and should learn from religious books. It is best if they learn this from a mullah whose children also start at that age. If there is no mullah, the father should teach the children, and girls and women should pray as often as boys and men. However, nomads cannot pray regularly because their work is irregular. When they are being taught, boys and girls can sit together until the girl's breasts grow.

When the mullah was asked about the religious education of the children, he explained:

> When boys and girls are seven years old, I teach them regularly. I sit in the middle, and the boys and girls sit separated from one another on each side. The education of girls is stopped after some years when their breasts begin to develop. The children learn how to pray and about the book [the *Qur'ān*], but they do not learn how to read or write — this is the same in the village. Among the *māldār*, the father is too busy to teach the children, but if a *māldār'*s son wants to become a mullah, I shall go on teaching him. But there is not much I can teach him [he had no books], and when he has learned everything that I can teach him and is old enough, he must go away to a *madrasah*, for instance in Herat, where I also have studied. But then he cannot do any work with the animals.

34'''SEXUALITY

Segregation of men and women in the nomad camps is, in general, not as strict as in the villages. Women are never veiled, and the nomads give two reasons for this: the hard work women have to do which makes wearing a veil impossible; and the fact that there are usually no men present whom they do not know, most of them also being relatives. Toddlers and little boys and girls only wear skirts which just cover their knees, and their genitals can often be seen. Girls, however, have to start wearing trousers when they are two to three years old, but boys continue wearing skirts for about one more year.

The sexual behaviour of herd animals is a common sight for children. This is different from children's experience in the cities and larger villages, and in Morocco, where it is considered disrespectful for a child to be in the presence of his father when animals copulate (Marçais 1980: 163).

Fig. 46 Children watching camels copulate and discussing the success of the mount.

Of special interest is the rutting season of camels, and the men and children watch the herd and even count the number of mountings. Every female animal should, they say, be covered three times. The males fight one another and all the men are busy watching over them so that that they do not hurt each other, and they also lead them to cover the squatting females. Male camels seem to have problems in copulating successfully, and boys and girls of all ages stand next to the pair looking closely to see whether they succeed (Fig. 46).

When men play with their toddler sons, they sometimes expose the boy's genitals, pull them gently, and, to the amusement of the onlookers, imitate the sound of a bell. This happens in the presence of men, women and girls of all ages. Girls sometimes also play this 'game' with their younger brothers (Fig. 47), and usually the adults do not care. Only once was a mother observed gently removing her daughter's hand from her brother's genitals without scolding her, after she had fondled and played with them for a while. Similar behaviours, which show quite a relaxed attitude towards sexuality in children, are also reported for the Usbak in northeastern Afghanistan. As Shalinsky (1980: 259) writes:

> Women, especially older neighbour women and sometimes his father's brother's wife, teased him [the boy Mudjib] about the size of his penis, which was held to be extremely large for a boy of his age. Mujib became very aware of his penis since the women fondled und pulled on it. Mujib began to masturbate, sometimes openly. At first nothing was said by his parents, but gradually, as he became older, he was told not to do it. During Mujib's fourth year, his parents began to talk of his circumcision party... During this period, Mujib was admonished by his father for masturbation. His father, seemingly calm, told Mujib not to do it because it was shameful. Mujib may have been confused since certain people were telling him not to masturbate, and yet other adults who saw it laughed and obviously enjoyed and encouraged him.

Knowing about and understanding sexual behaviour, however, is one thing; cross-gender relationships are quite another matter. As mentioned in the last section, when girls are about nine years old and 'their breasts begin to grow', they are no longer educated together with the boys and also should not tend the flocks with them. But even this is only the norm; in practice, older girls could be seen doing this job together with the boys. In principle, it is said that 'until they are ten years old, they are allowed to play with each other, and if they are brother and sister even longer'. The gender-specific segregation of work begins at about the age of ten to eleven, and, as so often, the explanation was that 'before this age the children don't know it' — which means, that they are not really aware of being sexually different before that. Shyness and embarrassment are especially pronounced when children who have been engaged to be married when still very young reach a certain age (see also Shalinsky 1980: 257). As Sher Ahmad said:

Fig. 47 A naked girl playing with her brother's genitals and imitating the sound of a bell.

