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SOCIAL STRATIFICATION OF AN ARAB VILLAGE
IN ḤADRAMAUT

by

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in the University of London

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ABSTRACT

The theme of the thesis centres around the system of social stratification of Ḥurēiḍah. I give a general description of the system as it operates in the village and then show how the processes of change in the country and outside, are affecting the situation in Ḥurēiḍah.

Ḥaḍramaut, sometimes aptly referred to as "madīnat al-muhād̄jirīn" (the country of the emigrants) has as a basic feature, a constant economic crisis in producing enough food for its population. As a result, migration and emigration have been going on since time immemorial. The country has thus never been isolated and its overseas ties have always played a major, if not dominating, role in the country. The Qu'āity Sultanate which was created by Ḥaḍramis based in Hyderabad (India) is a crowning example of this. Recently, this 'overseas' dependence has, if anything, increased. But world wide changes have shifted this dependence from India and the Far East, to the neighbouring Arab countries, thus incorporating Ḥaḍramaut in the wider processes taking place in the Arab World. This is to say, the history of Ḥaḍrami society has been shaped considerably by its ties with India and the Far East, while the present social organisation is being dramatically affected by its participation in the wider field of the Arab society.

Social stratification is a dominant feature in

Ḥadrami society. In studying its operation in Ḥurēiḍah, one cannot isolate the village in space or in time. The people "commute" constantly between Ḥurēiḍah and the surrounding countries, ignoring geographical (physical) and political boundaries. Similarly, the Far Eastern 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict of the past, the Pan-Arab Nationalism of the present, and the 'coming Revolution' of the future, all influence the social life as it exists in Ḥurēiḍah. Thus my analysis of the historical conflict, the continuing process of migration, and the political forces operating at different levels (in the country and outside), is essential in understanding the processes behind the formal social hierarchy of present day Ḥurēiḍah.

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PREFACE

This thesis is based on field work carried out in the village of Ḥurēiḍah, Ḥaḍramaut. Without the help and co-operation of Ḥurēiḍah's people, it would have been impossible to gather enough material and to understand the complicated processes inherent in their social life. Their co-operation was excelled only by their excessive hospitality and their patience to, what seems to them, my pointless inquisitiveness. I therefore express my deep gratitude and thanks to all the people of Ḥurēiḍah as well as those in other villages and towns who also helped me in many ways. But I am especially indebted and grateful to the following people:-

- (a) My three assistants Shāikh 'Ali bin Sa'īd Filkān, Shāikh 'Umar bin 'Abdallah Riḍwān, and Saiyid Abubaka bib 'Umar al-'Aṭṭās.
- (b) The local Government officials Saiyid 'Abdul-Rahman bin 'Alwī al-'Aṭṭās, Shāikh Aḥmad al-Yazīdi al-Yāfi'i, and Saiyid Abdallah bin Hādūn al-'Aṭṭās.
- (c) Mansab 'Umar bin Zein, Saiyid Ali bin Sālim al-'Aṭṭās, Shāikh Sālim bin Shāikh Bāsahl, Mbarak bin Jassār al-Ja'ēdy, Faisal Bādjlēdeh and Abubakar Bāsahl.

While in the field, Professor F.G. Bailey gave me constant and very valuable advice. In London Dr. A.C.Mayer guided me in the initial analysis of the unsystematised

material I had brought from the field. To both I express my sincere thanks. Professor C. von Fürer-Haimendorf has been my academic supervisor and has given me invaluable help and advice in all the stages of the thesis. To him I am very grateful and thankful for his constant advice and patience. I also take this opportunity to thank all my colleagues in the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at the School of Oriental and African Studies for the many informal discussions of the material during the writing of the thesis.

The Arabic words and names used in the thesis have been transliterated in accordance with the system used by the new edition (1960) of the Encyclopaedia of Islam.

INTRODUCTION

This thesis is based on field work carried out between July 1962 and June 1963. The field research was made possible by a grant from the Colonial Social Science Research Council. I am very grateful to the Council.

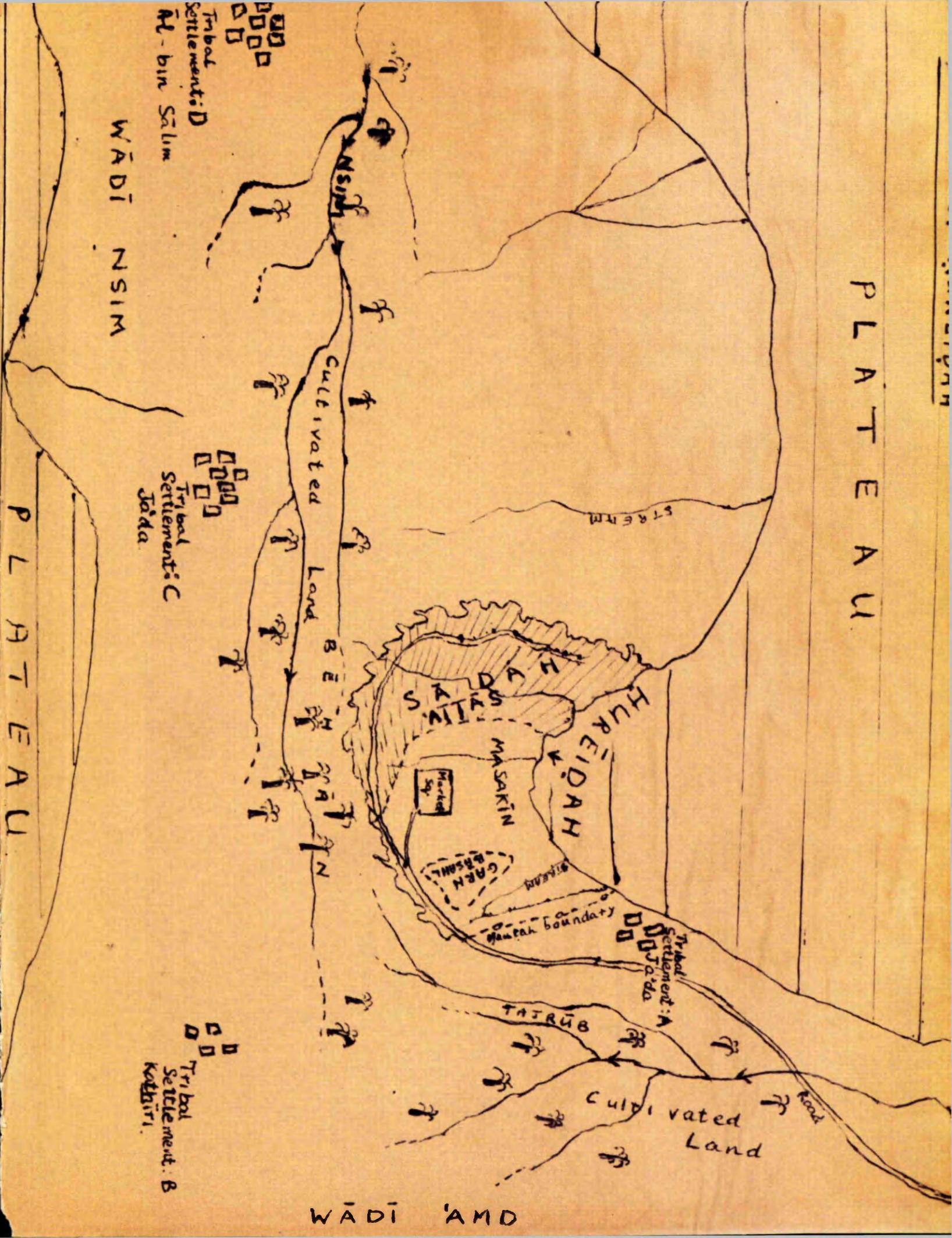
The research was carried out in a village called Ḥurēiḍah in the interior of Ḥaḍramaut, Southern Arabia. The village is situated in one valley (Wādi 'Amḍ) which forms part of a system of intersecting valleys - the Wadi System (see map^{P.15}). I did an intensive study by participating and observing in the life of the village; but I also made extensive visits of most parts of the valley system.

Ḥurēiḍah consists of a main village and four small surrounding settlements (see sketch map). In the past, i.e. until about 1940, the settlements were independent political units of the tribes (Gabā'il), while the main village used to be a religious sanctuary (ḥawtah), where non-tribal groups lived (see Chapter I). Today Ḥurēiḍah is part of the Qu'āiti State, administered by Central Government officials and the Local Council. The political division of the past is no longer significant.

The people of Ḥurēiḍah depend for their subsistence mainly on the tillage of land irrigated by an elaborate canal system. They live in mud built houses of varying size, from a three-floor twenty roomed house to a small one with only two rooms above the ground floor. Each house has a yard

PLATEAU

PLATEAU



WADI NSIM

WADI 'AMD

Tribe Settlement: D
Al-bin Salim

Tribe Settlement: C
Jaida

Tribe Settlement: B
Kathiri

STREAM

Cultivated Land

Land

BEHMAN

TARUB

Cultivated Land

Road

Tribe Settlement: A
Jaida

HUREIDAH
SADA SA'IN
MASAKIN

GRAN BRASHMA

Mantah boundary

Market

(waṣar) attached to it where domestic animals are kept and various household tasks are carried out. Inside the house the ground floor is always used as a store place. The houses are built close to each other and in many cases they are attached to form blocks of many different shapes. Building land within the village is scarce. Outside the village settlement is difficult because of lack of water and insecurity (in the past) from the tribesmen who monopolised firearms. Water is still a major problem and the twenty-two wells of Ḥurēiḍah have an average depth of 270 ft. These wells are the sole supply of water for the daily consumption of both humans and domestic animals.

Ḥurēiḍah was a famous ḥawtah in this part of the country. It has produced famous scholars whose reputation extended beyond Ḥaḍramaut to the far flung corners where Ḥaḍrami immigrants have settled. Many of its people have, until recently, emigrated (and migrated) to overseas, especially to India, Singapore and Indonesia. Its ties with these places were very strong and its best houses and mosques, are monuments to the strong economic dependence on past overseas remittances. This link was severed by World War II, and its effect is generally considered as an economic disaster not only for Ḥurēiḍah, but for Ḥaḍramaut as a whole. "As a result, many of the rich families of the area had fallen on sadly reduced days."¹

1. Johnston, C.H., 1964.

In the winter of 1937-38, Freya Stark spent four months (December to March) in Ḥurēiḍah. Her diary of the daily events and activities in the village, give a vivid if literary description of the life of the people of Ḥurēiḍah.¹ Although the village has not changed physically since then, social life is going through an important process of transformation. Since the end of the War, increasing migration to the nearby Arab countries, the rise of Nationalism, the coming of mass media and the recent political upheavals in the region, have all made Ḥaḍramaut increasingly part of the wider field. These processes have inevitably affected life in Ḥurēiḍah and are transforming it.

The Problem

I went to Ḥaḍramaut unaware of this transformation. My intention was to study the role of the Ḥawtah - like Ḥurēiḍah - in the traditional political system of Ḥaḍramaut. However within three months of my arrival in Ḥurēiḍah, the Yemeni Revolution took place (September 1962). I was struck by the intense reaction and identification of Ḥurēiḍah's factions to the events in the Yemen. This led me to investigate a different problem from the Ḥawtah.

The reaction to the Yemeni Revolution divided the people of Ḥurēiḍah into two blocks. The line of cleavage was that of the ruling group - the 'Aṭṭās, versus the rest of the people - the non-'Aṭṭās - who were politically dominated. As

1. Stark, F., 1948, (ed.).

time went by, it became clear that the cleavage was based on a structural conflict between the two sides within the village. However the language used in the ensuing debate, was that of Nationalism and the arguments were the same as those used in an important conflict among the Ḥaḍramis in the Far East (the 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict).¹ It became apparent that what had happened was that the local conflict had been clothed in the historical framework of the 'Alawī-Irshādi debate and that the presence of Nationalism had provided a new dimension to the conflict. Even more important is that the conflict between the 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās in the village had developed out of a clash of interests between the two blocks within the contexts of the village structure. The people of Ḥurēiḍah were in fact fighting their specific conflict within the ideological continuum of the recent history of the country and its participation in the wider field of the Arab World in the presence. The issue in the conflict was change in the system of social stratification.

1. See Chapter II.

CHAPTER I

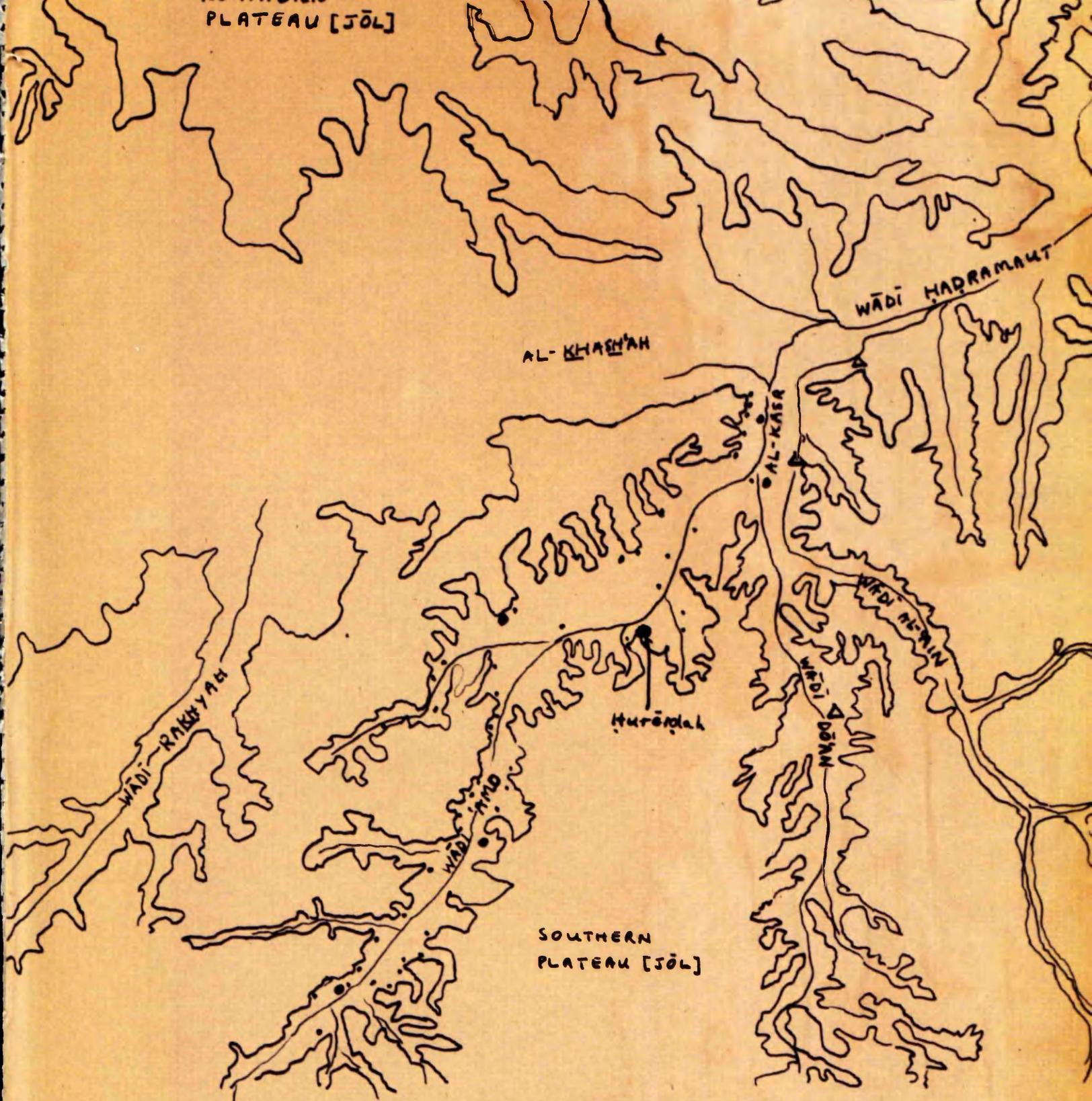
THE ECOLOGICAL SETTING

The term Ḥaḍramaut is now generally applied to the two States of the Qu'āitī and Kathīri Sultanates. It falls roughly within longitude 47 to 50 East, and between latitude 15 to 17 North. It is bounded in the north by the great Rub' al-Khālī (the Empty Quarter), in the south by the sea, in the west by the 'Awlaqī mountains, and in the east by the Mahra mountain range.

Ḥaḍramaut has two basic physical features. Immediately behind the coast lies a range of mountains whose rugged peaks rise up to 5,000 feet. This range is the beginning of that vast and dry plateau (jōl), with a mean height of 2,500 feet, that extends northwards for about 300 miles, till it is broken by the narrow interlocking valleys of the Wādī System. North of this system begins the northern plateau which continues northwards till it peters out into the Rub' al Khālī. These two plateaus, the Northern and Southern Jōls as they are called, make up almost 90% of the land area of the Ḥaḍramaut. The Northern Jōl is more barren, more desolate and more sparsely populated than the Southern Jōl, because it merges slowly with the desert. The Southern Jōl is what the geographers call a 'tame desert' - meaning that although it is barren and desolate, it can nevertheless support life, though at a very meagre level. In fact both the northern and southern jōl are inhabited by semi-nomadic tribesmen

scattered over a wide area with a very low population density. The two jōls are divided by the network of valleys which makes up the Wādī System. Some of these valleys start from a long way back in the plateaus and it is at such starting points that the nomadic tribesmen find water and cultivate when there is rain. During the frequent periods of drought these tribesmen move around with their animals (camels, sheep and goats) looking for water. When the rain comes, they go back to their own areas and resume cultivation.

The second basic physical feature of the region is the Wādī System. The Wādī System, as we have noted, separates the two plateaus. The most famous and largest of the valleys is the Wādī Ḥaḍramaut, which begins in the east where it is 40 miles wide, and stretches westwards, becoming narrower all the way. At its narrowest point, it is only 2 to 4 miles wide. After Tarīm, it turns southwards and begins its long journey through Mahra country to the sea. About 40 miles from its mouth in the east it is joined by the other main valleys, Wādī Dow'an, Wādī al-'Ein, and Wādī 'Amd, all three forming into one channel at al-Kasir, just before joining the Wādī Ḥaḍramaut. Each of these main wādīs has one or two major tributaries and innumerable inlets on either side, dispersed at short distances. From al-Kasir the main wādīs are only two to four miles wide and they become progressively narrower until near their source on the plateau, where they are only a few yards wide. The same thing applies to their major tributaries. The side inlets are very short and reach



A SECTION OF THE WĀDĪ SYSTEM.

KEY

- Course of flood.
- △ Qusairy towns.
- Non-tribal villages.
- Tribal [Gaba'il] villages

NOTE: Only important towns and villages have been indicated on this map.



the valleys from the top of the plateaus within a distance of about two to three miles. The most noticeable feature of the main wādīs and their tributaries is the precipitous, almost perpendicular, rock walls on either side of the valleys and the tableland formation on the top - the plateau. The mean height of these rock walls is about 2,500 feet. The floor of the valleys is flat and earthy at the wide end becomes pebbly and stony towards the source.

The valley system makes up less than ten per cent of the total area of the Ḥaḍramaut, but it is densely populated and holds almost one third of the total population. Throughout the length of these valleys and their tributaries there are villages and towns scattered at a distance of less than a mile between each. Wādī Ḥaḍramaut is the most populated of all the main wādīs, with large towns - the famous 'skyscraper' towns, such as Shibām, Saiwūn and Tarīm - each with anything from 10,000 to 20,000 people. In the other wādīs, the largest towns such as Ḥurēidah, would have a population of less than 2,000.

When it rains up on the plateau, the water flows down the valleys, gathering water from the tributaries and inlets, and flowing through a well-marked course, more or less in the centre of the valleys. Every village and town then diverts some of this water by a canal, and directs it to its own cultivated area. There it is distributed by a complicated canal system to every plot and date palm. The

system is a maze of interlocking channels. Since water is very important, and since the floods, which come rather infrequently, are the only source of water for cultivation, its distribution is very important, and the whole system is intricately designed to distribute the water to every farmer.

As a region in Southern Arabia, the climate of Ḥaḍramaut is very dry. On the coast it is subject to the monsoon rains and here, between May and June the minimum temperature is 95°F. In the winter (November to December), the minimum temperature is about 75°F. The average rainfall on the coast is about two inches, though in exceptional years it has exceeded five inches, though much of this may fall in a single storm. The largest cultivable area in the country is on the coast.

The Wādī System is not under the monsoon influence and therefore has different climatic conditions to those which prevail on the coast. The two barren plateaus and the nearby Empty Quarter (the vast desert of the Rub' al-Khālī) are important factors affecting the climate of the Wādī System. In this area the mean day maximum temperature is between 105° and 110°F during the summer (April to September) with a relative humidity of 35%. In winter the maximum range is between 85° and 87°F. with night maximum temperatures of 55° to 60°F. and a relative humidity of 44%. The average annual rainfall at Seiyun is less than two inches. This is a generous figure for the whole Wādī system because rain

does not fall over an extensive area, but tends to fall in small areas of a few square miles. In addition cultivation does not depend on the rain itself, but on the resultant floods (sēil) which follow a marked course along the valleys. Thus if the amount of rain falling at the head of the valley is considerable, the floods will then irrigate all the cultivable areas down the valley. But if the rain is not heavy, the floods will be used up before they get far down the valley. Similarly, if the rain falls at the main end of a valley, then only a few villages will be irrigated by the stream from their local inlets.

In this densely populated Wādī system, cultivation depends entirely on the floods, which in turn depend on rainfall - both the amount of rain and the place it falls. Between 1962 and 1963 there was half an inch of rain in Ḥurēiḍah which lies at the lower end of Wādī 'Amd. This rain was not enough to form into a local flood and thereby irrigate the cultivated fields. It was therefore useless to Ḥurēiḍah. But about a hundred miles up the 'Amd valley there was 'heavy' rainfall whose floods reached Ḥurēiḍah and irrigated parts of its drought-stricken fields.

Because rainfall over the plateau and the Wādī system is very small, droughts, prolonged or short, are a frequent occurrence throughout the country, imposing a heavy burden on the very limited agricultural resources. According to government estimates the whole country has 120,000 acres

of land under cultivation.¹ Thus in relation to the estimated total population of Ḥaḍramaut (310,000) there are about 1.9 acres of cultivable land per household (assuming an average of five people per household).² In addition, since the non-cultivable area has almost no vegetation the fertile area must also feed about 1,240,000 domestic animals - camels, cattle, donkeys, sheep and goats. Furthermore, the productive capacity of the land is low because of the frequent droughts. In short, the general climatic conditions and the limited resources of cultivable land make agricultural scarcities a permanent feature of the general economy of Ḥaḍramaut.

In the Wādī system the settlements are dispersed in a definite pattern. Along every main valley the villages are built on either side, generally on raised ground directly below the steeply rising and almost perpendicular walls of the valley, thus avoiding the floods. At the mouths of the main valleys, where for a short distance they broaden out to between two and four miles, some villages are situated near the centre of the valley bed.

-
1. "It is estimated that not more than approximately 1%, or 700,000 acres of the Protectorate is potentially cultivable. Of this about 150,000 acres is cultivated every year." Protectorate here means both Ḥaḍramaut and the former W.A. Protectorate - See Aden: Report for 1957-1958: H.M.S.O. 1961.
 2. Figures from Ḥurēiḍah show that the cultivated land, in relation to population is 1.2 acres per household of 4.4 people.

There are two types of Settlements:

Type A. First there are towns and villages in which there are representatives of all groups in the social hierarchy. Under the traditional political system such towns and villages came under the political authority of the Sulṭans or Sādah and Mashāyikh groups. Many were Ḥawtahs or sanctuaries. In the past no tribesmen lived permanently in such settlements.

Type B. Secondly there are tribal villages populated entirely by Gabā'il tribesmen with a few Masakīn families attached to them. In the past, each tribe had its own territory divided into segments. Such tribal areas, together with their settlements were jurally outside Type A settlements since they came under the tribe's political authority.

Under the traditional political system, this pattern of settlement was an important feature since settlements of Type A formed important focii of interaction with the surrounding villages of the Gabā'il tribes - Type B settlements. In spite of the disappearance of the traditional political system, by the extension of the Qu'āiti and Kathīri States, this settlement pattern has remained unaltered.

CHAPTER II

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, I will first give a general description of the main strata in Ḥaḍrami society, and the traditional political system that operated until the outbreak of World War II. From this I will proceed to outline the significant conflict (over the system of stratification), between the 'Alawī and Irshādi, among Ḥaḍrami migrants in the Far East.

The Ḥaḍramaut consists of a vast barren plateau (the jōl), which is intersected by a number of interlocking valleys (the Wādī system). The plateau is sparsely populated by semi-nomadic tribes, while the Wādī system is densely populated, with a sedentary population in towns and villages. The tribes (known as Gabā'il), live in both the valleys and on the plateau.

Within this area, all people speak the same Ḥaḍrami dialect of Arabic, they are all Sunni Muslims of the Shafi' School, and there is intensive internal mobility within the area. Ḥaḍrami society is a unit within which people are divided into groups and horizontal strata, but all are united within one broad value system.

Social Stratification:

Social stratification is a basic feature of Ḥaḍrami social organisation. There are three general and universal

strata throughout the Ḥaḍramaut, which are ranked as follows:-

- (i) The Sādah (sing. Saiyid)
- (ii) The Mashāyikh (sing. Shāikh), and the Gabā'il (sing. Gabīlī).
- (iii) The Masakīn or Du'fa (sing. Maskīn or Da'if).

The operation of this stratification at a village level will be the subject of a detailed analysis in subsequent chapters. However a brief description of the general strata is necessary here.

The basic and common criterion which defines the position of an individual or group in this stratification system is ancestry or descent (nasab) which is graded in status. The Sādah are a collection of descent groups (hereafter referred to as House), who claim to be the descendants of the Prophet Mohammad. They substantiate this claim by elaborate and well-kept genealogies which trace their descent to the Prophet and beyond. Because of their connection with the Prophet they are considered to be religious Houses and to possess supernatural powers.

The Mashāyikh stratum is composed similarly of a number of Houses, but they claim descent from well-known religious leaders and savants of the past. By virtue of this connection which most of them can substantiate with genealogies they have an ascribed religious status. Like the Sādah, they too are considered to have inherent supernatural powers.

The Gabā'il are a large number of tribes who claim to be the descendants of distant Arab tribes, and ultimately of Qaḥṭān.¹ Unlike the Sādah and Mashāyikh the Gabā'il have no religious status at all. Nevertheless, the status of their ancestry is considered to be equivalent to that of the Mashāyikh, and for this reason the two are placed in the same stratum. Within the stratum, the Mashāyikh are distinguished from the Gabā'il by their religious status.

The Masakīn (the Poor) or Du'fa (the Weak) are a collection of small, scattered and dispersed descent groups. Each descent group is isolated and without any genealogical connection with other similar descent groups. Their genealogies stop short within a few generations, and they do not belong either to the line of the Prophet or to that of Qaḥṭān; neither do they have any recognised religious leaders as ancestors.

Certain characteristic features of each stratum which help to define more clearly the statuses and functions of the groups of which they are composed. The Sādah, since their arrival in Ḥaḍramaut, have always been categorised

1. The Arabs are divided broadly into two groups: the Northern and the Southern Arabs. The Northern Arabs trace their descent to 'Adnān, those of the South to Qaḥṭān. The Sādah are a group of Northern Arabs who emigrated southwards to the Ḥaḍramaut. The Mashāyikh and Gabā'il on the other hand, belong to the Southern Arabs. This is the historical basis for the distinction between the two categories in Ḥaḍramaut today. (See Nicholson, 1930, p.xviii).

as a religious stratum, because of their specialisation in missionary activities, the search for and teaching of 'ilm (knowledge), and their peace-making and mediating among the Gabā'il tribes. The Sādah (and Mashāyikh also to some extent) have been the custodians of learning and Islamic studies, and all the famous centres of learning in Ḥaḍramaut have been run and maintained by them. Their activities amongst the tribes however, have always had political aspects. They have acted as peace-makers between feuding sections of tribes, mediated in disputes, and conducted people safely through hostile areas. Both their missionary and political roles gave them what is called suluṭāt al-rūhiyyah -- spiritual influence -- over the tribes amongst whom they lived and worked.

The Mashāyikh are distinguished from the Gabā'il tribes by their reputation and specialisation in religion. On this criterion they are akin to the Sādah (but with an inferior descent) in that they have been missionaries, specialised in 'ilm (learning), played a religious and political role amongst the Gabā'il tribes and acquired 'spiritual influence' over them. In fact, in areas where the Sādah were absent or their numbers insignificant, the Mashāyikh played the role of the Sādah. But between individuals, or in the general stratification, the Mashāyikh take second place to the Sādah because of their inferior descent.

The Gabā'il in general are looked down upon as less

religious and more primitive. They had a segmentary political organisation of their own and feuds between them were endemic. They were armed with rifles and in many areas prevented the Masākīn from possessing them (those Mashāyikh and Sādah who lived in towns and settled areas, voluntarily did not carry arms). The Gabā'il were thus considered to be warriors, with a rigid code of honour in which bravery, shame, and such allied values were of great importance.

The most important feature of the Masākīn stratum (besides that of being made up of small unconnected descent groups) was economic specialisation in occupations involving the sale of services. Hence manual labour, craft and ceremonial services were all carried out by the different sections within the Masākīn stratum, since the other strata would never do any work for payment. Thus in general, the Masākīn lived mostly in towns, specialising in this type of economic activity, and in Gabā'il villages as agricultural workers attached to Gabā'il lineages. Throughout the Wādī system, where the population is sedentary, the Masākīn stratum preponderates in relation to the other strata, but they are a minority in Gabā'il villages. There are very few villages entirely occupied by Masākīn.

The Traditional Political System of Ḥaḍramaut:

Until 1937, when Britain began to intervene actively in the country, Ḥaḍramaut had three kinds of political

'authorities':

- (i) Two rival Sultanates - the Qu'āiti and Kathīri. Between them they controlled the major towns in the Wādī system and on the coast. They had no authority over tribal areas.
- (ii) A number of minor towns and large villages scattered throughout the country were 'ruled' by Mansabs (chiefs), either of the Sādah or Mashāyikh strata. Such places were sanctuaries (hawtah) founded by the ancestors of the Mansabs ruling them. Hureidha was a famous and important village with this type of political 'authority'.
- (iii) In both the Wādī system and on the plateau there are a large number of Gabā'il tribes, covering the rest of the country outside the territories of (i) and (ii). Each of these Gabā'il tribes, large or small, had its own territory with a segmentary political organisation. Each tribe was a jural community with effective control over its own area. Neither the Sultans nor the Mansabs exercised any secular authority or control over them. Two of such tribes were the Ja'da and the Nahd, whose territories surrounded Ḥurēidah.

The relationship between the two Sultanates used to be one of rivalry, hostility and war, a state of affairs which had existed since the founding of the Qu'āiti dynasty in 1255 A.H. (1839 A.D.).¹ In 1917 the British Government made a treaty between the two Sultans which ended their hostility. Of the two Sultanates, the Qu'āiti was the largest and better organised. It had a centralised administrative structure and a judicial system extending throughout its dispersed territory, with a military and police force to preserve a precarious peace in the areas under its control. Qu'āiti territory, apart from the provinces of Mukalla and

1. See Sheikh Said Awadh Bawazir: Mecca, 1954.

Shiḥir on the coast, consisted mainly of towns and their satellite villages in the Wādī system, isolated and surrounded by Gabā'il territories - e.g. Shibām, Ḥōurah, or al-Qatn. To maintain contact between the capital and other parts of the territory entailed passing through Gabā'il areas, ruled and controlled by individual tribes. Thus the relationship between the Sultanate and the tribes within the orbit of its scattered towns was of paramount importance. The relationship was regulated by treaties between the Sultan and individual tribes, as well as by the giving of annual subsidies to the more powerful and faithful tribes.¹ But in spite of this, whenever the Sultan visited his interior outposts, he had to be accompanied by a heavily armed guard.

Outside the Qu'āiti towns were the tribal territories, each tribal grouping with its own area divided between its component units on a segmentary basis down to the lowest unit - the lineage or the village. Each tribe in the country was an independent jural community, with a segmentary political organisation. Throughout the tribal area there were widespread and endemic feuds between tribes and between segments within tribes. Most of the tribesmen were armed with rifles, and the barren terrain, with its intersecting valleys and strategically placed 'castles' (ḥusn), was particularly suited to intensive and bitter feuds,

1. Ingrams, W.H. 1936.

disrupting, and in some cases paralysing, normal movements and agricultural activities. These feuds were deeply rooted in the segmentary political system of the tribes, and were ideologically justified in terms of honour, revenge, and collective responsibility. The effect of the feuds was worsened by the destruction of the date palms (by burning or pouring kerosene on their roots) which were an important source of food. However, in spite of the feuds and the general insecurity throughout the country, there was an elaborate system of truce and 'safe conduct' whereby intensive and widespread mobility of people from one place to another was ensured. There was considerable movement of goods and people between the coast and the Wādī system, as well as between different parts of the Wādī system. This large-scale mobility was essential to the general economy of the Ḥaḍramaut. In the Wādī system, the movement of harvests from one area to another was vital because of the high degree of local climatic variation. In addition there was trade with the Yemen and certain areas of the present South Arabian Federation. At the same time, the general economy was heavily dependent on imports of overseas goods and foods and the emigration of people to India, the Far East and East Africa. Hence the movement between the coast and the interior.¹

1. In 1936 approximately 85,000 loaded camels left the ports of Mukalla and Shirir for the interior carrying mainly food and some piece goods. (Ingrams, D. 1949).

Within this wider context, a sanctuary (ḥawtah) such as Ḥurēidah played an important political, religious and sometimes economic role. Such a place was a centre for important groups of Sādah and Mashāyikh, who took the tribes surrounding them under their influence. The rulers of ḥawtahs - the Mansabs - were different from the chiefs of tribes and the secular Ṣultans. The Mansabs, as will be seen in the case of Ḥurēidah, were both religious and political leaders. Their ḥawtahs were holy places in which killing was forbidden. This prohibition was sanctioned by an agreement between the Mansabs and the surrounding Gabā'il. As a result such places became sanctuaries for the Masakīn groups, as well as neutral places for the hostile and feuding tribes. In some cases they became centres for annual religious visits (ziāra), which were the occasion for important markets where townsmen and tribesmen mingled. Such markets were, and still are held at Mashhad, al-Qatn, Buḏā, and Nafḥūn, to mention only a few in the Wādī system. As centres of religious learning, ḥawtahs were bases from which both the Sādah and Mashāyikh went out amongst the tribes, preaching, peace-making, and settling disputes. Scattered throughout the Ḥaḍramaut, the ḥawtahs were important points in an intricate network of relationships between themselves and the surrounding tribes. Each ḥawtah had specific political relationships with its 'own' surrounding tribes. Within the context of Ḥaḍrami society as a whole, they played an

important political role by minimising the inherent feuds between the tribes. Most of the important ḥawtahs were to be found at strategic points - between two large tribes, at important agricultural areas, or at reputedly evil places (e.g. Mashhad, built at a robbers' haunt). Ḥawtahs thus played an integral and important part within the wider context of the Ḥaḍrami political situation.

Ḥawtahs had certain specific features that distinguished them from tribal villages or large towns under the Sultanates. Firstly, ḥawtahs were ruled by a specific group of Sādah or Mashāyikh, and had a political organisation different from that of the tribes and the Sultanates. Secondly, the ruling group of a ḥawtah (Sādah or Mashāyikh) exercised a religious influence over the surrounding tribes, and within this framework maintained reciprocal political relationship with them. Thirdly, ḥawtahs were centres of educated people scattered in tribal areas. Ḥurēiḍah, as an important ḥawtah, had all these features and played an important political role within Wādī Amd.

This is a brief outline of the traditional political system of Ḥaḍramaut. It was a system with three different types of political organisation, all interconnected at different levels. That type of political organisation found among the tribes was the most extensive since the tribes occupied the largest area of the country and were the most numerous in relation to the total population. But since each

individual tribe, large or small, was an independent political unit, divided on a segmentary basis to its smallest component, it is not surprising to find that Ingrams thought that there were two thousand governments in Ḥaḍramaut in 1934-5.¹ Through Ingrams' work, active British intervention changed the traditional political systems of Ḥaḍramaut, as outlined above, into two Sultanates (the Qu'āiti and Kathīri) with reasonably efficient administrative and judicial structures, which now maintain law and order throughout the country.

Migration:

Up to the eve of World War II Ḥaḍrami society was therefore politically highly fragmented and had very little security. This and economic necessity, forced many people to migrate to distant countries. Migration (and emigration), have in fact always been permanent features of the society, and Ḥaḍrami historians trace the process back to the early period of Islam.² Ingrams³ estimated that in 1934 between 20% and 30% of the population of Ḥaḍramaut lived in the Far East, East Africa, or Egypt and the countries bordering the Red Sea.

The Far East, especially Indonesia and Singapore,

1. Ingrams W.H., 1945, p.244.

2. Al-Bakary, S. 1935. Vol.II. Cairo. There is a famous 'myth' in Ḥaḍramaut about the Banī Hilāl tribe who emigrated en masse to Burga wu Gābis (N. Africa) because of the continuous bad droughts in Ḥaḍramaut.

3. Ibid.

was the most important area of Ḥaḍrami migration. Not only did the majority of migrants go there, but also because it was an important source of annual remittances, estimated in 1936 to be about £600,000 a year.¹ The prominent Āl-Kāf family (Saiyid) for instance, today subsists on a capital of £25 million invested in Singapore; before the War the family was powerful enough to mint its own coinage.² In Indonesia, Ḥaḍrami are the second largest Oriental Community (after the Chinese), reaching a figure of 85,000 in 1952.³ "Over the centuries they [i.e. the Arabs] have managed to occupy a unique, and in many cases indispensable place in society in the Indies, particularly in connection with religious and economic life."⁴

In the Far East, Ḥaḍramis constituted a distinct group, living in heterogeneous societies under colonial rule, which had more developed political systems (compared to Ḥaḍramaut) and complex economic organisations. They acquired wealth as a 'merchant class' and thus became an important economic group. In these countries the Ḥaḍramis came out of their isolation and subjected to outside contact and influence. Under these conditions, and because they were outside their own society they were able to examine their social system and were in a position to debate and disagree

1. Ingram, D. 1949.

2. Serjeant, R.B. 1957.

3. van der Kroef, J.M. 1953.

4. Ibid.

on many important principles of the system without disrupting the society at home. This was what happened and a major conflict over the system of stratification took place, dividing the Ḥaḍramis into two opposing camps of Sādah and non-Sādah.

The 'Alawī-Irshādi Conflict.¹

"Shortly after the First World War there arose a bitter dispute, which continued well into the 'thirties, between two groups of emigrant Ḥaḍramis the 'Alawīs and Irshādis, in Indonesia."² The dispute in fact goes back to the beginning of the century. In 1903 the Ḥaḍramis formed a Welfare Association in Indonesia which set up a school to teach religion and Arabic to their children. However the Association was dominated and run by the Sādah. In 1911, the Sādah imported a Sudanese 'ālim (scholar) to teach at the school. But in 1914, the Sudanese (Ahmad al-Surkti) was pressed by the Sādah to resign from the school. In the same year, non-Sādah formed the 'Reform and Guidance Association'

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1. The two terms 'Alawī and Irshādi are very significant. The 'Alawī, properly called Bā 'Alawī, are the descendants of 'Alawī, the grandson of Ahmad bin 'Īsa (the Emigrant) -- the first ancestor of the Sādah who emigrated to Ḥaḍramaut. The Irshādis are those people who belong to the "Jum'iyat al-Iṣlāh wal-Irshād" the Reform and Guidance Association" formed in 1914. It is a non-Sādah organisation. In the Far East, such people were addressed as Shāikh (sing.) or Mashayikh (plural). This term has a different meaning in Ḥaḍramaut itself -- see Chapter III. Thus the 'Alawī were exclusively the Sādah, and the Irshādi, the Reformist -- mainly non-Sādah.
 2. Serjeant, R.B. 1962.

(the Irshādi Association) and appointed the Sudanese as the head of their schools.

The developing conflict was brought into the open and raised to an ideological and theological level, by an important event in 1905. In that year, a Sharīfa (a Saiyid woman) -- of the 'Aṭṭās House was married to an Indian Muslim with the consent of her parents. A Ḥaḍrami then wrote to the al-Azhar journal -- al-Manār -- asking if such a marriage was ḥalāl (lawful within Islamic sharia) or whether it was ḥarām (forbidden). The editor -- a scholar of al-Azhar, gave a fatwah (legal decision, casuistry) saying that the marriage was ḥalāl and published his answer.¹ This raised a controversy among the Ḥaḍramis, since in their society such a marriage had always been considered ḥarām. The Sādah who had always maintained this Ḥaḍrami interpretation of marriage rule, were particularly incensed by the fatwah from al-Azhar. The leading Ḥaḍrami scholar at the time -- Seyyid Omar 'Aṭṭās -- gave his own fatwah on the marriage and said that it was ḥarām. His fatwah was printed and circulated. His argument was that the marriage broke the rule of kafā'ah (eligibility in marriage -- Serjeant; equality of partner -- Levy).² According to the 'Aṭṭās scholar, the basic criterion of kafā'ah, is nasab (descent) and that this has four 'ranks' (daradjāt). These are:-

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1. The fatwah is published in al-Bakary, 1935, Vol.II, Cairo.
 2. Serjeant, R.B. 1957; Levy R., 1962.

- i. Arab women are not eligible to marry non-Arabs.
- ii. Quraish (the Prophet's tribe) women are not eligible to marry non-Quraish.
- iii. Hashimite (the Prophet's lineage) women, are not eligible to marry non-Hashimite.
- iv. Women descendants of Ḥasan and Ḥusēin (the two sons of Fātimah, the Prophet's daughter), are not eligible to marry the rest of Hashimite. (The Sādah are descendants of Husēin).

The 'Aṭṭās scholar quoted verses from the Ḳor'ān and the Prophet's sayings (ḥadīth) as evidence for this interpretation of kafā'ah. He argued that sharaf (nobility) was of two types: (i) inherent nobility (dhāti), and (ii) achieved nobility (ṣifāti). The inherent nobility of the Prophet is based on the fact that he was chosen by God for the Prophethood before Creation. This nobility of the Prophet is transmitted to his descendants (dhurriyyah) and that no achievement of any kind by other people can equal this nobility. It follows therefore that no man who is not a descendant of the Prophet, has nobility (equal descent status) to match that of a sharīfah. Such prospective spouses are unequal partners, and thus their marriage is haram. Furthermore, since such a marriage would lower the dignity of the sharīfah, it would be a deliberate act of annoying and displeasing the Prophet, which is also ḥarām and unthinkable. Thus the willingness of the parents or guardian of the sharīfah to give their

daughter to a non-Saiyid, does not make it any more ḥalāl, since Islām itself forbids such a marriage.

The fatwah of the 'Aṭṭās scholar was then sent to the editor of al-Manār, Mohammad Rashīd, who published a reply to it.¹ In his reply, the editor argued that nasab (descent), has nothing to do with kafā'ah. The basic criteria in kafā'ah which had been accepted by leading Muslim scholars, are:-

- i. Religion (whether a spouse is a Muslim or not), freedom (i.e. a free person or a slave), character (i.e. the compatibility of the two spouses), and wealth (i.e. whether the man can support a wife or not).
- ii. Permission of a girl's parents or guardian.

These then, are the important factors to be considered in marriage. Within an Arab or Muslim society e.g. that of the Ḥaḍramis, the willingness of the parents or guardian of the girls, is an important factor since they will look after her interest and dignity in the light of individual case. But descent should never be the criterion for rejecting a man, as the 'Aṭṭās scholar had argued, since this was against the teaching of Islām and its spirit which insists on the equality of all Muslims. He attacked the argument of the 'Aṭṭās, that the Sādah had an inherent nobility by virtue of being the descendants of the Prophet. He marshalled

1. The original fatwah of al-Manār, the fatwah of the 'Aṭṭās, and the reply to it, are all published in Al-Bakary, Vol.II, 1935. Cairo.

verses from the Kur'ān, ḥadīths, and opinions of other eminent scholars and argued that Islām treated all Muslims as equals, irrespective of race or tribe; that nobility was achieved by a person's deeds (especially in the field of piety) and not by ascription through his descent. He therefore denied that any Saiyid had a special nobility and status by virtue of his descent from the Prophet.

According to al-Bakary, the 1905 event was the first crisis which shook Ḥaḍrami thinking in the Far East. To him, the crisis made some people realise "the freedom of thought and the spirit of equality inherent in Islām"; but the crisis was not violent enough nor were the conditions ripe for a major division amongst the Ḥaḍramis.¹ It is important to note here that for the first time, the Ḥaḍramis have appealed to an Islamic authority outside their own society, an authority that is considered to be 'higher' and therefore its interpretation of Islam more correct. Furthermore, the issue of appeal was nothing less than the role of descent ranking -- as symbolised in hypergamous marriage -- in Ḥaḍrami society. Descent ranking is a basic principle in the system of stratification and has always been accepted without question. Now this basic principle has been raised to a theological plane and its very legality is being questioned. This then was the first step on the road to questioning other aspects of the system of stratification as it operates

1. Al-Bakary, 1935.

in Ḥaḍrami society. In this questioning, the highest religious authority (al-Azhar) has been brought in on the side of change (or reform). The 1905 event, as al-Bakary has noted, set the spark for the great debate on the system of stratification which divided the Ḥaḍramis into two bitterly opposing camps -- the 'Alawī and Irshādis.

In 1914, the Sudanese teacher suddenly became the focal point of the debate. By then he had been accepted as a scholar of integrity, repute and versed in Islamic jurisprudence (he was recruited from Mecca where he had made his mark). His forced resignation from the Sādah run school, was because of his public pronouncement that a marriage between a sharīfah and a non-Saiyid, was ḥalāl. He thus became, in effect, the local authority for a non-Sādah interpretation of Islam. Thus the non-Sādah immediately formed their own reformist association and made the Sudanese the head of their schools, the first of which was opened early in 1915. It is interesting here to note that non-Sādah Ḥaḍramis first appealed to Cairo (1905) and later (1914) to the Sudanese (an outsider again). This is important because in Ḥaḍramaut, and in the Far East, the Sādah or their disciples have always been the ultimate religious authority and their interpretation of Islām predominates in Ḥaḍrami society. Thus non-Sādah had to appeal to outside authorities in order to question basic tenets in Sādah teaching. It was held by the Irshādis that until then, the Sādah had 'captured their minds', 'poisoned

their thinking' and 'corrupted their beliefs' and made them 'worship' the Sādah. Thus education was considered to be the key to change all this, but the religious sanction to this change, had to come from outside Ḥaḍrami society.

The Irshādi association then started its own schools immediately. By 1935, they had established nearly thirty schools, where religion and Arabic were taught and had sent abroad (to Egypt) about 40 students. They had their own newspaper which conducted a bitter campaign against the Sādah and set up their own social clubs. The Irshādi movement rallied the non-Sādah and the organisation was specifically anti-Sādah. In the constitution there was a clause which excluded any Saiyid from holding any office in the association.

The Sādah rallied around their Welfare Association, increased their schools and conducted just as bitter a campaign against the Irshādīs. "To present a united front against the anti-Saiyid Irshādīs, the Saiyids formed a society entitled al-Rabiṭah al-'Alawiyah"¹ in 1927. This new association was more exclusive, as its name suggests, than the former organisation which was originally intended for all Ḥaḍramis.

The dispute between the two sides became very bitter. There were a number of street fights in which three people were killed and many injured. Their public debates -- through

1. Serjeant, R.B. 1957.

their numerous newspapers¹ and pamphlets -- became involved in the details of stratification, personal attacks of leaders, and attempts to involve (in the dispute) the Dutch and British Governments (the latter because of Singapore and because it was responsible for the external affairs of the two Sultanates of Ḥaḍramaut). The Irshādi accused the Sādah of using Islām to maintain inequality and their superior status in the society, of teaching people khurāfāt (heresy, nonsense) such as kissing their hands, 'worshipping' their shrines, insisting on exclusive terms for themselves etc. The Sādah were the reactionaries who had kept Ḥaḍramaut in 'darkness and ignorance', had exploited the love of the people for Islām in order to maintain their hegemony. The Irshādi insisted that all people were equal irrespective of their descent and deliberately used the term Saiyid to address everyone; they intermarried -- between Gabā'il, Mashāyikh and Masakīn -- and taught all these 'new' ideas in their schools. The Sādah on the other hand, accused the Irshādi of being khārijīs (seceders),² that they were going

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1. The Ḥaḍramis in the Far East had nearly twenty newspapers - daily, weekly and monthly; but most of these newspapers were ephemeral and did not last long.
 2. The khārijī was a fanatic movement in the early period of Islam, which was responsible for killing 'Ali bin Ṭālib, the fourth khalifa, cousin of the Prophet, husband of Fatimah (the Prophet's daughter) and father of Hasan and Husein the ancestors of the Sādah. In early Islam, the khārijīs disputed the necessity of having an Imām as head of Islam; "but that if it were found necessary to have one, then a worthy believer was to be elected, and that without regard to his being either a slave or a free man, Arab or non-Arab". Levy described them as "democratic Arab tribesmen". Levy, R., 1962, p.279.

against Islamic teaching by attacking the "children of the Prophet" (ahl beiyt al-Rasūl), and that they were introducing Bolshevik ideas amongst the Ḥaḍramis. They even wrote to the Sharīf of Mecca asking him to stop the Irshādi from making a pilgrimage to Mecca. The Sādah insisted that the term Saiyid was exclusive to the children of the Prophet, and that by virtue of this they had inherent nobility and superior status and that as a result it was ḥarām for a non-Saiyid to marry a sharīfah.

The conflict between the two parties created a serious cleavage, which many thoughtful Ḥaḍrami considered disruptive and harmful to the interest of the community as a whole in an alien environment. Thus attempts were made by leading personalities -- Sādah and non-Sādah -- to reconcile the two parties and restore the unity of the community. From 1919 onwards, at least three attempts were made by people from within the community in the Far East; but the attempts failed. Efforts were also made by people from outside the community, to unite the two parties. The two Sultans of Ḥaḍramaut, wrote a joint letter to the 'Alawī and Irshādi urging them to stop the disruptive 'bickering' and offering to mediate. The editor of al-Manār of Cairo, and the Shāikh of al-Azhar, also made similar appeals and suggested a settlement through their mediation. A reputed and highly respected Saiyid scholar from Ḥaḍramaut, actually went to the Far East and gave speeches in the mosque urging the two sides

to go to him for a settlement. All these attempts failed, mainly because the issues involved could not really be reconciled, even if the leaders of the two respective parties were willing. "In effect this was a struggle for predominance in the community between the more conservative Saiyids who had always wielded great influence, and those Ḥaḍramis who denied their claims to privileges inaccessible to other ordinary Muslims."¹ This contradiction could not therefore be resolved by appeals to moderation and by mediation between the leaders of the two organisations.

Effects of the Conflict on Ḥaḍramaut.

The conflict between the Sādah and non-Sādah was important enough to attract attention from Ḥaḍramaut and other parts of the Arab World. The depth of the conflict is shown by the failure of the many attempts at reconciling the two parties. But to what extent has this important dispute affected the society in Ḥaḍramaut itself? Apart from the attempts of the two Sultans and the Saiyid scholar at mediation, al-Bakary published a letter written by a leading Saiyid in Ḥaḍramaut (who had influence over the Yafi' tribe), addressed to the Yāfi' tribesmen in Indonesia urging them not to join the Irshādi movement. Another published letter, also written by a Saiyid, was sent to Ḥaḍramaut urging the people of the author's House not to listen to Sādah lies

1. Serjeant R.B., 1962.

and puts a strong defence of the Irshādi case. Apart from these published letters, we can reasonably assume that because of the interaction between the Far East and Ḥaḍramaut, the dispute was inevitably taken to Ḥaḍramaut. Serjeant says that after the formation of the al-Rābitāt al-'Alawiyah, other Sādah societies later sprang up in both the Far East and Ḥaḍramaut. Talking of the Ḥaḍramaut, he said that "I knew well a number of members of the Society of Brotherhood and Cooperation to which many young men [Saiyids] in Singapore and Tarīm [Ḥaḍramaut] belonged, and formed the impression that they genuinely wished to improve conditions in Ḥaḍramaut; but an anti-Saiyid acquaintance of mine affirmed that this society had a secret agreement containing a proviso that the children of ḡa'īfs (Masakīn) peasants were to be instructed only up to a certain standard, with other clauses to perpetuate Saiyid hegemony. Such statements are constantly on the lips of anti-Saiyid Ḥaḍramis...."¹

One important effect, according to Serjeant, was that "the lengthy wrangle found its expression in the publication of pamphlets and newspapers activity, and to it we owe perhaps in very large degree the impulse to embark upon the writing of history."² The first printed history to appear (1935) were the two volumes (Political History of Ḥaḍramaut) by the Gabā'il Salāh al-Bakary. He gave an anti-Sādah interpretation of the recent history and supported the

1. Serjeant, R.B. 1957.

2. Ibid., 1962.

Irshādi case. Later, Saiyid Ali bin Ṭwāhir Al-Haddād, the "doyen of the historians" (according to Serjeant), published (1949-50) two volumes purporting to be a biography of an 'Aṭṭās Mansab. The two volumes in fact "contain much general history of the Saiyids, an inquiry into their ancestry for which an impressive range of classical Arabic sources ... have been depouille."¹ In 1957 Said Awadh Bawazir (a Shāikh) published a book (Pages from Ḥaḍrami History) which gave an anti-Sādah emphasis to Ḥaḍrami history as a whole. Thus writers of both the 'Alawī and Irshādi camps, have been writing Ḥaḍrami history to support the case of one side or the other.

Before World War II, the Sādah in Ḥaḍramaut were very powerful and even the Sultans were predisposed towards them. This is mainly due to the conditions of the country at the time, and the important political and economic role they played. The Irshādīs were unable to organise themselves in Ḥaḍramaut and many migrated abroad. "The Irshādi were not permitted to rear their heads in Ḥaḍramaut because the Sultans wished to remain friendly with the Saiyids."² Thus it was only after the War, when Governments were established, that the Irshādi influence began to appear. After the independence of Indonesia (1949), many Ḥaḍramis returned home and amongst them were many Irshādīs. But even then when many

1. Serjeant R.B., 1962.

2. Ibid.

Irshādis were actually in Ḥaḍramaut (or in transit), they were not organised. This was partly due to the poor communications within the country, and the economic conditions which forced many people to migrate again, giving them no time to organise reformist organisations. But in spite of this, their influence in Ḥaḍramaut has been growing steadily since the War.

In the last twenty years, Ḥaḍramaut has been increasingly interacting with the Arab World and has cut off the ties with the Far East. This has been intensified since the Suez crisis by extensive migration. The increasing use of the mass media, and the deeper involvement of Pan-Arab Nationalism in the area. This has culminated in the recent political developments in Aden and the South Arabian Federation, as well as the Yemeni Revolution. Thus the post-war history of Ḥaḍramaut, has seen the rise of Nationalism, which has incorporated within it the pre-War 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict. A pamphlet published in Indonesia (1962) by the Irshādi, continues the war with the 'Alawī but ends up by claiming that it was the Irshādi which had warned the people against the Hashemite reactionaries as far back as 1914. They thus welcome the Free Yemenis i.e. the Revolution and say "the hour of Arab Nationalism in South Arabia has arrived; let the Hashemite reactionaries fold their network of intrigues and conspiracy, for the Free Yemenis have placed the last nail on their coffin which shall never

return."¹ In fact both the 'Alawī and Irshādīs have used the idiom of Nationalism to continue their conflict and have aligned themselves to opposing forces in the turbulent politics of the Arab World.

1. "Hadha Bayan linas". Published in Djakarta. 1962.

CHAPTER III

THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY OF HURĒIDAH

The four settlements surrounding the main village, are within a radius of between a 100 yards to $\frac{1}{2}$ a mile. For the purpose of this thesis, I will consider the four settlements and the main village as one social unit, and the name Ḥurēiḍah will be used to refer to this unit as a whole. The four settlements will be considered as spatially separate locations of Ḥurēiḍah. There are a number of reasons for treating the main village and the settlement as one unit:-

- (a) One of the settlements is only a stone's throw from one end of the main village. The other three settlements are all located within the small cultivated area used by all.
- (b) The settlements and the main village are one economic unit in that they share a common cultivated area, the canal system and the market square. The latter is in the main village, surrounded by a number of little shops. This is where all major economic transactions and shopping takes place for the people of the whole unit.
- (c) All major religious and communal activities such as 'Īd prayers and festivals, Friday prayers and ceremonies during the month of Ramaḍān, are carried out in the main village and all people participate as one community. Three of the settlements have no mosques¹ and their

1. Only the largest and most distant settlement ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) has a small mosque which was built recently. The fact that until recently all the mosques were in the main village, adds to the general attributes of Gabā'il as being "irreligious" and "primitive". It also indicates the important religious role of the 'Aḥḥās centered in the ḥawtah.

burial ground is the same as that of the main village.

- (d) No major communal activities e.g. in marriage etc. are carried out in the settlements without the participation of people from the main village. Furthermore, there is a daily and intensive interaction between the people from the settlements and those of the main village.
- (e) The Village Council of Ḥurēiḍah considers the settlements and the main village as one administrative unit.

The spatial separation of the Gabā'il settlements from the main village was an important fact of the traditional political system that ceased to operate about 1940. The main village was a religious enclave and ruled by the 'Aṭṭās whose authority was based on religious power. It was inhabited by many different and unarmed groups. The settlements on the other hand were independent political units, inhabited by tribesmen (Gabā'il) who monopolised the use and carrying of rifles. But since the establishment of the Qu'āiti State, the political distinction between the two sides has disappeared; now they have become one political unit, strengthening the other unifying factors e.g. economic and religious, and thereby bridging the physical separation. There are therefore good reasons for treating the settlements and the main village as one social unit. In fact the people themselves today refer to this unit as Ḥurēiḍah.

The social hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah encompasses a number of ranked groups, categorised into three main strata

which are internally differentiated. The following table illustrates the hierarchy:-

TABLE A. SOCIAL HIERARCHY IN HURĒIDAH

No.	General Strata	No.	Groups in Local Hierarchy	Number	Households
1.	<u>SĀDAH</u>	1.	' <u>Aṭṭās</u>	585	131
2.	<u>MASHĀYIKH-GABA'IL</u>	2.	<u>Bāsahl :Mashāyikh</u> (i)	82	20
		3.	<u>Ja'da: Gabā'il(ii)</u> (and other tribes)	54 ¹	15
				512 ²	114
3.	<u>MASĀKĪN</u> or <u>DU'FA</u>	4.	<u>Hirṭhān</u> (i)	190	42
		5.	<u>Akhdām</u> (ii)	390	80
		6.	<u>Subyān</u> (iii)	99	24
Total				1,912	426

The different groups in Ḥurēidah tend to live in separate localities (Ref. sketch map, pp. 9.) Almost all the 'Aṭṭās live in that part of Ḥurēidah called al-bilād (the town). In the past no member of the other groups lived

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1. Settled in Ḥurēidah during the last ten years. Most of them belong to various tribes in different parts of Ḥaḍramaut. They came as individuals and do not fit into the local Gabā'il structure. They married into the various groups and live matrilocally in the main village.
 2. Made up of the four tribal settlements in Ḥurēidah.

in this area, nor did they own a house or a plot. There were some non-'Aṭṭās servants attached to large 'Aṭṭās families and living in their master's houses. A few such servants have now been able to acquire land and build houses in this location. But these are exceptions. There are some servants who are still attached to their masters. The location (hāfah) as a whole is still an 'Aṭṭās area, vaguely divided into various wards (jōr), named after specific 'Aṭṭās descent groups. A small part of the al-bilād area, near the centre of the village, is occupied by Ḥirṭhān and some Akhdām families.

The Bāsahl live in the part of Ḥurēidah called al-Ḥasūsa (constituting the rest of the main village). Within this area, they occupy a raised ridge entirely to themselves (Garn Bāsahl -- Bāsahl Ridge). The rest of the al-Ḥasūsa is occupied by the Akhdām and the Subyān, with a tendency for small patronymic groups to congregate together.

The settlements are occupied by the tribal groups, each being made up of an agnatic descent group which in the past formed the basic independent political unit. Two of the settlements have Ja'da groups, which are part of the segmentary framework of the nearby Ja'da tribe.

This pattern of residence is partly an expression of the social hierarchy, and partly a product of the traditional political system and the long process of past movements of the different groups into Ḥurēidah. Thus for instance the



Top picture: A section of Hureidah.

Bottom picture: A visit (ziara) to the shrine of 'Umar, the ancestor of the 'Attas.

Ḥirṭhān, the only indigenous group in Ḥurēiḍah, occupy the oldest and highest part of the main village. On the other hand, the Akhdām and the Subyān, most of whom have come into Ḥurēiḍah within the last forty years, live hapahazardly within the residual area left by the other groups.

The significance of residential separation as a reflection of the social hierarchy is emphasised by a similar separation of graves in the burial grounds. Within the ideological framework of Islām distinction between graves on the basis of their shapes, as well as segregating them into separate groups, can only be based on the criterion of the religious virtues of individuals and not on ascribed status. Yet within the burial grounds of Ḥurēiḍah, each group has a specific area where its dead are buried and the best part of the ground -- in terms of the nature of the soil and its usefulness in relation to the technical problems of the graves -- belongs to the 'Aṭṭās. Furthermore, almost all 'Aṭṭās graves are cemented at the top and white-washed. Non-'Aṭṭās have only stones placed on the top of the graves to mark their size. Thirdly, the two largest domed shrines (sg. Qubbah) beautifully decorated and white-washed, belong to the ancestors of the 'Aṭṭās. Among the non-'Aṭṭās, only the Bāsahl have a small mud-built shrine on the grave of their ancestor. This differentiation in the graves and the segregation in the residence pattern obviously have important social significance and indicate

that stratification is a dominant feature of the social life of Ḥurēiḍah.

The groups in Ḥurēiḍah are not all of the same type nor are they all corporate groups. Groups 1 to 3 (see Table A.)^{p.49} are all descent groups, with genealogical frameworks, nodal ancestors and other symbols with which they can conceptualise their unity. Their size, strength of their cohesion and their internal structures vary and express their different roles within the stratification system. But they are all corporate descent groups. On the other hand, groups 4 to 6, are in fact occupational categories. I call them 'groups' here only in a very general sense for the sake of brevity and convenience. These groups also differ in their roles and attributes and in the degree of cohesion, if they can be said to have cohesion at all. For instance the Ḥirṭhān (4) do act corporately in specific situations, although they are not a descent group, while the Akhdām (5) and Subyān (6) do not act corporately. However in spite of this and other differences, these latter three groups are all occupational categories and in no sense are they descent groups, although each category is made up of small genealogically unconnected patronymic groups. It is clear that the six groups in Ḥurēiḍah are not of the same type, and that their differences are related to the respective attributes and roles of the groups within the total framework of the stratification system.

The social hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah is extremely important and pervades almost every aspect of the social life of the village. The ranked order of the groups is ritually enacted twice a year. It is dramatised by a ceremony in the big Friday mosque, and is thus surrounded by the aura of religion. The ceremony emphasises the continuity and social significance of the hierarchy, with all its implications. The occasion for the ritual is during the Muslim festival of 'Īd, at the end of Ramaḍān, and during the Mecca pilgrimage. At the end of the prayers in one of the ceremonies, all the people in the mosque form into their descent groups. The 'Aṭṭās (1), who occupy the most important part of the mosque, stand and form into two rows facing each other. The other groups then take their positions in a line in order to go and kiss the hands of the 'Aṭṭās. The line is headed by the Bāsahl (2). Each member of this group passes along the two rows of 'Aṭṭās and kisses the hand of every man in it - old and young. When the Bāsahl have finished "paying their respects", they are followed by the Gabā'il (3) who repeat the same act. Then come the Hirthān (4), Akhdām (5) and Subyān (6) in that order, to kiss the hands of the 'Aṭṭās. In 1962-63 however, many non-'Aṭṭās left the mosque as soon as the ceremony started. They said that they did not want to participate in this "outdated custom" ('ada qadīma).

The order of the groups in this ceremony is nevertheless very important. No one can join the 'Aṭṭās group unless

he is born a member of it. It is at the apex of the hierarchy, and members of the other groups acknowledge this by kissing the hands of its members. The Bāsahl come second in the hierarchy, and therefore take first place in the line. The Gabā'il follow the Bāsahl and so on, down to the Subyān. The social hierarchy is thus enacted meticulously in this ceremony.

The social hierarchy is also manifested by the terms of address between the people of the different groups, and the behaviour implied by the use of such terms. In this society, the principle of seniority is very important. When a young man addresses an older man of his group, he uses the term for father (wālid), or father's brother ('am). The latter term is also the term for father-in-law. However these terms are not used between people of different groups since they would contradict the rules of hypergamous marriage and the ranking of groups implied in them.¹ Other terms are thus used which express not only the status of the respective groups, but the type of behaviour which is to be followed between them. A young 'Aṭṭās can address elderly people of other groups by their first names, or, if he wishes to express respect, by using the term khāl (mother's brother). This is the rule even if the non-'Aṭṭās is a father-in-law, who is normally addressed by the same term as father's brother ('am). The terms used within the group to express

1. For a discussion of marriage and ranking, see next chapter.

respect (walid or 'am) are not applicable when used by an 'Aṭṭās to an old man of any other group, since non-'Aṭṭās can never be father or father's brother to 'Aṭṭās, but only mother's brother (khāl)

A mother's brother from outside a person's group is accorded less respect than a father or a father's brother. On the other hand, non-'Aṭṭās address 'Aṭṭās (young or old) as ḥabīb (the beloved or honoured). Kinship terms cannot be used even when the non-'Aṭṭās is addressing an 'Aṭṭās son-in-law. Similarly Bāsahl and Ja'da refer to the lower groups (of the Masakīn) by the term khāl (mother's brother). But the Masakīn groups address Bāsahl by the term Shāikh (Sg. for Mashāyikh -- scholars), and the Ja'da by their lineage, clan or tribe's name. Within the Masakīn groups, people address each other by their first names or by the normal terms of respect, i.e. wālid or 'am.

The public ritual enactment of the social hierarchy and the daily use of the terms of address, emphasise and express the formalised structure of the hierarchy. This structure is partially upheld by the commonly accepted views on the ascriptive characteristics of each group. Thus the 'Aṭṭās, as Sādah i.e. of the first stratum, are believed to have the noblest ancestry, an inherent supernatural power (karāma), are a missionary group and custodians of knowledge. The 'Aṭṭās have these attributes because they are the "children of the Prophet". They are called "Saiyid" (Sg. for

Sādah) -- lord or master, because they are inherently superior. The Bāsahl, as Mashāyikh, are also believed to have a noble ancestry, but this is inferior to that of the 'Aṭṭās. They have supernatural powers, but this is also less effective than that of the 'Aṭṭās. They are religious and knowledgeable, but once again to a lesser extent than the 'Aṭṭās. Bāsahl derive these attributes because they are the descendants of Sahl, who was a Shēikh -- a scholar. Their inferior religious attributes in relation to 'Aṭṭās, is because the Bāsahl derive their attributes from an 'Ordinary' scholar, while the 'Aṭṭās derive their attributes ultimately from the Prophet himself. Members of the different Gabā'il groups are also believed to have a noble ancestry, equal to that of the Bāsahl Mashāyikh since the two belong to the same stratum. They are believed to be brave warriors, honourable, primitive (beduw), and rather irreligious. They derive these attributes because they are the descendants of the epical ancestor of a specific tribe whose name they bear. They are called Gabā'il because they are tribesmen.

Members of the three Masakīn (poor) groups, have the most inferior ancestry. The Ḥirṭhān (agriculturist), are engaged in agriculture, cultivating their own farms. This being the main occupation of groups 1 to 3, it is considered to be a dignified occupation. The Ḥirṭhān are also called Girwān (villagers) because they are the only indigenous group in Ḥurēiḍah. Because of this and because of their

occupation, they have the highest status amongst the Masakīn groups. The Akhdām (servants or workers) are engaged in hereditary occupations e.g. carpentry, smithery, masonry, and manual labour which involve the sale of services or their goods, within the framework of the economic organisation of Ḥurēidah. Such occupations are considered to be "undignified" and have a low status. Hence the low status of the Akhdām in relation to the Ḥirthān. The Subyān (ceremonial servants) on the other hand, have the lowest status, because they are engaged in the most "undignified" occupation -- namely ceremonial service. This occupation is hereditary for the Subyān and it is concerned with specific activities in marriage ceremonies, in funerals and in the various festivities and feasts. Only the Subyān performed certain specified activities in the ceremonies. But the activities and the Subyān are not considered impure or polluted in the religious sense as they would be in the Hindu caste system. The Subyān have a normal religious state, like most people, but the activities which they perform are considered "undignified" and therefore shameful for non-Subyān to perform.¹

To sum up then, each group within the social hierarchy of Ḥurēidah has a number of ascriptive statuses and attributes, which are commonly accepted within the value system of Ḥurēidah. These are tabulated in Table B which follows.

1. Barth argues that the notion of 'Shame' among Swat, corresponds to the concept of pollution in Hindu society i.e. the two concepts have a similar function within a 'caste' system. Barth 1960.

TABLE B. ATTRIBUTES AND STATUSES OF THE GROUPS
IN THE HIERARCHY

No.	Local Group	No.	General Strata	Type of Group	Ultimate Ancestry	Immediate Ancestry	Statuses & Attributes of Groups.
1.	'Aḫḫās	1.	As Sādah	Corporate Descent Group	Descendants of the Prophet.	Nodal Ancestor 'Umar.	Descent status: Highest Religious status: Highest, supernatural powers, missionary. Economic status: High; Farmers.
2.	Bāsahl	2.	As Mashāyikh	Corporate Descent Group.	Descendants of Qaḥḫān.	Nodal Ancestor. Sahl.	Descent status: High. Religious status: High, supernatural power. Economic status: High, Farmers.
3.	Ja'da and Others.	2.	As Gabā'il	Corporate Descent Group.	Descendants of Qaḥḫān	Nodal Ancestor Ja'edy	Descent status: High. Religious status: None. Others: brave warriors, honourable, primitive. Economic status: High, Farmers.
4.	Ḥirḫān.	3.	As Masakīn.	Corporate Occupational category.	None.	None.	Descent status: None. Religious status: None. Others: Indigenous group. Economic status: High, Farmers.
5.	ikhdam.	3.	As Masakīn.	Occupational Category.	None.	None.	Descent status: None. Religious status: None. Others: weak and obedient. Economic status: Low, undignified occupations, crafts and labour.
6.	Subyān.	3.	As Masakīn.	Occupational Category.	None.	None.	Descent status: None. Religious status: None. Others: weak and obedient. Economic status: Lowest, most undignified occupation -- ceremonial servant.

1. The Masakīn are a 'residual category' outside the descent framework which confers status. They are considered to have no "ancestry". For further discussion of this, see Chapter IV.

I have so far shown (a) there is a social hierarchy, (b) that there are a number of frameworks which confer rank and status to the groups, and, as it is to be expected, (c) the groups at the various levels, have different attributes and roles within the total framework of the hierarchy. It is therefore necessary at this point to describe in some detail the various functions and attributes of the groups before I proceed (in the next chapter) to analyse their structural implications. The rest of this chapter will thus be concerned with a basic description of the roles of the groups.

The 'Aṭṭās.

All the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah, except for a small lineage, are the descendants of their nodal ancestor 'Umar. The small lineage descends from Agīl, the brother of 'Umar. "'Aṭṭās" is the nickname of 'Umar's grandfather. To all intents and purposes all the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah (including the descendants of 'Agīl) consider themselves as "'Umar's children". From 'Umar, 'Aṭṭās trace their descent back to Ahmad bin 'Īsa, the ancestor of all the Ḥaḍrami Sādah.

Ahmad bin 'Īsa, known as al-Muhājir (the Emigrant) came to Ḥaḍramaut from Iraq about 952 A.D./340 A.H.¹ Al-Muhajir, of the eighth generation² from Fātimah (the Prophet's daughter) through her son Husēin, is claimed to have come as

1. R.B.Serjeants. 1957. pp.8.

2. Ibid., p.8.

a missionary, reviving and spreading the teaching of the Sunnah according to the Shafi'i School.¹ The 'Aṭṭās genealogy, through al-Muhājir, goes back to Husēin and through his mother, ultimately reaches the Prophet. However, the father of Husēin and therefore the actual ultimate paternal ancestor of the 'Aṭṭās, was 'Ali ibn Abi Tālib, the first cousin of the Prophet. But the 'Aṭṭās explain this genealogical departure by quoting a number of hadīth² -- sayings of the Prophet. These Ḥadīths say that the children of Fātimah and 'Ali, were also "the children of the Prophet". Hence the descent of the 'Aṭṭās goes back to the very source of Islām - the Prophet - and is sanctioned by what are claimed to be the Prophet's Ḥadīth.

Starting from the Prophet downwards to al-Muhājir, the Sādah have a noble and distinguished ancestry, whose primary function was to spread Islām, the noble and good tradition of the Prophet, and to be the custodian of 'Ilm (knowledge). In Ḥaḍramaut, al-Muhājir and his descendants have continued this tradition right to the present day. Thus the role and manifest dedication of the 'Aṭṭās, as descendants of al-Muhājir, is to continue this long and "good tradition of our ancestors" Assalaf Assaleh.

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1. Ibid. But Serjeant has doubts as to whether Al-Muhājir was actually engaged in teaching and spreading the Shafi'i sunnah.
 2. "Hadith" is a valid source or "root" of the Laws of Islam. Levy, R., 1962, p.172.

'Umar was born at Lisk in Ḥaḍramaut,¹ in the year 992 AH/1584AD. He became blind when he was still a child. By his early twenties, he was already a "scholar", 'ālīm and a Sūfi (a mystic). His 'Shaikh'² -- religious teacher and spiritual guardian -- told him to go to Wādi 'Amd and preach to its "barbaric tribes". His donkey stopped at Ḥurēiḍah and refused to go any further. 'Umar then decided to stay in Ḥurēiḍah and use it as a base for his missionary activities in the Wādi. Within a few years, he became the religious leader of Ḥurēiḍah and virtually its ruler. Before he died he declared the village 'a ḥawtah -- (a holy enclave) which was under his protection. When he died his son took his place and continued his work. 'Umar's grandson - Muḥsin - became the first 'chief' (Mansab) of Ḥurēiḍah. 'Umar's

1. The brief 'history' that follows here was given to me by the Mansab of Ḥurēiḍah. It is of course impossible to check its accuracy, i.e. whether the events did take place in the way described and at the period stated. In a situation like this it is difficult to state whether this is a "myth" or actual "history". If it is any help at all, the Mansab has written this account in an unpublished book on the "History of Ḥurēiḍah". Similarly, 'Ali bin Ḥasan, fourth generation from 'Umar, had written the biography of 'Umar. Here I treat the 'history' of the 'Aṭṭās in the orthodox way, as a charter to their present situation. The 'truth' or 'falsity' of the facts is therefore not relevant.
2. The term "Shaikh" is used to describe and address a distinguished scholar of any stratum. But it is also used to refer to members of a descent group; -- in the latter case, the descent group would be the descendants of a non-Sādah Shaikh. The first meaning implies an achieved scholarly status by an individual without the implication of his descent status. Hence it is also used for Sādah scholars. The second meaning however, refers to an ascriptive descent and religious status of a particular group. Hence it is used to refer to people of the Mashāyikh group only, and never of the Sādah or other groups.

descendants proliferated in the village and some of them moved to other villages in the region where they continued the "good tradition" of their ancestor. One such famous descendant was Ali bin Ḥasan (4th generation from 'Umar) who turned a robber's haunt into a ḥawtah and called it Mashhad. His shrine is annually celebrated by a ziāra -- a religious visit; -- the ziāra will be analysed further down. Both 'Umar and his grandson Muḥsin, have a domed shrine in Ḥurēiḍah. The people of Ḥurēiḍah and others from outside make offerings (nudhur) to both the two shrines. 'Umar's shrine stands as a symbol of the religious status of the 'Aṭṭās and a reminder to them of their duty and tradition which they must carry forward.

The 'history' of the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah and their declared objective, their ethos in fact, is that of preachers of Islām and the noble tradition started by the Prophet himself. In their historical development in Ḥurēiḍah, the 'Aṭṭās have evolved a political organisation which turned them into a ruling group in addition to their function as missionaries. Their political authority (until Ḥurēiḍah was incorporated in the Qu'āiti State recently) was inevitably based on their religious power. Apart from their missionary activities, the basis of this religious power is derived from emphasising their link with the Prophet. This link implies that supernatural power and a large body of religious scholarship, has been transmitted from the Prophet down the

line of distinguished ancestors, to the 'Aṭṭās. Thus the fact that the 'Aṭṭās are religious leaders and custodians of knowledge, is not because of any achievement on their part, but is because of an inheritance from their past. The 'Aṭṭās therefore use what Emerys Peters has called a "cultural past"¹ in order to justify their present politico-religious status.

The very high religious status of the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah has always been maintained by their control of education, the monopoly of religious leadership and the use of religious ceremonies. As a result, the religious attributes and status of the 'Aṭṭās have become part and parcel of the "social pillars" which Islam prescribes and sanctions in Ḥurēiḍah. To question the religious status of the 'Aṭṭās, is to question the authority of Islām -- the Prophet and God.

Until a few years ago, Ḥurēiḍah had a traditional boarding school, run and financed by the 'Aṭṭās.² The school was primarily for 'Aṭṭās children, but it also had non-'Aṭṭās, mainly from other parts of the country. The school has now been taken over by the Government, but its two teachers are both 'Aṭṭās. The male 'Aṭṭās heads of households, have a literacy figure of 81%. Those of the Bāshal 80%. Amongst the other groups, the figure is between 31% and 45.4%. This

1. E.L. Peters 1963.

2. Freya Stark, describes the school in her book "A Winter in Arabia" (1948 ed.) when she visited Ḥurēiḍah in 1938.

difference in the percentage of literate between the groups is primarily due to the fact that the 'Aṭṭās controlled the traditional system of education. Many non-'Aṭṭās have become literate in the course of their migration experience recently. However these figures do not tell us the qualitative difference in the education of the various groups. Amongst the 'Aṭṭās élite, there are five people who are regarded as "'ulamā'" -- scholars, and whose reputation extends to the country at large and even abroad. The genealogy of the 'Aṭṭās is full of information concerning past scholars who established wide reputation in their time and attracted students from other parts of the country. This starts from 'Umar, the ancestor, right down to Mansab Aḥmad bin Ḥasan (who died in 1916); one of the prominent students of the latter was a "mufti" of Lahore and has written two volumes in praise of his teacher.¹ The present scholars of Ḥurēiḍah, all of whom are over fifty, are a product of the traditional educational system and are a continuation of the tradition of their ancestors. This tradition has produced scholars who have written biographies and religious books, published and unpublished, and who have collected books and built up libraries. One library I saw contained more than five hundred printed books on a wide range of subjects within the curriculum of traditional

1. "'Ugūd al-Almās". A Ṭwāhir... Singapore Vol.I, 1949; Vol.II, 1950.

Islamic studies. Another library, belonging to the Mansab and which I did not see, is reputed to be one of the largest private libraries in the country.¹ There is thus amongst the 'Aṭṭās an élite of scholars of a high calibre. By having friends in the various centres of learning in the country, they operate in a wider field beyond Ḥurēiḍah. What is important in the context of Ḥurēiḍah however, is that such scholars are accepted and regarded as religious leaders and experts on technical points of Islamic theology. Such people have always been the "final authority" on religious practice in Ḥurēiḍah. Since Islam prescribes rules for a wide area of social activities, their importance is thus obvious. Similarly their importance as custodian of knowledge, and its transmission through the formal educational system to their own group, is also obvious.

In Ḥurēiḍah in particular and the Ḥaḍramaut in general, secular education and knowledge outside the framework of Islamic theology is, to say the least, very rare. Thus the control of the educational system and the monopoly

1. While I was writing the thesis, the Mansab with the large library wrote to me requesting that I send him copies of any publication I make on Ḥurēiḍah. He also wanted me to send him copies of all the books written in English on the Ḥaḍramaut. Although the Mansab does not read English, he wants these books for his library. His father had built the library by collecting books and manuscripts on Ḥaḍramaut, from all over the country. The present Mansab is continuing this tradition although he has widened his field by collecting books from outside the Arab World and in a foreign language.

of scholars by the 'Aṭṭās, is merely an aspect of their wider function as a missionary group. The elder of the two Mansabs of Ḥurēiḍah is accepted as the 'official' religious leader of Ḥurēiḍah, since he represents 'Umar and is continuing the latter's work. Of the seven mosques in the village, six were built and are controlled by the 'Aṭṭās. The Imām -- prayer leader -- of these mosques, and the preacher -- khatīb -- of the Friday mosque, are all 'Aṭṭās. The preacher is also the man who officiates at marriage ceremonies, in the village. In all other ceremonies, 'Aṭṭās play the dominant role. This is not to say that non-'Aṭṭās are explicitly excluded from any religious office. Theoretically any pious and learned non-'Aṭṭās can for example become an Imām in a mosque, officiate at a marriage ceremony etc. But there are no learned non-'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah of the same stature as the 'Aṭṭās. Secondly, these offices are accepted as prerogatives of the 'Aṭṭās. Thirdly, all the mosques (except that of the Bāsahl) are controlled by the 'Aṭṭās and it is they who initiate most of the religious ceremonies. Because of all these reasons, 'Attās play a dominant role in the religious and other ceremonies in Ḥurēiḍah.

The religious status and supernatural powers of the 'Aṭṭās are however highlighted and dramatised by the type of religious ceremonies held in Ḥurēiḍah and the Mashhad ziāra. Firstly there is an annual mūwliḍ -- birthday celebration --

of the Prophet (the ultimate ancestor of the 'Aṭṭās). This is held at the shrine of 'Umar. A perfect association between the ultimate ancestor (the Prophet) and the nodal ancestor ('Umar), is thus achieved. The continuity of the line of descent, and the transmission of spiritual power, between the Prophet and the 'Aṭṭās, is thereby emphasised and maintained. Secondly, after every 'Īd prayer (there are two in a year), people march in a procession (led by the Mansab) from the mosques to 'Umar's shrine. There people pay their respect to 'Umar, and a brief prayer is said asking him to intercede with God, so that the ills of Ḥurēiḍah are removed and good fortune bestowed on its people. Thirdly, an annual mūwliḍ is held to celebrate the birthday of 'Ali bin Ḥasan 'Aṭṭās, the founder of the Mashhad hawtah.¹ This ceremony is held in the room where the man was born. Fourthly during the month of Ramaḍān, a regular ḥizb -- a mosque seminary -- is held every afternoon in one 'Aṭṭās mosque. In the seminary, the Mansab talks and extols the work and virtues of 'Umar. The talks are based on the manāqib (manuscript biographies), on the life of 'Umar, written by 'Ali bin Ḥasan. During the same period, a ceremony is held at all the mosques in Ḥurēiḍah, every alternate night starting from the thirteenth night of Ramaḍān. The ceremony is held in all the seven mosques as well as in 'Umar's shrine.

1. See below. p. 69.

In the ceremony, prayers are said and the Ḳur'ān recited collectively, followed by qaṣīdah (praise of past 'saints') and sermons in praise of the famous 'Aṭṭās ancestors as well as other Sādah scholars. When the ceremony is held at 'Umar's shrine, (normally it takes place two days before the end of Ramaḍān), a special significance is attached to the ceremony. Here a special prayer is said to a long list of 'Aṭṭās ancestors, all of whom are named. The prayer asks for the blessing of 'Umar on the named ancestors; it ends by everyone present reciting the Fātiha (opening chapter of the Kur'ān), for the named ancestors. All these religious ceremonies thus emphasise the deep involvement of the 'Aṭṭās with Islām. They emphasise the link between themselves and the Prophet with the implied transmission of spiritual power and knowledge from the very source of Islām down to the 'Aṭṭās. Since in all these ceremonies, 'Aṭṭās make sermons entreating people to follow the good path of religion and not to be enticed by the temptation of Satan, they emphasise the declared function of the 'Aṭṭās as a missionary group carrying on the noble tradition of the Prophet. In this way, the 'Aṭṭās have acquired what is called as suluṭāt al-rūhiyyah -- spiritual power, over an extensive field of the day to day social relations. This is the basis of their ascriptive religious status and power.

But it is at the Mashhad ziāra where the different roles of the 'Aṭṭās are dramatised. The place where Mashhad

village stands today used to be a favourite place for armed tribesmen to ambush and rob passing caravans and travellers. Because of this, the place acquired a very bad reputation. 'Ali bin Ḥasan, (4th generation from Omar), went to this place, preached amongst the tribesmen and ultimately pacified them. He turned the place into a ḥawṭah and made the surrounding tribesmen guarantee its sanctity. He mediated in their feuds, and made them agree to a truce at certain periods of the year. When he died, people went to visit his shrine, give offerings and pray their wishes. The ziāra became a regular visit attended by people from far and wide. The place also became a "sūq" -- a market -- during the ziāra period.

The ziāra has now become a very big annual event in this part of the country. In 1962-63, it was attended by more than 5,000 people, from the plateau as well as from villages and towns of the valleys. The ziāra lasts for three to five days. It starts by the "entry" of Ḥurēidah's Mansabs who are met by the Mansab of Mashhad. Then come the Gabā'il tribesmen -- each tribe forming into a group, and firing their rifles in the air as they enter the village. Then follows the mūwliḍ ceremony in the shrine of 'Ali bin Ḥasan. After this the Mashhad Mansab makes a public sermon to the large crowd gathered outside the shrine. The sermon reminds the people of the holiness of 'Ali bin Ḥasan, his noble work in the course of Islam, and the sanctity of the



Top picture: Temporary stalls at the market of a ziarah.



Bottom picture: The Mansab of Mashhad preaching to the crowd at the ziarah.

place. Many people then enter the shrine to make individual prayers and offerings. Then the Mansab of Mashhad and that of Ḥurēiḍah go to a big public ground-tank full of water, and ceremonially open it for public use. After this, the people visit the numerous stalls which have filled every available space in the village. From this time on there is brisk trade till the end of the ziāra. The mechanism and process of the market are complicated, but the important point here is that the market lasts for a number of days, and that the two broad categories of the larger society, that is the tribesmen and the townspeople, have intensive economic relations. The medium of exchange is money (East African Currency) although some barter does take place between individuals. The grounds where stalls are placed are rented and the proceeds goes to the Mansab. Similarly offerings to the shrine in money and in kind go to him. This is the main source of income for the Mansab and his close agnates, who make up the small population of Mashhad.

The village of Mashhad is in a barren and arid place far from the course of floods (seil) and therefore has no agriculture to support it. One well (450 feet deep) is its only source of water. There are twenty houses (all inhabitants are 'Aṭṭās) and for most of the year, its male population is away working as migrant labour. Yet its ziāra has always been and still is important, attracting people from a very wide area. Its sūq is very large and famous. The

Mashhad ziāra obviously plays a very important function. During the traditional period, when feuds were endemic and travelling dangerous, the ziāra provided a safe period and place where feuding tribes as well as unarmed people from villages and towns, could meet and trade. It was also the place from which the Mansab went out to stop feuds and settle disputes. It was a place where fugitives from feuds could hide, vows be taken, and prayers and offerings made. The 'Aṭṭās village of Mashhad therefore had an important political, religious and economic functions in the traditional social system of the wider field. Today it still performs an important religious and economic function. But the Mashhad (and five other 'Aṭṭās ḥawṭahs in the country), were until recently under the religious and political authority of the Mansabs of Ḥurēiḍah. The latter was the spiritual and political capital of all 'Aṭṭās wherever they were, Ḥurēiḍah has no ziāra, because 'Umar specifically prohibited it. The importance of Ḥurēiḍah and the specific political and religious roles of the 'Aṭṭās in it, can therefore only be understood properly by showing their significance in the wider field. Thus the religious role of the 'Aṭṭās within Ḥurēiḍah is strengthened and is an aspect of their significant role in the wider field.

I have described in some detail, the religious-political role of the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah and the wider field, in the present and immediate past. The 'Aṭṭās see themselves

as a "chosen" group, dedicated to a missionary (civilising) function, with supernatural powers inherited from the Prophet through a noble tradition which was started by him. They see themselves as performing a "good" function in the society. This, in general, is the image, or ethos, of the 'Aṭṭās, which the other groups have always accepted but are now beginning to question.

I have so far described the religious role of the 'Aṭṭās in the wider field and within Ḥurēiḍah. It is important at this point to describe their internal organisation of the House and its political function. The House is divided into nine lineages (Sg. Dār). These lineages are not of equivalent order genealogically (see genealogical chart ^{p. 101}). All 'Aṭṭās lineages are descendants of 'Abdul-Raḥmān. Yet it is 'Umar who is regarded as the "father" of 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah, primarily because he provides the ritual and historical focal point for them. Furthermore this explains the equality of status (except for lineage four) between the lineages which are genealogically unequal. Lineage 4 is the lineage of the Mansabs. The 'Aṭṭās thus have a nodal ancestor and a genealogical framework which unites all its groups. This is extremely important because it does regulate relationships within the House, and between it and other groups. It is important also because it contrasts with the genealogical framework of other groups in Ḥurēiḍah.

The cohesion and unity of the 'Aṭṭās House is one

of its most important features in contrast with the other groups. This is partly due to the very high rate of in-group marriage. The pattern of 'Aṭṭās marriage, 26% within a lineage and 60% within the House as a whole, means that the descent framework is reinforced by an intricate network of affinal, matrilateral and bilateral relationships making all the 'Aṭṭās as "one large family". Such a 'family' has of course internal cleavages and inherent areas of conflict, especially in inheritance disputes over property. However internal conflict of the 'Aṭṭās are channelled to their political organisation where they are settled. Even now 'Aṭṭās disputes tend to be settled internally, bypassing the courts as an alternative judicial system.

The historical development of the political organisation of the 'Aṭṭās, has two important and significant steps. The first step was when the office of the Mansab was divided and held jointly by two brothers. Ever since, the lineage of the Mansab has had two sections each with a Mansab. The second stage was when the 'Aṭṭās collectively set down and wrote a "Constitution" describing and formalising the structure and functions of the political organisation which had developed by that time (1239 A.H./1823 A.D.). The constitution formalised the distinct status of the Mansab's lineage, set out the functions of the Mansabs, created a Council and set out the procedures to be followed in resolving conflicts and in maintaining the unity of the

House.¹ The Mansabs presided over the Council, and their lineage had two representatives (one from each sub-lineage) in the Council. The other lineages, each had one representative in the Council. Their equality of status was thus formalised.

The political organisation of the 'Aṭṭās provided a focal point for their political unity, which emphasised their genealogical unity and at the same time counteracted the segmentary process inherent in the genealogical structure. The organisation still acts as the highest political authority, by operating informally, in spite of the existence of an alternative political organisation of the State (the only legitimate authority).² Thus the political unity of the 'Aṭṭās is still very strong, especially in situations of conflicts with other groups when the dominating position of the 'Aṭṭās in the hierarchy is vigorously questioned.

Because of the political development of the country during the last two decades i.e. the establishment of the Qu'āiti State, the 'Aṭṭās have controlled the Village Council since its establishment in 1949. Since then internal changes within the 'Aṭṭās have shifted the centre of political power i.e. the control of the Village Council, from the

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1. I have documents to show that the Council legislated a number of prohibitions on the 'Aṭṭās, settled conflicts between 'Aṭṭās outside Ḥurēiḍah, and set up a new Mansabate (in the early thirties) in a distant village. The Council discussed and approved all these measures.
 2. In 1962, the Qu'āiti Ṣulṭān visited Ḥurēiḍah. Before his arrival, the 'Aṭṭās leaders met informally to discuss arrangements and share responsibilities in entertaining the Ṣulṭān and his large entourage.

Mansab and his lineage, to another person belonging to another lineage. This change will be described later, but the result has turned the Mansabs into formal religious leaders and heads of the 'Aṭṭās House without any actual political power within the new political structure. On the other hand, the courts, the police and district administration in Ḥurēiḍah are Central Government institutions which are controlled by non-'Aṭṭās officials from other parts of the country. However the new leader of the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah operates and has contacts and influence within the wider political field. Thus the 'Aṭṭās control the Council and at the same time have influence over the Central Government institutions in Ḥurēiḍah. They therefore 'monopolise' political power in Ḥurēiḍah and their 'dominance' over the other groups is pervasive.

To sum up then, the 'Aṭṭās use their 'cultural past' to validate their religious status and supernatural powers. Through this they have always controlled religious institutions and leadership as well as the educational system. Their historical development and their genealogical framework, has provided them with a political organisation which has made them a highly cohesive and united group, controlling political power of Ḥurēiḍah, both in the past and in the present.

2. THE BĀSAHL.

The Bāsahl take second place in the hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah. They have a religious status. Their "spiritual influence" extends over two specific groups -- a patronymic group of the Subyān in Ḥurēiḍah and a lineage of the Ja'da tribe about ten miles away from Ḥurēiḍah. This 'influence' was pronounced and important in the immediate past but is now waning and is being questioned because of the general changes taking place in the society. The 'influence' meant that the Bāsahl settled the disputes of these two groups, that the leaders of the Bāsahl were regularly visited and provided with gifts, that their religious power -- barakah -- blessing, was sought and their curse -- hatf -- was feared. The relationship was essentially a superordinate/subordinate type, within the framework of spiritual influence. This relationship is still recognised by visits to the Bāsahl at specific occasions. It is also expressed in the reverence the two groups show towards the Bāsahl (kissing their hands and calling them ḥabīb, the beloved), while other groups do not show the same reverence towards Bāsahl.

The Bāsahl, as Mashāyikh, have religious status because of their claim to be descendants of Sahl who was a Shāikh (a scholar and religious leader) of Ḥurēiḍah at his time. According to the Mansab and the Bāsahl themselves, when 'Umar came to Ḥurēiḍah, Sahl voluntarily gave up

his post as the Shāikh of the village at the time. This was done in recognition of 'Umar's superior status. At the time, there was only one mosque in Ḥurēidah -- that of the Bāsahl -- and 'Umar used to preach and lead prayers in it. Ever since, a special relationship has existed between the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl. The mythical abdication of Bāsahl provides a charter for the inferior religious status of the Bāsahl in relation to the 'Attās. On the other hand Sahl was recognised by 'Umar as a Shāikh and the religious status of his descendants as Mashāyikh has been accepted and emphasised ever since. Thus every year the last religious ceremony of Ramaḍān, takes place in the Bāsahl mosque -- after the same ceremony has taken place in 'Umar's shrine. The ceremony at Bāsahl's mosque is important because it ends the holy month of Ramaḍān and heralds the 'Īd festival. But most important, the ceremony re-affirms the religious status of both the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl, by invoking the memories of their respective ancestors. The status of Bāsahl is also recognised by the fact that the 'Aṭṭās "officially" visit them during the 'Īd, to "pay their respects". This is important because all other groups visit the 'Aṭṭās at this occasion, without the latter reciprocating. The Bāsahl are thus an exception and the 'Aṭṭās visit is a recognition of their religious status which the other groups do not have.

The Bāsahl, as I have pointed out earlier, are a small corporate group with an informal political leader.