> When small children are engaged, they are told about it, even if they live in the same camp. They are allowed to play with each other, but when they are about ten to twelve years, they are shy/embarrassed and avoid each other. So the twelve-year-old future daughter-in-law visits us only if my son (also twelve years old) is not at home.

Betrothal (*kōzdạ*) can, as already mentioned, take place shortly after birth, and it is usually negotiated by the fathers of the children. Generally, the marriage (*wādạ*) negotiations take place some years before the girl has reached puberty, normally when she is about eight years old, but some years later in the case of boys. It was generally agreed that a boy's age should not exceed that of the girl by 'more than ten or fifteen years', and that boys should not be married before they are 'about fifteen or twenty years old when their beard starts growing and when they have a strong neck', as one informant put it. As already mentioned, the preferential form of marriage is that between a boy and his father's brother's daughter (FBD), and, if possible, daughters are exchanged (*badạl*). This has the advantage that no bridewealth has to be paid and that only a few presents are exchanged. Usually, the eldest son has to be married first, but exceptions are possible. The norm demands that only the parents (especially the fathers) decide on their children's future spouses; however, children's wishes are taken into account, as long as the parents have no major objection. It was often said that the relationship between two families is important. But it is equally important that the groom and bride like each other and that both are happy (*khosh*). Therefore it is good if they want to marry each other — as the saying goes: 'A good relationship must be based on free will (*dostī pạkhwā washi da*)'.

When half of the bridewealth has been paid, but never earlier than eight months before the wedding day, the *desmāl* feast is celebrated, after which the young man can meet his future bride privately in her parents' tent. Now sexual activities are also allowed, but they and their families earn a bad reputation (*badnāmī*) if the bride gives birth before the wedding (for a detailed description of these institutions among West-Afghan Azaksay, see Glatzer 1977: 139-145, Hanifi 1979; for a detailed analysis, see Tapper 1981, 1991).

From our descriptions, it is clear that sexual behaviour is not secret in a community of animal husbanders. The insecurity and fear prevailing in conservative urban contexts and often expressed by young townspeople, who normally have no sexual experience and only little information about what to do on the nuptial night, are not prominent among young nomads. Asked about sex instruction, some young men said that their fathers had given them some advice, but old Babu Benares said that this was not necessary and not always done, because

> When the young people come together the bride shows him her 'treasure' and he shows her his private parts and then they know what has to be done. Also already two years before the marriage takes place, they are allowed to meet in the tent of the girl's father and do *bāzi* [literally 'play', in this context it means, that some sexual activities take place].

35'"SWOOKPI 'WR

Summarising the findings, the following table (Fig. 48) shows the gender-specific process of socialisation in relation to age.