They are a stock group with a nodal ancestor and a genealogical framework which regulates their marriage and conceptualises their unity and cohesion. But unlike the 'Aṭṭās, the Bāsahl have a significantly large percentage of marriage with a neighbouring lineage of the Ja'da tribe. The reasons for this are:- (a) the Bāsahl as Mashāyikh and the Ja'da as Gabā'il, belong to the same stratum and can therefore intermarry; (b) the Bāsahl as a small, numerically weak group, intermarry with the powerful tribal lineage in order to consolidate their position within Ḥurēiḍah. This was important in the traditional political system because the tribes monopolised the use of rifles. (c) A number of Bāsahl owned pieces of land in the area of the lineage; recognition of ownership and protection of the land, was only possible with the consent and good will of the lineage concerned.

The Bāsahl are mostly farmers relying heavily on migration and remittances. Their leader is the leading shopkeeper of the village. He is a member of the Village Council, but cannot do much because of the 'Aṭṭās control of the Council. But as an important man in the village, he uses his position to extend his leadership over other groups in the village. The political role of the Bāsahl leader is important for two reasons:- (a) the Bāsahl have lost their religious influence, and their leader is now trying to reinforce their position by extending his political influence; (b) in the present political context of Ḥurēiḍah, non-'Aṭṭās do form

into a wider political 'block' in specific situations, and the Bāsahl leader is attempting to become the leader of this new block. This will be discussed in the chapter on the political system.

3. THE GABĀ'IL (JA'DA AND OTHERS).

Of the four Gabā'il settlements in Ḥurēiḍah, two are lineages in the segmentary structure of the Ja'da tribe which occupies the area just outside Ḥurēiḍah. The other two settlements are isolated lineages with distant connections to two separate tribes in other parts of the country. It will be obvious that these four units form a category and not one corporate group. In fact each settlement is a corporate group and in the past was a separate political unit. The two Ja'da lineages are drawn into the larger genealogical framework of the tribe and in the past this was important in regulating their political and kinship relations. Each of the other two lineages has its own genealogical framework which identifies it as a separate stock group and regulates its marriage and political relations.

The political and ideological system in which members of the Gabā'il groups had specific roles, has now become extinct. The traditional role and attributes of the Gabā'il which have already been described, has become dysfunction-alised under the new political system and the encroaching ideology of nationalism. The Gabā'il welcome the fact that

they no longer fear the religious powers of the 'Attās and Bāsahl as they did in the past, but at the same time bemoan their loss of political power and complain that they have become unarmed and as "weak" (da'īf) as the Masakīn. Unlike the 'Attās who have gained control of the new instruments of political power, the Gabā'il have lost their traditional power, without acquiring any new power in the present system. Similarly they have not acquired a new distinct economic or religious role. As a result, they have now become a collection of lineages without distinguishing characteristics apart from their descent connections.

The four units no longer have headmen to settle their internal disputes, but rely on the courts to do this. They have no influence on the Central Government institutions and although come under the jurisdiction of the Village Council, have no representatives on it. Because of this and because the four settlements are separate entities, the Gabā'il are politically weak and have not formed into one group with a strong leader.

The genealogical framework of each of the settlements gives each of the units cohesion and unity and at the same time regulates its marriages. The larger framework of the Ja'da tribe is important only to the extent that marriage outside the two Ja'da lineages is preferred within the tribe. Thus because there is no larger genealogical framework to include the four settlements, the division between

the units is more pronounced and expressed in the spacial separation. Given this inherent cleavage amongst the Gabā'il and the lack of political power, it is difficult to see how they can form into one larger corporate group. But it is possible for the Gabā'il to be part of a wider political alignment -- a block -- within Ḥurēiḍah as I will demonstrate later.

4. THE HIRTHĀN (OF THE MASAKĪN).

Of the three Masakīn occupational groups, the Ḥirthān (agriculturists), are the only people engaged in the dignified occupation of agriculture and the only indigenous people of Ḥurēiḍah. They are considered as the "professional" agriculturists -- the experts on the detailed problems of agriculture and the involved customs pertaining to the rights and duties in the distribution of water by the complicated canal system. They are also considered to be the original owners of a large part of Ḥurēiḍah's building land and cultivated plots. Because of these attributes they have a higher rank amongst the Masakīn occupational groups. The 'Aṭṭās refer to them as "ahl al-bilād" (the people of the town) in contrast to the Akhdām and Subyān. This is a recognition of the fact that they are autochthonous and are therefore accorded some respect.

The Ḥirthān are made up of 13 patronymic groups varying in size from 4 people to 67 people. The patronymic

groups are genealogically unconnected and therefore have no framework to conceptualise their unity. Nevertheless, the Ḥirṭhān have a strong preference for marrying within and between their patronymic groups. In general they do not allow their women to be married by Akhdām and Subyān, primarily because they consider the latter two groups have a lower status! Since Ḥirṭhān patronymic groups are stable and have been in Ḥurēidah for a long time, intermarriage between their patronymic groups has strengthened the ties between them and compensated for the absence of a genealogical framework. This explains why in certain political situations, this occupational category acts corporately and has an informal leader.

When the first Village Council was set up in 1949, the 'Aṭṭās recommended a Ḥirṭhān member to be appointed in the Council. Ever since, the Ḥirṭhān have had an informal leader and in one memorable crisis,¹ they acted corporately against the 'Aṭṭās. Their leader then resigned and has remained outside the Council to the present. He has now patched up his quarrel by becoming an informal clerk to the 'Aṭṭās President of the Council. In this way he has kept himself near to the centre of power and is thereby able to discharge his function as leader of the Ḥirṭhān and to look after their interests.

1. See case history, pp. 255. Chapter VII.

Most of the Ḥirṭhān are still farmers and like other people supplement their income by migration. However, there are a few Ḥirṭhān who now take up manual labouring during the drought period.

5. THE AKHDĀM (OF THE MASAKĪN)

They are made up of a large number of patronymic groups (45) varying in size from a single elementary family, to a group with 46 people. A number of the larger groups have been in Ḥurēidah for a 'long time', but the rest have moved in from other parts of the country within the last forty years. They came to Ḥurēidah in search of "peace and work" (amān wa shughul).

The older patronymic groups of the Akhdām are engaged in the traditional hereditary occupations such as carpentry, smithing, auctioneering, masonry, lime making etc. These occupations are hereditary to particular groups and are handed down from father to son. But since the economy was (and still is) small and could not support a proliferation of these occupations, the people from such patronymic groups migrated to other villages as the groups became larger. Another process is that the group would break up, with one part continuing the occupation and the other becoming labourers and water drawers, and ultimately migrate. In this way the size of these groups and occupations was confined. However it is amongst the manual labourers (agricultural and

building), water carriers and servants in the houses, that mobility was high. Such people migrated to the main port on the coast as porters during the drought period. It is also as labourers that new migrants came to Ḥurēiḍah. This is correlated with the hey days of India and Indonesia, between the two World Wars, when a number of 'Aṭṭās families became rich in those countries and sent to Ḥurēiḍah a lot of money. Huge houses and mosques were built, agriculture was intensified and a lot of food and luxury goods imported. Hence a large labour force was required and many Akhdām came to Ḥurēiḍah at this time. A number of 'Aṭṭās families actually imported servants from India at the time. After the setting up of the Qu'āiti State in 1940, some freed slaves joined this group -- a few were from Ḥurēiḍah itself, but most of them came from other villages.

The Akhdām are thus made up of a large number of separate individual families and small patronymic groups. 75% of these are recent migrants while the remainder belong to older groups engaged in crafts occupations. However the most important feature of this group is that they are all engaged in the sale of service which is considered to be undignified. They perform a specialised but important function in the economy and in the past were extremely dependent on the higher groups for their livelihood.

Since the end of the War, one of the most important economic changes has been the migration of people to nearby

Arab countries. By migrating and sending back remittances, many Akhdām have been able to buy plots of farms and build houses. The traditional attribute of the Akhdām that they did not own farms but specialised in working for others has thus been breaking down. But most important the Akhdām are no longer absolutely dependent on the higher groups for their livelihood, since they can now easily migrate for alternative sources of employment.

The Akhdām are the third largest group in terms of numbers. But because, (a) they have no genealogical framework to conceptualise their unity, (b) they are not and cannot be organised as an economic corporate group, and (c) they are highly mobile -- because of these factors, they are not a corporate group in any sense. Furthermore, because of their structure, the marriage pattern has a different effect on them than, for instance, the 'Aṭṭās who are one stock group. This problem is discussed in the next chapter.

When the first Village Council was set up, a member of the old patronymic groups was appointed to the Council. But it is obvious that the member was in no sense a 'leader' of the Akhdām since they are a category with no cohesion or any sense of corporateness. The 'Aṭṭās President realises the importance of this and has handpicked two members from the Akhdām. Since they do not represent any group, they are more likely to fall under his control than for instance the Hirṭhān member. However, the Akhdām as a low ranking 'group'

and at the lower end of the economic ladder, are more receptive to Nationalist ideas and can participate in wider and new political alignments within the village.¹ For instance in the conflict between the Ḥirṭhān and the 'Aṭṭās some of the Akhdām joined the Ḥirṭhān (the rest of the Akhdām morally supported them). Thus although the Akhdām are not a corporate group, there were situations in 1962-63, when they and the Subyān (as well as other non-'Aṭṭās) became opposed, as one 'block', to the 'Aṭṭās.

6. THE SUBYĀN (OF THE MASAKĪN).

The Subyān are also a collection of patronymic groups (6) of varying sizes (6 to 70 people) some having been earlier in Ḥurēiḍah than others. As an occupational category performing "ceremonial services" they have the lowest position in the hierarchy. Besides the ceremonial services, they are also occupied in many menial tasks, -- as labourers, water carriers, transporters of sand and stone by donkeys etc. Like other groups they also migrate to supplement their incomes and are therefore no longer economically dependent on higher groups. In fact some have taken to shop-keeping as a regular occupation, and a few young men now refuse to carry out ceremonial services for anyone.

Like the Akhdām, they are not a corporate group and have no genealogical framework to conceptualise their unity.

VII

1. See chapter on Political Organisation for a fuller discussion of this problem.

But unlike the Akhdām, none of the Subyān is a member of the Village Council. Because of this their small number, and their very low rank in the hierarchy, the Subyān have no political power at all in the village.

I have so far shown that (a) there is a social hierarchy in Ḥurēiḍah; (b) there are a number of frameworks which confer rank and status on the groups, and (c) that political, economic and ideological changes in the last two decades have altered some of the basic attributes of the groups and have created a discrepancy between the idealised picture of the social hierarchy and the actual reality of 1962-63. It is important therefore to recapitulate, in general terms, (b) and (c) since later chapters analyse them in greater detail.

In Ḥurēiḍah, and in Ḥaḍramaut at large, people are placed into three basic strata within a framework ancestry. The 'Aḥḥās, as descendants of the Prophet, belong to the Sādah stratum. Because of their ancestry, they have the highest descent status. The Bāsahl and Ja'da groups belong to the second stratum of Mashāyikh-Gabā'il. Because the Bāsahl and Ja'da are the descendants of specific apical ancestors (Shaikh for the Bāsahl, and Ja'ēdy, the ancestor of the tribe for the Ja'da) and ultimately the "children of Qaḥtān", their ancestry is less noble than that of the line of the Prophet. Hence their descent status is second to that

of the 'Atṭās. The Ḥirṭhān, Akhdām and Subyān on the other hand, are neither the descendants of the first nor of the second line of ancestry. Because of this, they are, (in terms of ancestry) a residual category with "no ancestry" and therefore no "descent status". Hence their stratum (the Masakīn) has the lowest status.

There is also a religious framework which confers status on groups. Within this framework, ascriptive status is conferred on two groups only -- the descendants of the Prophet, and those of past and reputed Mashāyikh. One is higher than the other in line with their respective descent status. The rest of the groups have no religious status, although individuals may achieve recognition because of their piety.

Political power was another framework which ascribed status to groups. In the wider context of Ḥaḍramaut, Sādah, Mashāyikh and Gabā'il groups, all held political power in their respective villages. Thus only the Masakīn groups were Du'fā (Sg. Ḍa'īf -- weak) politically. Nowhere in the country did they hold political power. In the context of Ḥurēidah, only the 'Atṭās and Ja'da held political power in the traditional political system. Today only the 'Atṭās control the Village Council.

Finally there is the economic framework which divided economic activities into "dignified" and "undignified" categories. Within Ḥurēidah's economic activities,

farming one's own plot and doing one's own odd job or helping someone else -- these were considered to be "dignified" occupations. On the other hand, activities involving the sale of service and production of non-edible goods for sale, these were "undignified" occupations. The latter were entirely done by the Akhdām and Subyān. The evaluation of occupations is also the basis for ranking the Masakīn occupational categories, since they have no descent status and cannot be ranked by the descent framework. Most important however, this broad division of labour eliminated competition and made co-operation between the higher and lower groups necessary. This made the lower groups economically dependent on the higher groups.

These main features of the stratification system means that there is a "clustering of statuses"¹ or summation of roles within each group of the social hierarchy. Whether this is a caste system or not is irrelevant at this stage, but it is important to realise that these features pertain to an idealised picture of the social hierarchy which has undergone significant changes.

Firstly, the descent framework is being vigorously questioned by a vocal group of young men. Nationalism, which is an important force in the country at present, specifically preaches against such ranking and some people in Ḥurēidah

1. Frederick Barth uses this phrase to describe the system of social stratification in Swat. See Leach 1960.

publicly disavow the importance and ranking of ancestry. The slogan of "equality" is specifically used to disapprove of ranking.

Secondly the encroaching ideology of Nationalism, the experience of the migrants (to nearby and distant countries) and the increase in education and the secular tendency of the Qu'āiti State, has tended to reduce the importance of "religious and spiritual influence" of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl. People now question the very concept of ascriptive religious status (and the power inherent in it). This is not to say that people are questioning Islam as a religion. It means that people have become more 'secular' in their attitudes and that many of them no longer regard any 'Aṭṭās or any Bāsahl as possessors of barakah or hatf. It means that now there is a different interpretation of certain aspects of Islām. This is inherent in the spread of Nationalism in which many important aspects of Islam are given a new interpretation.¹ This tendency to secular attitudes, is shown in the protest made by some people in not participating in the ritual enactment of the social hierarchy at the mosque (see pp. 53).

Thirdly, recent political changes have introduced a new system of judicial and administrative structures to supersede the old political system which vested political

1. See H.Z. Nuseibeh, "The Ideas of Arab Nationalism", 1956, pp.165-173.

power on the 'Aṭṭās and Gabā'il. This change has given the 'Aṭṭās a new form of political power locally, whilst the Gabā'il have become powerless. At the same time the new system has created new avenues of power in which all can participate, with the inherent assumption that all have a legal equality.

Fourthly, some economic changes and the large scale migration have removed the structural dependence of the lower groups. Migration to nearby countries is being increasingly used as an alternative source of employment, not only by the lower groups, but by all. This and some of the economic changes in Ḥurēidah has begun to change the evaluation and categorisation of occupations. The following table illustrates this clearly:-

TABLE C: TYPES OF OCCUPATIONS OF THE DIFFERENT GROUPS HELD

BY HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Key:

- (a) No Work.¹ (b) Owner Farmer.² (c) Share Farmer.
 (d) Scholar.³ (e) Shopkeeper; Petty Trader.
 (f) Craft: Occupation. (g) New Skills. (h) Manual Labour.⁵
 (i) Government Employee. (j) Water Carrier. (k) Absent
 (l) Servant

Name of Group(a)	in %										
	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)	(h)	(i)	(j)	(k)	(l)
1. 'Aṭṭās	9.2	-	5.3	7.6	3.1	0.8	0.8	5.3	-	28.2	-
2. Bāsah1	11.1	-	-	5.5	-	5.6	5.6	-	-	11.1	-
3. Ja'da & Others ⁶	6.5	-	3.2	3.2	-	-	9.7	-	-	12.9	-
4. Hīrthān	19	-	-	7.2	-	-	11.9	2.4	-	11.9	-
5. Akhdām	7.5	16.25	-	6.25	17.5	2.5	38.75	1.25	3.75	3.75	3.75
6. Subyān	-	-	-	20.8	-	-	25	-	4.1	-	29*

1. Such households are mostly headed by women or old men. They depend on remittances from younger members, or on their farms being worked by other people - mostly relatives.

2. Figures in this and the Share Farmer column are mostly of the same people who carry on other occupations. This is especially the case with the Akhdām and Subyān to whom farming is a secondary occupation. Share farming means working other people's farms and sharing the produce.

3. Scholars depend on "charity" from abroad as their main income.

4. Mechanical skills such as driving and running a grinding mill.

5. Heads of Households who were away working at the time of the survey.

6. Figures are based on one Gabā'il settlement and those Gabā'il living in the main village.

* Ceremonial Service.

Ideological and structural politico-economic changes have thus affected Ḥurēiḍah's hierarchy. This will be discussed in some detail later. But before discussing change, it is necessary first to analyse various aspects of inter-group relationship, mobility and the deeper structural differences between the groups in the system of stratification.

CHAPTER IV

ANCESTRY, MARRIAGE AND STRATIFICATION

I have so far described various aspects of the social hierarchy in Ḥurēidah, emphasising the different attributes ascribed to each group. In this chapter, I shall analyse the various aspects of the descent framework -- the importance of ancestry as a criterion of ranking, the role of the genealogical framework and the function of the marriage pattern. I shall also discuss the question of mobility, and conclude the chapter by restating the main features of the stratification system which have been implicitly or explicitly indicated in these last two chapters.

1. The Descent Framework.

Ancestry, nasab, is used here to mean both the apical and the ultimate ancestor of a corporate descent group. The 'Aṭṭās for instance are a corporate descent group with 'Umar as their apical ancestor and the Prophet as their ultimate ancestor. The Ḥirṭhān on the other hand, are not a corporate descent group. As an occupational category (although I refer to them as a group in a general sense of the word) they do not have a genealogical framework and can therefore have neither an apical nor an ultimate ancestor. In this sense, the Ḥirṭhān have no 'ancestry' and are a residual category.

In general then, the people of the Ḥaḍramaut are divided into two broad categories -- those who have an

ancestry i.e. those in the first and second strata, and those who do not -- i.e. the residual category in the third stratum. Those who do have an ancestry are divided, at the highest level, into the children of 'Adnān (the ancestor of the Northern Arabs), and the children of Qaḥṭān (the ancestor of Southern Arabs).¹ The Prophet is the descendant of 'Adnān, and his descendants in Ḥaḍramaut -- the Sādah -- are therefore Northern Arabs. Qaḥṭān is the ancestor of Southern Arabs who inhabit the Yemen and the whole of Southern Arabia. In Ḥaḍramaut, the different Gabā'il tribes and Mashāyikh Houses are vaguely considered to be the descendants of Qaḥṭān. The Sādah trace their descent through various stages to the Prophet and through him to 'Adnān. This genealogical 'tree', shijrat-al-nasab, is carefully recorded by genealogical experts. Each Saiyid House in Ḥaḍramaut traces its recorded genealogy first to its apical ancestor, then to the ancestor of all Ḥaḍrami Sādah (al-Muhājir, the Emigrant) and later to 'Adnān through various links. Similarly, the Mashāyikh and Gabā'il trace their descent through various links to their ultimate ancestor Qaḥṭān. But unlike the Sādah, the genealogies of the Mashāyikh and Gabā'il (especially the latter) are not well recorded, and at best each can trace its descent to its apical ancestor -- the founder Shāikh of a House or the

1. All the Arabs are ultimately divided into these two 'branches'. See R.A. Nicholson, p.xviii, 1962. In Ḥaḍramaut this geographical and historical division is not as important as the sociological differences between the representatives of the two branches.

ancestor of a tribe. Between this level and Qaḥṭān very little is known. The difference between the Sādah and the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il, is partly due to historical factors, but it is important here because of its sociological significance.

The Sādah in Ḥaḍramaut always stress the Prophet as their ultimate ancestor. Occasionally they trace their descent beyond the Prophet to 'Adnān and even further back to Adam and Eve. But it is the Prophet who is the ultimate focus of their ancestry. The choice of emphasising the Prophet and not 'Adnān^{or} (Adam and Eve for that matter) is important and is done for obvious reasons. Firstly, the Prophet has a unique spiritual status in that he was chosen by God before Creation. (See Ch. II). Secondly the Prophet is the fountain of Islām. Thirdly his descendants are limited to two lines only (those of his grandsons Hassan and Husēin) while the descendants of 'Adnān are inclusive of all the Northern Arabs.

When the ancestor of the Ḥadrami Sādah -- Ahmad bin 'Īsa -- came to Ḥaḍramaut from Basra (in Iraq) in 952 A.D.¹, his claim to be the descendant of the Prophet was not at first recognised. It was necessary in fact for his claim to be attested in Basra in front of Ḥaḍrami witnesses. But according to al-Bakary³ even after the claim had been attested, some leading Ḥaḍrami scholars at the time did not

1. Serjeant, R.B. 1957.

2. Ibid.

3. Al-Bakary S. Vol. I, 1956 (3rd edition).

accept the claim. Since then the Sādah have meticulously recorded their genealogies. This has made mobility into or out of their stratum very difficult.

The status of Mashāyikh and Gabā'il depends primarily on tracing their descent to their apical ancestors. The Mashāyikh trace their descent up to the founding Shāikh of the particular Mashāyikh House. In general, Mashāyikh Houses, especially the ruling family of each House, keep recorded genealogies of their ancestry back to the eponymous Shāikh. Beyond this point records are not kept. Mashāyikh Houses also have scholars, but this limited recording of their genealogies is an expression of their inferior status in relation to the Sādah. However such records validate their status as descendants of particular Shāikh.

The Gabā'il also have status by virtue of being descendants of particular ancestors. But the Gabā'il's status is not so much validated by producing 'recorded genealogies' as by being members of recognised tribes with a segmentary structures. Until recently tribes were independent political entities monopolising the use of firearms. By being a member of such tribal entity --- however recruited --- a man is automatically the descendant of the tribal ancestor and is fitted within its segmentary structure. Briefly then, the genealogy of a tribesman follows a segmentary structure to the ancestor of the tribe. From this stage upward, there is a vague connection with past groupings of tribes such as Kindah, Ḥimyar, and then ultimately with Qaḥṭān. As tribesmen

are in general considered to be 'primitive', their genealogies are not recorded. The status of a Gabā'il is therefore validated by political power i.e. by being members of a tribal political entity.

In the context of Ḥurēiḍah, these different aspects of ancestry have important structural implications. One of the Mansabs of Ḥurēiḍah is the local historian and the expert on nasab -- ancestry. He has written an unpublished history of Ḥurēiḍah and his father wrote an essay on the ancestry of the various groups of people of Ḥaḍramaut. The Mansab keeps a book in which an elaborate genealogy of all the 'Aṭṭās is kept (those who have gone overseas and settled there are also partially recorded). The Masakīn have no "ancestry" but when you press for their genealogy, they refer you to the "books" in the Mansab's library. Similarly the Gabā'il groups who do not belong to the nearby Ja'da tribe refer you to the Mansab for proof that they belong to the larger tribes away from Ḥurēiḍah. Thus the 'ilm (knowledge) and expertise of the Mansab is used to validate the claim to status of the 'Aṭṭās as well as that of other groups in Ḥurēiḍah.

The Bāsahl are a very small group in Ḥurēiḍah. In the recent past they have not produced any outstanding scholars to support their religious status; they themselves acknowledge that this is so. In addition their genealogy is unwritten and a few steps nearer their ancestor are unknown.

Yet they have maintained their status as Mashāyikh (which confers both religious and descent status). The reason for this is that the 'Aṭṭās have recognised this status by (a) including it in the local 'history', and (b) emphasising it in the various local rituals. The Gabā'il groups on the other hand, have maintained their status primarily by remaining as separate political entities, and enforcing their "tribal status" by political power. The two groups who belong to the Ja'da tribe are recognised as being parts of its segmentary structure; the other two groups have to explain their separateness by historical "proof" (from the Mansab) that they are part of a tribal segmentary structure which is geographically removed from Ḥurēiḍah.

Outside this descent framework are the Masakīn. The three 'groups' in this stratum are, as I have pointed out, occupational groups. Their ranking is primarily based on the evaluation scale of their ascriptive occupations. However, the Ḥirthān -- the top group -- tend to equate this ranking with differences in "descent status" between the Masakīn. On this basis they would not allow their daughters to be married by Akhdām and Subyān. On the other hand between the latter two groups there is intermarriage both ways although their respective occupations have different status. When a few years ago the Akhdām tried to stop giving their daughters to the Subyān, on the grounds that the latter were "inferior in ancestry", there was a big outcry in Ḥurēiḍah especially

from the Subyān. The attempt failed for various reasons. But the important point here is that amongst the Masakīn in general, occupation is the only criterion for ranking since they have no "ancestry". The higher status of the Ḥirthān is derived from their length of stay, their corporateness and their occupation and not from any "descent status" in spite of their claim. The three groups do not have descent status, since they are (a) a residual category outside the accepted general framework of ancestry and (b) they are occupational groups and in no sense are they descent groups.

2. The Role of the Genealogical Framework.

The differences in the various aspects of ancestry between the groups in the first and second strata i.e. those groups who have an ancestry, and between them and the Masakīn groups in the third stratum i.e. those who do not have an ancestry, is primarily an expression of the different roles of the groups within the system of stratification. This is shown clearly in the different forms of genealogical frameworks in the first and second strata, and in the absence of such a framework amongst the Masakīn.

The 'Aṭṭās are a stock group with 'Umar as their nodal ancestor. As such, the 'Aṭṭās have a genealogical framework with which they conceptualise their unity and which regulates their marriage as well as providing a framework for their political organisation. Although the 'Aṭṭās House

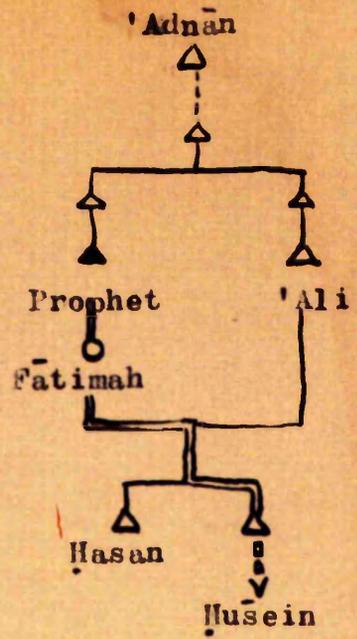
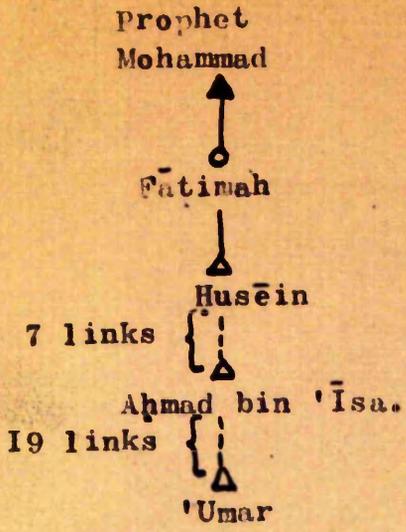
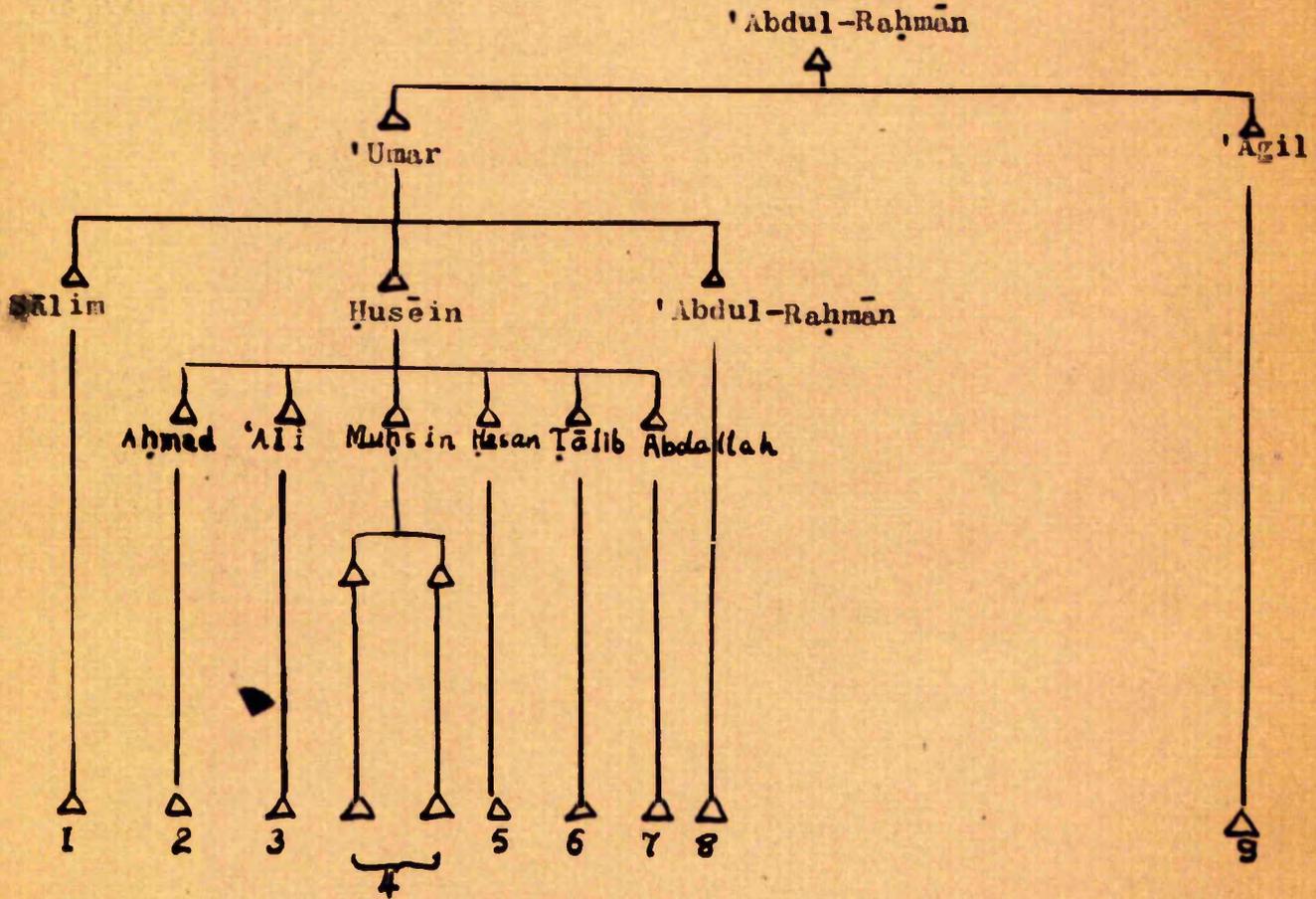


Diagram 1.



Genealogy of the 'Attas: from 'Umar to the Prohet from 'Umar downwards.

Diagram 2.

The Lineage of the Mansabs.

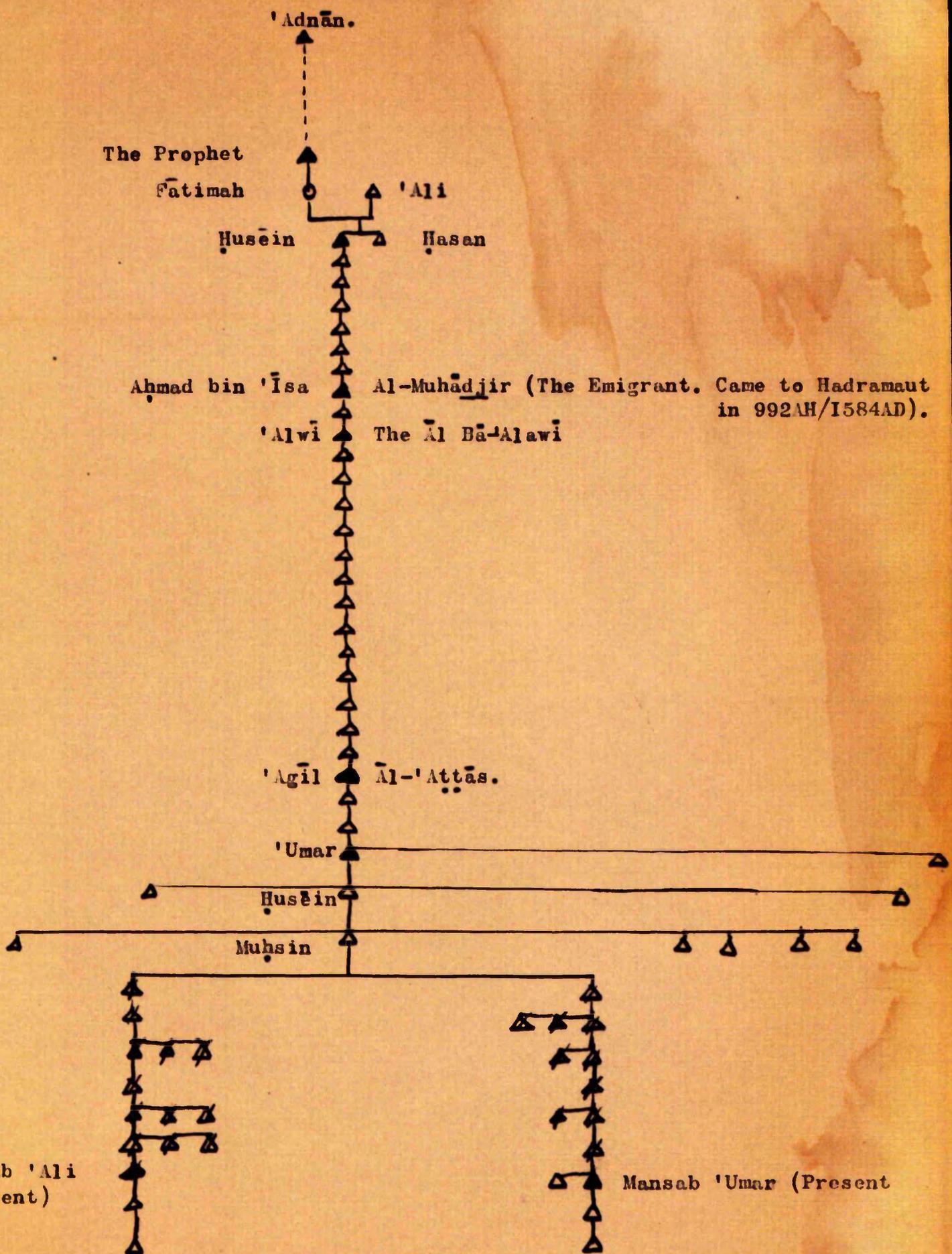
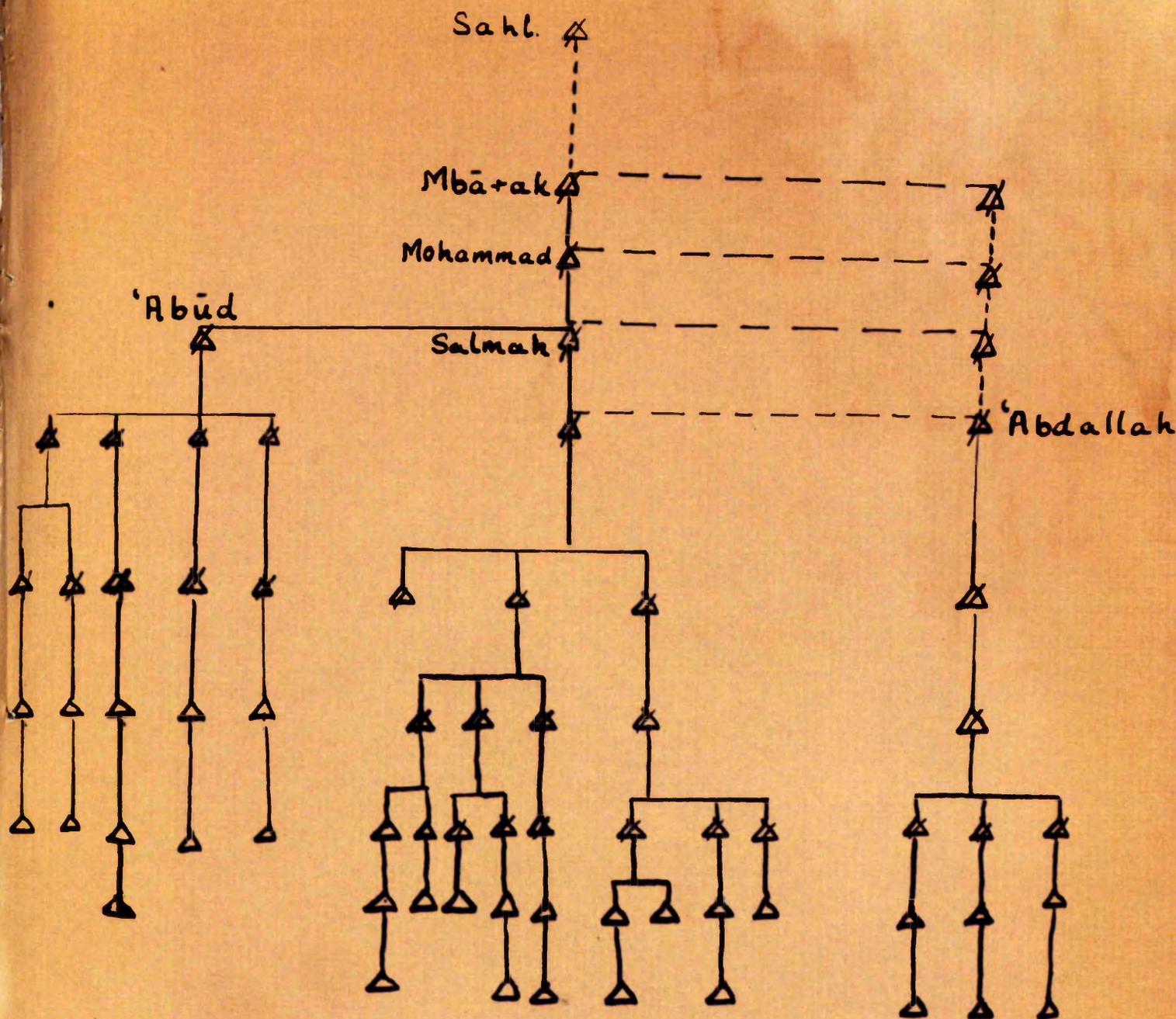


Diagram 3.

is divided into a number of lineages, all trace their descent back to 'Umar, through individual ancestors. Since the whole genealogy has been carefully recorded from 'Umar downwards, the links in the genealogy between a household of today and 'Umar, are those of actual individuals. Such links need not be points of bifurcation, dividing and joining groups, although in some cases they are (see diagrams 1,2,3). The "genealogical tree" of the 'Aṭṭās is in fact an "ideal" genealogy, in which even those people who have not borne any children are recorded, although children who die young and women tend to be ignored. This is not to say that the 'Aṭṭās "tree" has recorded all 'Aṭṭās who have been born in Ḥurēiḍah since 'Umar, or that it is a true historical statement. This problem is not relevant here. What is important here is that the given 'Aṭṭās "tree" i.e. the genealogical framework, is in the form in which people trace their descent through ancestors who in many cases are not points of bifurcation. From 'Umar upwards, the "tree" has the same form. There is a long single line of names of ancestors going back to the ultimate ancestor -- the Prophet. These ancestors may or may not form points of bifurcation in the larger group of Ḥaḍrami Sādah or of the still larger group, of all the descendants of the Prophet. But for the purpose of this discussion it is the features of the lower "tree" i.e. from 'Umar downwards which are important.

The "tree" (see Diagram 4) of the Bāsahl exhibits

GENEALOGY OF THE BASAHL HOUSE.



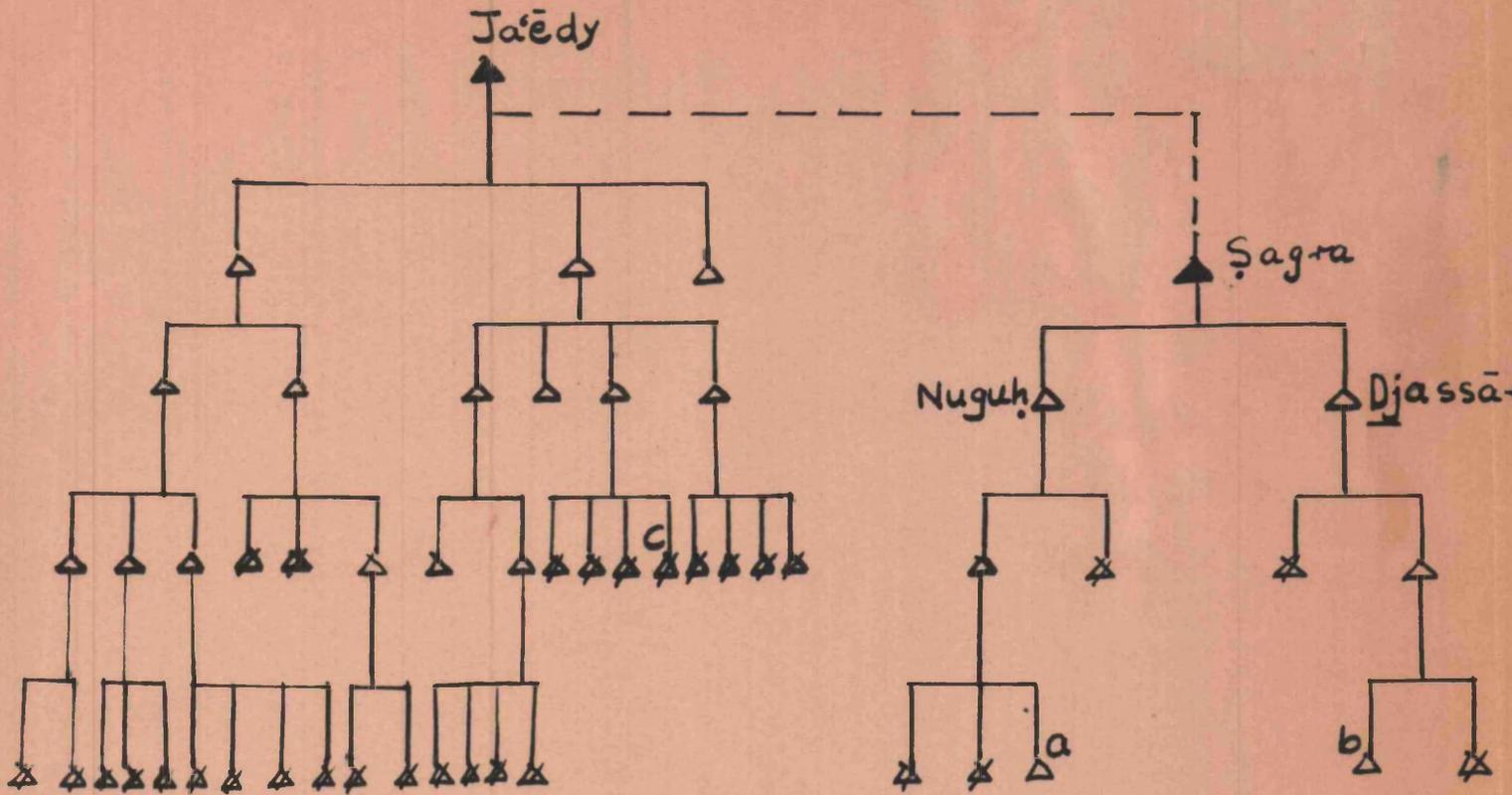
- △ Dead.
- △ Living
- - - Link
- ⋮ Unknown

Diagram

the same features, namely that people trace their descent through ancestors who may or may not be meeting points for other groups of the Bāsahl. The Bāsahl are divided into two lineages, one of which contains only one household while the rest of the living Bāsahl belong to the other lineage. But before these two lineages meet in the "tree", they trace their descent through ancestors who are not meeting points for other groups. From where the two lineages meet to the nodal ancestor -- Sahl -- the linking ancestors are not points of bifurcation. About two to three steps before Sahl, the names of the ancestors have been forgotten which suggest that (a) the Bāsahl have not produced any scholars since Sāhl to record their genealogy, and (b) the genealogy as a whole is more elastic than that of the 'Aṭṭās. Nevertheless, the "trees" of both the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl have the same basic features and form (~~see Diagram~~).

The genealogy of the Gabā'il groups, especially that of the Ja'da, has a different structure. Firstly, every group is a part of the segmentary structure of the tribe as a whole and secondly, even within the local territorial unit, such as the two groups in Ḥurēiḍah, their genealogies follow a markedly segmented pattern. The tree of the Gabā'il groups, has the 'nesting' feature of a characteristic segmentary structure, in contrast to the lineal feature of Bāsahl and 'Aṭṭās 'trees'.

GENEALOGY OF THE JA'IDA TRIBE.



△ Lineage segments each forming a village or a settlement of varying size, dispersed over a large part of 'Amd valley.

--- Link Unknown.

C Settlement C in Hutēidah.

a + b = Different segments making up settlement A in Hutēidah.

The three groups of the Masakīn are, as has been stated before, in no way descent groups and therefore are not enclosed in a genealogical framework. Each category is made up of a number of unconnected patronymic groups with a separate name. Generally the patronymic groups have very shallow generational depth, correlated with their length of stay in Ḥurēiḍah. Some such patronymic groups especially those of the Ḥirthān, have segmented into smaller segments and in most such cases, the connecting genealogical link between them have been forgotten and only the common name remains. The number of patronymic groups in any Masakīn substratum, can increase or decrease in response to the economic conditions of Ḥurēiḍah at any given point of time. Because these are open categories, especially the Akhdām and Subyān, new groups can come into the village and attach themselves to these categories. Recently some freed slaves from other parts of the country came into Ḥurēiḍah and attached themselves to the Akhdām category. Thus none of the three Masakīn categories has a genealogical framework because by definition categories cannot have such frameworks and because of the functional necessity for open categories at this level of the social hierarchy. The patronymic groups within the categories vary in size and generational depth as a necessary corollary to this (see Table A^{p.109}).

The differences in the structure of genealogical frameworks of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl on the one hand and the Gabā'il groups on the other, is an expression of the different roles of the groups in the stratification system. Similarly the absence of such a framework amongst the Masakīn groups, is related to their specific role within the system. Both the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl are missionary groups, localised in one village and their status (religious and descent) depends very much on their claim to be descendants of particular ancestors. The 'Attās in particular, being the ruling group, the custodian of knowledge and religious tradition, need a genealogical and political framework which would maintain cohesion within the 'Aṭṭās House, and which could override any segmentary tendencies inherent in their House because of the strong patrilineal kinship system of the society. Thus although their House is divided into lineages at the third generation from 'Umar, no formal recognition is given to the segmentation below that level, except when the Mansab's office was divided in one of the lineages. Even the main lineage divisions are glossed over by the emphasis which people put on following a lineal chain of ancestors to 'Umar and ignoring the lineage framework. This is not to say that the lineage cleavage is not important. In fact it is specifically recognised in the traditional 'Aṭṭās Council by having a representative from each lineage. But precisely because the major lineages are recognised and

TABLE A: GENERATIONAL DEPTH AND GENEALOGICAL LINKS OF
MASAKĪN PATRONYMIC GROUPS

Name	No. of Patronymic Groups	Generational Depth ¹	Segments of Patronymic Group	Genealogical link between segments	Genealogical link between segments and the ancestor of a Patronymic group ²
<u>Hirthān</u>	1	10	2	Unknown	Unknown
	1	10	3	Known	Known
	1	7	2	Unknown	Unknown
	1	7	-	"	Known
	7	5	-	"	Unknown
	1	5	-	"	Known
	1	4	-	"	Unknown
	<u>Total</u>	<u>13</u>			
<u>Akhḍām</u>	1	8	-	Unknown	Known
	1	8	2	"	1 Known
	2	7	4	"	1 Unknown
	1	7	2	"	2 Known
	1	7	-	"	2 Unknown
	1	6	3	"	Known
	5	6	-	"	2 Unknown
	1	6	5	"	Known
	2	6	-	"	Unknown
	4	5	-	"	Unknown
	1	5	-	"	Known
	1	4	2	"	Unknown
	10	4	-	"	Unknown
	12	4	-	"	Known
	2	3	-	"	Unknown
<u>Total</u>	<u>45</u>				
<u>Subyān</u>	1	7	4	Unknown	1 Known
	1	7	-	"	3 Unknown
	1	6	2	"	Known
	1	5	2	"	1 Known
	2	5	-	"	1 Unknown
					1 Known
<u>Total</u>	<u>6</u>				

1. The known ascending and descending generations from Ego.
2. Many segments of patronymic groups cannot trace their descent to the ancestor of the group.

their names fixed, this minimises the recognition of groups of smaller order i.e. genealogical subdivision are not politically recognised. The basic feature of the 'Aṭṭās tree and that of the Bāsahl, is a function of maintaining political unity and ignoring the segmentary nature of the kinship system. Secondly the lineal nature of the 'trees', emphasises the link between a person and the ancestor of the whole stock group. The rituals that surround the nodal ancestor because of his historical and religious role, also emphasise the unity of the group and ignore its segmentary process. Thirdly, at the lowest level, the genealogies function to validate claims to property and inheritance, as well as regulating relationships between individuals i.e. they are 'working genealogies'.

The Gabā'il genealogical framework on the other hand is a typical segmentary structure encompassing all the groups of the tribe. Thus the Ja'da groups in Ḥurēiḍah are part of the structure of the whole tribe (see diagram 5^{p.106}). Similarly the two non-Ja'da groups insist in linking themselves to distant segments of their respective tribes. One of these tribes is on the caravan routes to the coast. The group in Ḥurēiḍah linked to it used to pass its territory without paying any toll and without fear of attack as a recognition of their common descent. As a result, the particular Gabā'il group in Ḥurēiḍah was heavily engaged in caravan transportation between the coast and Wādī 'Amd. Thus the wider

genealogical framework of the Gabā'il regulates relations between groups which are widely dispersed in place and time. The genealogy within the local territorial unit, such as the four groups in Ḥurēiḍah, function mainly to link the smaller segments within it. The ancestors within the genealogy are mainly points of bifurcation linking together groups of different orders. Only at the lowest level i.e. between Ego and the third or fourth generation, does the genealogy trace the actual descent of an individual, primarily for the purpose of inheritance. Thus the Gabā'il genealogy functions mainly to regulate political relations between groups of different orders. Within the localised unit, it regulates relations between its smaller segments and at a still lower level, it becomes a 'working genealogy' which prescribes behaviour between individuals and validates claims to inheritance and property. Unlike the genealogies of the 'Aḥḥās and Bāsahl that of the Gabā'il emphasises political division as well as ultimate unity. This is of course inherent in the segmentary nature of the genealogy and formed the basis of Gabā'il political organisation. Since the imposition of the Qu'āity Government however, the political aspect of the genealogy has lost its function, and the binding force inherent in this has been lost; (this is why the four Gabā'il units have become incorporated within the social unit of Ḥurēiḍah). But the genealogical framework of the Ja'da is still important in regulating marriage between

its groups as well as within the groups. Similarly the genealogies of the other two Gabā'il groups still continue to regulate their marriages and to function as working genealogies.

None of the three Masakīn groups has a genealogical framework, but each of the patronymic groups within its occupational category, has a genealogy of its own whatever its size, which varies in generational depth from three to ten generations (see Table A). Patronymic groups have working genealogies, which are essential for any group. However the absence of an encompassing genealogical framework for each of the occupational categories as well as for the Masakīn stratum as a whole, is an important correlation to the structural position and role of this stratum within the stratification system. It means that (a) since the Masakīn are not made of large corporate descent groups, they are excluded from the descent framework and thereby have no descent status; (b) their necessary lack of cohesion and unity implies their political weakness in the stratification system; (c) the specific economic role of the Masakīn groups, especially of the Akhdām and Subyān, necessitates their political weakness in order to maintain their dependence on the higher groups, and secondly such an economic role requires an open category which will increase and decrease in response to the economic conditions of the village; (d) given the traditional political system prevailing in Ḥurēidāh, it is difficult to see how

three cohesive and united Masakīn groups could have lived without competing for political power and refusing to perform the undignified economic tasks. Because of the position of the Masakīn groups in the stratification system and because of their specific economic role, they could not functionally be united into cohesive descent groups with genealogical framework to conceptualise their unity. However working genealogies are necessary for any group larger than an elementary family. Each of the Masakīn patronymic group has such a genealogy.

So far then we have a descent framework which confers ranked status on the different groups which have "ancestry". The Masakīn who are outside this framework are in a residual category and do not have descent status. Secondly the descent status of the higher groups are validated by claiming descent from particular ancestors ('Aṭṭās and Bāsahl) as well as by maintaining political independence of a tribal group (Ja'da). The former, especially the 'Aṭṭās, keep meticulous record of their genealogies in order to validate their claim to higher status. The latter on the other hand, control the use of physical force in order to maintain their political independence and 'tribal' status. Thirdly, the different roles of the groups is expressed by the different structures of their genealogical frameworks as well as by the lack of such a framework. The genealogies of 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl have predominantly lineal appearance in

order to emphasise cohesion and political unity appropriate to their respective roles in the society -- as the ruling group of Ḥurēiḍah in one case, and as missionary groups in both. The lineage structure of the Gabā'il is a highly segmentary one whose main function is to regulate political relation between groups. On the other hand, the fact that the three Masakīn categories do not have encompassing genealogical frameworks is a corollary of their lower status in the stratification system and their specific economic roles. We therefore have a stratification system in which different groups have ascribed roles and statuses which imply deeper structural differences between the groups than would appear at first.

One of the most important functions of the marriage pattern of Ḥurēiḍah is to maintain and emphasise these differences between the groups and ultimately to maintain the social hierarchy. Given the variations of the genealogies, a uniform marriage pattern applied to all the groups would have different effects at various levels of the social hierarchy. For this and other reasons, it is necessary at this point to discuss the marriage pattern of Ḥurēiḍah and its relation to the system of stratification.

3. Marriage Pattern and Stratification.

Although the Ḥaḍrami are Sunni of the Shāfi'i School, their marriage rules do not follow closely the religious prescription on this aspect of social activity. In general

marriage rules express the functional pre-requisites of the social structure, and social stratification is one of the most important aspects of this. In some cases religious arguments are used to support aspects of the marriage system, but in general the marriage system is regulated by other values and is outside the rules prescribed by the Shāfi'i School. Here however we are not concerned with the marriage system as a whole but with that aspect of it which is related to the social stratification.

Marriage in Ḥurēiḍah is polygamous, but in accordance with religious teachings a man cannot marry more than four wives at the same time. In 1962-63 there was no man with four wives, but there were a handful of men with two or three wives each. These were mostly rich men who could afford to maintain more than one wife. The two Mansabs for instance each had three wives all living in the same household. But there are also a large number of men who marry more than one wife consecutively. A man may marry another wife when his wife dies or when he divorces her. Of 312 heads of households in the main village, 42.6% had married more than once and some as many as six times. On the other hand, of the total marriages of the 312 heads of households, 41.3% ended in divorce. Thus polygamy and a high rate of divorce are two important features of the marriage system. Divorce severs some of the existing affinal ties, while polygamy creates new ones. These two features of the marriage

system indicate that in general affinal ties are weak and divorce is easy.

In theory marriage is the responsibility of the fathers of the two prospective spouses. A father arranges for his son's first marriage and should pay for everything.¹ The prospective spouses generally have very little say in their marriage. The bride is 'captured' when the ceremony of her marriage is half way through. She is then told of her marriage for the first time. The groom is sometimes consulted (as to the choice between two sisters for instance). But even after the marriage the father still maintains his responsibility for, and some authority over, his married son who remains in his father's house. The newly arrived wife also falls under the general responsibility of her husband's father since she becomes "his daughter".

A first marriage in general is an expensive business in which brideprice (jihāz) has to be paid, prestigious ceremonies and feasts made (walīmah), and ceremonial servants (Ṣabiy) paid. Ceremonies and feasts are made by both the groom's and bride's families. The paying and receiving of the brideprice is limited to the two families; no wider groups are involved on either side. The brideprice

1. At present most young men who migrate to work outside Ḥaḍramaut, pay their own bridewealth when they return to marry. The fathers however share the expenses of the marriage itself.

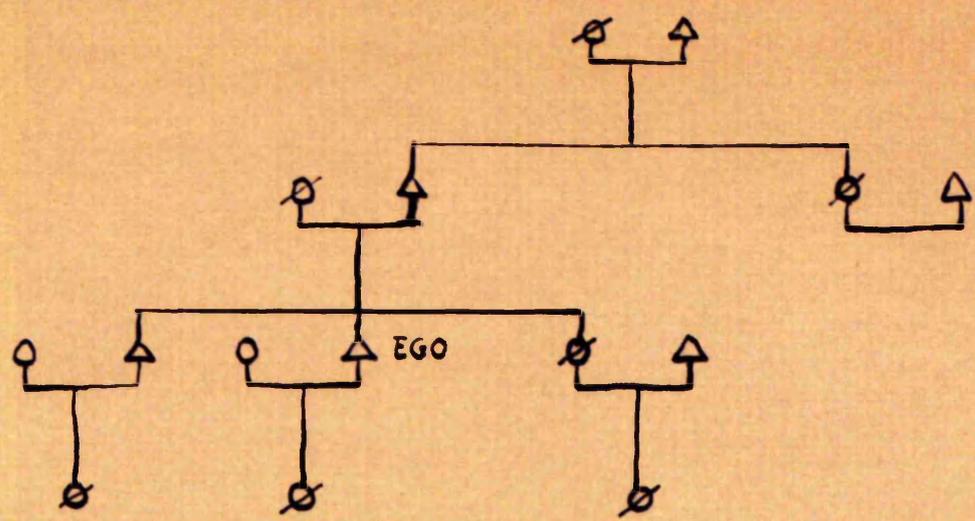
is thus a transaction between the two families of the prospective spouses, and symbolises the transference of certain rights (ḥaḳ) over the bride from one family to another. However it is important to note that although the bride acquires new rights from her marital status she still retains some rights in her natal family. As a wife she acquires a new status and becomes a member of her husband's family. She also acquires the right to inherit a share of his property. The husband on the other hand has exclusive sexual rights over his wife. The children belong to the husband's group and in case of divorce, the mother has partial responsibility and rights over the children until they reach the age of seven, when the father takes over completely. On the other hand, even as a wife she is still a member of her natal family. She inherits from her father and she can go back to her family at any time. Her father has certain authority over her in case of a dispute with her husband. He also has the responsibility of defending her against her husband in a dispute. The wife (zawjah) is thus at a point of overlapping responsibilities between her own family and that of her husband.

The bride nearly always goes to her husband's house to live, although there are rare exceptions of the reverse happening. If the husband comes from another village, contact between the two families is maintained at regular intervals by reciprocal visits. If the spouses are from the same town,

which is generally the case in Ḥurēidāh, contact between the two families is highly informal but with reciprocal visits being obligatory at specific occasions in the year. The husband thinks of his affines (a'mām) as being mainly members of the nuclear family of his wife, but affinal relations are sometimes extended to a wider group of relatives. They are most intense between the two families however and they are expressed by the terms wājib (obligation), and sharaf (honour). The fulfilment of obligations and the maintenance of honour is a duty of both sides. Affinal relationships encompass a wide range of activities such as mutual help, hospitality, and attendance at each others ceremonies, feasts and funerals. They also involve visiting (ziāra) on specific occasions in the year, the giving of symbolic gifts etc. Fulfilment of these obligations satisfies honour. Evasion of obligations is shameful to one party and an insult to the other and therefore a cause of strain in the affinal tie. But the most important cause of straining these ties revolves around the wife - either in the treatment she gets from her husband and his family, or in her failure to perform her duties and play her proper role. All important grounds for divorce centre on these questions.

Beyond the families of the two spouses, agnates of each are vaguely considered to be affines in a general sense (garabah); from such affines hospitality is expected and the rest is left to the individuals concerned. Because

Diagram 6 Prohibited spouses within the Descent Group.



Note : EGO is allowed to marry any other female within the Descent group other than those marked.

affinal ties are focussed on the families of the two spouses and do not involve the wider group in a general sense, marriage is essentially a contract between two families rather than between two wider kin groups. As a way of strengthening ties between groups or within a group, individual marriages are insignificant. Only a high percentage of such marriages can bring this about.

In exogamous marriage, all members of a group are prohibited as spouses and therefore the question of defining who can or cannot marry presents no problems. But where in-group marriage is preferred this is a problem and a precise definition of prohibited spouses is required. In the case of Ḥaḍrami society this is provided by the Shāfi'i School. The prohibited persons whom Ego cannot marry comprise a very narrow range of kin (see Diagram 6, p.119). Given any sizeable descent group, it should not be difficult for Ego to find spouses within the descent group. The number of prohibited spouses appear to be minimised precisely in order to encourage marriages within the group.

Outside the House, the lineage or patronymic group, the preference for in-group marriage involves more and more inclusive groups from the level of one kin group to the next until it reaches the limit of the widest kin group. In other words, outside the lineage, preference is for marriage within the maximal lineage, then within the clan, and ultimately within the tribe. In the case of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl, the

widest unit is the House. For the Gabā'il it is the tribe and for the Masakīn it is the patronymic group. Beyond this point marriage is preferred within the stratum -- between Sādah Houses, between Mashāyikh Houses, between Gabā'il tribes and between Masakīn patronymic groups. Thus endogamy moves outwards in circles to the widest point -- the stratum. Beyond this point, they are inter-strata marriages.

In-group marriage, i.e. marriage within the House, the lineage or patronymic group, is strongly preferred by all the groups. With the 'Aṭṭās the limit of the unit with first preference is the whole House in Ḥurēiḍah. Brideprice is uniformly set at the low rate of Shs. 70. For the 'Aṭṭās outside Ḥurēiḍah, brideprice is between Shs.200 and Shs.300, and for other Sādah Houses, the last preference within the stratum, it is anything up to Shs.1,000. Within the Bāsahl House, the first unit of preference, brideprice is between Shs.200 and Shs.300; between them and other Mashāyikh Houses, it rises to about Shs.500, and marriage with Gabā'il tribes, (the last preference within the stratum), the brideprice is about Shs.1,000. Amongst the Gabā'il, first preference is within the lineage (the local political unit) and the brideprice is between Shs.200 and Shs.400; within the clan it rises up to Shs.600 and within the tribe, it is about Shs. 1,000. Marriage with another tribe or Mashāyikh House (the last preference within the stratum) is slightly more expensive, the brideprice rising to Shs.1,500. The Masakīn demand

a brideprice of between Shs.200 to Shs.500 within the patronymic group -- the first unit of preference. Between one such group and another (the last unit of preference within the stratum -- generally within the occupation category) the brideprice is about Shs.1,000. Thus low brideprice is related to the preference for in-group marriage at different levels -- the lowest brideprice being for the most preferred marriages.

It is clear that the strong preference for in-group marriage (the order of preference varies with the order of the group) and the brideprice system are correlated with the structure of the genealogy of the group. Both the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl have uniform brideprice for their respective Houses which are considered as units for first preference. This means that internal cleavages within the units are not recognised and marriage is regulated specifically to cut across such cleavages. This is in line with the lineal character of the structures of their two genealogies in which total unity is emphasised. On the other hand preferences within the Ja'da tribe, differentiate between groups of different orders and thus emphasising unity within the small political unit, and the divisions between such groups. Primary unity of the lineage (the independent political unit), ultimate political unity of the tribe, and the segmentary divisions within it, are all recognised by the different orders of preference and their corresponding bride-

prices. Unlike the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl, the Ja'da pattern of marriage is in line with the strongly segmentary structure of their genealogical framework.

But amongst the Masakīn, there is no encompassing genealogical framework -- apart from that of the patronymic group -- which regulates marriage. Preference, as expressed by the brideprice, is only within the patronymic group. Outside this group, there is no other unit within which marriage is preferred and recognised by a fixed brideprice. The widest limit of marriages amongst the Masakīn is the stratum. Within the stratum, there is a tendency for marriages to follow the occupational categories -- especially amongst the Ḥirthān. But there is no explicit kinship rule which prescribes this, nor is there a descent framework and brideprice which recognises this tendency and regulates it on this line. The patronymic group is the only unit which regulates marriage amongst the Masakīn.

It is clear that the principle of preferred endogamous marriage is strong in the society, and that its uniform application in the social hierarchy will produce different effects at the various levels of the hierarchy. The significant factor here is the structure of the genealogical framework or the absence of such a framework. Thus amongst the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl, first preference covers the entire Houses and thus functions to cement the cohesion of the stock group and minimise internal divisions. The 'Aṭṭās especially, as a

ruling missionary group, necessarily need the cohesion and unity which in-group marriage provides. On the other hand, the Gabā'il segmentary political organisation necessitates cohesion and division at different levels within the wider unit of the tribe. Hence the different units of preference within the tribe. Within the Masakīn, preference is only within one small unit, the only unit with a genealogical framework. Endogamy here will emphasise the total division amongst the Masakīn as a reflection of the absence of an encompassing genealogical framework and the lack of larger descent groups which imply political weakness of the Masakīn as a whole. The overall result of the marriage pattern is to strengthen the cohesion of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl Houses, to emphasise the segmentary divisions of the Ja'da tribe, and to maintain the total division of the Masakīn above the patronymic group level.

In discussing a similar situation in a Muslim Lebanese village, Emerys Peters¹ emphasised the significant role of a genealogical framework in the regulation of marriage, and the relation of the pattern of marriage produced with the movement of land. The difference between the Lebanese situation and Ḥurēiḍah is that here women have only one source of acquiring property, namely inheritance. In

1. E.L.Peters, 1963.

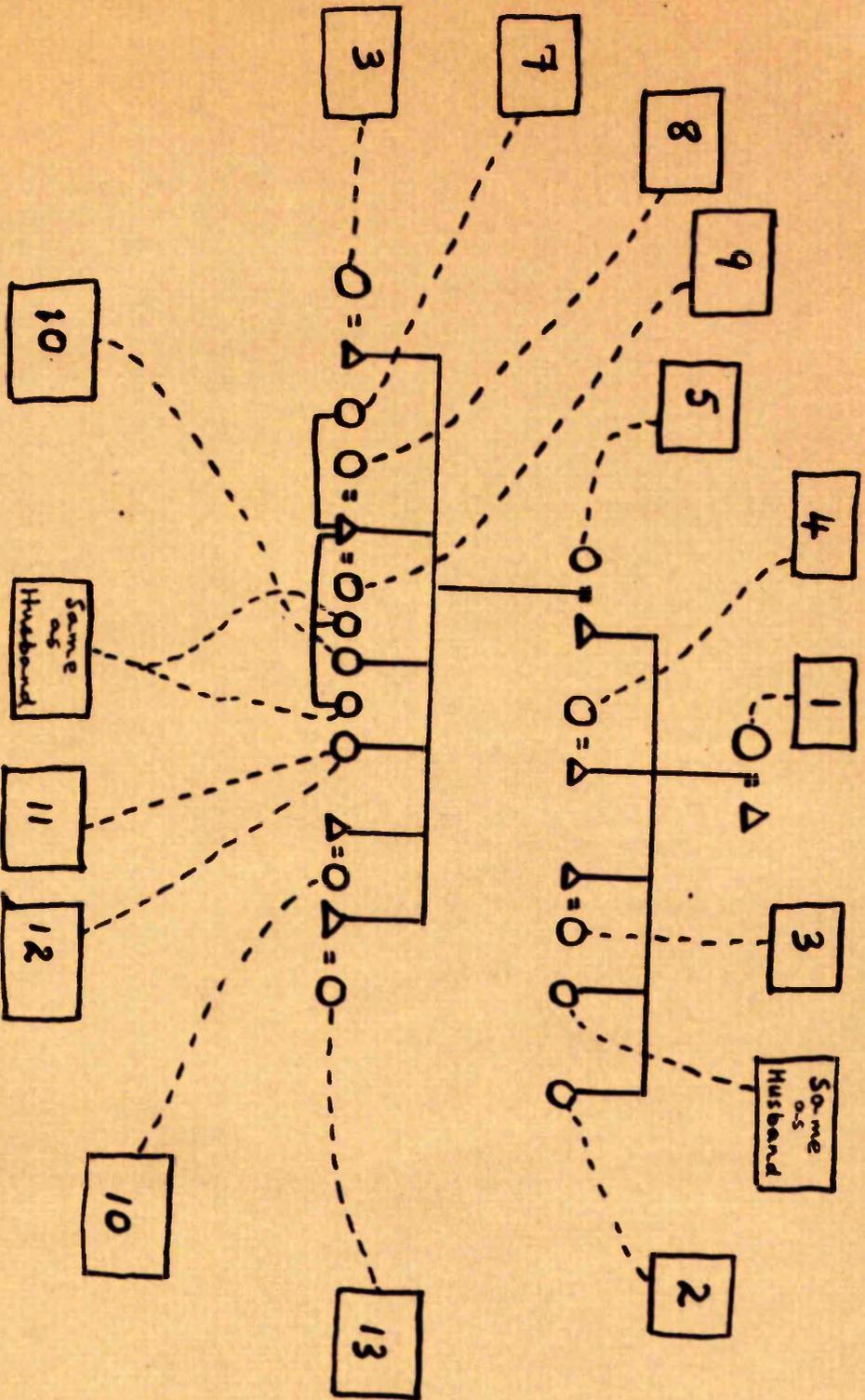
In the Lebanese village, land was given to women on their marriage. From this and other sources, women acquired ownership over land. In marriage women moved from one group to another taking their ownership right with them. Hence the marriage pattern indicated the movement of property.

Ḥurēidah no land or money is given to the women at marriage. The brideprice is generally small for in-group marriage and in all cases this is expended by the bride's father on the marriage ceremonies. The bride gets gifts in jewellery etc. from her husband and her parents, but all this does not amount to much in terms of cash. Nevertheless a woman does inherit palm dates, land, a house or a part of it and other property, from both her husband and her father. Hence movement of women by marriage does represent a movement of property, however small in value or quantity. Hence the importance of the marriage pattern of Ḥurēidah described above.

It is obvious that 'Aṭṭās women cannot be a source of property moving to other groups, since they do not marry outside the House. The result is a very high percentage of in-group marriage within the House, which means that 'Aṭṭās property in general remains within the group. The same can be said of the Bāsahl, since a very small percentage of their women marry outside the group. Similarly, a very high percentage of in-group marriage within the minimal political unit of the Gabā'il, has the same implication. In any case, until recently, the Gabā'il specifically disinherited their women so that in case of women marrying outside the unit, property can remain within it. But with the Masakīn, the marriage pattern is different and so this affects the movement of property. Since many of the patronymic groups here

MOVEMENT OF WOMEN AMONG THE MASAKIN.

AN AKHDAM PATRONYMIC GROUP.



X Represents
a Patronymic Group.

are small, they are in many cases forced to marry outside such groups. Thus a patronymic group receives in and sends out women to other patronymic groups. Property moves in and out of a given group corresponding to the movements of women it receives and gives out. Unlike the 'Aṭṭās whose property remains within one large group, Masakīn property moves between a large number of small groups (see diagram 7). The very high brideprice between two patronymic groups may be taken to represent a compensation for the potential loss of property which a woman carries with her from one group to another. On the other hand, the very low and uniform brideprice amongst the 'Aṭṭās may be taken as an indication that the 'Aṭṭās view property in terms of group ownership (vis à vis other groups) and therefore its movement within the House needs no compensation, since ultimate group control is maintained. But to what extent does property move (through marriage) across the different levels of the hierarchy? This brings us to the question of hypergamous marriage which I will now discuss and its relation to the movement of property as well as its other aspects.

As I have pointed out earlier, endogamous marriages move outwards from a given descent group to the widest point -- the limit of the stratum. Beyond this point they become inter-strata marriages, which in Ḥaḍramaut are hypergamous. Such hypergamous marriages are based on the principle of

kafā'ah -- "equality of descent status".¹ Ideally the concept of kafā'ah applies to a marriage between spouses who descend from the same apical or ultimate ancestor. This is appropriate in endogamous marriages either within a descent group or within the same stratum. The spouses in such marriages have equality of descent status -- all Sādah are the 'children' of the Prophet, Mashayikh and Gabā'il are the ultimate descendants of Qaḥṭān, while the Masakīn have the same descent status as a residual category outside the descent framework. But the principle of kafā'ah also covers marriages in which a man's descent status is superior to that of the women. In hypergamous marriages then, kafā'ah expresses explicitly the superior status of a man and the inferior status of a woman. Hypogamy in this situation is not possible, precisely because it contradicts the principle of kafā'ah. Through kafā'ah then, inter-strata marriages express status differentiation and ultimately symbolises the whole system of stratification.

The brideprice for hypergamous marriages is very high compared with that for endogamous marriages. It varies between Shs.1,000 to Shs.3,000. The percentage of hypergamous marriages is however very small (see table B ^{P.129}). There are a number of reasons for this. Firstly such marriages are

1. This is an important principle in Islamic rules of marriage. I have translated it here on the basis of local interpretation and usage. See Chapter I for a discussion of this principle.

TABLE B.

MARRIAGE PATTERN : ENDOGAMY-HYPERGAMYEXTANT MARRIAGES OF MALE HEADS OF HOUSEHOLDS

Strata	Local Group	No. of people	No. of marriages	Within lineage House	Within Mashayikh	With Gabā'il	With Masakīn			
							Hirthan	Akhdam	Subyān	
Sādah	'Atṭās	585	118	22.8%	61.0%	1.8%	3.5%	-	2.5%	0.9%
Masakīn	Mashayikh	82	16	-	62.5%	6.25%	31.25%	-	-	-
	Basahl	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Masakīn	Gabā'il	-	-	-	Within Clan Tribe	-	-	-	-	-
	Sagra of Ja'da	60	20	45%	10%	30%	5%	5%	-	-
Masakīn	Hirthan	190	31	19.5%	-	-	-	54.8%	22.6%	-
	Akhdam	390	60	11.5%	-	-	-	-	86.6%	1.8%
	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	Subyān	99	18	22.2%	-	-	-	-	22.2%	50%

1. Figures are based on Gabā'il settlement A.

considered socially undesirable. The children of such a marriage have inferior maternal relatives, akhwāl, and the implication is that they inherit some of the inferior qualities of the mother's group, especially if the mother is from the Masakīn stratum. Secondly, in general, there is no economic advantage to be gained for marrying downwards (apart from individual exceptions). The Gabā'il disinherit their women and the Masakīn are the poorest section of the society. Thus the acquisition of property cannot be said to be a significant motive for such marriages. Furthermore, hypergamous marriages have a high brideprice as compensation for any such potential advantage that a man may gain. Thirdly the very strong preference for endogamous marriages (the reasons for such preference have already been explained) necessarily means a low percentage of inter-strata marriages. This low percentage of hypergamous marriages means that the existing ratio of group control over economic resources is not disturbed.

In general then, the pattern of marriage in Ḥurēidah has two aspects -- endogamy and hypergamy. These aspects can be looked at as a continuum in whose scale there are points of preferences starting with marriages within a specific descent group (the most preferred) and ending up with inter-strata marriages (the least preferred). This continuum in the marriage system, generally divided into the two broad categories mentioned above, has a number of

functions. At one end of the scale i.e. endogamy, it affects the various groups differently and serves to maintain the structural differences between them. At the other end of the continuum i.e. hypergamy, it serves to express the descent statuses of the different groups into a hierarchy. The marriage pattern as a whole then functions to maintain the stratification system.

So far in this chapter I have shown that people are ranked on the basis of the general descent framework. From this I proceeded to show how the differences in the structures of the genealogical frameworks and the absence of such a framework are a reflection of the specific roles of the various groups in the hierarchy. Finally I have discussed the different effects of the uniform marriage pattern on the various groups and have suggested that its ultimate function is to maintain the local hierarchy and symbolise the system of stratification. Given this deeper structural differentiation of the groups in the stratification system, and the implicit rigidity as a corollary, the logical question that arises from this is whether mobility is possible in the system. It is therefore necessary at this point to discuss the questions relevant to mobility.

4. Mobility

The movement of a group from one position to another within the social hierarchy implies a change in its status

and role in the total framework. There are two types of movement possible for a group:

- (i) Mobility within the stratum, and
- (ii) Mobility across the strata.

Both types of mobility are difficult, but the latter is more difficult since it implies a more important change in the scheme of stratification.

Mobility within a stratum is possible only within the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il and the Masakīn strata. This is because these two strata are internally ranked, while that of the Sādah is not. Mobility within the second stratum - the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il - means that a Gabā'il group could become Mashāyikh or the reverse. The process is based on a Gabā'il group acquiring a religious status through time, or a Mashāyikh House losing its religious status through time. This is possible if a Gabā'il group produces reputed scholars and religious leaders through a number of generations. At first it is only the family of the scholars which acquires the status of Mashāyikh, but if many scholars are produced, proportionate to the size of the group, the status becomes ascriptive for all members of the group through time. The higher the reputation of the scholars, the quicker is the process. However, since the Gabā'il are generally large tribes, and mostly bedu - i.e. 'primitive', this possibility is reduced to individual families, and even then the process takes a long time. In any case scholarship and reputation is

acquired by living in towns where centres of learning are to be found. Hence Gabā'il acquiring the status of Mashāyikh are generally individual families who have lived in such places cut off from the segmentary structure of their tribes. Only their descendants become Mashāyikh. On the other hand, if a religious status has been established, especially if only by a small group, and if it is not maintained by the rise of new scholars within the group, then the group loses its status and may become Gabā'il. But a small descent group cannot become a "tribe", especially if the group resides in a town, since to become a 'tribe' requires a territory, and a segmentary and political organization to maintain political independence. Thus small Mashāyikh groups tend to move straight to the Masakīn stratum in their downward mobility. Some of the Mashāyikh Houses existing in Ḥaḍramaut today are large, well-established and reputed groups with specific areas under their spiritual influence, and hawtahs of their own (like that of the 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēidah). Such Houses are unlikely to lose their status. But the possibility of this happening to a small and uninfluential group like the Bāsahl, is real enough. However the status of the Bāsahl was recognised by the 'Aṭṭās and ritually re-stated every year. Hence the maintenance of its status without having produced any scholars. But one patronymic group in Ḥurēidah which was once a Mashāyikh did not maintain its status and has moved down to the Masakīn stratum (see Case II). However the

important point here is that there is this possible movement of groups within the stratum, with the essential proviso that it is a long process. Furthermore this type of mobility is less difficult than that across the strata, and the process quicker with small groups than with large ones.

Movement between the ranked groups within a stratum may also take place within the Masakīn category. As I have indicated earlier in this chapter, the criteria for ranking the different categories is occupational, and it is possible for two segments of one patronymic group to be in different categories in different localities. Mobility between these categories can thus be achieved within the life-span of an individual if he moves from one area to another and changes his occupation. Unlike mobility within the second stratum, in which a religious status (an important status) is involved, mobility within the Masakīn stratum does not imply an important change in status. It is true that the status of the Ḥirṭhān is generally considered to be higher than that of the Akhdām or the Subyān, precisely because the Ḥirṭhān are agriculturalists and mostly the indigenous people of a locality, and it is therefore difficult to move into their section by changing one's occupation or by acquiring farm holdings. However, mobility between the Masakīn sections in different areas is, in general, relatively easy, partly because the mobility is of small patronymic groups, mostly nuclear families, and partly because such mobility does not

imply a substantial change of status. Neither mobility between the Gabā'il and the Mashāyikh, or between different sections of the Masakīn, requires any adjustment in the principle of grading of ancestry.

Mobility across the strata however essentially means changing the descent status of the individual or group, since this is the criterion for ranking the strata. It also implies a basic change in the role of the individual or group. Hence mobility across the strata is very difficult precisely because it is fundamental. Moving up to the Sādah stratum or down from it is probably impossible. As far as I know there are no cases of this having taken place. The status of the Sādah Houses depends entirely on their genealogical link with the Prophet, and every Saiyid House keeps meticulous records of its genealogies. Furthermore, there are genealogical experts amongst the Sādah whose function it is to prevent non-Sādah from claiming the exclusive descent of the Prophet. On the other hand Sādah Houses are unlikely to go through a process, long or short, of moving downwards from a privileged and superior strata. Hence moving into or out of the Sādah stratum is, to say the least, extremely unlikely to occur.

Inter-stratum mobility, when it does take place, is between the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il and the Masakīn strata. Movement can be upwards or downwards between these two strata. The process is based on changing the ascribed role of the

individual or group, and not by changing the status of ancestry. In fact the latter is recognised only when the former has been achieved. Isolated Mashāyikh families who have ceased to produce reputed scholars may lose their reputation and thus become Masakīn. When such families stop playing a religious role for any considerable length of time they become undifferentiated from Ḥirthān of the Masakīn stratum. I know of a number of small descent groups in Wādī 'Amd who claim to have been Mashāyikh in the past, but who are now classified as Masakīn. This process in fact generally occurs in the case of small Mashāyikh descent groups.

A Gabā'il family, living in a distant town and cut off from the tribe, (which is generally rare) can assume an economic role such as being a servant or a labourer, and thereby in time become recognised as a Masakīn family. In such a situation, the descendants of the Gabā'il family would have lost all contact with the original tribe. On the other hand, on the rare occasion of a Masakīn family producing a reputed scholar who in his life-time acquires the title of Shāikh (religious leader), the title may then become ascriptive to all the members of the family and later to the descent group, if in succeeding generations this status is maintained, either by gaining institutional recognition of it, or by producing more scholars in each generation. Maintenance of the religious role by the family is the necessary condition for keeping the status of Mashāyikh.

Mobility by the Masakīn to the Gabā'il group is much more difficult than to the Mashāyikh because, in the past at least, the changing of roles entailed more than the acquiring of particular qualities. To become a Gabā'il, it was necessary first to be part of a large group which could establish political independence and a territorial unit. This meant that the Masakīn must have a village of their own, be powerful enough to remove the political domination of a particular group, and get the necessary recognition of the surrounding Gabā'il tribes. There are very few villages entirely occupied by Masakīn, and there were still fewer with the necessary unity and power to establish political independence. Individual or small patronymic groups could not go through the process of becoming Gabā'il, since the armed power of the Gabā'il could easily stop the attempt. As far as I know, there has only been one attempt by a Masakīn village to become Gabā'il and this was largely due to the intervention of external factors in favour of such an attempt - in this case money and organisation from Indonesia. In general, mobility of the Masakīn to the Gabā'il section was extremely difficult because of the organisation and armed power of the Gabā'il, who would use force to thwart such attempts.

The following case histories will illustrate the various aspects of mobility.

Case ITime: 1962-3Place: Hurēidah

Husn,¹ a man of the al-Husn tribe, came to Hurēidah about thirty years ago from the Wādī Ḥaḍramaut, a densely populated area, where some Gabā'il tribesmen live in large towns. In Hurēidah he married an Akhdām woman who later became a village dancer. Husn in due course became the servant of one of the 'Aṭṭās Mansabs - an occupation normally undertaken by the Masakīn only. He had two daughters, and just before he died a few years ago, he built a small house. One of the daughters was married to an 'Attās, but was divorced within two years. The elder daughter did not get married. Husn's wife died in 1962. The two daughters are now left with the small house and nothing else. The unmarried daughter, who is a prostitute, is now the bread winner of the house.

Hurēidah is a long distance from the al-Husn territory and when Husn came and established a family there he lost all connection with his tribe, although he was accepted in Hurēidah as a Gabā'il. His occupation was unusual for a Gabā'il, and with a Khādīm wife he established his isolated and cut off family in Hurēidah. The occupation, apart from its status, gave him no scope to make money. Husn's family thus had all the conditions suitable for a downgrading in the hierarchy. Husn's daughters are now ready to marry anyone - including a 'respectable' Masakīn. Hurēidah people are divided over the status of the family. Some people consider them to be Gabā'il, whilst others classify them as Masakīn. However, their only relations in Hurēidah are Masakīn - that is maternal kin. Economically

1. All personal names used in case studies are fictitious.

the two women cannot be choosy about a husband, and if one of them marries a Masakīn, that would be the irrevocable step in her establishment as Masakīn.

Case II

Time: From about 1580-1963

Place: Hurēidāh

'Abdul-Rahīm, the head of the Bākhamīs descent group, was a well-known scholar at the time of 'Umar, the ancestor of the 'Aṭṭās. The two people it is said, were close friends, and 'Abdul-Rahīm was recognised as a Shāikh. He even taught the children of the 'Aṭṭās and during the 'Id festivals the 'Aṭṭās used to visit him. Thus the Bākhamīs was a recognised Mashāyikh descent group. When 'Abdul-Rahīm died, the Bākhamīs did not have another scholar to maintain their status and ever since their status has been slowly changing. By the 1940s the group was considered to be Masakīn and in the Hirṭhān category. At this time, one Bākhamīs wanted to marry a Bāsahl woman, but the Bāsahl refused, on the grounds that he was a Masakīn. So the man eloped with the Bāsahl woman and got married to her in another town without her parents' permission. The couple did not return to Hurēidāh. During the 'Id festival of that year, a brother of the runaway Bākhamīs attempted to join the Bāsahl House in the ceremony of 'paying respect' to the 'Aṭṭās.¹ He claimed that his descent group was Mashāyikh and that the proof of the Mashāyikh status was the fact that his brother had just married a Bāsahl woman. The man was told by the 'Aṭṭās to take his 'proper' place amongst the Masakīn. This attempt at ritual recognition of the Bākhamīs' previous status failed. The Bākhamīs in the previous two generations have been intermarrying within the Masakīn stratum, which is an expression of their inferior descent status in the hierarchy.

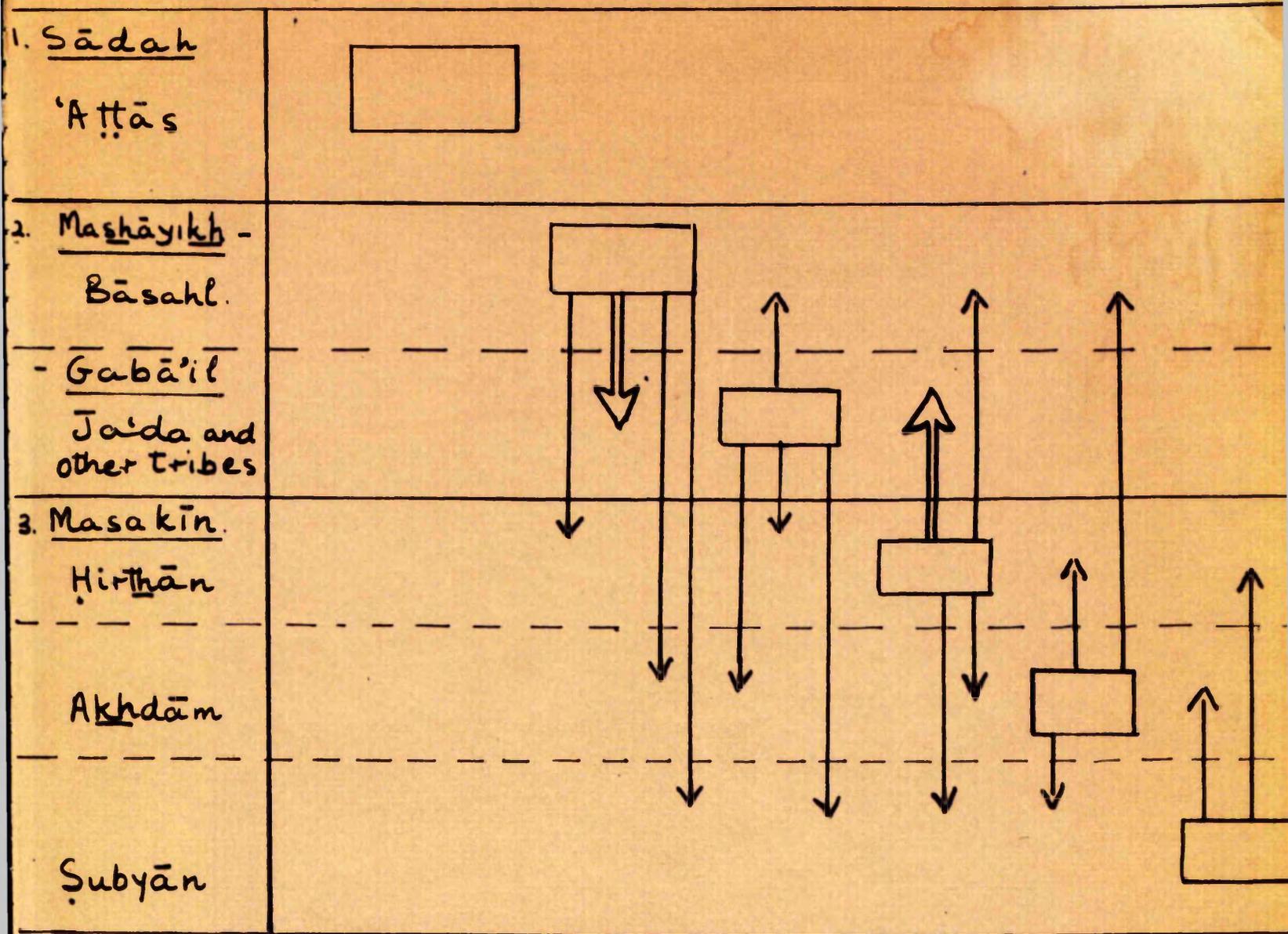
1. See p.53.

Case IIITime: 1935-40Place: Garia in Wādī 'Amd

Garia is a village occupied entirely by Ḥirthān of the Masakīn stratum. During the traditional period, the village was under the political dominance of a large Mashāyikh House in Wādī Doan, which extends its influence to this village. But this political dependence, apart from costing the people of Garia a share of their harvest, did not protect them from the surrounding Gabā'il tribes. A number of people from the village had emigrated to Indonesia, where they started their own Association. The Association decided to change the status of the village, and some of its members returned home with money and arms. They organised and armed the whole village to resist the dominance of the Mashāyikh House. The Mashāyikh punishment for such a rebellion was to ask some of the Gabā'il tribes under its spiritual influence to attack the village and rob it of its harvest. The villagers were prepared for this, and incidents of robbery and shooting had begun, when, in 1938-40 the Qu'āity Government sent its soldiers to Wādī 'Amd and disarmed both the Gabā'il tribes and the villagers as part of the wider process of establishing its authority over the whole country. The attempt of the Masakīn to become Gabā'il was thus frozen. The Masakīn of Garia are now derided as the people who wanted to become Gabā'il.

These case histories illustrate three general points. Firstly that mobility from one stratum to another is an historical process in which a group's status changes over a span of generations, rather than being a sudden change. Secondly this change is primarily a change of roles, and

MOBILITY



KEY

→ Mobility of Individuals.

⇒ Mobility of Groups.

Diagram

once the role is established, recognition of an appropriate ancestry is accorded and the new status is expressed by inter-marriages suited to it. Thirdly, mobility is usually easiest for small descent groups. The move is made by one individual or one family, and later the new status becomes ascriptive to the whole descent group. With the Gabā'il on the other hand it required in the past a large group with a maximum physical force, since a monopoly over the use of power was an essential feature in the role of the Gabā'il.

5. Conclusion.

In the changed conditions of Ḥurēiḍah the traditional roles of the different strata are losing their ascriptive force, and some have disappeared. New alternatives are now open and new roles have been created. The 'Aṭṭās are no longer the only ruling group of Ḥurēiḍah. Even if they dominate the Local Council, they still have to share power with Central Government officials, most of whom are not Sādah. The Bāsahl no longer conform to their traditional religious role, and they are more busy farming their holdings than preaching to the Gabā'il. The Gabā'il tribes no longer have their segmentary political organisation, nor do they carry arms. At the same time, some Masakīn have stopped playing the ascriptive roles of Subyān or Akhdām, and have made money by shopkeeping or by working abroad. Some 'Aṭṭās, Mashāyikh and Gabā'il have taken up Masakīn occupations. In

general then, the ascribed roles of the groups have been thrown open. At the same time, individuals can voluntarily change their ascribed economic roles. But this change is not statistically significant at present.

Outside Ḥurēiḍah, the political and economic system of Ḥaḍramaut is open in that anyone can climb up the administrative machinery of the Government, or become wealthy through business without being hindered by his descent status. In other words, achievement is becoming more and more recognised as a criterion of rank in the political and economic sphere. At the same time the increasingly effective and widespread ideology of Arab Nationalism is undermining the traditional justification for the social stratification. In the large towns especially, the questioning of the system is widespread and many people are ignoring its ascriptive statuses.

In this and the last chapter, I have given a descriptive analysis of the system of stratification operating in Ḥurēiḍah. In some cases I have had to discuss some general aspects of the system as it functions throughout the country, but in the main I have concentrated on the social hierarchy as it operates in Ḥurēiḍah. In the last chapter I described the social hierarchy and the main features and different roles of the various groups. I have also pointed out the significant changes that have taken place in the last two decades and have indicated the trends of their

effects on the various status-ascribing frameworks. In this chapter however, I have described the deeper structural differences between the groups, the general function of the marriage system in maintaining stratification and the question of mobility. These two chapters then have been concerned with a general description of the stratification system as a necessary preliminary to a more detailed analysis of changes in the system which will follow in the rest of the thesis. It is therefore important at this point to conclude by restating the main features of the stratification system.

- (a) There are three general and universal ranked strata, two of which are internally differentiated.
- (b) The strata are inclusive and their recruitment is by birth.
- (c) Summation of roles is an important principle of the system. Relations between groups tend to be organised on the basis of this principle.
- (d) Relations between groups is characterised by co-operation rather than competition, especially in the political system.
- (e) Mobility is possible but difficult.

These main features of the system are in fact almost identical to Bailey's definition of a caste system, or what he calls a closed social stratification.¹ Ḥaḍrami stratification is certainly closed. But whether it is a caste system

1. Bailey, F.G. 1963.

or not is another problem. The changes that have taken place in the last two decades have certainly made the system more "open" i.e. it is being vigorously questioned by a new ideology and the trends are towards ignoring ascription as a basic principle of ranking and status conferring. In order to substantiate this general statement, it will be necessary to analyse the politico-economic and ideological changes in Ḥurēidāh in some detail. This I will do in the following chapters.

CHAPTER V

ECONOMIC ORGANISATION1. Economy and Stratification: The Past.

There is enough evidence to show that in the past, that is to say, before the incorporation of Ḥurēiḍah into the Qu'āity State, stratification in Ḥurēiḍah was intimately linked with economic organisation. The proportion of resources controlled by each group could be correlated with its position in the hierarchy - the Sādah 'Aṭṭās being the wealthiest and the Masakīn the poorest. But since 1940, political changes in Ḥaḍramaut as a whole have resulted in economic change. The question then is, has economic change affected social stratification as I have described it? If for instance the Masakīn have become the wealthiest stratum in Ḥurēiḍah, this would be likely to affect stratification considerably. My contention in this and the following chapter is that although there has been some economic change, the differential control of wealth which is correlated with the social hierarchy has not been radically affected. In this chapter I propose to examine two points: firstly, the close correlation between social stratification and economy in the past, and secondly, how economic factors in Ḥurēiḍah today necessitate large-scale labour migration. In the following chapter I shall discuss the effects of labour migration on the control of resources and the social hierarchy.

Since I propose to relate economic changes to stratification, it will be necessary first of all to have a general picture of the relation between the two in the traditional period.¹ Only then can we say that there has been radical change in the relationship, only a minor change, or no change at all. Without a general picture of the inter-relation between stratification and economics in the past, it would be presumptuous to state that the relation between the two is now either different or the same. For this reason I propose to briefly reconstruct the general picture of the relation between economy and social stratification in the traditional period, using all the available evidence.

A Reconstruction: Differential Control of Resources.

Reconstruction of the past, even if it is the very recent past, is usually difficult. It is even more difficult in the Ḥaḍramaut, where even at present there is no systematic recording of statistical data. However what I want to reconstruct is not a detailed and exact picture, but a broad and general one. My assertion is that the social stratification of Ḥurēiḍah coincided with an economic stratification in terms of which the Sādah were at the top, the Masakīn at the bottom, and the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il in between. From this assumption we can analyse in detail the relative economic

1. This phrase refers to the period just before the incorporation of Ḥurēiḍah into the Qu'āity State around 1940.

positions of the strata today, and thereby discover if the control over resources by the strata has changed hands or not.