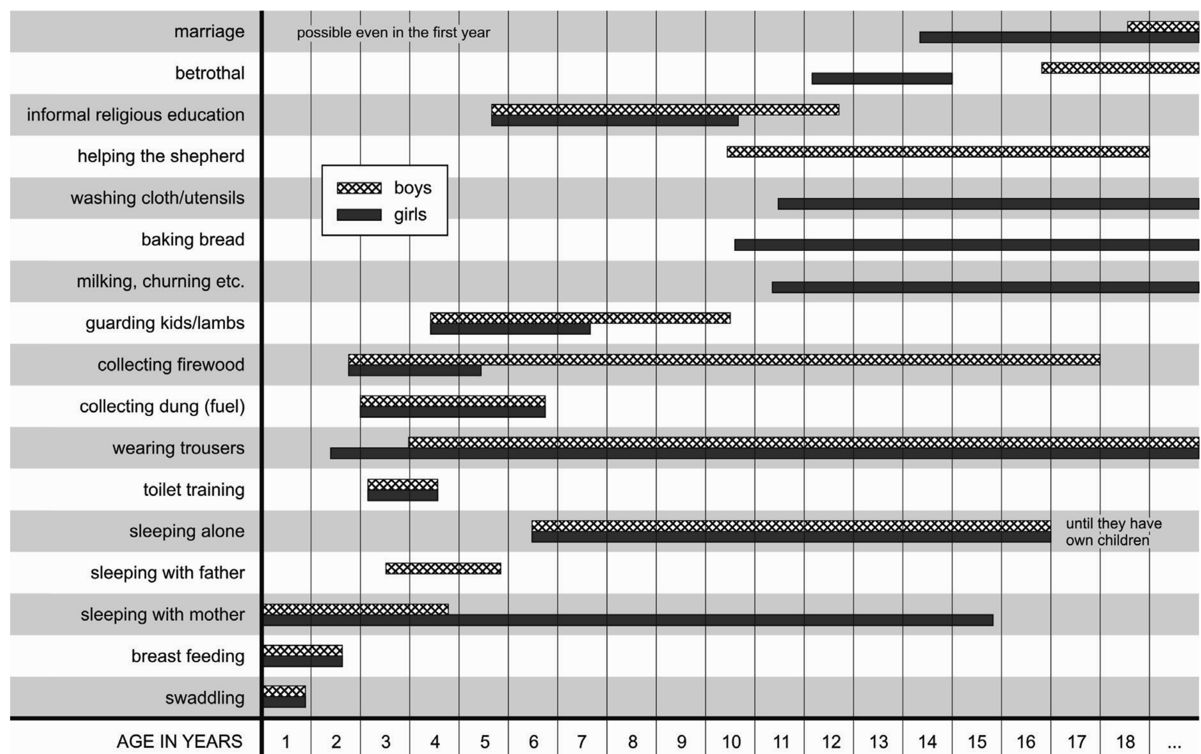


Fig. 48 The gender-specific process of socialisation between birth and about eighteen years.

36'''FROM SOEIALISATION TO EDUCATION: MOBILE PASTORALISM AND """"VJ G'PROBLEMS OF FORMAL EDUCATION

Schooling and formal education everywhere provides, as Seymour-Smith (1986: 90) has explained, programs which offer a differential amount of education considered suitable for each class, sector and specialisation in an 'advanced society'. This leads to differentiation, exclusion and grades. Formal education embodies values and skills not possessed by the community as a whole, and it amplifies class differentiation.

The basic problem faced by most formal education, that is schooling programs for the children of 'traditional', especially pastoral nomadic communities (for an overview, see Dyer 2006; Krätli and Dyer 2006; also Katz 1986 for the situation in rural Sudan), lies in deciding which aims these programs should have. Schooling programs usually prepare children for a life outside their 'traditional', natural and cultural environment — for a life in the broader, more or less urbanised, often even semi-westernised society (cf. Mead 1970; for Iran, see Higgins and Shoar-Ghaffari 1995). Leaving their 'traditional' niche, more often than not joining the urban poor is the common fate of many children from these societies who have been through such 'modern' schooling programs (e.g. Rao 2006).

School curricula for the children of pastoralists can be successful only if these children are educated in such a way that it grants them an equal chance of either successfully staying in or returning to their pastoral niche, or of leaving pastoral nomadism altogether for a new life in one of the niches the broader society offers. To pursue such a double strategy, teachers who normally have not been brought up in a nomad camp and therefore usually know very little or even nothing about the nomads' life must first be prepared to learn about the nomads' world. First of all, they must understand that the mobile lifestyle of pastoralists is neither 'primitive' nor 'backward' — concepts created by white colonialists and inculcated into the thinking of the 'modern' urban elite of many countries in the 'Third World'. In many parts of the world, pastoral nomadism has to be understood as an optimal economic adaptation to a specific environment that cannot otherwise be used sustainably, and as an adaptation that has successfully provided large sections of society with meat, milk, and other herd products over centuries.