This attempt at reconstruction is based on the availability of some evidence, which in my opinion is substantial enough for us to draw general conclusions as to the respective economic positions of the groups in the social hierarchy. The evidence is of two types:

- (i) From the economic resources in Ḥurēiḍah today, I deduced a number of basic facts concerning the economic resources of the past.
- (ii) I have figures from which the labour migration of this period can be calculated - some from genealogies and some from living household heads.

This evidence can give us some idea of the income coming into Ḥurēiḍah from outside. The evidence from these two sources give us a reasonable picture of the respective wealth of the different strata.

{ Ḥurēiḍah in the past depended almost entirely on its cultivated fields for its supply of food. Only a few families (most of whom were 'Aṭṭās) were rich enough to import some sugar, tea, coffee, etc. for personal consumption. Local agricultural produce was thus the main source of the food supply. The cultivated land in Ḥurēiḍah is irrigated by a canal system which is very old.¹ The canal system regulates the amount of water (which comes during the

1. For a description of the ancient irrigation systems in Wādī 'Amd, see Caton-Thompson and Gardner 1939.

floods - seil) for all the farms in the area. The canal system itself is fixed and cannot be altered in any way - either by increasing the width or depth of the channels, or by making new channels. This is very important because the cultivated farms are also fixed in size in terms of the canal system. Land which is outside the canal system cannot be irrigated and therefore cannot be cultivated. Thus the total area of the cultivated fields of Ḥurēiḍah is fixed and has been fixed for a considerable time in the past. Agricultural resources cannot therefore have been improved by increasing the size of the cultivated area. If the acreage of land cannot be increased, then a group can increase the amount of land it owns only at the expense of other groups. Thus if the 'Aṭṭās owned more land in the past than they do now - in relation to the other groups - then its loss would be a gain to the other groups. If we can show that the 'Aṭṭās had sources of income from overseas, while the Masakīn categories did not, it would then be reasonable to assume that the 'Aṭṭās were wealthier than the Masakīn, and that because of this they would buy and own more land and houses per household than the Masakīn. The fixed area of cultivated land is thus one given factor in our process of reconstruction.

But if the size of the cultivated area is fixed, it could be argued that its output could have been increased by the introduction of new methods of cultivation. From the

data I have, it is certain that no new methods have been introduced. It is impossible to use tractors here because of the intersecting canals, the small size of the farm plots and the interspersed enclosures of date palms. No chemical fertilisers are used - the same animal fertilisers are used as in the past. No new mechanical tools have been introduced. Locally made tools, like the hoe, are used, along with cows and camels. Methods of cultivation are the same as those in the past. Similarly water resources - that is flood irrigation by means of the canal system - must be assumed to be constant within the cycle of variation, since no dramatic change in the climate has taken place. From this we can assume that output per acre has not increased. In fact one might argue that if anything it has decreased, because the farms are constantly being fragmented by the inheritance system.

In general then, we can reasonably assume that the size of the cultivated area and the output of agricultural produce has not increased and is likely to have remained constant. From the last chapter, we know that there is a very high percentage of in-group marriage, and that the pattern of marriage together with the inheritance system which transmits property from the father to both male and female children means that the wealth of a group will remain largely within the group over a number of generations. The implication is that the status quo could not be affected by

changes in the internal economic organisation, but could be upset by an external factor such as the inflow of money into Ḥurēidah from overseas. In 1934-6, just before the coming of the government. Mr. Ingrams reported that money from overseas migration was an important phenomenon. He estimated that between 20 and 30 per cent of the estimated population of the Ḥaḍramaut lived in the East Indies, East Africa or Egypt and the countries bordering the Red Sea.¹ Money from overseas migrants was an important source of income.² From Ḥurēidah we have similar evidence. Migration at the time was an important phenomenon, and people migrated mainly because they wanted to send money back home. Migration was mainly to India and Indonesia. Journeys to these countries were expensive and people went there because they expected high rewards. But because of the expense involved in the journey we must assume that the poorer people would not be able to afford these long journeys and therefore stayed at home. Thus those who migrated were not only those who were initially wealthy enough to afford the journey, but we can also assume that they became wealthier as a result of these journeys. Hence the group that had the highest percentage of migrants at the time can probably be assumed to have been the wealthiest. The following table will give us an idea of

1. Ingrams, W.H. 1936, p.141.

2. Remittances were estimated to total £630,000 per annum in 1936 (Ingrams: 1936, p.142).

the extent of migration in Ḥurēiḏah during the traditional period and the degree to which different groups had links with overseas. Migration to India and Indonesia was brought to a sudden halt at the beginning of the Second World War.¹

Table A: Pre-1939 Migration to India and Indonesia

Groups	No. Males	Travel Abroad A				Born Abroad ² B			
		Ind-ia	Indo-nesia	Total	%	Ind-ia	Indo-nesia	Total	%
1. 'Aṭṭās	310	7	50	57	18.3	2	42	44	14
2. Bāsahl	53	1	12	13	24.5	-	12	12	23.9
3. Ja'da	299	5	18	24	8	-	8 ³	8	11.6
4. Masakīn Groups	359	5	18	23	6.4	-	13	13	3.3

This table is based on a survey carried out in 1962-3. It is as well to point out that because of this it does not reflect the exact figures of emigration at the time. In particular, some people who returned to Ḥurēiḏah during, or after the War have since died, and are therefore not included in the figures. Similarly, many immigrants opted to stay overseas and never returned to Ḥurēiḏah. I think

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1. "The Saiyids in Hadramaut [i.e. the Sādah] were aware of the dangers of their dependence on Java, and a writer in the early thirties prophetically points out the effect a world war might have on their wealth there". (Serjeant, R.B. 1957, p.25).
 2. The figures for those who have travelled abroad are inclusive of those born abroad.
 3. These figures (in column B) are from one Gabā'il settlement only. It has a population of 67 males.

that this explains the higher proportion of migrants in the Bāsahl group as opposed to the 'Aṭṭās. 'Aṭṭās genealogies show that their emigration to the Far East goes back at least two to three generations, whilst those of the Bāsahl suggest that their emigration goes back only one generation from living middle-aged men. According to the 'Aṭṭās Mansab, there were 1,500 'Aṭṭās in Indonesia before World War II. His figures were based on a census taken thirty years ago. If the number is correct, 'Aṭṭās emigration must have been going on for a considerable period. No figures are available for the Bāsahl, but their genealogies, and the size of their group, make it unlikely that the number of Bāsahl migrants was in fact proportionately higher than that of the 'Aṭṭās. In view of these figures, it seems likely that many of the 'Aṭṭās opted not to return to Ḥurēiḍah at the end of the War. In the case of the Bāsahl, most of those born abroad returned to Ḥurēiḍah, and this has inflated the figures of their migrants. As a small group, the return of their members to reinforce their position was perhaps to be expected. With the 'Aṭṭās this was not necessary. Thus the difference between the percentage of migrants of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl groups does not exactly reflect the emigration realities of the past. In fact all other evidence points to the fact that the 'Aṭṭās had the largest proportion of migrants, and were therefore likely to have earned more income from abroad. The low figures of Gabā'il migrants may also be explained

partly by the fact that under the traditional system manpower was important for feuding, and this may have discouraged people from emigrating. Broadly speaking then, we have a general picture of the 'Aṭṭās and Mashāyikh as having had the highest proportion of migrants and the Gabā'il and Masakīn the least. If we can assume then that the fact of migration is an indication of the wealth of a group, the table gives us a general picture of the respective wealth of the three strata, which, as is to be expected backs, in general, the ordering of the social stratification. Furthermore we have circumstantial evidence to show that this general picture is not just guesswork, a shot in the dark. In the traditional period, political conditions were such that only the Sādah and the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il strata could travel safely to the coast, and from there to the East. The Masakīn could only travel to the coast if they were protected by the Gabā'il or the other groups, otherwise they were liable to be killed. Thus, under the traditional political system, the Masakīn were discouraged from migrating. In fact most of their patronymic groups came to Ḥurēiḍah in this period in search of 'peace' and protection. About 72 per cent of the Masakīn patronymic groups moved into Ḥurēiḍah within the two decades before the coming of the Government. They came into Ḥurēiḍah from Gabā'il areas, and most of them state that they were escaping from Gabā'il 'oppression'. If nearly three-quarters of the Masakīn were

new settlers in Ḥurēiḍah, we may assume that they would not have been able to meet the initial expenses required to migrate to distant countries. This is especially so if the general description of the Masakīn as people who owned few farms and who specialised mostly in working for the other strata is reasonably accurate.

All this is of course circumstantial evidence, but it all points to a picture of a social structure which militated against the Masakīn being a wealthy stratum. On the other hand, all the impressionistic evidence points to the Sādah as having been the wealthiest stratum. All the largest and best houses of Ḥurēiḍah were built during the traditional period and all of them are owned by 'Aṭṭās. Secondly, most of the rich families in Ḥurēiḍah today are 'Aṭṭās, and all informed me that their money came from India and Indonesia. Some of these families were rich enough to bring architects and builders from India in order to build a mosque in Ḥurēiḍah. They also imported the first car into the region at a time when there were no roads suitable for motor traffic. Nearly all 'Aṭṭās now complain that since World War II, when money from India and the Far East was stopped, they have become much poorer than they were before.¹ The Mashāyikh and Gabā'il have the same

1. "The age of Java is now past and the cutting off of Javanese remittances has reduced some Saiyid families to poverty...." (Serjeant 1957, p.26). Serjeant points out that the Sādah have been in Indonesia longer than the Dutch.

complaints. In general then we have a broad picture of the traditional period with the Sādah at the apex of the economic ladder, the Masakīn at the bottom, and the Mashāyikh-Gabā'il in between.

The outbreak of World War II reduced migration to a trickle, and later completely halted it. Money from India and the Far East stopped at the beginning of the war. When India and Indonesia both became independent countries and imposed monetary restrictions in 1947-9 it completely stopped. Many Ḥaḍrami migrants in India and some of those in Indonesia returned to the Ḥaḍramaut. The effect of all this is generally accepted to have been an economic catastrophe for the Ḥaḍramaut especially since it was accompanied by a prolonged drought between 1934 and 1944. In 1937 Britain intervened in Ḥaḍramaut and established the authority of the Qu'āity and Kathīri Sultanates over the whole area. Ḥurēiḍah thus became part of the Qu'āity State. The changed political conditions and the imposition of a rudimentary form of administration brought 'peace' to the country. Motorised transport began in the early fifties. A new wave of migration also began, but this time it was to Saudi Arabia, 'Aden, and the Arabian Gulf. By 1962-3, Ḥaḍramaut had become part of the internal market served by the growing port of Aden, and these changed economic conditions had their effect on Ḥurēiḍah.

Having shown that in the past, social stratification

was closely correlated with economic stratification, it is important now to show how economic-political changes of the past 15 years have, if at all, affected the correlation that has been shown to have existed. Is the social hierarchy in Ḥurēiḍah today backed by the differential control of wealth by the different groups? If so why is this the case?

Since the end of the War, there has been an intensive and widespread labour migration from Ḥaḍramaut to the nearby Arab countries. This has been a major agent of economic change in the country. Thus in order to analyse the relation between economics and the social hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah, it will be necessary to discuss two things; (i) the economic organisation of Ḥurēiḍah today and why labour migration is an important part of it. This will be discussed in the rest of this chapter. (ii) The effects of labour migration, especially on the differential control of resources by the different groups. This will be discussed in the next chapter.

II. Economic Organisation : The Present.¹

The basic economic unit in Ḥurēiḍah is the household which varies from a small Nuclear Family of two people, to a large Extended Family of fifteen people. Statistically however, the average household consists of 4.4 people. Each household has its own house, but a few live in rented

1. The phrase refers to the time of the field work i.e. July 1962 to June 1963.

houses. Houses vary considerably in size, but all must at least have a ground and upper floor (~~see Chap. I~~). The building of such a house requires considerable capital and is therefore a major drain on the income of a household. Households derive food and cash income from agriculture, the traditional non-agricultural occupations and shopkeeping -- the three main spheres of economic activities. But since the existing economic resources in Ḥurēiḍah barely provide enough food for the people,¹ the major source of cash income is the flow of remittances from labour migrants.

Farming is the most important economic activity since until recently, the village depended almost entirely on its produce. Every household head calls himself a 'farmer' because nearly everyone owns or cultivates farm plots and date palms. All other economic activities are supplementary to agriculture. A smith for instance, stops his work and goes to the fields to cultivate his farm when floods come. Preparation for cultivation is taken seriously by all whether they are labourers, farmers or shopkeepers. Agriculture is thus the most important economic activity. But since cultivation depends entirely on floods which come irregularly because of the climatic conditions of the area, there is no regularity in economic activities. During the drought periods those who are entirely dependent on farming become 'unemployed' until the floods arrive. Similarly, those engaged in

1. This statement is substantiated later in the chapter.
See pp. 174 - 189.

non-agricultural activities are adversely affected by drought.

Dates and millet are the main agricultural products of Ḥurēidah, with beans and simsim as supplementary crops. These form the basic diet of the people, together with some wheat which is occasionally imported from other areas in the country. After picking, both the dates and millet go through a number of stages after which they are stored in the houses against the exigencies of the frequent droughts. Each household has a number of goats which provide milk as well as being a source of meat for special occasions. Some sheep are also kept for this purpose. Meat has a very high value, but the slaughtering of a sheep or a goat for a guest is a matter of honour. Similarly, important occasions - feasts, marriages, funerals, annual festivals, the birth of a child - all require the slaughter of goats or sheep. Hence these animals are in great demand and have a high monetary value. Every household keeps a flock, not only because of the milk provided by the goats, and for killing on special occasions, but also as investments for sale when money is short. But feeding the animals is a big problem - sometimes as big a problem as feeding the people. The main source of their food is the millet stalks which are stored like the dates and the millet. During the drought, millet stalks are sold and fetch exorbitant prices. The cultivated area does not have much grass for the animals to eat because

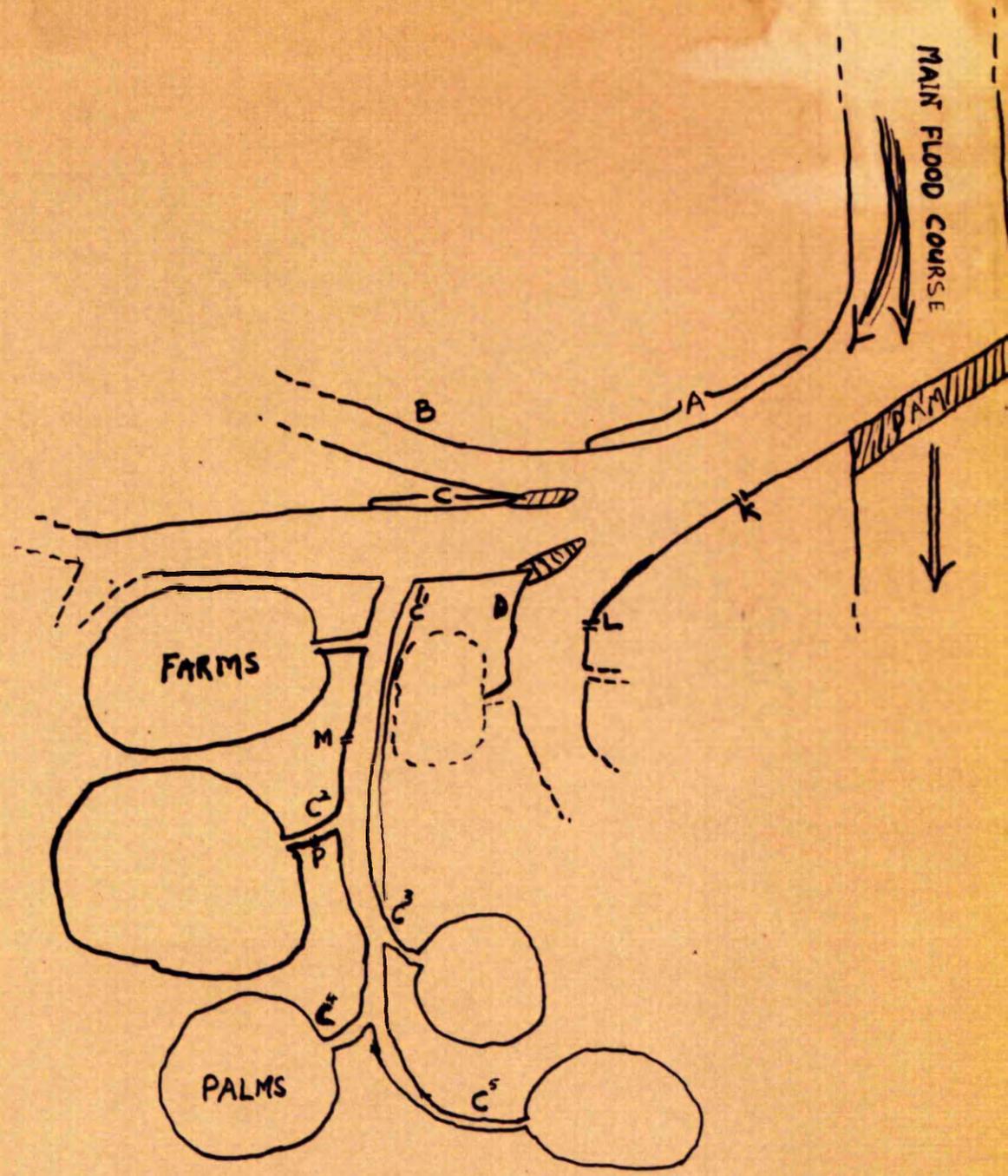
of the constant weeding. Furthermore, most of the time the animals are kept out of the fields.

Today the daily diet of Ḥurēiḍah has been augmented by imported food. Tea is drunk in large quantities. Curry has become part of the daily diet -- this requires tinned tomatoes, the various ingredients, and at least a tin of tuna fish. Wealthy families have rice daily with tinned fruit, but the poor have such meals only occasionally. This is an important change in the pattern of family expenditure which must be reflected in economic organisation as a whole. I will discuss this problem presently.

Besides agriculture there are traditional non-agricultural occupations such as pottery, smithing, carpentry and silver smithing -- all of which are hereditary occupations held by particular families. There are also a number of families who are masons and housebuilders. Building a house requires a large labour force for making mud bricks with sand and water from the wells, transporting the stones for the foundations, and actually building the house. Manual labourers in Ḥurēiḍah are mostly engaged in work associated with housebuilding, but also in drawing water for use in households, and, during cultivation, in agricultural labour. All these are traditional occupations, using material entirely from local resources.

Shopkeeping is of course a different kind of economic activity. Shops have begun to open in Ḥurēiḍah during the

Diagram 9
A CANAL BRANCH



Note : Letters refer to explanation on p.166

last ten years. There are now eleven shops owned by people from all the strata. All the shops sell imported foods and light manufactured goods. Since agriculture does not produce enough to bring purchasing power to the people and so sustain the traditional occupations and the shops, the latter depend for their existence on money flowing into Ḥurēiḍah from the outside. These shops and the money from the outside world are the only tangible aspects of economic change in Ḥurēiḍah. Their role in the economy will be discussed later.

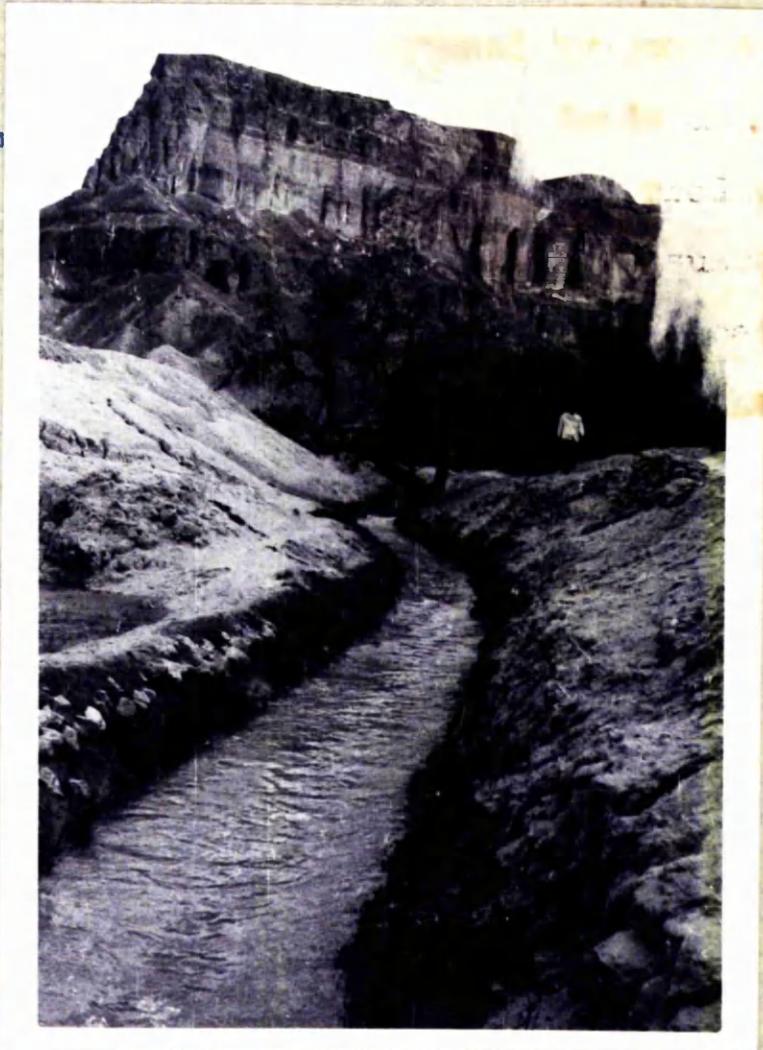
This is a brief description of the broad spheres of economic activity in Ḥurēiḍah today. Let us now examine them in some detail.

Agriculture and the Canal System.

As I have pointed out, the cultivated land in Ḥurēiḍah is fixed in terms of the canal system, and cannot be increased in area, since cultivation depends on flood irrigation. The whole of the cultivated area is divided into three sections, each being irrigated by a separate canal system. Two of these systems are flooded from the same source -- the secondary Wādī Nsim. The third (the Tadjrūb canal system) receives floods from the main Wādī 'Amd, and I shall describe this one briefly in order to show how the canal system operates.

The Tadjrūb canal system (see diagram 9, p. 161) diverts water from the main course of floods coming down

Top pictures: A part of a branch canal.



Bottom picture: A part of the Tadjrüb canal system.

from Wādī 'Amd. A diversion is created by a small dam, which has been built to a particular height so that it can divert just enough water to irrigate the cultivated area covered by this canal system. The assumption is, that given one 'normal' flood, the dam should divert just enough water into the canal system. From the diversion, the water reaches Ḥurēiḍah through a main canal which, at a certain point, is divided into four tributary canals. The size of each of these branch canals is measured on the basis of the area they must irrigate. Hence branch canals may be of unequal size. Each branch canal is then sub-divided, into two or three channels - the size of each depending on the total area of land it is to irrigate. Each of these branches has off-shoots at specific points where they enter an enclosed area of land with either farms or date palms. The size of the channel - that is, the amount of water it will carry, depends on the number and size of farms and palm enclosures it irrigates. The channel cannot be enlarged in order to bring in more water, since this would mean that the amount of water going to other off-shoots further down would be reduced. If the channel cannot be altered, then the farms and palm enclosures it irrigates cannot be increased in size. Given an enclosure of date palms, if it is fully planted, the number of palms cannot be increased. Only the replacement of dead palms is possible.

A basic principle of the canal system is that water

flows from the main canal downwards and along its branches, and finally reaches the farms and palm enclosures. This means that the whole canal system slopes slowly downwards. The canals must be kept in this state all the time. The mud from the canals and main branches is put on either side. Similarly, when an off-shoot enters a palm enclosure, the side furthest from the entrance must be lower, and since the floods deposit silt every time they come, this becomes a major problem. Silt has thus to be consistently removed from the canals and enclosures so that water can flow without interruption. As a result there are huge mounds of sandy soil on both banks of the whole network of canals. The cultivated areas are thus enclosures because of the huge mounds of soil surrounding them. Since this system has been in use for as long as the people can remember, the soil mounds are considerable in size and height. They take up a considerable part of the total area. This is a serious disadvantage to the canal system, since cultivable land in the narrow valleys is scarce in the first place.

Secondly, the distribution of water by the canal system has certain drawbacks. The amount of water brought by the floods that come down the main wādī is not always the same because of the variations in rainfall. Thus, the amount of water diverted into the canal system depends on the size of the flood. Sometimes only a small amount of water reaches the canal system, and in such situations the

water is used by the places at the beginning of the canal system. Very often this is the case and the canal system irrigates only parts of the cultivated area.

Thirdly, the passage of the floods through the canal system creates certain consequences. They bring branches, weeds and small trees which obstruct the flow of water, especially at the points of divisions between the canals. Obstructions can reduce the amount of water flowing into a particular canal, and areas irrigated by it are then likely to suffer. Hence, the clearing of the canals as soon as the flood arrives is a major job that demands constant attention. Furthermore, if the flood is big enough, the force of the water always causes damage at different points in the canal system. Both these problems necessitate the repairing and cleaning of the canals, and the organisation of men to carry this out. It also involves the rights and responsibilities of each farmer in relation to the canal system.

Of the three canal systems in Ḥurēiḍah, each has an overseer - kheyyil, who is responsible for the main canal which diverts the water from the flood course in the main valley. Since damage at any point to this main canal will affect all the farms irrigated by the system, all the farmers are responsible for repairing it. They pay either in cash or in labour for such repairs, and the contribution of any individual farmer is based on the size of his farm. The overseer of the canal is responsible for organising the

work, collecting the contribution, etc. In return for his services, he can plant palms on the side of the canal. When the main canal divides, each major branch has an overseer, and all the farmers whose farms are irrigated by the particular canals are responsible for repairing any damage to it. Similarly each of the sub-branches of the major canals has its overseer with responsibilities over the canal. The offshoots are looked after by the owners of the farms irrigated by them. Thus a breakdown at point K (see diagram⁹) is the responsibility of overseer A, and all the farmers contribute to the repair. Damage at point L will be the responsibility of overseer D and only farmers along canal D will contribute to the repair. Head C1 is responsible for the branch of canal C, and point M will be repaired by C2, C3, C4, and C5. At point P on the other hand, only C2 and the people owning farms in the enclosure are responsible. Responsibility is thus divided on the same principle as that of the canal layout itself.

Given this irrigation system, there are a number of logical consequences which are of considerable economic and political importance. Firstly, since the area of cultivation cannot be increased, and since the methods of production have not been improved, an increase in population would have a serious effect on food supplies. Secondly, land is scarce and the value of cultivable land is very high. Thirdly, the inheritance system has, through successive generations,

fragmented the farms into smaller and smaller units. This suggests that the population has risen over a period. It also means that ownership of land is defined with great precision, and is therefore a likely source of conflict. A canal system like this, which imposes collective responsibility at different points, as well as creating individual vested interests, is a potential source of conflict between different groups. The organisation which is responsible for the canal system of Ḥurēiḍah - the Local Council - thus acquires considerable political importance. These implications, which result from the specific nature of Ḥurēiḍah's agricultural system, will be discussed later.

Property Ownership.

"Ownership" of property in Ḥurēiḍah means in general, individual ownership, uncomplicated by a multiplicity of rights held by different groups in the same property. When a person (a man or a woman) owns something, it means that that person has exclusive rights over the object and can dispose of it in any way he or she likes. If a man and his adult sons work on a farm, the father has legal rights over it, unless this right has been formally transferred to his sons. Children do not have any right over their father's property until he dies, in which case all his inheritors have a collective interest in the property. When the property is divided between them according to the inheritance rules,

then each assumes exclusive rights over the share allotted to him or her. However, there are exceptions to the general principle of individual ownership. Since property can remain undivided, if desired, for a long time, it is not uncommon for siblings to own their father's wealth collectively until they decide to divide it. In Ḥurēiḍah the only people who claim collective ownership over land are the Bāsahl and Gabā'il. The Bāsahl claim that the ridge they reside on and the few plots surrounding it are owned by all the Bāsahl. Similarly, the four Gabā'il settlements also have collective ownership over the building sites of their settlements. Part of the Sagra clan,¹ which resides in settlements A is part of the Ja'da tribal structure and has collective rights over its clan territory outside Ḥurēiḍah. In this area, neither members of other Gabā'il tribes nor people from the town can build a house or dig wells, without the permission of the whole clan. Apart from these exceptions however, all property is owned on an individual basis.

Collective ownership is thus reduced to the minimum and is restricted to the residential area only. Other forms of property are owned on an individual basis, and even after the death of the owner an undivided inheritance is shared amongst the inheritors. Property in Ḥurēiḍah means agricultural land, palm trees, building plots, houses, domestic animals and personal belongings ranging from house utensils,

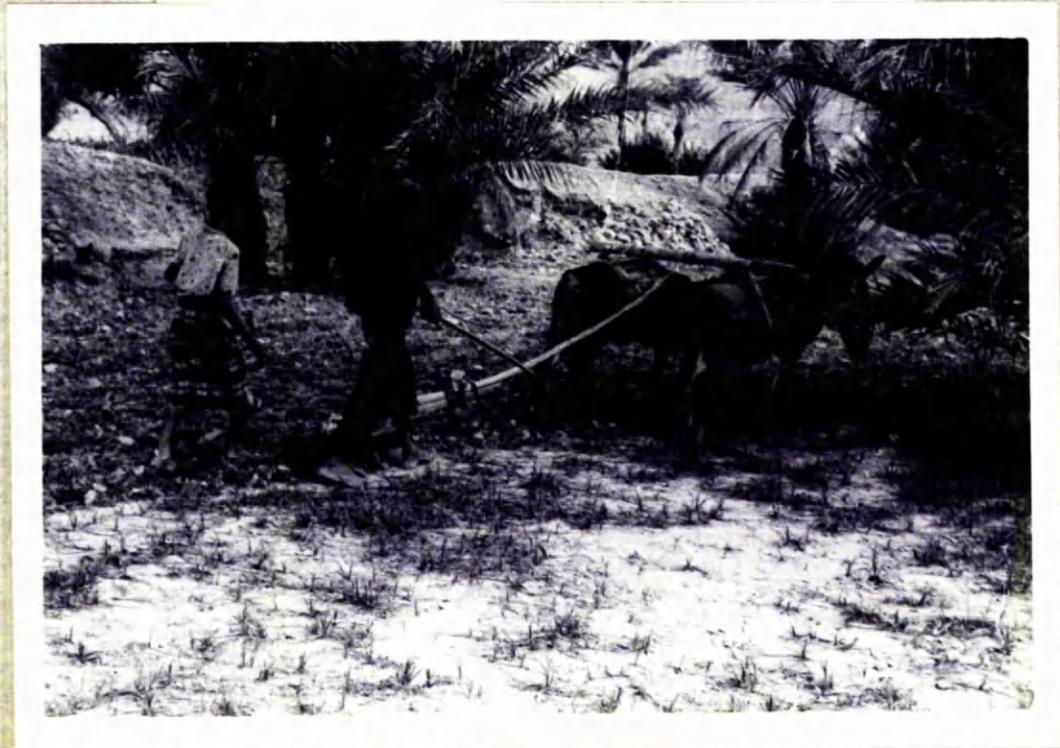
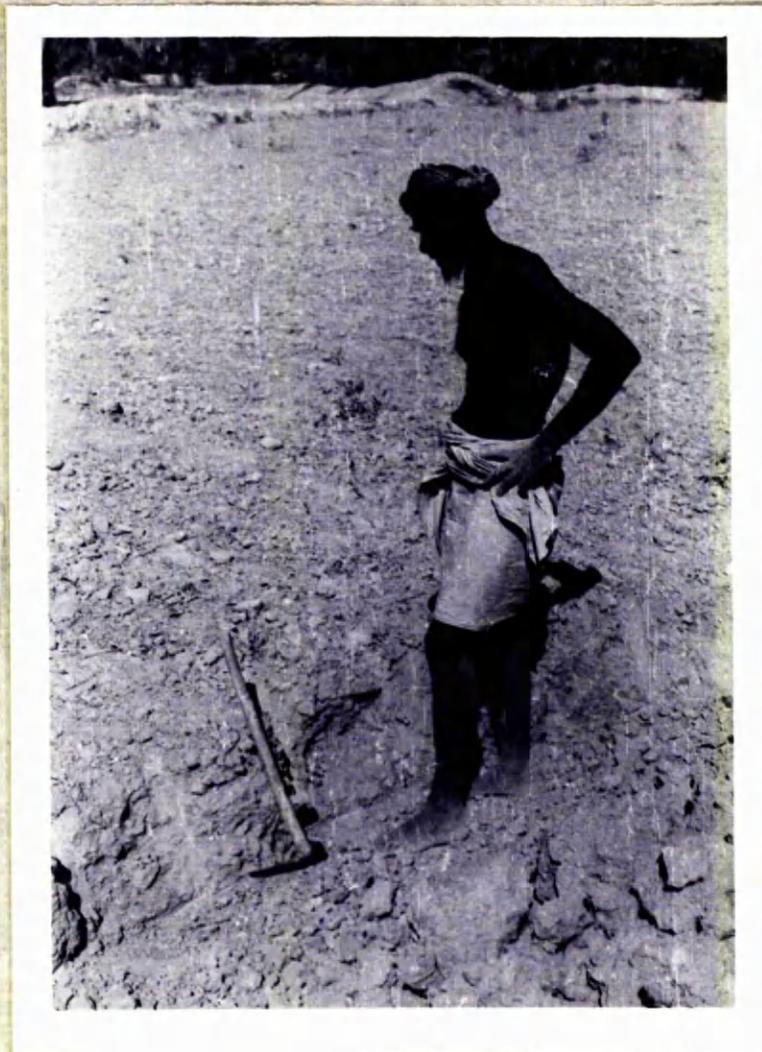
1. See genealogy, Diag. 5 p. 106 Ch. XV.

radios and clothes, to manuscripts. If a man dies leaving a wife, a son and a daughter, his property would then be divided in the following way. One-eighth of the property would go to the wife and seven-eighths to the children. Of the seven-eighths, a son's share is twice that of a daughter. This ratio of division is fixed by the *Ḳur'ān*, but what is important here is the method of division. If the man owned thirty palms of different types and sizes (they might be dispersed throughout the cultivated area) then the palms would be categorized on the basis of their monetary value into a number of lots. If one lot included, let us say three palms, then these would be divided first between the wife and children. Then the children's share would be divided on the basis of two shares to the boy, one share to the girl. If the second lot were twenty palms, they would be divided similarly, and the remaining seven of the thirty palms would be divided on the same basis. The same principle is used for farm strips. If the man had two strips of land of unequal value, in areas served by different canal systems, then each strip would be divided between the mother and the children, each taking his or her appropriate share. Houses, building plots and other forms of property are similarly divided. This brief description is a highly simplified version of the complex method of inheritance. But the main point here is to indicate how the inheritance system fragments property in general, and farms in particular, in

minute and uneconomic units. Furthermore, it disperses a person's agricultural property over different parts of the cultivated area. It is possible for instance, for five people to have different shares in one date palm. One person may own the land on which the palm has been planted (even the indentation in the soil in which the palm grows could be owned by more than one person), and therefore have a half share in the palm. The other half would be owned by the man who had planted the palm, or, if he is dead, his share could be divided amongst his inheritors, each taking a different proportion of the proceeds. Similarly a small plot of land could be fragmented to the same extent. This considerable fragmentation is not only uneconomical but necessitates a high degree of precision in defining the position of a person's palms or strips of farm within an enclosure. This is a field of unlimited possibilities for disputes, especially since the methods of establishing ownership introduced by the government courts encourage such disputes. This is of course a political problem, but given a combination of these factors - a fixed area of cultivable land and therefore a scarcity of land, giving it a high value, together with a high degree of fragmentation - it is safe to assert that disputes are likely to result.

Cultivation and Land Holding.

The cultivated land of Ḥurēiḍah is divided into two types:-



Top and bottom pictures: Different stages of preparing farm enclosures before planting seeds.

- (i) There are enclosures which are planted with date palms and nothing else.
- (ii) There are farm enclosures in which millet is the main crop.

Dispersed between the millet stalks are beans and simsim.

The two types of farms present different problems and requirements. The palm tree needs watering seasonally until it reaches a certain stage, after which it can stand up to four successive years of drought. No preparation is required apart from pollinating the tree and making sure that the ground is clear so that water can reach the tree and sink into the earth. During the harvest period, the palms require constant attention to protect them from birds and thieves.

Millet cultivation on the other hand requires considerable preparation at all stages - from one harvest to the next. Millet is grown in the same plots, year in and year out for a long time. Hence the yield of the soil is very low. Considerable preparation is necessary even for a 'normal' yield. Deep tilling and fertilising before and after the floods, and constant weeding while the millet is growing are the minimum requirements. When the millet forms on the stalk, a minute by minute watch is necessary to protect the crop from the swarms of hungry birds, which if not driven away can wipe out the millet crop of a sizeable enclosure in two days.

There is a tendency for the two types of enclosures

(i.e. the palm and the millet enclosures) to concentrate in certain areas. But there are however some areas where the two intermingle. Both types of enclosures are highly fragmented i.e. many people own strips of farms or palm dates in each enclosure. This is shown clearly by the diagrams below.

A

1	2
3	4
5	
6	
7	
8	9
10	11
12	
13	14
15	16

Diagram A: A farm enclosure.

Diagram A represents an actual farm enclosure of millet about one and a quarter acres in size (160 maṭīrah).

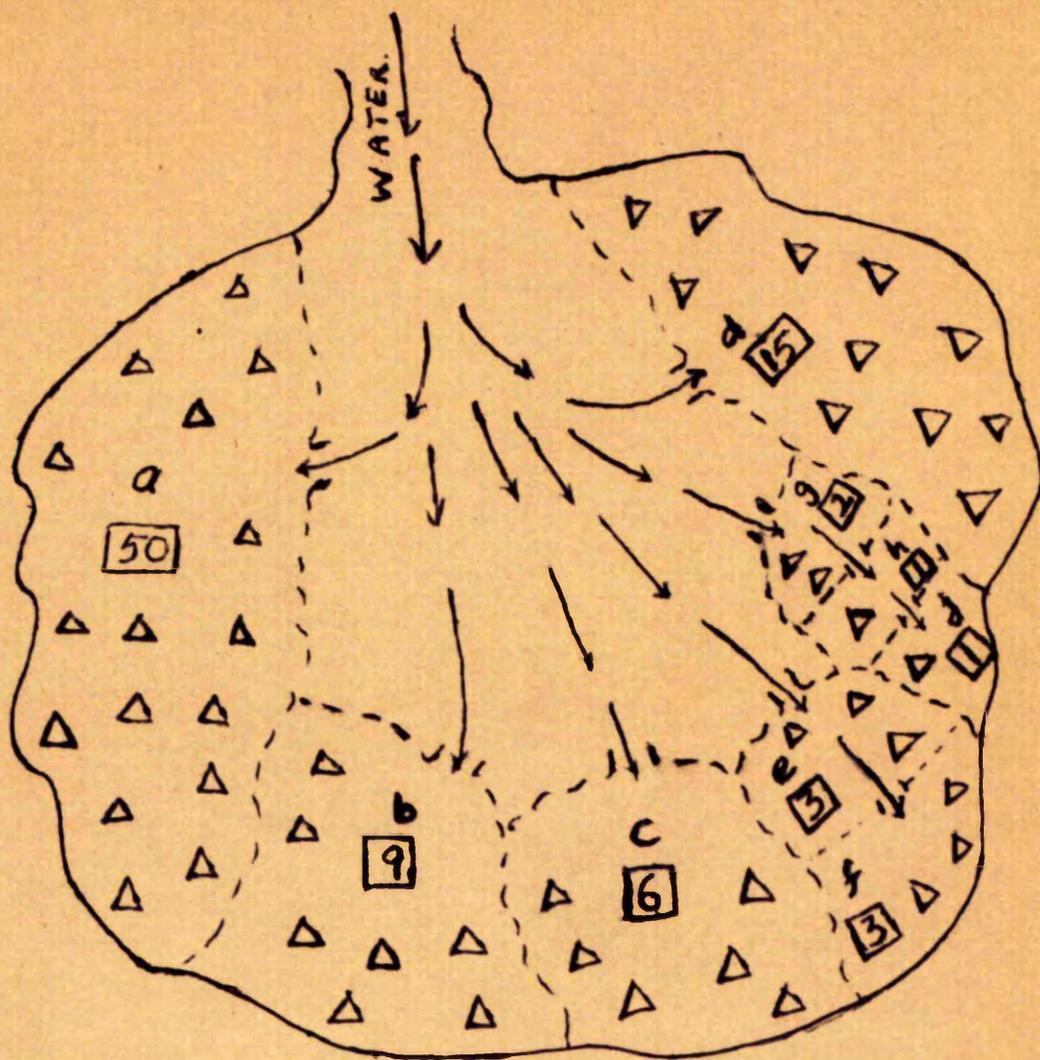
It is divided into sixteen pieces owned by different people. Strips 3 and 8 are owned by one man, another owns strips 1 and 2, and another 14 and 15. Strips 6, 7 and 11 are separately owned by three brothers. The rest of the strips are owned by one person each. A farm enclosure

of 160 maṭīrah divided into sixteen pieces gives an average of 10

maṭīrah to each (3,240 sq.ft.) The

size of a farm enclosure (djarb) varies from between 70 and 80 maṭīrah to 1,500 maṭīrah (the largest). However most of the enclosures are between 100 and 200 maṭīrah and are owned by an average of four to six people. A person will own an average of between 20 to 50 maṭīrah in one farm enclosure. Since the overall average ownership of land is 1.2 acres

DIAGRAM B



A PALM ENCLOSURE.

(about 150 maṭīrah), it is reasonable to assume that a household will have its farm strips scattered in at least three farm enclosures.

Diagram B represents an actual palm enclosure (about 180 maṭīrah). It contains 90 palm trees divided between ten owners. The palm trees are referred to as hufrah (the indentation on which the tree grows). In the diagram, the alphabets represent the owners and the encircled numerical figure represent the number of palm trees each owns. Thus owner b has 9 palm trees and so on. Within the enclosure, the palms of one owner are not always concentrated in one part; sometimes they are dispersed throughout the enclosure.

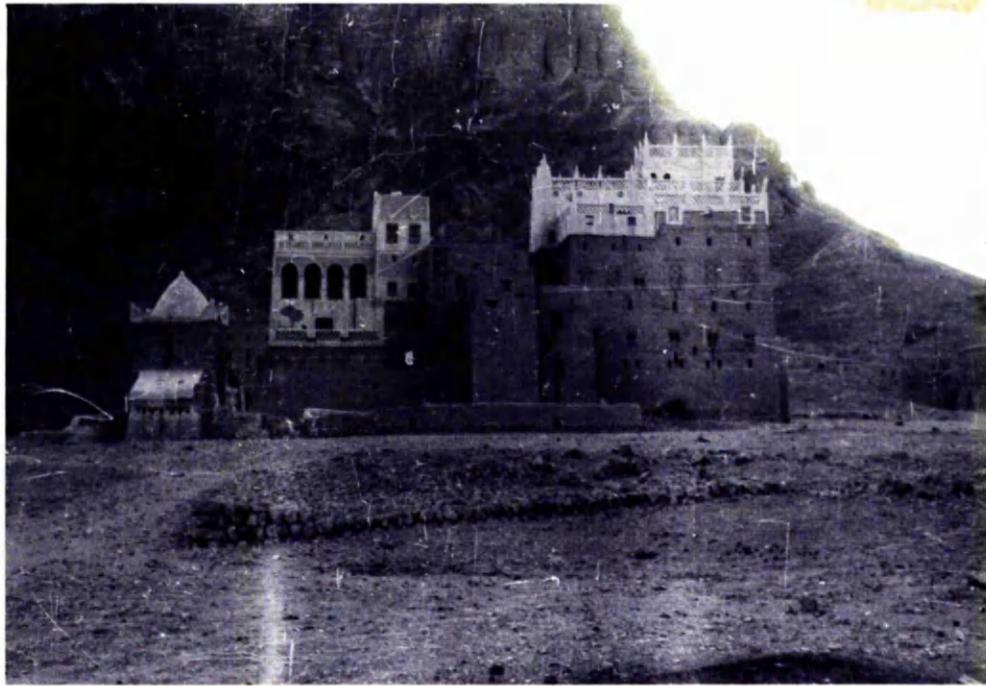
Both diagrams A and B show the high degree of fragmentation in the two types of enclosures. There are some enclosures (of both types) which belong to one owner entirely. But this is uncommon and the above diagrams characterise the prevalent pattern of ownership. The dispersal of holdings and their continuous fragmentation is thus an important aspect of the land tenure system.

Traditional Non-Agricultural Occupations

Although Ḥurēiḍah's economy is largely based on agriculture, there are a number of economic activities outside this sphere which involve an elementary division of labour. Specialisation is mainly in craft occupations - carpentry, pottery making, silver and iron smithing and

mason's work. The occupations are carried out by particular families, with the skills handed on from father to son. Secondly, there are many people who are engaged as labourers, especially in the different stages or work necessary for house-building and for agriculture. Included among these labourers are water carriers and servants. Thirdly, there are ceremonial servants, who get paid for their specific roles in ceremonies. It must be emphasised that nearly all these people engaged in paid non-agricultural activities are small-scale farmers either with their own holdings or cultivate other people's farms on a share basis. The paid occupations are supplementary activities which they perform off-season or when there is a drought.

Craft occupations are on a very small scale, generally occupying only one family, or occasionally two. The iron and silver used by the smiths comes from outside Ḥurēiḍah, but the clay for pottery, the timber for carpentry and all the materials used in housebuilding are from local sources. The 'ilb tree is the only source of timber for building houses, and because these trees are scarce, their value is high, and is determined by the usefulness of a stem or branches for building purposes. In building a house, the timber is used for supports, or for doors and windows. The rest is built on stone foundations, and then constructed from mud slabs mixed with wheat straw. Lime powder for white-washing and the sand used in cement are both found

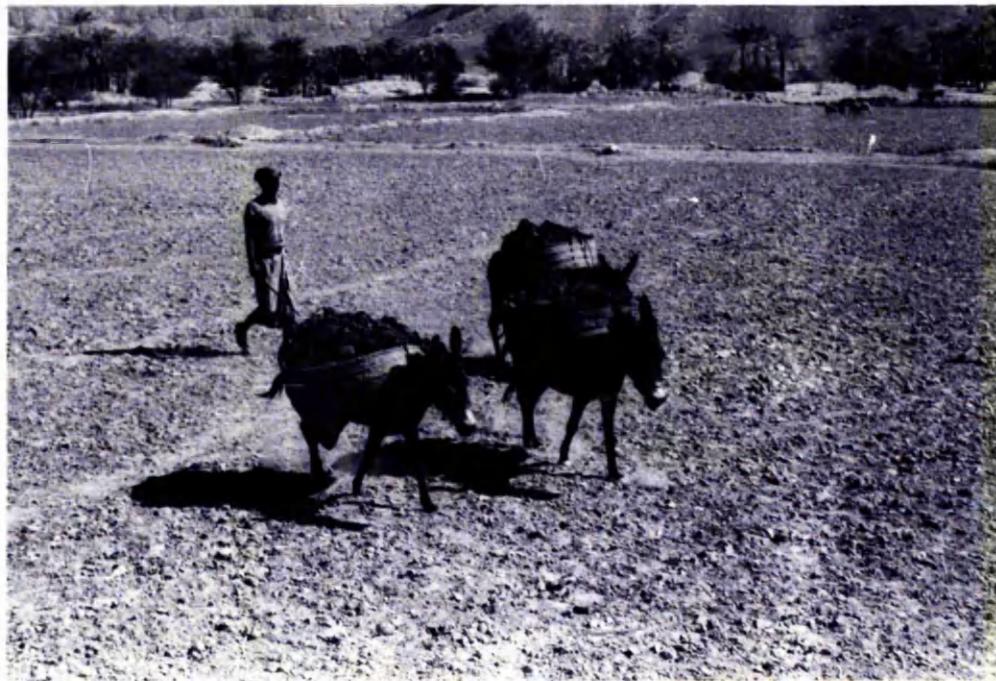


**Top picture: A large and pre-war 'Attas house.
Bottom picture: A foundation for a new house.**

locally. The process of building a house necessitates a large labour force for cutting and transporting stones, making and carrying mud slabs, and the actual brick-laying. House-building thus employs a sizeable part of the manual labour force. Similarly, agricultural work takes a large part of the labour force for preparing the farms before and during the floods. Rich people with large holdings employ labour on their farms. It is usually the case that those who construct houses are also, at different periods, agricultural labourers. Agriculture is, however, given priority.

Ceremonial services are performed by the Şubyān only. Each Şubyān family serves a number of non-Şubyān families in particular ceremonies. They get paid for such services, and in addition every family has a number of obligations to its şabiy - ceremonial servants. Besides the payment for service, a person must give his şabiy gifts of food and clothes during the 'Īd festivals, or when he returns from a journey. He must give him a gift from the harvest, and left-overs from all the feasts held in the house. These extra payments constitute a substantial part of the şabiy's family budget.

In periods of drought these non-agricultural activities fall to a very low level, since the total income of the people is then reduced to a minimum. In the past, those Masakīn who were out of work used to leave for the coast at this period until the drought was over. At present



Top picture: Transportation within Hureidah.
Bottom picture: A lime-furnace in Hureidah.

however there is a constant flow of money in Ḥurēiḍah from its migrants abroad, and this money stimulates non-agricultural activities. During the year 1962-3, at the height of a three year drought, two new houses were built and three old ones extensively repaired. This provided a continuous source of income for the builders, the carpenters and the labourers, and indirectly, the shopkeepers. Hence these activities are dependent on the maintenance of a high level of purchasing power created by remittances from labour migrants. This brings me to a description of the relation between local economic resources and the 'needs' and size of Ḥurēiḍah's population.

Production and Subsistence

Let us now examine Ḥurēiḍah's economy as a whole. From this it will be clear that the internal economy cannot maintain the population, even at a 'subsistence level'. It will also be clear that partly as a result of the wider political and economic changes in the Ḥaḍramaut, the basic 'necessities' of a family in Ḥurēiḍah have changed, and as a result Ḥurēiḍah's economy has become part of a wider economic system. The result is a high percentage of labour migration which to some extent bridges the gap between Ḥurēiḍah's local resources, and its inhabitants' newly acquired 'needs'.

Ḥurēiḍah's agriculture must be seen in the context

of the regional climate because this is an important factor. During my field work in 1962-3 there was no harvest because there had been no floods for three successive years. At the end of my stay, floods came to Ḥurēiḍah without any rain having fallen in the village. In fact the floods exceeded expectations and caused widespread damage to the canal system - damage which may cost some of the farmers more to repair than they will receive in income from their harvest. Furthermore, in the last three decades there have been three major droughts - one of seven years and two of three years each - apart from the usual alternation between one year of drought in two or three full or partial irrigation. Hence the uncertainties of the floods and the frequent droughts are major factors to be taken into consideration when assessing the productive capacity of Ḥurēiḍah's agriculture.

With this in mind, I will try to give an approximate estimation of Ḥurēiḍah's agricultural productive capacity. The cultivated area is being constantly measured in order to assess the amount a farmer has to pay in contributions towards repairing damaged canals. The overseer (kheyyl) of each canal system keeps a record of the area of all the farms irrigated by the canals. Palm enclosures are measured in terms of the number of holes in which the palms are planted. Each palm counts for two units. The unit of measure used for measuring the size of the millet farms and the number of palms is the same - the maṭīrah (134.4 maṭīrah =

1 acre).¹ The total area of the cultivated land is about 532.7 acres (71,600 maṭīrah). After an intensive discussion with a group of local agricultural experts,² we came to the conclusion that about 30,000 maṭīrah of the total is planted with date palms, and since the local system of measurement gives two maṭīrah for each palm tree, the number of palms will be approximately 15,000. Thus of the total area of 71,600 maṭīrah, only about 41,600 (309.5 acres) is used for millet farms.

Assessing the number of palms and the total area of millet farms of Ḥurēīdah is easy enough because records exist. Records of the size of each holding are very necessary in an area where cultivated land is scarce and where the inheritance system demands precise sub-division of property. But to calculate the amount of dates and millet produced is very difficult, since no records are available and no attempt had been made before to make such calculations. Furthermore, there are inherent difficulties that make any attempt to arrive at an exact figure almost impossible. Firstly, the millet farms produce different amounts per maṭīrah because of variations in the preparation of the land. Secondly, each palm may have a number of stems from the root and some of these stems are as good as a single palm. The number of

1. 1 maṭīrah = 324 sq. feet.

2. Made up of four people - the three overseers of the canals, and the fourth a farmer with experience of arbitrating in agricultural disputes. He also knows in great detail the layout of farms and palms in Ḥurēīdah.

stems varies from two to twenty for one tree. The size and weight of the fruit stem varies from 10 lbs. to 50 lbs. Thirdly, not all the palm trees are producing dates since there are many which are still too young to produce dates. Fourthly, as I have pointed out earlier, the harvest is not seasonal due to frequent droughts, and it is not always a full harvest. It will be necessary in our calculations to assume an "average palm tree", as well as the average produce of a maṭīrah in a millet farm. Nevertheless the margin of error in these calculations is minimised by the knowledge of the group of local experts who have suggested the following figures for a full harvest:-

An average palm tree with five branches
will produce... 150 lbs of dates
($\frac{1}{2}$ bahār)

An average maṭīrah planted with millet
will produce... $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs of millet
($\frac{1}{2}$ gahāwil)

The bahār is the bag of dates weighing 300 lbs; the gahāwil the bag of millet weighing 15 lbs. Calculation of the productive capacity of Ḥurēiḍah's agriculture will be based on these figures, which in turn are based on the assessment of the local experts and on my own observations. It is the only method of arriving at an approximate figure of the total production.

If we assume a full harvest, Ḥurēiḍah's total production for one season will be as follows:-

Dates	7,500 Bahār	=	1,004 tons 9 cwt.
Millet	20,800 Gahāwil	=	139 tons 5.7 cwts.

In addition there are the beans and the simsim, but since these are grown between the stalks of millet on a very small scale they are impossible to measure. We can neglect them without increasing very much the margin of error in the total figures. In fact they are more than offset by the fact that nearly half of the weight of any date is made up of its stone, and therefore the total weight of the edible part of the dates is considerably less than the figure given here. The amount of produce given above must now be related to the total population of Ḥurēiḍah. The figures are:-

<u>No. of Households</u>	<u>No. of People</u>
<u>426</u>	<u>1,912</u>

The 426 households have an average of 4.4 persons each. If we relate the total agricultural production of Ḥurēiḍah in a full harvest year to its population, we have the following figures:-

Dates	17.5	<u>Bahār</u>	(5,250 lbs)	per household.
Millet	48	<u>Gahāwil</u>	(360 lbs)	per household.

If we take a different method, we arrive at approximately the same results:-

The total cultivated area is	532.7	acres
This is an average of	1.2	acres per household.

If the average household farm of 1.2 acres is divided between 0.7 acres for millet and 0.5 for date palms, then the production in a full harvest year will be:-

Dates	16.75	<u>Bahār</u>
Millet	47.1	<u>Gahāwil</u>

Whichever set of figures we take, the total agricultural produce of the household will be used to feed an average of 4.4 people from one harvest to the next - assuming that this is about one year. In fact, of course it is usually more. Since agriculture is the sole source of income from internal sources, it must cover all other expenses - for clothes, the house, feeding the animals and for other contingencies. If the head of the household were to sell half the amount of his dates at the 1962 prices, he would get about 400 shillings - that is £20. But most households do not sell their dates since dates constitute the main source of food; millet similarly cannot be spared for sale. Hence the dates and millet of an average household cannot provide money to meet the other necessary requirements of the household. Since agriculture is the basis of Ḥurēiḍah's local economy and the major source of its income, we must assume that it cannot provide for or sustain the basic needs of the present day population of Ḥurēiḍah. These basic needs must be provided for by an income from sources outside Ḥurēiḍah. But what are the basic needs of an average household in Ḥurēiḍah today?

Since the establishment of the authority of the Qu'āity and Kathīri Sultanates over the whole of Ḥaḍramaut, 'peace' has prevailed over the country. With the establishment of 'authority', the British Government introduced a single currency throughout the South Arabian Protectorate

which includes 'Aden. Since 1945 Ḥaḍramaut has been drawn into a wider economic system that encompasses the whole of South Arabia and, through 'Aden, it has become part of an international economic system. From the early fifties transport has been motorised and the port of Mukalla is regularly visited by cargo boats from East Africa and 'Aden. About five years ago, air transport between Ḥaḍramaut and 'Aden was introduced and now there are regular twice-weekly flights between the two areas. Today imported goods come regularly by air and sea to Mukalla, and from there are dispersed by motor transport to the remote villages of the interior. The introduction of this wider and complex economic system into Ḥaḍramaut has not been accompanied by any increase in economic productivity in the country such as the introduction of light or heavy industry, or the bringing of new land under cultivation, or by improving methods of cultivation. In fact Ḥurēidah could be taken as typical of the whole country in the sense that its local economy has remained static, but it is now absorbing a flood of imported foods and light manufactured goods from the far flung corners of the world - Japanese, Indian, Hongkong, British, Egyptian and German goods are all displayed on the shelves of its little shops. The introduction of a wider economic system into Ḥurēidah has changed the needs and tastes of the people, but has not at the same time provided a new internal source of income for purchasing these new needs. There are

of course no figures to show that this is true for the whole country, but it is certainly the case in Ḥurēiḍah and our brief examination of occupations and family budgets will illustrate this.

The following are new occupations introduced into Ḥurēiḍah within the last ten years, and which do not depend on local economic resources:-

TABLE B

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>No. of Persons Employed</u>
1. Shopkeeping.....	11
2. Post Office Staff.....	2
3. School Teachers.....	2
4. 'Secretaries' (Central Government)...	2
5. President of Local Council (unpaid)..	1
6. Grinding Machine Operator.....	1
	<hr/>
Total.....	19 or 0.98%
	<hr/> of total population.

The introduction of these new occupations into Ḥurēiḍah has not brought in a substantial new source of income. Those without the new occupations must depend on local sources for their income - in other words primarily on agriculture. But the wider economic system has brought eleven small shops, all of which compete to sell their goods. It is significant that all the goods sold in these shops are imported. Not a single item produced in Ḥurēiḍah or in other parts of the Ḥaḍramaut is sold in the shops. Thus apart from providing an income for the owners, the shops are not even an indirect source of income to the rest

of the people in Ḥurēīdah. Yet they exist because people buy from them. What sort of things does the average household buy from these shops? From a random sample of eight people's shopping lists for a whole month, the following are the main items bought.

A. Food

1. Tea, sugar, tinned milk
2. Cooking oil, ghee
3. Tinned tomatoes and fish:
curry ingredients
4. Rice, wheat
5. Dried fish
6. Sweets

B. Other Items

1. Cigarettes and tobacco
2. Kerosene
3. Cash

The lists were taken at random from a shopkeeper's book. These things were bought daily from the shop by the household mainly on credit. Payment was intermittent and depended on the availability of work for the household heads involved. The shopkeepers were unanimous that the above items are those they sell most frequently. Other items are sold only rarely. If we compare this list with another one made by different customers of the same shops we will find a close similarity. The second list was drawn up by three heads of households. I asked each separately to write down the essential things he bought for one month for his household. The lists of the three men had the same items but varied in the quantity of each because the size of the three households was different. There was one exception however and this was the item of meat. Two did not include it in their list because they thought it too expensive. The third

person bought it twice a month.¹ However they were all agreed that the rest of the items were essential and a 'minimum requirement' for living. The list is as follows:-

A. Food

1. Tea, sugar
2. Cooking oil
3. Tinned tomatoes and fish:
curry ingredients including
onions and salt,
4. Rice and millet
5. Dried fish, meat
6. Dates
7. Food for the animals
(camels or donkeys)

B. Other Items

1. Kerosene, charcoal,
2. Soap

The similarity between the two lists is very close, but there are slight differences. Firstly, millet, dates and the food for animals would not usually be bought, because each household gets these from its farms. This happened to be at the height of a drought in which there had been no flood for three successive years. Thus most of the stocks of agricultural produce, millet, dates and millet stalks, had run out and people had to buy these from the shops. Secondly, in this list we see an addition of such items as matches, coal and soap which do not appear in the other list. This can be explained by the item 'cash' in the first list. Cash is borrowed from shopkeepers and may be used to buy these particular items from other shops if that shop does

1. Meat is scarce in Ḥurēiḍah. If one wants meat one tries to find another person or persons to share the cost of slaughtering an animal. A pound of meat by this method would cost about 6 sh. To slaughter a whole goat or sheep costs between 40 sh. and 100 sh.

not sell them. The borrowing of cash (50 cents to 5 shillings) is significant. It means that the households had no cash at all and had to borrow it in order to buy things from other shops. In fact 'borrowing' is a great problem about which the shopkeepers continually complain. People take things from the shop, but some do not pay back simply because they have no money. When I asked the shopkeepers why they gave goods to the people on credit terms, they gave two reasons:

- (i) People do not normally have a regular source of cash, but pay back the money when they get some cash.
- (ii) Some people would starve if they did not 'lend' them the basic things they required.

I should also add perhaps that if one shopkeeper does not lend the money, another one will, and since these shopkeepers are competing with one another they cannot afford to turn down potential customers. One shop in fact had to close down when it was no longer able to meet the demands of its customers for loans. Nevertheless the implication of all this is that many households have a constant acute shortage of cash, and this will become clear when we consider the total amount spent on the month's shopping.

I do not claim that the lists given above are exhaustive of what all the people of Ḥurēiḍah buy. I know as a fact that at least four of the wealthy people of Ḥurēiḍah import their food in bulk, directly from the big towns and have a very wide range of items in their diet. Such families

rarely eat millet and dates as a main meal but try to buy the latest in packed and tinned foods. However the lists do represent the type of items bought regularly by most of the households. There are two important things to note from the lists:

- (i) All the items are bought from the shops and therefore require money or the loan of money.
- (ii) There are many items in the shops which are occasionally bought by the people which are not included in the lists - medicines, transistor batteries, clothes, toys, lamps, cooking utensils, tinned fruit, etc. What is left out of the list is important in that it emphasises that the items given in the lists are considered to be 'necessities'.

As I have said, money is necessary for acquiring these goods from the shops. This money must come from outside Ḥurēiḍah - how much of it is required, I shall discuss shortly. If the lists indicate that the goods bought are considered to be basic necessities, it also shows graphically that the 'needs' of ordinary people have changed, since all the items are imported and many have only been introduced in the last fifteen years. It shows that the agricultural produce of Ḥurēiḍah itself is now only one element in the family budget based on changing tastes. Hence the little that Ḥurēiḍah can produce is inadequate for what the people actually eat and use, and what they expect to have. Ḥurēiḍah's local resources can no longer meet the demands of the people, which are now only satisfied by a wider economic system. How much is required to satisfy the basic demands of the sample households?

The eight households, whose shopping lists were taken from the shopkeeper's accounts, had an average of four people. The average of the total cost of the shopping for one month is 121 sh. 3 cts. This works out to about 30 sh. per person per month. On the other hand the average of the total cost of the goods in the other three lists came to 218 sh. 12 cts. The households had an average of six people, and this works out to an average of 36 sh. 33 cts. per person. Thus any person in a household spends between 30 sh. to 36 sh. 33 cts. per month on 'basic necessities'. Luxuries, such as clothes, meat, medicine, fruit, vegetables or radios, could be sacrificed. Since the average number of people per household in Ḥurēidah is 4.4, we can take the monthly figure of the first sample to be a better approximation for household spending. Each household therefore spends approximately 121 sh. 3 cts. per month on basic necessities. This in my view is a conservative estimate.

Migration: An Economic Necessity.

Earlier in this discussion I attempted to calculate approximately the agricultural production of a household in a good harvest year. We found out that each household can expect 5,250 lbs of dates and 360 lbs of millet. For an average household of four people, this amount of dates could be sufficient for a year's supply of food and therefore a little of it could be sold in order to obtain cash for other things. But the amount of millet is certainly

insufficient for a year's supply and therefore cannot be sold without risk. Secondly because of the uncertainties of the harvest, many households store their produce against drought. Hence agricultural produce cannot be a source of income for buying other requirements. Similarly the traditional occupations depend partly on agriculture, and partly on indirect income from outside. They cannot be a source of income for satisfying newly acquired needs. The only other source that could provide a money income is the new occupations that have come about as a result of the wider economic system. But as we have seen, these provide income to only 0.98 per cent of the total population and therefore cannot have much economic effect.

Apart from the basic needs which require a regular income, there are other requirements which demand more, if not regular money. These are for household furniture ranging from cooking utensils to mats and lamps. There are also marriage expenses, capital for building a house and repairing it, and clothes. All these require lump sums of money, which the local economic resources cannot provide to every household.

If an average household in Ḥurēidah requires approximately 121 shillings per month to pay for basic necessities, as well as an occasional lump sum of money for other equally necessary 'needs', then we must ask from what source is this income derived? I have shown that the local

economic resources cannot be the source for such income, nor can the new occupations brought into being by the wider economic system. But since the migration of labour is an extremely important phenomenon in Ḥurēiḍah, we must conclude that this is the source whereby the new needs are satisfied. The reason for the migration of Ḥurēiḍah's men then, is economic necessity.

In the next chapter I shall discuss the economic role of migration and relate it ultimately to the main theme of change and social stratification.

CHAPTER VILABOUR MIGRATION AND STRATIFICATION

I ended the last chapter saying that migration from Ḥurēiḍah is an economic necessity. I also mentioned in passing that migration is one of the major agents of social change. This will become clear when I show the extent of migration and discuss its effects. It is therefore necessary at this stage to discuss the whole question of the relation between migration and the social hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah.

It is as well to point out from the outset that migration (and emigration) from Ḥurēiḍah, has a long history, as was indicated in the last chapter and in Chapter II. Furthermore a migration phenomenon, especially if it is as extensive and of such long standing as it is in Ḥaḍramaut, is highly complex and its effects permeate widely in the matrix of the society. Thus I will of necessity omit many interesting aspects of this phenomenon and confine myself entirely to those aspects of migration related to the theme of change and stratification in Ḥurēiḍah.

Since labour migration has a long history, I will deal with the post-war wave only. The war did make a major break in the migration process. Pre-war migration (and emigration) was mainly to distant countries such as India, the Far East and East Africa. It also took place during the traditional period when there was no established State in

the country and no motorised transport. On the other hand, the post-war wave is entirely a migration of labour and mainly to the neighbouring Arab countries. During the war and since, two States have been established in the country and motorised as well as air transport introduced. Post-war labour migration is thus a continuing process in the present and is affecting the social and economic organisation of Ḥurēiḍah and the country as a whole. It therefore makes good sense empirically and analytically to treat the post-war wave as a separate phenomenon and limit my discussion to it. In this discussion I propose to show that labour migration has had a considerable effect on the social hierarchy of Ḥurēiḍah, but that the order of the differential control of economic resources has not as yet been changed.

In Ḥurēiḍah today, 66.7% of the adult male population (that is, men over the age of fifteen years) have migrated to one or more countries at one time or another of their lives. At the time of the survey (1962-63), 37.4% of the adult males were away working in various countries, while 29.1% were in Ḥurēiḍah but have been abroad before. Only 33.3% of the adult males had never migrated before. Thus labour migration is an extensive phenomenon in Ḥurēiḍah.

The main reason for migration, as was pointed out in the last chapter, is economic necessity. Economic necessity, as a "pushing" force, is a general cause in all situations of extensive labour migration. Similarly attraction



The latest means of transporting migrants. This air-strip is only fifteen miles from Hureidah.

to the urban life (from the discomforts and subsistence of rural life) is accepted as a "pulling" factor, a general and contributory cause of migration. However over and above these general "push and pull" forces in migration, there are in Ḥaḍramaut specific factors which have increased the scale and frequency of labour migration, as well as accommodating it as a permanent feature of the society.

There had been a dramatic improvement in the transportation system within the last fifteen years. Until the late forties, migration necessitated travelling on a camel, a donkey or on foot from the interior of Ḥaḍramaut to the coast. From there, migrants sailed on dhows to the Arabian Gulf, 'Aden or East Africa. Both parts of the journeys were thus long, arduous and risky. However since the early fifties motor transport has been introduced within the country. Similarly a route has been opened across the Empty Quarter desert to Saudi Arabia, where most of the migrants go. Secondly, regular cargo steam ships now visit Mukalla enabling people to travel to 'Aden, the Arabian Gulf or East Africa. Thirdly, there are now weekly flights between Ḥaḍramaut and 'Aden. The last fifteen years have therefore dramatically transformed the transportation system between Ḥaḍramaut and the surrounding countries. This period corresponds to the rapid development and expansion of the oil economies of Saudi Arabia and the Arabian Gulf, as well as the expansion of the free port of 'Aden. Extensive

migration in Ḥaḍramaut is thus related to the changing transportation system and the expanding economies of the surrounding countries.

Secondly, economic insecurity in Ḥurēiḍah is a major factor in making people migrate repeatedly. The Mambwe of Central Africa migrate because of "economic necessity", but find their economic security in the land of their villages. Their migration has been described as "raiding the cash economy for goods".¹ But unlike the Mambwe, the people of Ḥurēiḍah have to migrate continuously, not only because of economic necessity, but also because of the uncertainty of the floods even for those people who can depend on the scarce land. Furthermore because of the fixed nature of the irrigation system, the recent tendency for the population to increase has added pressure on food production and inevitably increased economic insecurity in Ḥurēiḍah. I have no comparative figures to show that the population has in fact increased.² But since increase in the population has been a general trend during the last few years in this part of the world, I assume this to be the case in Ḥurēiḍah. Furthermore many emigrants who have been living in distant

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1. W. Watson, "Tribal Cohesion in a Money Economy", 1958.
 2. Ingrams (1936) estimated the population of Ḥaḍramaut to be 260,000 in 1934-35. The Government's estimate in 1962-63 was 310,000 people. No proper surveys have been carried out and in my opinion both these figures underestimate the population. For one thing they do not take into account the large number of migrants.

countries for a long time, have recently been returning to Ḥaḍramaut because of the unsettled political conditions abroad. Thus during the field work, three families with children born in East Africa returned to Ḥurēiḍah because of political insecurity there. Thus besides the limited economic resources, climatic conditions and increasing population are factors which make for a general economic insecurity.

Thirdly, the Family in Ḥurēiḍah is predominantly organised in order to accommodate continuous migration as a lasting feature in the society. Within the family, men and women play different roles and the division of labour between them is rigid. Firstly according to religious beliefs a woman must be veiled, and her face is not to be seen by any adult male who can legally marry her. Secondly, a woman's role is strictly limited to housework, the care of children and some minor work outside the house - such as weeding the farms and picking firewood. She can engage in sewing and other 'housework' to earn money if she has no one to support her. Full time work for payment outside the house is never permitted and migration to work is impossible. Thus only male members of the family can migrate. Boys are not generally allowed to migrate. Given this restriction of migration, and the limited role of women, migration necessitates certain organisational adjustments in the structure of the family which are reflected in the preponderance of particular types of family in Ḥurēiḍah.

A nuclear family, consisting of a man, his wife and small children, cannot afford the loss of any of its members by migration, unless it can depend on a wider group of relatives. If the head of the family wants to go to Saudi Arabia and work for a year or two, he must have either a brother to look after his wife and children, or he must arrange for them to live with his wife's parents. It is even more difficult if the man's mother is alive and living with him. On the other hand, a nuclear family with a grown-up son or two, can cope with the loss of the two sons as labour migrants.

An extended family, in which there are grown-up and married sons, is ideally organised for migration. Either the head of the family or the sons could migrate, leaving the others behind. If there are two or three grown-up sons they may all travel at one time, or at different times. The important point is that one man should remain behind to look after the family and carry on with the farming. Another ideal type of family organisation which can easily accommodate migration is the patrilineal joint family, in which two brothers, their wives and children - grown-up or young - live together as one family, often with their property undivided. With such a family one of the brothers and some of the grown-up sons could migrate.

In other societies it is usually the case that the patrilineal joint family is the last stage of the family

cycle, since families normally break up at this point.¹ In theory then, there should be very few such families in Ḥurēiḍah, especially since the family property is generally divided as soon as the father, as head of the family, dies.

The families in Ḥurēiḍah fall roughly into three stages of a family cycle, but, as is to be expected, there is wide variety within the ideal types of the cycle. What is significant is that there is a preponderance of families that can accommodate migration as a permanent feature. The nuclear family, which can only accommodate migration if it contains adult sons, constitutes 43.7% of the families in Ḥurēiḍah.² The extended family and the patrilineal joint family - the most suitable organisational types for migration - make up 31.7 per cent and 24.6 per cent of the total respectively. These two, taken together, make up the dominant percentage of family types in Ḥurēiḍah. There are two significant points to note here:

- (i) 51.5 per cent of the extended families have relatives from outside the family living with them on a semi-permanent or permanent basis. Such relatives are limited to the range of wife's mother, daughter and her children, brother's wife, sister and her children. This is an indication of an important organisational feature of the family, whereby kin can be taken in to live for a considerable time. This feature facilitates the migration of those heads of nuclear families which have no grown-up male members to leave behind. Such heads of families can leave their wives and children with another family to be looked after while they are away.

1. Fortes, M. 1958.

2. Figures are based on the main village and one of the Gabā'il settlements.

- (ii) Many patrilineal joint families in Ḥurēidah break up as soon as the head dies because of the strong pressure to divide the inheritance. Nevertheless this type of family constitutes 24.6 per cent of the total families. This high percentage can perhaps be explained by the fact that this kind of family is ideally structured to cope with migration. In fact it can even be argued that because many of its male members are most of the time involved in the process of migration, the chances of it breaking up are minimised.

The advantage that the extended or patrilineal joint family has over other types of family in connection with migration, is clear. With these types of families, the chances are that more than two men will be available in the family. Since only one man is required to look after the family and the farm, the rest of the manpower is available for labour migration. One of the principle weaknesses of only one man migrating is the necessity for him to interrupt his work and go home at intervals. Two men on the other hand can migrate alternately, and thus keep a continuity in their work abroad. This is sometimes necessary if the labour migrant owns a shop abroad. The difference between the two groups of migrants is indicated by these figures. 16.7 per cent of households have the head of the house away, whilst 40.3 per cent of households have other male members of the family away, such as a son or a brother. This generally means that nuclear families with no other men in the family are forced to send the head of the family, while the other two types of family can send other men who are also members of the family. In most cases this means that two to three

men are sent from families of these two types. Hence the more men there are in a family, the better are the chances of maintaining a regular income from abroad. This need not be to the detriment of maintaining the farms at home, as is generally the case where there is only one man migrant in the family. Thus in general, the predominance of particular family types, encourage men to migrate.

It is clear that over and above economic necessity, there are other important factors which have contributed to the large scale and intensive migration. Migration is intensive because people make frequent journeys between Ḥurēiḍah and the employment centres in the surrounding countries. Of the heads of households who have migrated at one time or another of their lives, 37% have been to two or more countries -- in some cases as many as six. The majority of those who go to Saudi Arabia and 'Aden make between 2 to 3 journeys to the same country. Migration is thus a continuous process in which Ḥurēiḍah is at one end and numerous urban centres at the other, with men moving to and fro, with a high rate of mobility. This intensity of migration has important implications which will be discussed later.

From Ḥurēiḍah, then, migration has been intensive and extensive. But since labour migration is a major agent of wider economic changes, it is necessary first to show in which area of Ḥurēiḍah's economy have these changes taken place. Only then can we discuss the relation between the economic changes and stratification.

General Changes in Ḥurēiḍah's Economy.

1. The Significance of Remittances.

Migrants leave Ḥurēiḍah in order to find work, earn money and send it back home. There are a few people who go on pilgrimage to Mecca and also there are some who visit rich people asking for charity. Apart from the pilgrims, the rest have the same ultimate aim - to acquire money. This money is sent back to Ḥurēiḍah as remittances of two types - as cash or as kind. The cash is remitted in two ways; either by regular or occasional instalments of sums of money through the Post Office or the local Ḥaḍrami bank, or, every time the migrant returns to Ḥurēiḍah he takes with him the bulk of the money he has earned. Goods are also sent in two ways, either by each migrant sending home bulk food and other piece goods occasionally, when a friend is returning home, or by ordering a local shop in Ḥurēiḍah to supply his family with specific amounts of food. Alternatively, when a migrant returns home he brings with him food and piece goods to increase the comforts of his house. The range of both foods and piece goods is limited to particular items which satisfy particular needs. Food is limited to rice, ghee, some tinned foods and dried fish. The piece goods are mostly personal clothes, pressure lamps, transistor radios, rugs, mattresses, cooking utensils etc. All these items can be bought locally and those who do not travel buy them from local shops. However, the migrants bring these items because it is cheaper

than buying them locally. Most people consider these to be essential items for an average household.

It is very difficult to calculate the extent of remittances coming into Ḥurēiḍah, partly because the people do not like to talk about their incomes, and partly because the remittances are not sent regularly. However, we can get an idea of their extent if we know the percentage of households receiving remittances. At the time of the survey, 1962-63, there were 49.3¹ per cent of Ḥurēiḍah's households receiving remittances from migrants abroad. Since migration involves 66.7 per cent of the adult male population, and 55.4 per cent of the heads of households have been migrants at one time or another of their lives, the figures on remittance-receivers do not reflect the true extent of the flow of money into Ḥurēiḍah. There are two reasons for this. Firstly, at the time of the survey, some migrants were in Ḥurēiḍah, resting before making another journey. Hence some households were not receiving any remittances at the time. Secondly, some migrants do not send anything while they are away, but bring all the money, food and piece goods with them when they return. Such households also technically do not receive remittances whilst the migrant is away and are therefore not represented in the figures. However, it is safe to assume that not only all households with migrants receive an income, regular or irregular from outside, but

1. Figures are based on the main village and one Gabā'il settlement.

that every migrant is a source of such income. Hence the flow of money from migrant sources is quite extensive.

II. Expenditure Pattern:

Let us now examine the pattern of expenditure of this extensive outside source of income. This can be illustrated by a few case studies.

Case I.

Place: Hurēiḍah

Time: 1949-63.

Maḥmūd, a Gabā'il tribesman, has four grown-up sons, two of whom were born in Hurēiḍah. In 1949, Maḥmūd returned to Hurēiḍah from Indonesia, after twenty years' stay, with his two sons, but with no money, to join his other two sons in Hurēiḍah. Between then and 1962, three of his sons (Said, Ali and 'Uthmān) migrated a number of times from Hurēiḍah to a number of countries. In 1962 Said and Ali had just returned from Saudi Arabia, while 'Uthmān was in Kuwait. Maḥmūd, being an old man by now, approaching eighty, kept the fourth son ('Abūd) with him in Hurēiḍah all the time. Said and Ali brought with them 17,000 shillings, most of which was earned by Said, the more skilled and educated of the two. They stayed in Hurēiḍah for six months.

During the six months, the three brothers in Hurēiḍah got married, and although the marriage ceremonies were planned to take place at the same time in order to cut down expenses, it did not work out that way. Altogether the marriage cost 4,000 shs. in bridewealth and ceremonies. The marriages took place in the first two months after the arrival of Said and Ali from Saudi Arabia. The rest of the time was spent preparing and making arrangements for building a new house near the existing one. This involved buying, cutting, and transporting some trees to the site of the house. It also entailed buying and transporting sand to the site for making the mud bricks. This cost 6,000 shs. Meanwhile the whole family was spending at the rate of 770 shs. per month for food and feeding the animals. Since there had been no harvest, due to drought, in the previous two years, most of their food had to be bought from the shops. Furthermore the drought had killed seven of their date palms valued at 1,500 shs. Thus, by the end of the six months, their money was running out, and the preparations for

building the house had to stop. Ali left for Kuwait to join 'Uthmān, whilst Said was delayed for two months because of his wife's pregnancy.

When Said left Ḥurēidah, the first floods arrived, and 'Abūd, who was left behind, began to prepare the fields. The house project would be continued later, when enough money had been earned by the migrant sons.

Case II

Place: Ḥurēidah

Time: 1954-63.

Karim, an 'Aṭṭās, is thirty years old. He went to Zanzibar in 1954, where he worked for three years in a shop, and then returned to Ḥurēidah in 1957, and got married. He lived in one part of a large house, which was divided between a number of relatives. He occupied three rooms, which he owned, and he tried unsuccessfully to buy another part of the house so that he could own a whole floor. After staying in Ḥurēidah for nearly nine months, he went to Saudi Arabia to work. For three years he tried his hand at different occupations, ranging from a houseboy's job to shopkeeping. In 1961 he returned to Ḥurēidah.

Within three months of his return, he opened up a small shop. He also began to make preparations for building a new house. After some difficulty, he found a plot near the graveyard. Between 1961 and 1962 he built the new house which cost him 13,000 Shs. and at the same time managed his shop. He also bought a few palm trees. At the end of 1962 however, his wife died. Soon afterwards his shop had to be sold, partly because he was making a loss and partly because he wanted the cash to finish the house. Five months after his wife's death, he married a divorced woman, held a very small and cheap ceremony, and then moved into his completed new house.

After the marriage, he began to make preparations for another journey, this time to Kuwait. Then suddenly the floods arrived in Ḥurēidah and Karim postponed his plans and started cultivating his holding and preparing his palms. He was glad of the floods, because when he migrates to Kuwait after the harvest, he can leave food with his family, which is cheaper than buying it all the time. The family now consists of his wife, his mother and his maternal grandmother.

Case IIIPlace: HurēidahTime: 1950-64

'Awadh, a member of the Hirthān section of the Masakīn, is fifty years old. He has four daughters, two of whom are grown-up, being seventeen and twenty years old respectively. He also has two sons of five and twelve years. Altogether, with his wife, there are eight people in the family. 'Awadh owns a number of farm plots and palm trees.

Between 1950 and 1960, 'Awadh made three journeys to Saudi Arabia. For his first journey in 1950, he sold three palms in order to have cash for his fare and to leave some money with his wife. His brother, who lives next door, looked after the family while he was away.

On the first journey 'Awadh worked for two years as a clerk. In 1952 he returned to Hurēidah, but two years later he made another journey to Saudi Arabia. This time also he worked for two years, also as a clerk. Between 1956 and 1957 he was in Hurēidah, and one of his daughters got married. On his third journey he spent three years, 1957-60. On his return, the husband of his daughter died and the widow returned to her father's house. In 1961, the second daughter got married, and 'Awadh spent about 2,000 Shs. on the marriage ceremony. But his daughter refused to have sexual intercourse with her husband, and was divorced. 'Awadh was forced to pay back the bridewealth - 1,000 Shs. He paid 500 Shs. and is now in debt to the former husband of his divorced daughter.

'Awadh occasionally works for the Local Council as a clerk, and gets paid on an informal basis. He is an informal leader of the Hirthān section, and would not do any manual work in Hurēidah. In 1962 'Awadh began to borrow money and later pawned two of his palms and some silver jewellery of his wife. In 1963 he began to talk of making a fourth journey to Saudi Arabia, but these plans were interrupted by the arrival of the floods, which tied him down at least until the harvest was over.

Case IVPlace: HurēidahTime: 1962-4

Abubakar, an 'Attās, is the most important political figure in Hurēidah. He is the President of the Local Council and is considered to be the wealthiest person in the town. He is fifty years old, and his household contains fifteen people. Two of his eldest sons are married and have children, but they are still living in his house and under his authority. One of them looks after his farm and the other one is a teacher and acts as his secretary.

Abubakar is the head of a religious Order with adherents in Pakistan, India and Burma. He has visited these places every two or three years, ever since he became the Head of the Order in 1929. Early in 1962 he made one of these journeys to the Far East, and in 1963 he visited 'Aden, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Ethiopia calling on various wealthy friends.

His main source of income is from these journeys. He has many important friends in the Central Government's hierarchy, and when they visit Hurēidah he entertains them lavishly. While in Hurēidah, Abubakar devotes all his time to the Local Council, dealing with local problems. As a result, the council revolves around him, and his power is increased because of his ability to manipulate his powerful friends in the Central Government. Abubakar's house is one of the finest in Hurēidah, with a special guest house attached to it. He lives lavishly, almost entirely on imported foods. He is also famous for his selective hospitality, and all important visitors stay at his guest house. He also finances a number of important religious ceremonies which were initiated by his father - the founder of the Order.

These four case histories suggest many points which could be followed up and discussed. Here however, we are only concerned with two aspects of the cases. Firstly, that the process of migration involves a series of journeys which are necessitated by constant economic need as well as by occasional heavy expenditure. Secondly, the cases show a general pattern of expenditure which has important

implications for the economic organisation. The economic necessity for migration has already been discussed, but what needs emphasising here is that the occasional heavy expenditure such as is required for marriage, building houses, or buying property, seems to be just as important and 'necessary', requiring an outside source of income, as the day-to-day expenses of food. In the previous chapter I considered these irregular large expenses as luxuries, in order to emphasise the importance and necessity of everyday needs. But as the cases show, this is only a half-truth, and we must consider them as part of the 'necessities' of an average household, and an important reason for migration.

The case histories also illustrate clearly the basic pattern of expenditure. The money that a migrant earns from outside the country is generally spent on one or more of the following items: (i) Food, (ii) Marriage, (iii) Property, (iv) Setting up a shop. The following figures indicate the proportion of household heads spending income from migration in various ways.

No. of Households receiving remittances.	Percentage of household heads spending mainly on marriage	On property	On Shops	Other Expenditure
154	34.6%	27.7%	10.7%	27%

These figures need some explanation. All households spend their money primarily on day-to-day food, but this table shows only expenditure other than on food. Column 2 includes people who spent their income mainly on marriage, apart from food. Column 3 is made up of people who spent their money largely on buying property (building a house or buying farms and palms). Some of the people in this column may have spent part of their money on marriage but they are not included in the first column. Similarly, column four is made up of people who have set up shops in Ḥurēiḍah. For instance, Karim of Case II got married twice, and bought property, but he is excluded from these two columns because he set up a shop. The figures of columns 2 and 3 do not therefore reflect the actual percentage of people who have spent their income on marriage and on property. Nevertheless, they give an indication of the pattern of expenditure, over and above the basic necessities of food.

Marriage expenses can be divided into two parts - the bridewealth, and the expenses of the presents, the ceremonies and the feasts. The bridewealth is paid entirely by the husband or his father - no other kinsman contributes to it. There is a difference between the amount of bride-wealth necessary for a virgin girl, and that for a divorced woman. Each group in the hierarchy has a fixed rate of bridewealth for in-group marriage (see Chapter IV). 'Aṭṭās bridewealth is the cheapest, whilst that of the Masakīn is

the most expensive. This has an important bearing on the amount of cash appropriated for marriage by the different groups.

But the most expensive part of the marriage is the ceremonies, presents and feasts. The family of each prospective spouse makes its own ceremonies and feasts. These are most lavish for the first marriage of both the spouses and can cost each family anything from 1,000 to 4,000 Shs. The most important items in this part of the marriage are clothes, jewellery and presents for the bride, which are provided by both parents of the prospective spouses; elementary furniture such as mattresses, cooking utensils and a linen chest; and the feasts and ceremonies each family has to make. The groom's family however receives some help in these expenses from the people invited to the ceremonies. Every household head who is invited is obliged to contribute some money at a particular ceremony; this varies from 1 Sh. to 20 Sh. The collective contribution can amount to as much as twenty-five per cent of the cost of ceremonies and feasts. Some people make careful calculations in their invitations so that the collective contribution can pay as much of the expenses as possible. However, the groom is obliged to make an equal contribution to the marriage expenses of each family which has contributed to his marriage. So in the long run this cancels out. This high cost of ceremonies and bride-wealth applies to first marriages, especially that of the

bride. Second marriages have small ceremonies and feasts, generally costing between 300 and 500 Shs. In general marriages are an important way of spending a large part of the cash income from labour migration. In many cases a considerable amount of saving is necessary.

The buying of property is another way in which a large part of the cash income is used. This consists in repairing or extending an old house, building a new one, buying a farm plot or palm tree, or buying domestic animals. Domestic animals are the least important, whilst housing and farms are the most important. The 'Aṭṭās have the largest houses in Ḥurēiḍah, most of them having been built in the pre-war hey-days, with income from the Far East. A few of them are occupied by as many as five nuclear families, but most of them are under-occupied by only one or two such families. The houses of the other strata are generally very small, and those of the Ḥirṭhān are very old, needing constant repairing and expansion to accommodate large families. The 'Aṭṭās as a group also occupy the largest residential area in Ḥurēiḍah in relation to their numbers, and many own empty spare sites in which they can expand. The Mashāyikh are tightly packed on a small ridge with only a small empty area nearby, whose ownership is in dispute. The Gabā'il have their own settlement areas and finding building sites is not a problem, except for those who live in the main village. The Masakīn generally have no empty

sites, especially the Ḥirṭhān whose houses are packed in the highest and oldest part of the town, with no room for new building. Thus, apart from the 'Aṭṭās and the Gabā'il, the rest of the groups in Ḥurēidah need a considerable part of their cash to repair and expand their small and old houses to accommodate the growing size of family. To build a new house, an empty site is required, which is expensive and difficult to find. A plot for one house can cost anything from 500 to 1,500 Shs. In general then the problem of housing constitutes a major item of expenditure for the Bāsahl and the Masakīn, and a slightly lesser one for the 'Aṭṭās and Gabā'il. The buying of farms and palm trees is another expensive item. The price of palm trees and farms varies considerably. Palm trees can cost from 100 to 800 Shs. a tree, and farms can cost from 10 to 100 Shs. per maṭīrah. Nevertheless the buying of palms and farms constitutes a major item of expenditure.

The setting up of shops is primarily aimed at providing a regular cash income to cover a man's expenses. Many shopkeepers find it difficult to make profits and some have closed down (see Case II). This is due partly to the problem of debt which I described in the last section and also because the shops are highly dependent on the flow of income from migrants. But the basic aim of the shopkeeper is not so much to make quick profits as to provide a regular occupation and enough income to cover his normal expenses.

The shops vary in size, the largest having a stock worth about 20,000 Shs. with daily sales varying from 10 Shs. to a rare 100 Shs. The smaller shops have a stock worth from 1,000 to 5,000 Shs., mostly in food. They have daily sales of 5 to 20 Shs. Shops are therefore a form of investment which provides a regular occupation and a meagre income for their owners and thereby avoids the necessity for migration.

The Local and the Wider Economy.

If we take an average household and calculate the total amount of cash required in a year for the basic necessities of food, and then add to it the cost of occasional expenditure such as on marriage ceremonies or property, we would find that a regular cash income is necessary over a long period of time. Income from migration not only provides for the basic necessities but is also a source of capital for investment. Extended and patrilineal joint families must expand their living accommodation if they are to stop the break-up of a family (e.g. Case I), and such necessities involve a large sum of money. However there are a few people, like Abubakar of Case IV, the Mansabs and a few others, who spend most of their regular income on entertaining officials and important guests who come to Ḥurēiḍah. They do this partly to maintain their status, and partly as a political instrument, trying to influence the men of power in the Central Government who visit Ḥurēiḍah.

The handful of individuals who do this are wealthy in the first place and receive regular income from overseas on a charity basis (see Case IV).

But the most important aspect of the inflow of cash income into Ḥurēiḍah is its effect on the economic organisation. First of all, a large part of the purchasing power it creates is spent on satisfying the newly acquired tastes in food. A new sector of the economy - the eleven shops - has thus arisen to satisfy this new demand and has become a necessary part of the economic organisation of Ḥurēiḍah. The shops are very closely related to and dependent on the purchasing power created by remittances. In December 1962, when the route to and from Saudi Arabia was blocked due to political events of the time, the Saudi Arabian mail which brought remittances to Ḥurēiḍah stopped coming for three months. All the shops experienced a sharp fall in their sales and at least one shop closed down (see Case II). However the shops are now an integral part of the economy, cashing money orders and cheques and supplying food to households on order from migrants who are away working. The shops cannot survive without the purchasing power of the remittances. But since Ḥurēiḍah's shops import almost everything from overseas via 'Aden and Mukalla, they are also part of the wider economic system. In 1962, the price of sugar in Ḥurēiḍah suddenly rose by 200 per cent, and within two days the BBC reported a world-wide rise in the price of sugar.

Another and equally important effect of the increase in internal purchasing power as a result of migration is that the traditional occupations have all been stimulated. The building of houses sets in motion a number of activities - the making of lime and mud bricks and the transporting of stones; and occupies a number of persons - manual labourers, carpenters and builders. Marriage ceremonies keep the silver-smith busy making silver jewellery. Ironsmiths also have work repairing pressure lamps and cooking utensils, and making agricultural tools. Agricultural labourers get employment even during the drought, when wealthy people hire them to irrigate young palm trees with well water lest they die of drought. The demand for property increases the already high value of farms and building sites. The inflow of remittances increases the circulation of money and thereby stimulates non-agricultural activities in Ḥurēiḍah, and ultimately provides income to those men who do not migrate. The phenomenon of migration keeps Ḥurēiḍah's economy working, as well as integrating it with a wider economic system. It is the most important factor in the context of present day conditions in Ḥurēiḍah.

Effects of Migration on Stratification.

If then we want to show the effect of migration on stratification, we must first of all find out whether the traditional differential control of wealth has been changed

or not. I have so far shown that labour migration from Ḥurēiḍah is extensive and intensive and that its effects on the general economy have been considerable. But because of the scarcity of resources in Ḥurēiḍah (and in the country as a whole), its economy is extremely limited and is now highly dependent on the inflow of remittances. Thus the changes that have taken place have not introduced new economic avenues (apart from the shops) through which groups can move up and down the economic hierarchy. This is to say that the total wealth of any group is still dependent ultimately on income from abroad. In this sense, the changes within the local economic organisation of Ḥurēiḍah have not been fundamental. Thus if we want to find out the effects of migration on the distribution of wealth within Ḥurēiḍah, then we must focus our attention not on the local economic activities, but on the income from outside. We must examine more closely the distribution of migrants between the groups and their earning capacity abroad.

There is in fact a definite correlation between the total number of migrants and their position in the social hierarchy. This is shown in the following table.

Table A.

The table shows that the percentage of migrants who were away at the time of the survey, is highest at the top of the hierarchy and lowest at the bottom. A broadly similar trend is shown by the column of total migrants. In general

TABLE A. EXPEND AND DISTRIBUTION OF MIGRATION IN THE SOCIAL HIERARCHY : 1962-63

GROUP	Total Adult Male.	Never Migrated.	Total Migrants.	Migrants in relation to total adult male		Migrants now in Saudi Arabia	Fureiqah but have been to the following countries						Total migrants of each stratum
				Away Now.	In Fureiqah Now.		'Aden	Qatar Kuwait States	East Africa	India	Indonesia		
'Aṭṭās	100% 202	13.3% 27	86.7% 175	56.6% 114	30.1% 61	85.2% migrants	- away now:-	- 7%	3.5%	3.5%	1.7%	8.2%	86.7%
Bāsahl	100% 29	6.9% 2	93.1% 27	44.8% 13	48.3% 14	78.5% migrants	- away now:-	7.3%	23.9%	14.2%	-	-	77.9%
Gaba'il	100% 207	37.2% 77	62.8% 130	33.9% 70	28.9% 60	71.6% migrants	- away now:-	-	8.5%	2.8%	10%	11.5%	58%
Hirṭhān	100% 56	28.6% 16	71.4% 40	28.6% 16	42.8% 24	87 migrants	- away now:-	6.3%	-	6.3%	-	4.2%	58%
Akhḍām	100% 164	56.1% 92	43.9% 72	20.1% 33	23.7% 39	95% migrants	- away now:-	-	3%	3%	3%	2.5%	58%
Subyān	100% 63	41.2% 26	58.8% 37	38% 24	20.6% 13	77% migrants	- away now:-	7.7%	4.1%	-	-	15.3%	58%

Notes: 1. Many migrants have been to more than one country. Such people have been included in the column of the country they stayed longest.
 2. Those who have been included in the columns India and Indonesia are now in Fureiqah and have not been anywhere else since their return. Many migrants returning from these countries have later gone to Saudi Arabia, 'Aden, Qatar etc. Such people have been included in the column of the latest country they have been to and excluded from the columns of India and Indonesia. Migrants shown to be in these latter two countries at present, are expected to return to Fureiqah although they have been there since before the war.

one can say that migration has been heaviest amongst the higher groups and lightest amongst the lower groups. There is thus a definite correlation between the number of migrants and their position in the stratification system.