Ethnographic research on teachers' work is rare and has been carried out mainly in westernised cultures, focussing mainly on problems in the cultural reproduction of capitalist societies (Forsey 2000). Teachers in 'Third-World' countries are not only confronted with problems regarding how to educate children from different social classes in already relatively westernised urban settings; they often have to teach children from very varying cultural backgrounds outside the larger cities.

Therefore, one of the main problems is how to develop training programs for teachers who must educate children from very different cultural, social and economic backgrounds. Those teaching the children of pastoralist or other mobile communities have to understand the nomads' culture, their norms and values, their economy and their social and political organisation. They have to know how these children perceive their own 'traditional' world; they have to understand the children's emotions which, in turn, are tied up with their pastoral world; they must know something about their pre-school life, for in this phase, these children have already experienced parts of their traditional pastoral and nomadic culture which might clash with the cultural goals these teachers try to reproduce. The results of research on socialisation in 'traditional' nomadic cultures can hence be of great use in training teachers to work with children who may be faced with a cognitive dilemma in choosing between the goals of two types of cultural reproduction program.

The above description should make it clear that if nomadic Pashtuns of western Afghanistan are representative of Muslim pastoralists in this part of the world, they differ in their patterns of socialisation from the inhabitants of villages and especially from urban populations. Many of their norms and values also do not comply with the more codified Islamic norms and rules of behaviour in the broader sedentary society.

The extreme workload of women, their constant economic and social interaction with men and the more or less open tents pitched close to one another — all this makes strict gender segregation impossible. Furthermore, the visibility of animal sexual behaviour and the probable propinquity of children to adult sexual behaviour leave little room for biological secrets.

For such children, who may have to leave their nomadic pastoral world at the age of about five or six, schooling can be a traumatic experience. In classrooms, they are likely to face demands, attitudes and behaviours that are quite different from the norms and behaviour patterns they have experienced at home. The demands for strict discipline, which requires sitting quietly for long periods of time in a closed room, may lead to the claustrophobia that many children reported after visiting the houses of their relatives in the village. In mixed classes of peasant and nomad children who come from the different worlds of villages and pastoral camps, conflicts are inevitable. The dichotomies between what they have experienced and learnt from their parents and what a teacher from a sedentary and probably urban background tells them are likely to lead to cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957; Unger-Heitsch 1995) that is especially difficult for the nomad children to overcome.

Teachers coming from urban centres more often than not have never seen a pastoral nomad and have no idea of the world of these children, of their norms, values, attitudes and behaviours. For townspeople in Afghanistan, the nomads are overwhelmingly unruly,

aggressive, dangerous, dirty and bad Muslims. This was common knowledge in the towns, and was expressed, for example, by most school children in Kabul when asked to write an essay about nomads (Christian Guksch, pers. com.).

A deeper understanding of the nomad way of life and the way children grow up in nomadic pastoral worlds is a prerequisite for programs which plan formal education for these children to help them keep up with the development of their respective countries (see Shahbazi 2001, 2002 for an analysis of the history and problems of a formal education system designed for the nomadic Qashqa'i of Iran). As Shafi *et al.* (1977: 156) observed for Iran

> The quality of education in terms of its *goals* and *contents*, and *methods of teaching* requires more extensive innovations in order to make formal schooling more adaptable to the occupational needs of the various social groups and the society in general [emphasis mine].

We should, above all, never forget that taking children away from their nomadic life and providing them with the 'general knowledge' of urban society invariably involves the risk that when they have finished school, they often do not want to return to live as nomads, but will usually have little chance of finding a job in the cities.

In Afghanistan most, if not all of the Taliban who so cruelly suppressed the people(s) of Afghanistan for more than ten years were Pashtuns, and many of them were the children of nomads who fled the country under the communist regime. Some were brought up in schools (*madāris*) in Pakistan, where they were trained for *jihād* and inculcated with the values and behaviour of a radical interpretation of Islam. Many of these boys once were the sons of the same people whose patterns of socialisation have been described in this paper — the difference in character, beliefs, worldview and behaviour between the adults raised under the two different educational systems cannot be more striking.

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