It is also clear from the table that there is a common factor between the present post-war wave and the pre-war migration. In spite of the changed conditions, migration in both periods has as its main feature the close relation between the number of migrants and their position in the stratification. Without going into detail we can point to a number of factors that have contributed to maintain this important feature of labour migration. Firstly, although the war made a big break in the process of migration and brought about new conditions, there has been no major change in the economic organisation to correct the traditional imbalance in the number of migrants from each group. Secondly, the educational advantage of the 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl has, in general, made them get the higher paid jobs abroad than the other groups. This has given them an added incentive to migrate. Thirdly the inflow of money in Ḥurēiḍah stimulated the traditional occupations in the economy. Since these are done mainly by the Masakīn, this development has tended to discourage them from migrating because of the new possibilities of earning money at home however little. Fourthly although everyone migrates because of economic necessity, the process of migrating from Ḥurēiḍah to, let us say, Saudi

Arabia requires high capital (relatively). This capital is required for (a) fares, since distances are great and travelling expensive; (b) to leave enough food at home, especially if floods for that year have failed. Thus the wealth acquired by 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl from the pre-war migration is a major factor in enabling them to migrate in larger numbers after the war. The reverse applies to the Masakīn i.e. their poverty ill equipped them to meet the necessary expenses to migrate after the war. This has thus produced the paradoxical result in which higher number of migrants is dependent on 'wealth' rather than poverty. Finally it is suggested that the period in which the process of post-war migration has been going on, is too short for its effects to correct the difference in the ratio of total migrants from each group, as well as their differential control of wealth. I will discuss this point presently.

To show that the total number of migrants from each group is largely dependent on its position in the social hierarchy, is to imply that not only are there economic differences between the groups, but that these differences are correlated with the stratification system. This has been shown to be the case in the past. But since at present income from abroad is still the decisive factor in the distribution of wealth between groups, the main feature of the post-war migration indicates that the traditional correlation between the economy and the social hierarchy has

not been altered. Below I show that all the evidence points out that this is the case.

It is extremely difficult to calculate the total outside income of an individual or a group for any given period. However, we can make reasonable deductions about the relative income of each strata in 1962-3 from the following table.

TABLE B
REMITTANCES AND MIGRANTS' OCCUPATIONS ABROAD

Key:

- A. Number of Heads of households who have migrated.
- B. Households receiving remittances.
- C. Households with close relatives away.
- D. Charity.
- E. Labour and Unskilled Work.
- F. Shops.
- G. Clerks.

Stratum	A		B	C	Occupations of Migrants Abroad			
					D	E	F	G
	No.	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
1. 'Aṭṭās	131	80	58.5	69.3	10.8	26.9	26.9	13.1
2. (Bāsahl	20	70	65	65	-	45	25	5
{ Gabā'il ¹	16	54.8	58	80.6	-	19.3	32.2	-
3. Masakīn	146	41.1	32.2	38.3	-	26.9	6.8	1.4

The table gives us some indication of the differential income of the strata derived from labour migration. There are a number of points in the table that need

1. Figures based on one Gabā'il settlement only.

explanation. Firstly, columns one and two together show the extent of migration within each group. They show that the 'Aṭṭās have the highest percentage of households whose heads have migrated, and the Masakīn the least. The remittance column also shows a similar trend. However the figures in this column show only households which were receiving remittances at the time of the survey. This does not include all remittances, since every household containing migrants receives remittances at one time or another. Nevertheless the proportion of remittances going to each stratum may be taken as fairly average. It would have been better to know the total amount each stratum receives and this would have given the figures their proper significance, but all we can do here is to assume that all households receive more or less the same amount. However column four gives us some information which may lead us to change this assumption. The occupation of the migrants in the host countries is in fact a good basis for deducing broadly the total income of each strata. Migrants working as labourers - unskilled and semi-skilled occupations - are paid the lowest wages. Clerks are paid higher wages, and the setting up of one's own shop brings in the highest income. Nearly all migrants are engaged in one of these three broad occupations, and the percentage of the distribution of the strata in these occupations is highly significant. From these three occupations, it is reasonable to assume broadly that the total

earning power of the strata is graded in the order given in the table. But it is the column of 'charity' which widens the gap between the 'Aṭṭās and the rest of the strata, especially the Masakīn. There are a handful of men who travel around to Ḥaḍrami 'colonies' abroad or to wealthy people of non-Ḥaḍrami origin from whom they obtain large sums of money, either for their personal use, or with the promise of using it for charity in Ḥurēiḍah. Only people with particular qualities can do this. They need to have a conspicuously high status in the society, such as a Mansab, or to have a reputation as learned religious leaders who could be trusted to use such money for the benefit of the poor and to advance the cause of religion. Sometimes a person believed to have healing powers, or even a jester, who, in effect, lives off rich people, can qualify for this way of 'earning' money. In the former case, money is generally given with the ultimate aim of using it for charity, although most of it is used by the person who collects it. In the latter case it is given to the individuals for their own use. The handful of people who 'earn' their income in this way are all 'Aṭṭās conforming to the qualities described above. But the most important aspect of the 'charity earning' is its income value. Such people return to Ḥurēiḍah with large sums of money which would take an average migrant a number of years to earn. The wealthiest 'Aṭṭās in Ḥurēiḍah earn their income in this way. Abubakar (see Case IV) made

one of his trips while I was in the field. He travelled by air to the different countries. On his return he told me that he was satisfied with his trip and that he had collected "a few thousands" (E.A. Shillings). Rumour in Ḥurēidah put the sum as Shs.50,000, but this is certainly an exaggeration. One of the Mansabs also left Ḥurēidah at the time. He also travels by air to the other countries. Since he left in 1962, he is still visiting in East Africa. On one of his previous journeys, he returned to Ḥurēidah with a new Land Rover as a present from the then King Saud. A third 'Aṭṭās keeps flying between 'Aden and Ḥurēidah. This man is reputed as possessing a "jinn" (spirit) and his main work is to provide charms for curing all sorts of illnesses. However he lives in the house of a very wealthy Ḥaḍrami in 'Aden and is known to have considerable influence on his friend. The 'Aṭṭās once took a month's holiday to Egypt from 'Aden. He also has a Land Rover and in 1962 sold his two year old vehicle and bought a new one. Other 'Aṭṭās who earn their income from "charity" (al-djāh) make fewer trips and are less wealthy outwardly, but their general income is higher than most migrants. 'Charity earning' then is a major source of income. On the basis of the figures in the table of people occupied in different jobs, it is reasonable to assume that the income of the 'Aṭṭās is the highest and that of the Masakīn the lowest. Between the Bāsahl and the Gabā'il, the tabel as a whole suggests that there is very little

difference. My impression however suggests that the Bāsahl have the edge over the Gabā'il. This differential in migration earnings of the strata is confirmed by the property and wealth of each group. The following table will illustrate this.

TABLE C

CONTROL OF PROPERTY BY GROUPS : 1962-63

Group	Percentage of total Population	Land owned ¹ by group		Houses
		Area acre per house--hold	Percentage of total area	
'Attās	31.8%	1.3	32%	34.6%
Bāsahl	4.2%	1.3	4.9%	3.4%
Gabā'il	29.6%	1.3	31.9%	27.4%
Masakīn	35.5%	1.0	28.1%	34.6%
Outsiders			3.1%	
			100%	

The table shows clearly that the differential control of property coincides with the social hierarchy, and in fact confirms the deductions I made from table B. It may be argued however that the differences shown by the figures between the amount of land owned by each group are too small to be really significant. But there are a number of factors which are not conveyed in this table, which make the small

1. Individual holdings are dispersed throughout the canal system in every case and therefore 1.3 acres of 'Attās land is not necessarily better than 1.3 acres of Gabā'il land.

differences between the wealth of the strata more significant than they appear. Firstly, there are differences in the value of houses which are not shown by the figures. All the largest and best houses are owned by the 'Aṭṭās. Secondly, the 'Aṭṭās own more valuable empty sites for building in Ḥurēiḍah town than any other group. Thirdly, given the scarcity of material resources, the narrow margin in the control over property between the groups has considerable local significance and actual value, which cannot be conveyed by the figures. Fourthly, in the local scheme of evaluating the wealth of a group, the level of its cash spending on food is just as important as its ownership of property. Since it is difficult to assess the amount of cash spent or earned by any particular group, we can only rely on indirect evidence for this. This evidence is provided by Table B together with my impressions based on observation, which suggests some differences in the regular expenditure of the strata, coinciding with the social hierarchy. We can therefore say that the social hierarchy is still based on differential control of property by the strata, although the margin of difference is quantitatively narrow.

It is possible now to state that although labour migration (with other general factors in the country) has considerably affected the economy of Ḥurēiḍah, it has not on the whole altered the traditional differential control of wealth. If it had been possible to collect accurate data for

both periods, I would have suggested that the gap in the wealth between the groups is not as great as it was in the past. There is no statistical evidence for this statement, but this is my impression. I have also suggested that the main reasons for the negative effect of labour migration on the economic basis of stratification are twofold:- (a) the close correlation between the economy and the social hierarchy during the traditional period has necessarily affected the number of migrants from each group. Since each migrant tends to consolidate his economic position at home, the result has been so far to maintain the status quo in the position of each group in the control of resources; (b) the local economy of Ḥurēiḍah is extremely limited because of scarcity of resources. This has been aggravated by the absence of what Wilson¹ calls an "uneven development" between the towns and the rural areas, because in Ḥaḍramaut no major economic development has taken place at all. As a result, the limited changes that have taken place in Ḥurēiḍah's economy cannot provide new avenues for any group to increase its wealth dramatically at the expense of other groups. As a corollary to this, the wealth of any group can only be increased substantially by income from outside. This brings us back to the first point i.e. the question of the different number of migrants from each group. This vicious circle in Ḥurēiḍah's economy is very important because it is an

1. M. Wilson, "The Analysis of Social Change", 1945.

underlying factor in the opposition to the system of stratification, and to the 'Aṭṭās who are seen as representatives of the system.

But labour migration has also produced a positive economic effect related to the social hierarchy. During the traditional period the Masakīn were almost entirely dependent on the employment provided by the higher groups. This was an important feature of the stratification system. However the post-war wave of migration and the changed conditions in the country as a whole, have meant that the Masakīn also could migrate in an increasing number as time passed. As a result, a relatively high number of them do migrate at present. Migration has thus opened up an alternative avenue of employment, albeit outside the country. The Masakīn are thus no longer entirely dependent on the local economy which tied them to the higher groups. They now have a choice of either working in Ḥurēiḍah or to migrate and seek other work. The fact that an important proportion of Masakīn men have no choice but to work in Ḥurēiḍah (at least for some time), does not invalidate the point that an even larger proportion do make a choice to migrate. This was clearly shown in table A, (p. 216) where the total number of migrants amongst the Masakīn is 58% of the adult males. Similarly the incorporation of Ḥurēiḍah's economy into a wider economic system and the general effects of the inflow of remittances, have introduced new but limited economic possibilities (e.g.

shopkeeping) in which individual Masakīn can participate. Table C p. 92 Ch.III, shows clearly that the rigid traditional division of economic activities is breaking down. Thus it is now possible for an Akhdām to refuse to be a labourer or a Subyān to perform ceremonial services, because they are no longer absolutely dependent on these occupations. They can either be shopkeepers or migrate. However the new economic possibilities are so limited that they provide alternatives to only a few individuals. Such individuals are statistically insignificant and the majority of Masakīn (and other groups) are still engaged in their traditional economic activities (see table C, p. 92 Ch.III). Because of this limitation in Hurēiḍah's economy, the alternative avenue for employment provided by migration, is more and not less significant for the Masakīn. Thus labour migration has affected and altered a basic feature in the stratification system - namely the absolute economic dependence of the Masakīn stratum on the two higher strata.

Besides economic effects, labour migration also brings with it important ideological effects. What Watson¹ calls the "industrial experience" which migrants go through when working in the towns, has important repercussion in the rural villages to which migrants return. Watson observes that the industrial complex of urban centres, is a great school; "to labour is to learn".² Abou-Zeid³ describing the

1. W.Watson, "Tribal Cohesion in a Money Economy", 1958.

2. Ibid., p.192.

3. Juhar Pitt-Rivers, "Mediterranean Countrymen", 1963.

effects of labour migration on an Egyptian Oasis, also points out that migrants go through changes of ideas and that this change (in conjunction with general economic changes) affects the social structure of the rural "society" to which the migrants return. It is therefore generally accepted that labour migration is followed by important ideological changes in the villages where migrants come from; to concentrate on the economic effects only is to present only one side of the picture, albeit an important side. This is particularly important in the context of the Middle-East today where the transistor radio is carried even by shepherds and mass communication is such an important method of ideological indoctrination.

In Ḥurēiḍah, the frequent journeys migrants make essentially mean a movement from one type of social organisation to another. For men from Ḥurēiḍah must comprehend the complex organisation of the urban situation in order to operate in it for any length of time. This frequent and intense interaction with the complex social organisation of the urban situation forces the migrant to accept many aspects of the urban framework of social life. In time the migrant becomes partially or completely urbanised. This necessarily involves an ideological change on his part, since the urban situation is organised on different principles from those of Ḥurēiḍah's small scale organisation. This ideological change generally becomes the basis on which

a migrant would question the social stratification of Ḥurēiḍah on his return. One basic principle which migrants have questioned in Ḥurēiḍah, is the idea of ascribed economic roles.

Working abroad involves the exact antithesis of ascribed economic roles which are part of Ḥurēiḍah's stratification. Men migrate in search of work and they may be forced to accept any work offered to them. This is especially the case in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait where job reservation for the citizens of the two countries is a common practice. There are 'Aṭṭās who accept menial work and even undignified jobs such as houseboys, while some Masakīn become clerks or set up little shops. In fact some of the richest men from Ḥaḍramaut in Saudi Arabia are Masakīn and many Ḥaḍramis, both Sādah and non-Sādah work for them. In Saudi Arabia and other countries to which Ḥaḍramis migrate, they get work on the basis of their ability. Migrants achieve their economic roles either by pulling strings or by having the right qualities. This principle contradicts the social attitudes concerning ascribed economic roles in Ḥurēiḍah. All its migrants, who generally tend to congregate in the same towns, are subjected to this principle. An 'Attās and a Masakīn can share a room, with the latter having a better job than the former. The difference between achievement and ascription becomes very obvious. In this way, the relation between Ḥurēiḍah's migrants of different strata is affected when

they are abroad, and their attitudes towards work changed. When they return to Ḥurēiḍah, a few 'Aṭṭas, Mashāyikh and Gabā'il now do manual and other work without the stigma of being inferior persons, while Masakīn individuals can stop carrying out their ascriptive occupations such as ceremonial services or carpentry, without being accused of trying to climb up the ladder of social stratification. The experience of migration has thus broken down the equation of inferiority in status with ascriptive economic roles. But the important point here is that the breakdown of this aspect of Ḥurēiḍah's value system is also related to the minor economic changes taking place in Ḥurēiḍah itself which have forced some people of high status to take 'inferior' jobs. In addition the opening up of new alternatives has enabled some Masakīn to drop their 'inferior' jobs. The combination of migration experience and the incorporation of Ḥurēiḍah into a wider economic system, has made it possible for individuals to move up and down the economic ladder. However this structural possibility of economic mobility has only affected a few individuals and therefore is statistically insignificant in relation to the ultimate control of resources by the different strata.

The second and perhaps more important effect is the involvement of the migrants with Nationalism¹ and the

1. I use this term here as it is ordinarily used -- namely the movements and ideology of political parties and trade unions in their struggle to achieve independence or further political and economic changes for the countries in which they operate.

inevitable increase in their political consciousness. Migrants working in urban centres are drawn into the web of political parties and trade unions, whether these are open or secret. They are attracted by the activist ideology of these organisations which always demands changes, either in the working conditions of the workers or wider changes in the whole society. Epstein¹ has shown how workers in a Northern Rhodesian copperbelt town (most of whom are migrants from the rural areas) participate in the activities of the Trade Union and Political Parties of the area. Watson² too shows the same process taking place in the rural areas. The Mambwe and their chief are shown to be involved in the wider political issue of Central African Federation. The involvement of the Mambwe in this political issue was described as "Federation fever". This was correlated with the direct rise in the political consciousness of the Mambwe (because of their industrial experience) and ultimately to the long-term effects of the migration phenomenon. In Ḥaḍramaut the conditions are different from those in Central Africa. But the immediate effect of the participation of the migrants in urban life, is the same, - namely their increased political awareness. Secondly, although the migrants in both areas live in the turbulent political atmosphere of Nationalism, there are fundamental differences in the main features and

1. A.L.Epstein, "Politics in an Urban African Community", 1958.

2. W.Watson, Ibid.

objectives of the two Nationalism. In Central Africa, Nationalism was marked by the Black-White colour issue and the achievement of political independence. In the Middle-East, Arab Nationalism is dominated by the issue of independence only in 'Aden and the Federation. In Saudi Arabia, The Arabian Gulf and Yemen, Nationalism is mainly concerned with replacing "reactionary" Arab Governments by "progressive" ones, as a means of changing the "traditional societies" and ultimately achieving Arab unity in the whole area. The emphasis is thus mainly on changing the existing social order which is being maintained by certain groups within the society itself. The 'traditional and reactionary' society of Ḥaḍramaut in general and that of Ḥurēiḍah in particular is of course dominated by the stratification system. This is the antithesis of a 'progressive' society propounded by Nationalism and whose basis will be "equality". Thus the involvement of Ḥurēiḍah's migrants in the wider ideology of Nationalism, is expressed in the questioning of the social hierarchy in the village. This was dramatised when the Yemeni Revolution took place in September 1962 and generated what I can only call "Revolution fever". There are historical and specifically local factors which explain why the ideological changes in Ḥurēiḍah are directed specifically to its system of stratification. This point, and how the neighbouring Yemeni Revolution came to symbolise the politico-ideological conflicts within Ḥurēiḍah will be discussed in

a later chapter. The main points I want to make here however are threefold:- (a) that labour migration increases the political consciousness of the migrants, and (b) that this involves the adoption of new concepts and ideas on the nature and working of society. The main vehicle of such ideas is Nationalism or what I call the 'new ideology of social change'; (c) that as a result of (a) and (b) Ḥurēiḍah's migrants have begun to question or justify the system of stratification as it operates in their village.

To sum up then, labour migration has been an important agent of both economic and ideological changes in Ḥurēiḍah. Firstly it seems that the basic feature of the pre-war migration has continued into the post-war wave, in spite of the major change in destination and the introduction of favourable conditions for migration. That this is the case should not be surprising if we consider the factors involved in the actual process of migration as well as the distribution of wealth. This latter factor more than anything else, has made income from the outside unequal between the groups and ultimately, this has tended to maintain the traditional differential control of wealth. Secondly, migration has also brought about some general economic changes within Ḥurēiḍah. However, because of the nature of the natural resources and the economic organisation based on it, the changes have not brought in new economic avenues which could alter the wealth of any group substantially.

This is very important, because it enhances the significance of income from outside and especially its distribution between the groups. Finally, migration has made Ḥurēiḍah's men participate in the industrial and commercial complexes of the neighbouring countries. It also involved them, passively or actively, in the turbulent politics of the wider field. There are of course other factors related to this problem, but the point here is that the process of migration has "schooled" Ḥurēiḍah's migrants. As a result, they have undergone an important ideological change which has a direct bearing to the problem of stratification in Ḥurēiḍah. In the next two chapters, I will describe the internal political organisation of Ḥurēiḍah and show that its conflicts tend to focus on the system of stratification because of the influence of the ideology of social change emanating from the wider society.

CHAPTER VIIPOLITICS AND STRATIFICATIONPart IInternal Politics : The Conflict of Change

Until the intervention of Britain in Ḥaḍramaut (1937-40), the main village of Ḥurēiḍah was a Hawtah -- a religious enclave ruled by the 'Atṭās (see Ch.I). The creation of the Qu'āiti State by Britain and the imposition of its rule over the area (from 1940 onwards), ignored the traditional organisation and brought in a new political structure. The Qu'āiti State backed by force became the sole legal authority in Ḥurēiḍah.

However the different groups in Ḥurēiḍah -- especially those which were organised and acted corporately in the past -- continued to act as separate units and relations between them are still an important factor. Thus outside the formal political structure, imposed by the Qu'āiti State, there is what I will call an informal political structure of the groups that are organised and co-operate within the framework of traditional principles. Since the political changes mean essentially that all political power is now vested with the Government, the interaction between it and the informal political structure is thus an important part of Ḥurēiḍah's politics. This interaction means that each group will struggle to control and influence the formal power structure in Ḥurēiḍah. In this struggle for power, the position of any

group in the social hierarchy, its wealth and unity all become important factors in making it easier or difficult for the group to attain power. Similarly, factors inherent in the circumstances which led to the imposition of Government rule in Ḥurēiḍah, and the nature of the new political structure, both intervene to help or hinder any given group in its struggle for power. These latter factors will be taken as given. My discussion will centre on the sociological factors related to the stratification system and which have a bearing on the power struggle of the groups.

The formal political structure was imposed with a number of basic assumptions. Firstly that political power will be vested in the institutions and officials of the Government and not rest with any given group in Ḥurēiḍah. Secondly that all people will have equal legal status as citizens of the Qu'āiti State. Thirdly that bureaucratic principles will be the basis for the execution of the judicial and administrative powers of the Government. However, the present reality of Ḥurēiḍah's political structure is that one group controls and influences almost all the decisions emanating from the formal political structure. The factors that have led to this contradiction between the reality and the ideal of the political system will be discussed below. I will suggest that, as a result of this contradiction, wider political blocks have formed in Ḥurēiḍah and that this development is directly affecting the social

hierarchy. In the second part of this chapter, I discuss external factors which have intervened in the situation and which are correlated with this significant development. There I suggest that the development of the wider political blocks and the ideological change that has been taking place at the same time, are both expressed in a fierce debate on the system of stratification in Ḥurēiḍah. Furthermore, the 'Alawī-Irshādi dispute (see Ch. II), provides a historical framework for the debate. Thus the conflicts resulting from internal political changes and the intervention of external forces, are related to and are affecting the social hierarchy in Ḥurēiḍah.

The Formal Political Structure.

The formal political structure has two parts: that of the Central Government and that of the Local Council. The seat of the Central Government is at the port of Mukalla -- the capital of the Qu'āiti Sultanate. At the apex of the Central Government is the Sultan (succession is hereditary) and under him is a Wazir -- the head of the Government.¹ At this level there are two important Councils. One is the

1. The present Wazīr is an 'Aṭṭās from the coast. This area -- Shihir and Mukalla Province, was under the rule of the Qu'āiti Sultan even before the intervention of Britain. In 1962-63, when I was in the field, the present Wazir was then a deputy Wazir being groomed for the present post. He is a close friend of the 'Aṭṭās President of the Local Council in Ḥurēiḍah and was the right hand man of the Sultan during the latter's visit to Ḥurēiḍah in November 1962.

QU'AITY STATE
CENTRAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE.

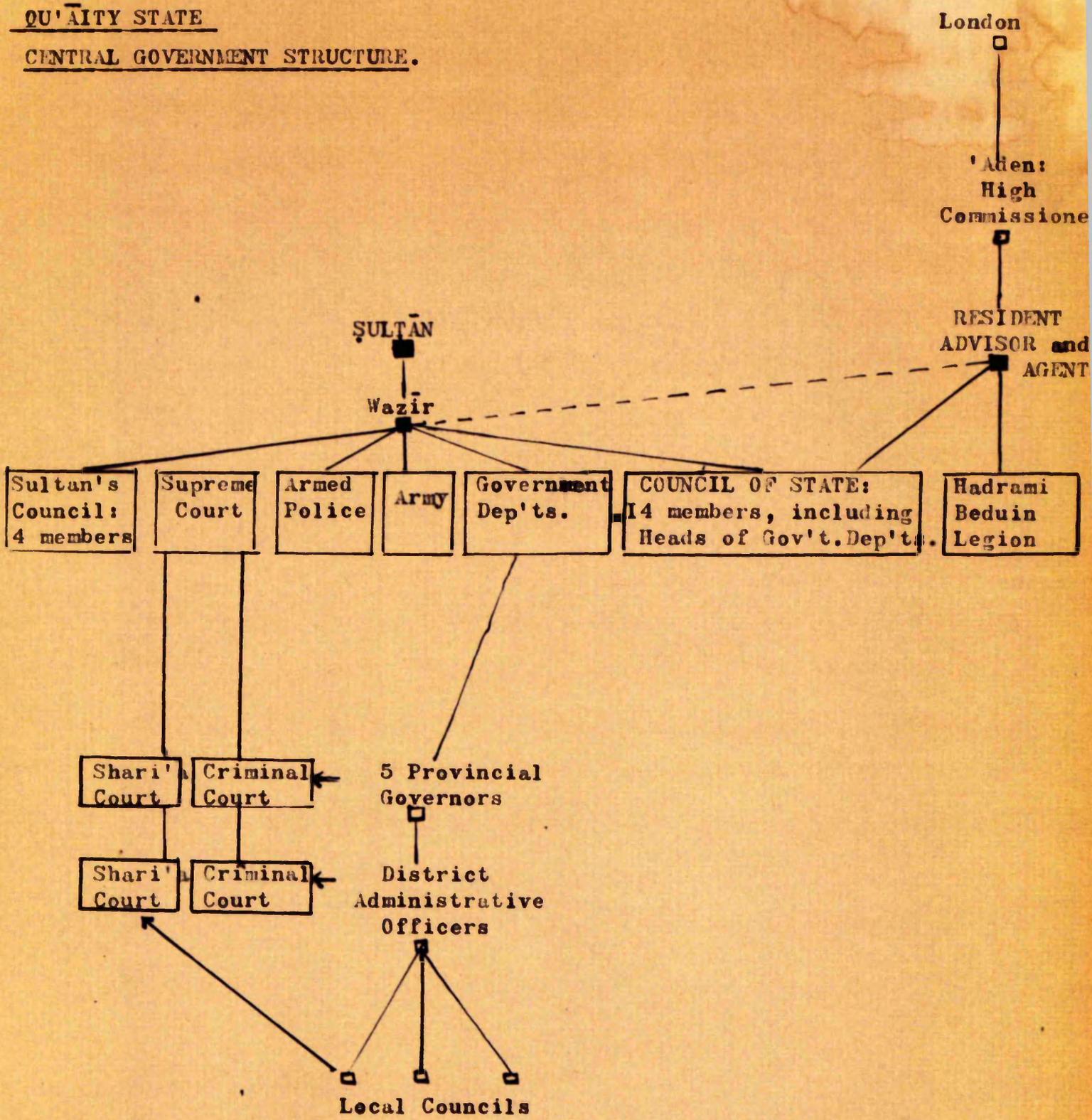


Diagram 10

Sultan's Council, chaired by the Wazīr, which deals with day-to-day matters on behalf of the Sultan. Its members -- four people -- were appointed by the last Sultan before his death. The second body is the Council of State which has fourteen members. This is also chaired by the Wazīr and its members are drawn mostly from the heads of the various Government departments. The British Resident Advisor in Mukalla and all the members of the Sultan's Council, are also members of the Council of State. All important decisions and legislations are made by this Council.

The Wazīr is also the head of the executive branch of the administration, consisting of a number of departments such as education, treasury, customs, immigration, works and building, provincial administration, Beduin affairs etc. Another branch - made up of the regular Qu'āiti Army, and the police (armed and unarmed), also come under his ultimate authority.

The country is divided into five provinces, each province having two or three districts. Each province has a nā'ib - a governor, and each district has a gā'im - a District Administrative Officer. The governor is responsible for the security and administration of the whole province. He is also a judge of the Criminal Court of the Province. The Police and Security Forces also come under his authority. The District Administrative Officer (D.A.O.) has the same responsibilities over the District. In each province there

are also Shari'a courts dealing with civil cases, one at provincial level and others for each district. The ḳāḍi - the judge of the Shari'a court - is independent of the governor, and comes under the responsibility of the Supreme Court in Mukalla. The Criminal Courts also come under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court. However close collaboration exists between the ḳāḍi, governor, and D.A.O. at different levels, especially over the use of the Police.

The Qu'āiti Government is a Protectorate of the British Government. The latter has a Resident Agent in Mukalla, who is also an advisor (Resident Advisor) to the Qu'āiti Government. He has close and almost daily contact with the Wazīr, and participates in the making of all important decisions of the Qu'āiti Government by being a member of the Council of State. The Resident Advisor (R.A.) as the British representative, is responsible for the external affairs of the Qu'āiti State, and its internal security. He has control of the Ḥaḍrami Beduin Legion, the most powerful and efficient military force in Ḥaḍramaut, whose main function is to maintain internal security. It is backed by the Royal Air Force and the British military force in 'Aden. According to the various treaties between the British Government and the Qu'āiti Sultanate, the R.A. advises the Qu'āiti Government on everything except matters concerned with "religion and custom". At present the office of the R.A. in Mukalla is more powerful than that of the

Wazīr and the Sultan. The R.A. can exercise his influence through the Wazīr, even on minor administrative problems. In recognition of this, people sometimes send their petitions direct to the R.A. appealing for his intervention on various local problems.

The Qu'āiti Government was reorganised in the early forties by the first R.A. -- Harold Ingrams. His intention was to enlarge the traditional Qu'āiti Government structure, without introducing any "Western elements". The function of the Administration was simply to maintain law and order. There are a few laws made by the Government as a guide to the governors and ḵāḍis in their task of settling disputes. The ḵāḍis make their decisions within the framework of the Shari'a -- the Islamic legal system. Since then, the structure has been modified to increase its efficiency, but its function is still the same.

The Qu'āiti and Kathīri States were historically Gabā'il Sultanates, with a hereditary ruling Sultan at the top (see Ch. I). The Qu'āiti Sultanate had, in the traditional period, an embryo administrative structure, with an open method of recruitment. When Britain intervened in Ḥaḍramaut (1937-9), and the Qu'āiti Sultanate was turned into the sole legal government (over a large part of Ḥaḍramaut), its administrative structure was reinforced and reorganised on bureaucratic lines. As a result, its administrators and other officials come from all the three strata of Ḥaḍrami society.

Apart from the Sultan, who is a Gabā'il, the top officials of the Government consist of Sādah, Mashāyikh, Gabā'il and Masakīn, all of whom come from the areas traditionally under the Qu'āiti Sultanate. Thus one of the important features of the Government structure, past and present, is this disregard of the social stratification in its recruitment.

The structure of the Qu'āiti Government is highly personalised. The internal organisation is such that its officers, at different levels of the structure, have wide powers, with very little accountability. The administrators in the provinces, for instance, rarely distinguish between their administrative and judicial roles. Similarly, the procedures of both Shari'a and Criminal courts give the judges very wide room for manipulating the rules of procedure, and make them potentially highly partial to one side or the other. The judges can initiate action, they can accept or refuse a witness, and they can cross examine witnesses. They alone record the evidence, and this is done by hand in the form of a summary of the evidence on which the judgement is finally based. The attendance of key witnesses can be enforced, speeded up, or delayed, at the judge's discretion. Appeals are possible against court decisions, but the courts of appeal at whatever level they have the same procedures, and though court decisions may be revised by the Supreme Court, this takes a long time. In general then, the legal system potentially gives considerable discretion to

judges. Effective checks in the judicial structure, to prevent misuse or make its judges accountable for their decisions, are very weak.

Administrators have the same wide powers with very little accountability. Decisions made by an administrator can be changed or repealed by his superior without any consultation. Written notes from administrators are passports for bypassing administrative regulations. Difficulties in communications make these notes very valuable, and the more senior the administrator who writes them, the greater is the importance attached to them.

The administrative and judicial sections are very small in size but cover a large geographical area, with no facilities such as typewriters or telephones for easing administrative work and communication except in the capital. Nevertheless the administrators and judges of the higher and lower ranks know each other well. Personal influence plays an important part in such matters as promotion. This means that a decision can be swayed this way or that by interested parties. Hence the influencing of decisions of the administrators and judges (i.e. manipulation) is very important in the context of local politics such as those of Ḥurēidāh. Those individuals or groups that can influence decisions most consistently become, in the local context, politically dominant groups.

The formal political structure of 'Amd District of

which Ḥurēiḍah is a part, is at present made up of the District Criminal Court, the District Sharī'a Court, the Police Station and the local council. The Administrative Officer of the District, besides being the judge of the Criminal Court, is also the head of the District and is responsible for everything going on in the area. The local council of Ḥurēiḍah and those of other villages are supervised by him and generally he appoints their members and presidents (Ḥurēiḍah is an exception in that the two presidents of the council since 1949 have both been appointed by the Governor of the Province -- i.e. from a higher level). The police come under the District Administrative Officer. The judge of the Sharī'a Court is directly responsible to the Ḳāḍi of the Province, and from him to the head of the Sharī'a judges in Mukalla.

I cannot here discuss in detail the role of the Central Government at the village level, but from this brief description, two important features of the government emerge, which have a bearing on the local political organisation. Firstly, the Government's administration as a whole is in a state of improvisation. Uncertainties abound as to the source of power and responsibilities at the different levels, even amongst the top officials. The executive legislative and judicial functions are rarely separated. There is no constitution and there are very few laws defining the powers of the Government, the spheres of activities of its different

departments, and the legal rights of individuals. Administrative decisions are constantly changed and improvised. Appeals against legal and other decisions are made to the Resident Adviser, the Sultan, and the Wazīr, showing confusion as to the ultimate source of power. The second important feature is that recruitment into the Government is open, in that the position in the social stratification is not used as a criterion, whatever other criteria are used. This is an important feature because it is one of the factors in Ḥaḍrami society which is tending to break down the rigidity of social stratification. These two features are related to the political problems of Ḥurēidah.

The Local Council.

The Local Council in Ḥurēidah has limited functions and judicial powers. It can try disputes not involving more than £5 and impose fines not exceeding 35 Shs. Its other functions are to deal with minor problems that arise from agriculture (e.g. repairing the canal system), to be responsible for the Waqf Committee (which looks after endowed farms and palms), to give birth certificates, certify the good conduct of travellers, and to certify buildings and public ceremonies. It has no power over the police and is completely subordinate to the District Administrative Officer. Any dispute in Ḥurēidah, or any matter that the council deals with, can be taken straight to the

District Administrative Officer and so bypass the council. The role of the Council therefore depends very much on the relationship between its President and the District Administrative Officer.

The local councils were set up in 1949 primarily as "arbitration committees" to deal with minor local disputes, especially those arising from agricultural problems. The Government incorporated the "traditional authorities" of the villages into the Local Councils, with the assumption that they were the most suitable people to deal with local problems. In 1952, local councils were given judicial powers and their administrative functions widened. In Ḥurēiḍah, the introduction of the Local Council system meant the incorporation of the traditional 'Aṭṭās Council into the new body with the addition of a few non-'Aṭṭās members to make it more representative. All this was done by the Governor of the Province. Thus, since its introduction, the Local Council of Ḥurēiḍah has been dominated by the 'Aṭṭās. In 1962 it had seven members, four 'Aṭṭās (including the President and his deputy), one Bāsahl, one Ḥirṭhān, and one Akhdām. No Gabā'il was represented.

Since 1949, there have been two Presidents. The first was a Mansab, and the second, the present holder of the office, a leading figure of the 'Aṭṭās House. When the second President took over, he began on a deliberate policy of increasing the stature of the Council, and removing it

from the control of the D.A.O. whose offices were then centred in Ḥurēidāh. The President is a highly educated and wealthy person, who has friends at the highest level of the Qu'āiti Government. He also claims to have friends amongst British officials. In the local context these ties are seen as potential sources of power behind the President. The President is also very wealthy (as was shown in Case IV in Ch. VI). With all these qualities he has been able to employ a number of methods to achieve his aims. These will be discussed later.

The meetings of the Council are held at the President's house, and these have become synonymous with the morning gatherings at his house. The Local Council revolves around the person of the President and when he is away important decisions are deferred until his return. The 'Aṭṭās, through the President, have absolute control of the Local Council. This has been achieved by manipulating the Central Government structure, and exploiting its flexibility. The personalisation of Local Council in the person of the President is a basic feature of the political organisation of Ḥurēidāh.

The Informal Structure.

Outside the framework of this formal, but flexible government structure, there is an informal political structure of the different groups in Ḥurēidāh. Of all the

groups only the 'Aṭṭās and Gabā'il have recognised political offices. This is because the 'Aṭṭās were the ruling group of the main village in the past, while each of the Gabā'il settlements was an independent political unit with its own headmen (mugaddam). The Bāsahl and the Masakīn groups came under the political control of the 'Aṭṭās and therefore did not have recognised political offices, although the Bāsahl and Ḥirṭhān had, and still have, informal leaders. What is important here is that neither the traditionally recognised officers of the 'Aṭṭās (Mansabs) nor those of the Gabā'il (mugaddam), play any significant role in the present day politics of Ḥurēiḍah.

The internal division of the 'Aṭṭās has already been described (see Ch. III). In the past, they had a Council presided over by the two Mansabs, and made up of a representative from each of the lineage. This traditional political organisation of the 'Aṭṭās has also already been described (see Ch. III). But in 1938 when the British Government had established a truce in the country and the process of expanding the State to include other areas was under way, the Mansab of Ḥurēiḍah reconstituted the 'Aṭṭās Council to include two non-'Aṭṭās members -- a Bāsahl and a Ḥirṭhān.¹ This council continued to be the main political body in

1. Freya Stark gives a brief description of this Council in her book "Winter in Arabia" (pp. 60). She spent a few months in Ḥurēiḍah in 1938-39.

Ḥurēiḍah with few changes in membership, until around 1946-7, when the Qu'āiti Government sent an Administrator (for the first time) with a few soldiers and appointed a leading 'Aṭṭās as the Ḳāḍi. In 1949, when the local councils were being introduced, the 'Aṭṭās Council simply changed its name and status and became a Government body. One of the Mansabs was its president. In 1956, the Mansab resigned and his deputy took over and has remained the President of Council until now.

The resignation was the culmination of a power struggle within the Council which had been going on for some time. The occasion for the change was the setting up, by a Central Government directive, of a Waqf Committee under the local Council. The function of the Committee was to take over the responsibility of looking after endowed property (farms and palms) which was traditionally in the hands of the Mansabs and other people. The Mansabs and a number of other people opposed the setting up of the Committee and the Mansab resigned as the President of the Council. But in effect the Mansab was also protesting at the loss of his powers, since at that time the deputy was the most powerful man in the Council (see p.255) and the Mansab was reduced to a figurehead. This crisis marked an important shift of political power within the 'Aṭṭās House, from the Mansabs to a 'new man', outside the hereditary and 'constitutional' leadership. It also brought about internal divisions within

the 'Aṭṭās. By 1962-3, neither of the two Mansabs nor any members of their sub-lineages remained as members of the Council. Nevertheless, the Mansabs still remain the 'constitutional' leaders of the 'Aṭṭās and in informal meetings of the 'Aṭṭās House they take their rightful place, albeit without any effective political power. Their religious role however is still important, and not only as the religious leaders of the 'Aṭṭās but of Ḥurēiḍah as a whole.

The 'Aṭṭās House still has its traditional political organisation, with the Mansabs and leading members of the 'Aṭṭās meeting occasionally as an 'Aṭṭās Council'. In 1962 when news came to Ḥurēiḍah that the Sultan would visit the town, such a meeting took place at the house of the President of the Local Council. It was made up entirely of leading 'Aṭṭās personalities. Decisions about arrangements were made with the participation of the Mansabs. But the President of the Council, as the most powerful man, informally chaired the meeting, which in effect endorsed his suggestions. Thus the actual and effective political power has shifted from the Mansabs to the President of the local Council. The latter recognises the Mansabs' hereditary status as the leaders of the 'Aṭṭās and consults them as a matter of formality. He also does not want to deepen the existing divisions within the 'Aṭṭās by ignoring them. Nevertheless, the President of the local Council is the de facto political leader of the 'Aṭṭās and this is recognised

by all. Hence although the traditional political organisation still exists, the centre of political power has shifted away from the Mansabs to the President of the local Council. He is the new 'Mansab', not only because he controls the new and effective political body, but also because he has taken over the traditional functions of the Mansabs as arbitrators. 'Aṭṭās political power is now based on the Local Council.

The Bāsahl and the Ḥirṭhān are the only two groups within the main village of Ḥurēiḍah which act corporately in specific situations. Both have informal leaders and on two separate occasions which I will discuss later, each group was involved in a concerted political action against the 'Aṭṭās. There is a difference between the two groups however; the Bāsahl are a kin group while the Ḥirṭhān are united primarily by their common feeling of being the indigenous people of Ḥurēiḍah. The Bāsahl act corporately on non-political issues, while the Ḥirṭhān need an important political problem to make them act corporately. The rest of the Masakīn groups, the Akhdām and the Subyān, are not political groups, in that they do not act corporately and have no formal or informal leadership. They have no corporate relations with other groups.

In the past the Gabā'il had a headman in each settlement who settled internal disputes, and acted on behalf of the unit externally. However, since their incorporation

into the Qu'āiti State, the headmen of the settlements have become politically insignificant, and in one settlement, they decided not to have another headman when the last one died. This is because the necessity for maintaining the political independence of the settlements within the segmentary framework of the tribe has now disappeared. Maintenance of the political unity of each settlement is also no longer of over-riding importance, since there are now alternative institutions - the Central Government courts - for settling disputes. Nevertheless, in other contexts, each settlement identifies itself as a separate unit vis-à-vis the other settlements and other groups in Ḥurēiḍah. Not only are the Gabā'il settlements discrete physical entities but in many situations they still act corporately as political units. One of the settlements built a small canal in 1963 to divert water from the valley side to a reservoir in the village. This project was undertaken by all the men in the settlement. Similarly, in disputes in which the domestic animals of one settlement enter those of another, responsibility is collectively shared. But the existence of the Government institutions has considerably narrowed down the field of corporate political relations between the different settlements. Disputes between two individuals of different settlements, which in the past would have involved corporate action by the settlements, are now regarded as the responsibility of those individuals concerned in the dispute. The Government

Courts and administration, which narrow responsibility in disputes to individuals, are the antithesis of corporate political action. Thus although the Gabā'il in the settlements still constitute separate political groups, the sphere of corporate political action either internally or externally, is reduced to a very small range.

Interaction between the Formal and Informal Political Structures.

Since the imposition of the formal Government structure on Ḥurēiḍah, political relations between the groups have been regulated by the ability of each group to monopolise and influence the effective powers of the officers of the formal structure. The formal structure, as I have pointed out, is divided into two parts - the Local Councils and the Central Government structure - each having its own function. The Local Council's functions are limited to a narrow range of activities; problems of the canal system and municipal activities. The Central Government on the other hand, has a wide range of administrative and judicial functions. The Courts deal with all important disputes; fighting, marriage, property claims, inheritance, etc. Thus an individual must deal with the Local Council in a narrow range of matters, but has the alternative of going to the Central Government over a wide range of disputes. A third alternative is to seek arbitration - mostly by the

President of the Local Council in the case of Ḥurēiḍah -- but this must be agreed upon by both parties. However the Local Council and the Central Government are the two most important political bodies settling disputes and carrying out other administrative functions. The 'Attās have absolute dominance over the Local Council and exercise considerable influence over the Central Government structure in Ḥurēiḍah. This is done in two ways:

- (i) The 'Aṭṭās occupy all the offices of the Central Government in Ḥurēiḍah, except the two most important ones - that of the k̄āḍi, and that of the D.A.O. - which are held by outsiders. The secretaries of the two officers are 'Aṭṭās however, and the Postmaster and the two teachers in the town, are all 'Aṭṭās. They thus monopolise all the posts available for local people.
- (ii) The k̄āḍi and the D.A.O. are both under the influence of the President of the Local Council. He is wealthy, and is an important person in Ḥurēiḍah. But more important, he has friends in the top strata of the Qu'āiti Government, and can easily pull strings to the detriment of either the k̄āḍi or the D.A.O. For instance, he can easily engineer their transfer from Ḥurēiḍah, and probably mar their service record by creating difficulties for them and making them 'unpopular'. Hence the k̄āḍi and the D.A.O. go out of their way to be on the right side of the President. It is not an accident that the D.A.O. has moved to another village and the k̄āḍi spends as little time there as possible. The 'Aṭṭās thus control the Local Council and influence the Central Government officers.

The Bāsahl have a member in the Local Council, but have no influence over its activities. Similarly, they have no influence over the Central Government officials. The Masakīn have two members in the Local Council, but these have been hand-picked by the President to serve his own

purposes, rather than to represent any group interest. They have no influence over the Central Government officials. The Gabā'il have no representative at all in the Local Council, and their influence over the Central Government officials is negligible. The non-'Aṭṭās groups generally prefer to take their disputes to the Central Government, where individuals can influence the decision in a particular case, but no more. But if in such cases an 'Aṭṭās is involved, then the judges have to be cautious lest they offend the President of the Local Council in their decision. Thus the hidden influence of the President, and therefore of the 'Aṭṭās, on the formal political structure is all-pervasive. The following case studies will show this.

Case I. Hirthān versus 'Aṭṭās.

Place: Hurēiḍah

Time: 1952-3

In 1952, three years after the traditional 'Aṭṭās Council had been turned into the local Council of Hurēiḍah and was thereby a part of the Qu'āiti Government structure, the elder of the two Mansabs was President of the Council. At this time the Council had six members; four 'Aṭṭās, one Bāsahl and one Hirthān. All had been appointed by the Governor of the Province in 1949, in consultations with the 'traditional authorities' of Hurēiḍah - i.e. the 'Aṭṭās. In 1952, Abubakar, now the President of the Council, was then deputy to the Mansab, when the Council faced its first major crisis. The crisis was precipitated by a fight between two boys - an 'Aṭṭās and a Hirthān, in which the 'Aṭṭās father was alleged to have held the Hirthān boy so that his son could beat him up. The Hirthān were outraged by this, and their Council member (a man regarded as the elder of the Hirthān) approached the Mansab and complained about the incident. The Mansab advised the Hirthān elder to go to the Police for justice, because the Council "could do

no more than make a ritual settlement". By this he meant that the two sides would be asked to forgive each other by invoking Allāh and reading the opening chapter of the Kur'ān. The Ḥirṭhān then went to the Police and both the boys were arrested and locked up. The 'Aṭṭās father then went to Abubakar and obtained from him a note requesting the release of the two children. The Police officer then released the two boys. The Ḥirṭhān were incensed by this denial of justice by the 'Aṭṭās, and held meetings for three successive nights to decide what their next move would be. Some Bāsahl and a few Akhdām also attended these meetings. They decided "to help each other in obtaining justice" - i.e. they would contribute money and give backing to any of their number involved in legal dispute with an 'Aṭṭās, particularly disputes taken to Government courts. This was not an exclusive Ḥirṭhān mutual aid-society, but included any other non-'Aṭṭās who wanted to contribute to the kitty. Every meeting was 'spied' on by the 'Aṭṭās and was followed by rumours of threats to all those who had attended. Two leading members of the 'Aṭṭās in the Council called for a meeting in which they decided to write a petition to the Government. In this petition they asserted that the Ḥirṭhān had formed a political party (all political organisations are banned by the Government), drew analogies to Mau Mau, and asked the Government to punish those responsible. The Ḥirṭhān member of the Council resigned in protest at this 'Aṭṭās move. That week the Governor of the Province visited Ḥurēidah and spent two nights as the guest of Abubakar. He ordered the D.A.O. to try those responsible for the "nightly meetings". The D.A.O. had been absent whilst the meetings were being held, but on his return to Ḥurēidah, he tried the ring leaders of the meeting and found them guilty of forming "a political party". His judgement was long and written in immaculate classical Arabic, though according to the non-'Aṭṭās, the D.A.O. was not educated enough to write such prose. The Ḥirṭhān appealed to the Governor's court and the same Governor who had ordered a trial quashed the D.A.O.'s judgement, on the grounds that the people accused were far too ignorant and uneducated to form any political party. When the accused Ḥirṭhān returned to Ḥurēidah, they were re-arrested by the D.A.O., interrogated for a day, kept locked up for two days and then released.

Case II: Bāsahl versus 'Attās

Place: Hurēidah

Time: 1962-3

One morning in late 1962, a truck-load of stones was placed on an empty plot a few yards away from the Bāsahl residential area. The Bāsahl were taken by surprise, since they considered this place to be part of their residential area. The stones had been placed there on the orders of the President of the Local Council. They were for the foundations of a guest house (magsad) which the Council intended to build. No one knew about the project; even the other members of the Council, including the Bāsahl member. When, later that day, it was known that the President had ordered the stones to be placed there, two leading members of the Bāsahl went to see him. The Bāsahl put their case to the President as follows: First, the plot on which the stones were placed was part of their residential area, and therefore belonged to the Bāsahl collectively. Secondly they were willing to give it to the Council as a gift, if the Council would ask them for it. The President's reply was as follows: If the Bāsahl claimed the plot, they must prove their claim. It was his contention that the plot belonged to no one, and was therefore Government property. He promised however, that work would stop on the building, until the matter had been settled one way or the other. If the Bāsahl's claim were proved to be right, then the Council would ask the Bāsahl for the plot.

The Bāsahl, who were then divided amongst themselves, held a meeting and decided to press their claim at the kaḍi's court. The kaḍi however, refused to accept the documents which the Bāsahl brought forward. His refusal was based on a technical point - that the documents must first be registered and their validity approved, before they could be used as proof of ownership of any land. The documents had been drawn up by one of the Bāsahl's ancestors, and their demarcation of the 'Bāsahl ridge' - on which the Bāsahl live - was vague and subject to different interpretations. Until then it was commonly accepted that a limited area around the ridge was part of Bāsahl land, but no-one knew exactly the boundaries of this area. When the kaḍi rejected the Bāsahl documents, one of the Mansabs claimed that he had documents to show that the plot in question in fact belonged to an extinct 'Attās family. However, the Bāsahl were not deterred by all this. They sent one of their men to the capital with their documents, in order to register them and have their claim approved by the Supreme Court. No building was begun on the disputed site.

A few months later, the Wazīr and the British R.A. visited Ḥurēiḍah, to discuss with local officials another project of building a new Police Station. They went round the town with the President and the D.A.O. and with a large crowd of people following behind, looking for a suitable site for the new Station. The area they were examining was around the Bāsahl ridge and as they passed the disputed plot, the Bāsahl leader tried unsuccessfully to bring up the subject under dispute to the Wazīr and the R.A. He hoped to convince them of his case by showing them what the Bāsahl regarded as their land. However the attempt failed because the officials refused to be drawn into the dispute. Since then the Bāsahl have remained silent, waiting for the results from the Supreme Court. By July 1963, when I left the field, the dispute had still not been settled but it looked as if the President would have his way in the end.

Both the cases show clearly the absolute control of the Council by the 'Aṭṭās and their effective influence on the Central Government's institutions in Ḥurēiḍah. Although the two cases are separated by a span of ten years, it is significant to note that the passage of time has not reduced the power of the 'Aṭṭās which has in fact increased. By 1963, the Council was a more powerful body than in 1952, because it had become the only Government body in the largest "town" of the district. As a result, the stature and power of the President has increased. But more important, the President now has absolute personal control of the Council, and can initiate important actions such as the building of a guest house without consulting other members of the Council (and I suspect the D.A.O. as well). Since 1952 then, 'Aṭṭās political power has definitely increased and, significantly, this increase in their power is

correlated with the emergence of the existing President (Abubakar) as their de facto leader, and the decline of the two Mansabs who were the traditional political leaders of the 'Aṭṭās.

In Case I the Mansab advised the Ḥirṭhān to go to the Police because the Council was "constitutionally" powerless to deal with disputes of that nature although he and the Council could make a traditional "ritual settlement". But because of the existence of the Government, the Ḥirṭhān wanted more than a mere 'ritual settlement' since they strongly believed that they had been wronged. As it turned out the 'Aṭṭās were able to influence the Government and withdraw the dispute from its jurisdiction back to the Council. This was done by the deputy President (Abubakar). When the Ḥirṭhān, backed by the Bāsahl and Akhdām, decided to take corporate action in future disputes, the 'Aṭṭās used their dominance in the Council and their influence with Government officials to teach the Ḥirṭhān a lesson, and break down this wider alignment by inciting the Government to persecute the Ḥirṭhān. The curious contradictory behaviour of the Governor shows how strong 'Aṭṭās pressure could be when an official was in Ḥurēidāh. The D.A.O. was completely dominated by the 'Aṭṭās, and his re-arrest of the Ḥirṭhān was an attempt at fulfilling the 'Aṭṭās threats of punishing the Ḥirṭhān. In this way he placated the 'Aṭṭās and "saved their faces". The Council,

in spite of the ineffective leadership of the Mansab, acted as an effective instrument of 'Aṭṭās political domination as a result of the action of Abubakar (his nephew was also widely believed to have composed the D.A.O.'s judgement on the Hirṭhān).

Apart from the domination of the 'Aṭṭās and their effective manipulation of the formal political structure, we see in Case I the Hirṭhān acting as a corporate group in opposition to the 'Aṭṭās. Of all the Masakīn occupational groups, the Hirṭhān alone act corporately in specific situations. It is most probable that the Hirṭhān have had many conflicts with the 'Aṭṭās in the past and there seem to be a latent current of long standing hostility between the two groups. The Hirṭhān, as the only indigenous group in Hurēiḍah, complain that the "immigrant" 'Aṭṭās have taken almost all their land "by cheating". The reaction to the 1952 incident was certainly an expression of a deeper conflict than the manifest reasons of "injustice". The support of the Hirṭhān by other non-'Aṭṭās also implies that the hostility, and opposition to 'Aṭṭās dominance, was not confined to the Hirṭhān only, but included the rest of the non-'Aṭṭās. In 1962, ten years after the incident, the Hirṭhān were still very bitter about the dispute. However their bitterness and complaints gave by this time more emphasis to the 'Aṭṭās' monopoly of political power and the resultant "injustice" than to the long-standing 'land

question'. In 1952, the informal leader of the Ḥirṭhān resigned from the Council and has remained outside it to the present. Later however, his brother was appointed to the Council by the present 'Aṭṭās President of the Council. This expresses both the division within the Ḥirṭhān and the political insight of the President in exploiting it.

The most significant factor in Case I was, however, the open and tacit support given to the Ḥirṭhān by the other groups. Although only a few non-Ḥirṭhān openly attended the meetings and were willing to contribute some money, it is generally accepted (even by 'Aṭṭās) that most of the people of the other groups gave moral backing to the Ḥirṭhān. In fact the strong reaction of the 'Aṭṭās and their analogy between the Ḥirṭhān meetings and Mau Mau, indicate that other groups were being strongly influenced by the Ḥirṭhān and that this is precisely what the 'Aṭṭās feared most. What the Ḥirṭhān were in fact doing was to break down the old political units by forming a wider non-'Aṭṭās 'block' to oppose the 'Aṭṭās. This wider political alignment, starting as far back as 1952, was thus extremely important. But just as important was the fact that the object of the new 'block' was specifically to oppose the 'Aṭṭās. It was essentially an anti-'Aṭṭās 'block', reacting against the successes of the 'Aṭṭās in controlling and influencing the formal political structure of Ḥurēidāh.

As I have pointed out, between 1952 and 1962, 'Aṭṭās

control and influence on the formal political structure increased. But at the same time the opposition to the 'Aṭṭās became more marked and the anti-'Aṭṭās 'block' which grew out of the 1952 incident, showed signs of going through a process of forming into a politically corporate group. The increasing power of the 'Aṭṭās, and the rising antagonism of the non-'Aṭṭās to this, has been the most significant factor in Ḥurēiḍah's politics in the last ten years. It has affected relations between the 'Aṭṭās and other groups considerably and the dispute in Case II ('Aṭṭās v. Bāsahl) can only be understood in the light of this growing antagonism. For instance many people pointed out that the 'Aṭṭās President could have chosen another plot to place the stones for the guest house. There were undisputed Government plots in the area which he could have chosen -- later the Wazīr and the R.A. did in fact select a plot in that area for building the new Police Station. Furthermore the Council at the time did not have enough money for building the guest house and it would have taken the President at least a year to get the money from the Central Government. Thus many people believe that the President chose the particular plot as a deliberate provocation of the Bāsahl. The timing of the dispute is also very significant and will be discussed below. The dispute was therefore created to serve as a tool for manipulation in order to achieve specific political objectives. These objectives were determined by the political forces in

Ḥurēiḍah at the time, and it is important to give a brief sketch of both before analysing Case II. This perspective is necessary for the understanding of the manoeuvres and reactions implicit in the dispute.

Case I showed that although the 'Aṭṭās were powerful in Ḥurēiḍah itself, their power became, to say the least, tenuous outside the village. This was clearly demonstrated by the Governor's court decision which quashed the D.A.O.'s judgement against the Ḥirṭhān. Even within Ḥurēiḍah itself the 'Aṭṭās could never be sure that their pressure will be effective on every D.A.O. In 1952 they controlled the Council which was not then an important body; this was the only instrument of power under their control. Although they were the most powerful group in Ḥurēiḍah at the time, their power was only effective in so far as they could influence Central Government officials in and outside Ḥurēiḍah. Influence is by definition, intangible, uncertain and subject to failure; to the 'Aṭṭās this represents the fundamental political change in the creation of the Qu'āiti State and its investiture with all the political power. The main objective of the 'Aṭṭās was therefore to make their power more 'solid' and certain and under the circumstances, all they could do was to manipulate the formal political structure so that the element of uncertainty in their 'influence' could be reduced to a minimum, both in and outside Ḥurēiḍah. This was made easier by the nature of the

formal political structure, which, as has been noted, is highly amenable to manipulation.

However, up to 1956 the leadership of the 'Aṭṭās was controlled by the Mansabs (one of whom was the President of the Council). But both the Mansabs were and still are the representative of 'Umar (as a missionary) and therefore the religious leaders of Ḥurēīdah. The ideal image of a Mansab¹ is that of a pious person, uninterested in worldly affairs (often a Ṣūfi), and an impartial arbitrator when he deals with disputes. A good Mansab then is the least suitable person to play the role of a cunning politician, manoeuvring behind the scenes and playing his cards well with Government officials in order to influence their decisions. Of the two present Mansabs in Ḥurēīdah, one is illiterate in the sense that he cannot write, although he has memorised all the important religious texts that are necessary to fulfil his religious role; the second (and the younger) is a Ṣūfi who is considered to be an eccentric by many people. On the other hand, the deputy to the President of the Council (Abubakar, 1952) has the necessary qualities which are important to a good politician. He is highly educated, well travelled, wealthy and has many important friends in the Government. He had spent many years in India as a head of the 'Aṭṭās religious order (ṭarīqa) and was very familiar with the methods of dealing with highly placed officials in

1. See Twahir, Vol.I, Singapore 1949.

the Indian Administration. If the main objectives of the 'Aṭṭās were to be achieved, it was functionally necessary for the leadership of the House to pass from the Mansabs to the 'new men' in order to meet the changed conditions. This did not take place until 1956 after a struggle between the President (Mansab) and his deputy (Abubakar). See pp. 249.

When Abubakar took over the leadership of the Council, he became in effect the de facto political leader of the 'Aṭṭās. Since then all political activities in Ḥurēiḍah have centred around him and by 1962, he was the most powerful man in Ḥurēiḍah. The President (Abubakar) has been able to increase his power and therefore that of the 'Aṭṭās House as a whole, by working on what he calls a definite 'plan'. This plan had three objectives:-

- (a) To increase the limited functions and powers of the Local Council.
- (b) To minimise the control of the Central Government officials on the Council.
- (c) To increase his effective influence at the centre of power in the capital.

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to go into a detailed account of how the President achieved these secondary objectives. However a brief sketch is necessary here.

Firstly the President has always been able to dominate all the Central Government officials sent to Ḥurēiḍah, and even those at the capital. This is primarily due to his personal qualities and strong personality. I am

stressing this point because the Government is highly personalised and run like the "Old Raj";¹ in this situation where personal influence is very important the 'personality' of a person becomes a crucial factor in the manoeuvring and manipulating of people. I have met the majority of Qu'āiti officials from the rank of the D.A.O. upward, and apart from a few individuals of the highest rank, almost all officials have a lower standard of education than the President. The President is also a highly capable and experienced person, especially in running an organisation² and handling people.

1. C. Johnston, "The View From Steamer Point", 1964. Johnston was the British High Commissioner in 'Aden between 1960 and 1963.
2. The President had been the head of the 'Aṭṭās ṭarīqa in India for many years. The religious order has many branches in India, Pakistan, Malaysia and Burma. Before the War and immediately after, the President used to spend most of his time in India running the order. Since the late forties, he has remained in Ḥurēidah making a long visit to these countries every two or three years. Some of the local branches of the order are being run by experienced professionals who write to the President for consultation and advice on many problems. Many of the letters were in English, which I translated and wrote his replies in English. The way the President handled the variety of problems referred to him was impressive and illuminating. He had a detailed knowledge of the personnel, the local difficulties and the general conditions of the different branches in the various countries. Thus in 1962-63, he followed closely the Indo-Chinese crisis, the Malaysia problem and Burmese Revolution at the time and tried to relate these general developments and their effects to the organisation of the ṭarīqa. For instance, in Burma a lawyer and a timber merchant were both important members of the local organisation of the ṭarīqa. The Revolution had affected both these men and their income had dwindled considerably. This in turn was affecting the economics and charitable activities of the order in Rangoon. The President was highly concerned by these developments, and he used to write often to these two men assuring them of his prayers so that conditions would change for the better.

His wide travels, his high intelligence, his strong personality and political insight, his age (50 years old - thus the strong seniority principle also operates in his favour) all these make up a formidable and powerful 'personality' which cause him generally to get what he wants from people. This is of obvious importance in his day-to-day dealings with the Central Government officials in Ḥurēiḍah. For instance, when the D.A.O. visits Ḥurēiḍah and has to do his "duty" i.e. to be told what the Council has done during his absence, the President delegates this to his secretary (his son, 22 years old) who carries out the task in a corner of the large room in the guest house, while the President drinks his cups of tea and entertains his visitors or deals with some minor problem. This is of course a slight on the D.A.O. who is officially a superior of the President. But it produces the 'right' impression in Ḥurēiḍah and shows who is the "boss" in the village. Furthermore, when the Governor of the Province or higher officials from the capital visit Ḥurēiḍah, they invariably become the guests of the President and are always impressed by his lavish hospitality. In this and other ways, the President is able to have a powerful influence over officials with whom he deals, either regularly or occasionally.

Through a conflict with one of the D.A.O. immediately after becoming President, Abubakar was able to make the Governor take his side and give him extra powers in

order to avoid such conflicts. These extra powers were:-

- (i) the use of the Police without referring to the D.A.O.
- (ii) disputes from the Council could go directly to the Provincial court i.e. the Governor's court, bypassing the D.A.O.'s court.
- (iii) He can imprison a person for up to one week and impose fines up to £50.

This power is renewed every three years, but he has never used it. These powers were given to the President personally and not to the Council. They were approved by the highest officials at the capital. As far as I know Abubakar is the only President of a Local Council in the Qu'āiti State who has been given these extraordinary powers. The powers given to the President in fact were aimed at making him 'independent' of the D.A.O.

Secondly, Abubakar has enhanced and extended the activities of the Council considerably and thereby reduced the work of the D.A.O. and the *ḳāḍī*. As a wealthy man, he is not personally engaged in any economic activity in Ḥurēiḍah. He devotes the best part of his working hours to the business of the Council and other political activities. Thus every morning, he sits in his well furnished guest room (barzah) where people drop in to chat and drink a cup of tea. In these daily sittings, many disputes are brought to him, sometimes as the President of the Council and sometimes as a private person. In such occasions, his barzah turns into what he calls a "private court" or a "council court" whichever is

appropriate for the dispute. Abubakar also arbitrates in many family disputes where women are involved, since it is shameful ('aib) for women to appear in courts. Many disputes are taken to him because, (a) if taken to the Government courts (the K̄adis and D.A.O.'s) a lot of money has to be paid in bribery, and (b) private arbitration is generally preferred since disputes taken to the courts tend to become more serious and antagonism between the disputants is increased. Thus through both private and official arbitration Abubakar has been able to divert most of Ḥurēiḍah's disputes to himself and thus reduced the work of the Government courts and therefore that of the K̄adi and the D.A.O.

In 1959, the President undertook a large project to repair a local dam. This very big operation, which cost about £4,000, necessitated using the Police to enforce payment of contributions for the repairs, setting up committees to plan and execute the work and keep its accounts etc. All this was done without the D.A.O. i.e. it was carried out entirely by the Council under the direction and supervision of the President. The plan to build a guest house (see Case II) was also entirely under the direction of the Council. In other villages all important activities and projects of this nature (large or small) are closely supervised by the D.A.O. In Ḥurēiḍah however, the D.A.O. has been completely ignored. Thus by 1962, the D.A.O. found it necessary to move to another smaller village in the District. He took with him



Top picture: The 'Attas President of the Local Council, discusses a boundary dispute with a Gaba'il.

Bottom picture: The Qua'ity Sultan (third from right) on his visit to Hureidah, is surrounded by 'Attas.

the Police and a few months later the Ḳāḍi followed suit. Both the D.A.O. and the Ḳāḍi now visit Ḥurēiḍah about once a month.

Thirdly, the President maintains close contact with his friends at the capital. In 1962, a few days before the Sultan was due to visit Ḥurēiḍah, Abubakar received a personal letter from the then deputy Wazīr, asking him to look after all the necessary arrangements. During the preparation and when the Sultan was in Ḥurēiḍah, all important decisions were made by the President. Not only was the D.A.O. under the President's 'command', but even the Governor of the province was not consulted on many aspects of the arrangements and accepted the decisions made without protest. The visit of the Sultan showed the direct contact the President has with the top officials. It also highlighted the strong personality of the President and showed how he dominates officials who are superior to him in status. Furthermore it showed his decisiveness and organisational ability, since he was in control throughout the visit.

But it is the contact with the 'men of power' at the capital which is important here, and these contacts are maintained during his frequent journeys out of and into the country when he passes through the capital and stays for short periods. The friends are not limited to the Qu'āiti hierarchy but extends to that of the British Government, from the R.A. in Mukalla to the officer in charge of the

Eastern Protectorates in 'Aden. The individuals holding these two offices, have been in Ḥaḍramaut for over 15 years and both have become personal friends of the President during this period. The two officers and others have all visited Ḥurēiḍah, especially during the early days of establishing the Qu'āiti State, all have invariably been his guests and impressed by his hospitality. The President, realising the value of ties with such people, has, as a matter of policy, maintained the ties by periodic visits and by an occasional letter to them. Such contacts are useful for many purposes. In 1961, the President managed to get a visa and a letter of recommendation from these contacts to visit the ruling Shāikhs of the Trucial States (a difficult thing) for collecting 'charity'. At his guest house, the President always tells 'anecdotes' of the impressive receptions given to him when he visits his important friends in 'Aden, the British Representative in Baḥrein, the British Ambassador in Kuwait and of course his host the Shāikh of Kuwait. This circle of friends -- mainly important British officials and the rulers of the small states -- may or may not be his

'good' or even actual¹ friends. They may or may not help him. What is important here is that, this account is believed and accepted by the right group of people in the capital and the general audience in Ḥurēiḍah. These accounts are generally believed and there is no reason for anyone to doubt the President. This circle of friends then, is important to Abubakar for a number of reasons. (a) It is an important status symbol since this is the circle of the highest political authority in the region. (b) His contact and friendship with the rulers (Shāikhs) is an important source of income to him, and one on which he draws periodically. (c) The British officials concerned with Ḥaḍramaut (e.g. the R.A. and the Head of the Eastern Protectorates in 'Aden) makes Abubakar a potentially powerful person in his relations with the important officials of the Qu'āiti State hierarchy,

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1. It is impossible to check whether all the important people the President claim to be his friends are in fact his friends. The R.A. and the officer in charge of the Eastern Protectorate in 'Aden are his 'good friends'. This they have told me themselves. Similarly, the President showed me a letter from the British Representative in Baḥrein addressed to him. On the basis of the letter, he too is a 'good friend' of the President. I have also seen the letter of recommendation given to the President by the R.A. and addressed to the Shāikhs and the British Agents in the Trucial States. Finally, it is widely believed that the President is a personal friend of the Shāikh of Kuwait and also a particular friend of one of the important Ministers in the Government there. From his detailed account of his various visits to Kuwait and my personal assessment of the honesty of the President, I have no reason to doubt the substantial part of his accounts. However, I do not know how close is his friendship with the Ruler of Kuwait and in any case, Abubakar does not claim that he is a 'close' friend of the Ruler.

since he has access to higher authority in the total political system. In this way Abubakar has acquired an informal but unique 'political status' which makes him a very influential person within a "Raj" type of Administration in Ḥaḍramaut. Abubakar thus uses his external ties with the British hierarchy to strengthen his position in his dealings with top officials of the lower Qu'āiti hierarchy. Similarly he uses his ties with top officials of the Qu'āiti State as a backing in his dealings with the Provincial (Governor) and District (D.A.O.) officials. Personal ties within the total political system, are manipulated at different levels to give Abubakar a unique 'political status' which ultimately increases his political power in Ḥurēiḍah. When the R.A. and the Wazīr visited Ḥurēiḍah (see Case II), Abubakar was dealing with long standing friends both of whom were his guests. On the other hand, the leader of the Bāsahl('Umar) was dealing with the two highest officials in the country, both of whom he did not know personally, and his attempt at winning their sympathy against their friend was obviously doomed to failure.

I have given a brief sketch of the methods used by Abubakar in his "plan" to increase his personal power in Ḥurēiḍah. He has done this by manipulating the formal political structure in the country. This shows the nature of this structure which I take here as given and cannot discuss. But it also shows the political insight of Abubakar, a

quality which is very important in the situation. Within six years of taking over the leadership of the Council and that of the 'Aṭṭās, Abubakar made himself the virtual 'ruler' of Ḥurēiḍah. This very great success brought with it his major difficulties. Firstly, the increasing power of the 'Aṭṭās intensified the antagonism of the other groups. This will be discussed below. Secondly, in his attempt to popularise himself (in order to counteract the growing antagonism), Abubakar took certain steps which were highly criticised by the 'Aṭṭās and publicly divided them.

In 1961, Abubakar formed a Cultural Club in Ḥurēiḍah, whose objective was to promote "equality" between the people of Ḥurēiḍah. The move was to show that Abubakar was a "modern and progressive" man, who had the interest of the whole of Ḥurēiḍah at heart and had no intention of dominating non-'Aṭṭās. The formation of the Club and its consequences will be discussed more fully in the second part of this chapter. Here it is sufficient to note that Abubakar's action was controversial and was opposed by most 'Aṭṭās. He was criticised for letting down the 'Aṭṭās and the effect of his action was to divide them into two camps. This was important and serious for the 'Aṭṭās because they had always presented a united front and had never been disunited publicly. By the middle of 1962 when the Club was slowly fading away, it was time for Abubakar to rally the 'Aṭṭās together and heal the disunity. A dispute with the Bāsahl seem to be just the right thing

for uniting the 'Aṭṭās. The Mansab for instance immediately supported the President (see Case II) although until then he had been his severest critic. This partly explains the deliberate provocation of the Bāsahl. But why did Abubakar specifically choose the Bāsahl and not another group?

I have pointed out that as early as 1952, a wider alignment comprising of non-'Aṭṭās groups had begun to form. This development was primarily a reaction to the near monopoly of political power by the 'Aṭṭās. The new block was forming specifically to oppose the 'Aṭṭās. Since then the 'Aṭṭās have changed their leadership and considerably increased their control of political power. I have suggested that a concomitant increase in the opposition to the 'Aṭṭās has been developing. This is certainly the case and will be shown to be so. However its development is only partially due to the internal situation i.e. the increasing power of the 'Aṭṭās. In fact, as I will suggest in the next section, since 1952 the experience of migrants abroad and the intervention into Ḥurēidāh of an 'ideology of change' have been major factors in the increasing antagonism between 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās. It is therefore necessary here to assume a proposition -- which I discuss later -- that by 1962, many non-'Aṭṭās had been considerably affected by their migration experience and the 'new' ideology emanating from the outside. That is to say, many of the non-'Aṭṭās have assimilated an 'ideological framework' that rejects a stratified society

like that in Ḥurēidah and that their hostility to the system is directed against the 'Aṭṭās who are seen to defend, maintain and symbolise the system. The increasing antagonism between the 'Aṭṭās and the non-'Aṭṭās is therefore partly due to external factors intervening in the situation. This will be discussed in the next section.

By 1962 the anti-'Aṭṭās block was showing signs of revolving around one man. The man whom I will call 'Umar,¹ is the informal leader of the Bāsahl group. As far back as 1952, 'Umar played a leading role in the release of the Ḥirṭhān when they were re-arrested after their return to Ḥurēidah (see Case I). The object of the re-arrest was to fulfil the 'Aṭṭās pledge that they would punish the Ḥirṭhān. Thus 'Umar's effort to release the Ḥirṭhān, not only showed his personal alignment in the conflict but also his potential as the leader of the new block. At the time 'Umar was not even a leader of the Bāsahl and his action was out of step with the then leader of the Bāsahl who remained neutral in the Council. However since then 'Umar has become owner of the largest shop in Ḥurēidah and early in 1962 became the leader of the Bāsahl when the previous leader died.

'Umar is educated although not as highly as Abubakar. He is intelligent, has spent over 15 years abroad as a businessman and has a wide range of experience especially in dealing with people. Since 1952 he has cultivated close

1. This name is fictitious.

business ties with a powerful trader in the capital (Mukalla) who backs him financially and 'politically'. Through the trader 'Umar has cultivated contacts with many middle-range officials of the Government. However the trader (who is from a nearby Mashāyikh group) acts as a link between 'Umar and the high officials at the capital. Thus 'Umar has certain personal qualities and contacts outside Ḥurēiḍah which, though not comparable with those of Abubakar, are the best any non-'Aṭṭās has in Ḥurēiḍah. He is the most suitable candidate for the leadership of the new anti-'Aṭṭās block.

In Ḥurēiḍah 'Umar has a unique position for recruiting support from all non-'Aṭṭās groups. His shop is at the market square where people always gather to talk and to buy things (this can be compared with Abubakar's guest room where people gather every morning).¹ He has the biggest shop and the majority of his customers are non-'Aṭṭās. The Gabā'il especially do most of their shopping with 'Umar, generally on a credit basis. Credit, as has been pointed out before, is an important element in the exchange system in Ḥurēiḍah,

1. Barth (1953) describes a parallel situation in the traditional political system of Kurdistan villages. There the formal political leader of a village, has daily informal gatherings in what Barth described as the "smoked filled room" in the leader's house. Such gatherings consisted of the higher 'caste'. The lower 'caste' also met informally on the rooftop of a house -- the 'roof top society'. In both gatherings village politics inevitably dominated the conversation.

making the customers particularly amenable to the shop-keeper's pressure (or recruiting campaign). 'Umar's shop therefore acts as an important centre for recruiting supporters.

A major qualification of 'Umar is the fact that he is accepted by the 'Aṭṭās as an 'important personality of the village' (min 'ayan al-bilād). He is a member of the Council and is always invited to any important occasion organised by the 'Aṭṭās. Since the two groups have a 'special relationship' from the traditional period, which is restated regularly on specific occasions (see Ch. III) this may account for 'Umar's recognition by the 'Aṭṭās. Because of his position and recognition, 'Umar is considered as one of the few people capable of dealing with Abubakar and standing up to him. He can argue with Abubakar and even make him change his mind on a specific matter. Thus many people take 'Umar with them when they go to Abubakar's house to discuss any particular problem.

'Umar is also considered to have some influence with the D.A.O. and the Ḳāḍī. He is wealthy and can afford to offer hospitality and bribes to such officials. During the brief periods when these officials are in Ḥurēiḍah, I have seen 'Umar pay many night visits to the respective officials in order to 'straighten things out' on behalf of disputants whose cases were pending in the courts. Sometimes this 'straightening out' can merely mean that a particular case

should be heard during this visit and not be delayed till the next one. By 1962 then, 'Umar was playing an important political role on behalf of the non-'Aṭṭās. He had become so important and indispensable that he was 'automatically' drawn in almost every dispute involving non-'Aṭṭās. His intervention became even more important in situations of 'Aṭṭās v. non-'Aṭṭās conflict. 'Umar had in fact become the informal leader of the non-'Aṭṭās.

In 1962 when the 'Aṭṭās vs. Bāsahl dispute took place, the political situation in Ḥurēiḍah was not very favourable to the President. In the first place, his group was divided and there was considerable criticism of his leadership from his own ranks. Secondly the anti-'Aṭṭās opposition had increased and had become centred around the Bāsahl leader. This situation was viewed with misgivings by Abubakar for a number of reasons:- (a) his authority within his own group was being undermined by disunity; (b) 'Umar was in effect becoming a rival to him and a contender for his position; (c) the opposition between the 'Aṭṭās and the non-'Aṭṭās was undermining his claim that he speaks for the whole of Ḥurēiḍah which is an important card in strengthening his hand when he deals with the Central Government. It was therefore necessary for Abubakar to take action which would simultaneously achieve three things:-

- (i) Rally the 'Aṭṭās behind him and so restore their unity.
- (ii) Humiliate 'Umar with a defeat and thereby contrast their respective power.

(iii) Break down the anti-'Aṭṭās camp and so remove a major threat to his and the 'Aṭṭās political dominance.

The President's deliberate provocation of the Bāsahl by his action was calculated to achieve these three political objectives.

The dispute in Case II then was primarily a political conflict between Abubakar and 'Umar. Both the leaders were supported by their respective groups -- 'Aṭṭās and Bāsahl. The Mansab immediately supported Abubakar. The Bāsahl held a number of meetings to discuss the situation. A Bāsahl, a close friend of 'Umar, resigned as the treasurer of the Cultural Club in protest against the 'Aṭṭās. This is interesting because it does indicate that the Bāsahl saw themselves as opposing the 'Aṭṭās rather than fighting a particular issue with the Council. Similarly, the fact that the project was not discussed in the Council initially, merely confirmed the prevalent interpretation that the dispute was the making of the President alone. The Ḥirṭhān leader for instance summed up the dispute by saying that Abubakar was "hitting 'Umar on the head" meaning that Abubakar was using the Council to put 'Umar in his 'proper place'.

Abubakar's action rallied the 'Aṭṭās behind him and so one of his aims was achieved immediately. His second objective -- to defeat 'Umar and contrast their respective powers -- could not be achieved immediately because the

outcome of the dispute would take some time. However the President was confident of his victory, partly because the claim of the Bāsahl was intrinsically weak (because the demarcation of the ridge was vaguely defined in their document) and partly because the head of the Supreme Court (a personal friend of the President) would ultimately decide the issue. A foretaste of the President's victory and therefore of 'Umar's humiliation, was the Kāḍi's rejection of the Bāsahl documents on a technical point. Similarly the public refusal of the Wazīr and the R.A. to listen to 'Umar, was a humiliation which symbolically showed to the bystanders which side the 'powers that be' were on, in this contest. Thus even before the dispute was officially settled, the President's victory was seen as inevitable and his power demonstrated.

The third objective of Abubakar -- to break down the anti-'Aḥḥās block -- was contained in the manifest purpose of the action. This was to build a guest house. At the time there was no talk at all of such a house being built and the news was a complete surprise to everyone. The project could have been started a year or two later without making the slightest difference to Ḥurēidāh. There was no overriding necessity for it to be built at the particular time, especially when most of the money was not available in the first place. It seems that either that Abubakar made a hasty decision to build the guest house (which I think is unlikely)

or that this was a carefully thought out project to be played out at the most suitable occasion. Whichever way the decision was arrived at, it is clear that the purpose in building the guest house was to popularise Abubakar and to show that he was concerned with the welfare of all and not of the 'Aṭṭās alone. The idea was to make 'Umar oppose the building of a guest house and therefore show that he was more concerned with the interests of Bāsahl rather than the interests of Ḥurēiḍah. The contrast between Abubakar fighting for a project that will benefit the public as a whole, and 'Umar fighting against the project because of the interest of his agnatic group, would obviously be to the advantage of Abubakar. However, 'Umar, perceiving this implication, counteracted by agreeing to the building of the guest house provided Abubakar asked the Bāsahl for the plot.

Abubakar's action was obviously an attempt at recruiting non-'Aṭṭās supporters. His choice of provoking the Bāsahl into a dispute which he was confident of winning, was primarily aimed at obstructing 'Umar from assuming the new role as a leader of the solidifying anti-'Aṭṭās camp. However it is not clear why he started the dispute at this particular time. This can only be explained if we relate it to the setting up of the Cultural Club. The Club was set up early in 1961 and was his first major attempt at recruiting non-'Aṭṭās. The creation of the Club as has been pointed out, seriously divided the 'Aṭṭās. Yet Abubakar went ahead

with the project in spite of the predictable division within his group. This indicates that Abubakar thought that the anti-'Aṭṭās antagonism was very serious and required such a risky action. However, when by the end of 1962 the Club was fading away, it became clear to Abubakar that his bold attempt had failed and that anti-'Aṭṭās opposition was still as strong if not stronger. Another attempt to break down this opposition was therefore necessary. Hence the production of the guest house project at this time with its desired effects of forcing 'Umar to oppose it.

The 'Aṭṭās-Bāsahl dispute was started by Abubakar with specific objectives in mind. He succeeded in achieving two of his immediate aims -- uniting the 'Aṭṭās and contrasting his power with that of 'Umar. His major objective of breaking down the anti-'Aṭṭās alignment is a long term 'plan'. One can safely predict that he will make other attempts towards this end.¹

The political power of any group in the new context is based on its ability to dominate and influence the formal political structure. This is what the 'Aṭṭās have done and the change is reflected in their absolute control of the Council and the personal powers of its President, Abubakar. The other groups in Ḥurēiḍah have failed to gain any

1. In June 1963, a short article appeared in one of the weekly newspapers of Mukalla, attacking Abubakar as the "dictator" of Ḥurēiḍah. The writer did not disclose his name.

influence within the new structure, and are therefore politically under 'Aṭṭās domination. Relations between the 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās are primarily regulated by this factor. Non-'Aṭṭās groups have a common political status as the dominated groups, and the success of the 'Aṭṭās in increasing their power, has tended to consolidate the new alignment of the non-'Aṭṭās groups. This basic political division was clear as early as 1952 (see Case I) but the important point here is that the last ten years has sharpened this cleavage, with the result that the non-'Aṭṭās camp has become more 'solid' in spite of Abubakar's attempt at breaking it.

The 'Aṭṭās are by far the largest single kin group in Ḥurēiḍah, and all are concentrated in one area. Unlike the Gabā'il and Masakīn groups, they are united in one House -- politically, residentially and by descent. They are politically organised and have a deep sense of unity -- unlike the non-'Aṭṭās who have no political organisation at present, are internally divided and whose only unifying factor is their dominated status and common anti-'Aṭṭās opposition. The 'Aṭṭās monopolise the religious leadership of Ḥurēiḍah, through the Mansabs as well as other individual scholars whose reputation is spread beyond the Ḥaḍramaut. All leading members of the 'Aṭṭās have regular income from overseas and are therefore able to live in Ḥurēiḍah for most of the time in comparative wealth, and concentrate on local affairs -- like Abubakar in the Council. Because of this and

through labour migration, they have been able to control political power and maintain their pre-eminent economic position in the social hierarchy. The 'Aṭṭās therefore have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. They have at their disposal all the local forces to maintain it, and until a few years ago, they had in fact, been very successful in doing this.

But Ḥurēiḍah has now been lifted into a wider context with intense political interaction with outside urban centres and has felt the full force of Nationalism. The success of the 'Aṭṭās in maintaining their traditional politico-economic position as a dominating group, has sharpened the contrast between Ḥurēiḍah's social hierarchy and the egalitarian ideology of Nationalism. Thus the politically and economically dominated non-'Aṭṭās groups see their interest is best served in bringing about changes in the existing social order. However, sudden changes in the economic organisation and the formal political structure is not possible because of the existing allocation of material resources and the overall political system. Hence the opposition of the dominated groups to the status quo is an ideological one and not an organised activity devoted to changing the economic and political structure. The two 'sides' i.e. the 'Aṭṭās who want to maintain the status quo and non-'Aṭṭās who want change, is expressed in the polarisation of political alignment into the two 'camps' respectively.

These two camps are antagonistic because their basic interests are contradictory. This contradiction has resulted from the continuance of the coincidence between the control of politico-economic power and the social hierarchy in a new setting dominated by the egalitarian ideology of Nationalism.

To sum up then, Abubakar's attempts have all been directed at solving a basic dilemma. The social structure of Ḥurēiḍah and Abubakar's personal qualities have combined to make the 'Aṭṭās the most powerful group in Ḥurēiḍah. Their interest is therefore in consolidating their power and maintaining the status quo. On the other hand, the dominated non-'Aṭṭās see their interest in acquiring political power and this can only be attained by a change in the status quo. The corollary to pursuing non-'Aṭṭās interest, is their increasing co-operation and opposition to the 'Aṭṭās. This contradiction in the interests of the two sides, has led to the inevitable conflict. This is inherent in the social structure and the dynamics of change. Abubakar as an individual can do nothing to remove it (given the existing social structure) and is therefore unlikely to achieve his ultimate objective of breaking down the non-'Aṭṭās block.

The development of this conflict is also partly due to external factors as well as the existence of the 'Alawī-Irshādi dispute in the recent past. These two aspects of the conflict are discussed in the next part of the chapter.

PART IIPOLITICS AND STRATIFICATIONExternal Politics

The polarisation of political alignment on 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās line in Ḥurēiḍah has been the most significant development of the last ten years. I have argued that this is mainly correlated with a structural conflict within the village. In this section however I will suggest that the development must also be related to the interaction of Ḥurēiḍah with the wider field of the Arab World if it is to be explained fully. The effect of this interaction has been to add a new dimension to the conflict and to provide an idiom which links the local situation with the 'new ideology' of the wider field. This culminated in the "Revolution Fever" of September 1962 (as a reaction to the nearby Yemen Revolution) dramatising the two 'camps' as representing what Mannheim calls 'ideology and utopia'.¹

1. Karl Mannheim's concepts seem appropriate to the situation in Ḥurēiḍah. He defines them as:-

"The concept of "ideology" reflects the one discovery which emerged from political conflict, namely, that ruling groups can in their thinking become so intensively interest-bound to a situation that they are simply no longer able to see certain facts which would undermine their sense of domination. There is implicit in the word "ideology" the insight that in certain situations the collective unconscious of certain groups obscures the real condition of society both to itself and to others and thereby stabilizes it."

"The concept of utopian thinking reflects the opposite discovery of the political struggle, namely that certain oppressed groups are intellectually so strongly

It is not necessary here to justify the theoretical stand that certain events in a village situation can be fully explained only by tracing their links with the larger and complex field of which they are a part.¹ This is generally true of most parts of the world today, but it is even more relevant to the Arab World.

Ḥurēīdah participates in the wider field of the Arab World in two ways:- (a) through a high rate of labour migration, and (b) through the extensive and increasingly intensive use of the mass media -- especially the radio. This interaction cuts across political boundaries and is part of the intense feeling behind the political drive towards Arab unity; this drive is a major force in the area

interested in the destruction and transformation of a given condition of society that they unwittingly see only those elements in the situation which tend to negate it. Their thinking is incapable of correctly diagnosing an existing condition of society. They are not at all concerned with what really exists; rather in their thinking they already seek to change the situation that exists. Their thought is never a diagnosis of the situation; it can be used only as a direction for action. In the utopian mentality, the collective unconscious, guided by wishful representation and the will to action, hides certain aspects of reality. It turns its back on everything which would shake its belief or paralyse its desire to change things". Mannheim (1960 ed.), p.36. Mannheim uses these concepts to describe large historical and political movements and their relations to the social structure of a given society. I believe it is possible and even necessary to identify similar movements within a micro-situation and within a limited span of time. In Ḥurēīdah and in the wider field we can identify the two sides as defined by Mannheim. It is not an accident that the two sides at the village, identify themselves with their equivalent camp in the wider field.

1. Max Gluckman 1964.

whose aims, theoretically, is to remove such boundaries. The Arabs, in spite of the many important cleavages and serious internal conflicts, can be described as being one 'unit' or 'social field' at the highest level. They have what has been described as a 'mystical' feeling towards their ultimate unity.¹ Pan-Arab Nationalism operates at this level. Its main expression, drive and symbol is the Voice of the Arabs which disseminate the 'new ideology' throughout the Arab World. It is with this widest field that Ḥurēiḍah interacts intensely through labour migration, and participates in the 'new ideology' through the transistor radio. It is only by examining the effects of this wider context that we can explain fully the events that took place in Ḥurēiḍah in 1961 and 1962.

Migrants from Ḥurēiḍah go to the various Arab countries where they go through what Watson calls the 'industrial experience'.² Lerner, after an extensive survey in seven Middle-Eastern countries, describes the effects of the city on the migrants in the following terms: "Some migrants never penetrate the urban curtain and live out their lives in a miserable daily dying. Others find in the industrial discipline a full and satisfying life. Still others are infused with new dreams of glory -- imagining themselves at the head of an Islamic brotherhood or of a proletarian

1. Ingrams 1964.

2. Watson 1958.

union, or of a Titoist state defying all the mighty. Many, perhaps most, simply try to learn a little more, get a little more, have a little more".¹

Many Ḥaḍrami migrants do in fact get involved, directly or indirectly, with political movements in the countries to which they migrate. It is impossible here to give any account of the extent of their political participation. But it is interesting to note that Ḥaḍrami migrants play a leading, if not dominating, role in all the political parties in 'Aden. Furthermore, all the banned political parties and Cultural Clubs in Ḥaḍramaut itself have been led mostly by migrants who had returned home after lengthy spells abroad.² In Ḥurēiḍah itself, there were some people who had participated in political and trade unions organisations abroad and were then actively engaged in political movements within the country.³ Thus although not all of Ḥurēiḍah's migrants engage in political activities on their return, the majority of them however do become politically conscious and follow with considerable interest political issues of the wider field and of Ḥaḍramaut itself. This is

1. D. Lerner 1958.

2. It is interesting to note that a recent booklet tracing the political struggle of Ḥaḍramaut against local 'reactionaries' and British Imperialism, is entitled "The Country of the Emigrants".

3. Political activities within the Qu'āiti State are outlawed. It is therefore impossible here to give any facts or clues that might lead to the identification of the individuals concerned.

important since it is this highly emotional political consciousness which is related to the particular events in Ḥurēiḍah to be discussed below.

But it is not only the migrants who have become politically conscious in Ḥurēiḍah. There are some people who have never migrated and who show just as high a degree of political consciousness as the migrants. This is largely due to the transistor radio which in the last seven years have spread extensively in the whole country. In 1962-63 there were between 150 to 200 radio sets in Ḥurēiḍah. Such radios can be bought from Ḥurēiḍah's shops at a cost of from £5 to £15. Most of the sets are however brought in by returning migrants, partly because the sets have become a status symbol and partly because they can be sold or pawned easily when a person is in need of cash.

People tune to the wireless for many reasons and listen to many different programmes. Everyone with a set tunes to the Voice of the Arabs and most people listen to its political programmes. Other stations such as San'a Radio, 'Aden, the Arabic Service of the B.B.C. are also widely listened to. One leading 'Aṭṭās sends regular reports to the B.B.C.'s audience research unit. Others ask questions from the B.B.C. on specific topics.¹ During the early days of the

1. When I arrived in Ḥurēiḍah, the people there had known for some time that I was going to 'study' Ḥurēiḍah. Some people had heard the broadcast of an interview I had with the Arabic Service of the B.B.C., in which I stated that I was going to do field research in Ḥurēiḍah. The 'Aṭṭās then spread the rumour that I was going to do research in 'Aṭṭās history which will subsequently be published in Europe.

Yemeni Revolution, Abubakar used to tune to nine different Radio Stations (in Arabic) and spent as many as six hours a day listening. On the average, people spend between 4 to 5 hours a day listening to the radio; the size of the regular audience to one set, varies between one to ten people. The radio in Ḥurēidah is thus an important 'source of information' and entertainment.

In the Arab World as a whole, broadcasting as a mass media, has been used in the last fifteen years, as an important political instrument. Its effect in 'arousing the masses' has been widely recognised by the opposing political groups within the Arab World. Even before the Suez crisis (i.e. before 1956) and the spread of transistors, Lerner emphasised that a major factor in the social change taking place in the Middle-East then, was "the shift in modes of communicating ideas and attitudes...." to the large public. The "mass media" he continued, "of tabloids, radio and movies are now the dominant modes". Since 1958, when cheap transistor radios have become available, the radio has assumed a major role in this new mode. The Voice of the Arabs, the most important broadcasting station in the Arab World, has been described as having a "pervasive agitational impact".¹ It "received major credit for inciting the riots which toppled two Governments and prevented Jordan's adherence to the

1. Hurwitz, J.C. 1958.

Baghdad Pact".¹ More recently, Cohen points out the strong influence and even instructions of the Voice of the Arabs to Arab villagers in the Triangle Area in Israel.²

Within the region of South Arabia, the dominant role of the Voice of the Arabs has been recognised and attempts made to counteract its influence. In 1962 'Aden Radio³ suddenly became more powerful and the range and clarity of its broadcasts increased, with additional time on the air. Similarly after the Yemeni Revolution, a new and powerful transmitter was installed in Saudi Arabia, with an increase in its political programmes and their presentation.⁴ In pre-Republican Yemen, "the Imam had learnt the power of radio and did his best to control its use, but he was defeated by

1. Lerner 1958.

2. Cohen, A. 1965. Cohen points out however that the instruction given to the villagers (to abstain from voting in the 1959 general election) were partially obeyed because of specific factors within the village which dominated the situation at the time.

3. In 1958, new studios were opened for the 'Aden Broadcasting Service. 'Aden, Report for the years 1957 and 1958. H.M. Stationary Office 1961. 'Aden Radio now transmits 80 hours a week in Arabic. In the South Arabian Federation (including 'Aden, but excluding Ḥaḍramaut) there are an estimated 80,000 radios to a population of 605,000 people. In my opinion the estimate is very conservative. In Ḥaḍramaut, no estimate of the number of radios has been done, but my guess is that the ratio of the number of radios to population is probably the same as that of the Federation.

4. According to Ḥaḍrami migrants, listening to the Voice of the Arabs was forbidden in Saudi Arabia! Those listening to it had their sets broken and fines imposed. I have not been able to check on the existence of such a law or practice in Saudi Arabia. There are an estimated 1,000,000 radio sets to a population of 6 million.

the small transistor ..."¹. However within a week of the Revolution in Yemen, San'a Radio was completely reorganised, its time increased from about two hours a day to thirteen, and its programmes and their contents changed radically to reflect the change that had taken place in the Yemen. Ingrams² (who opposes both the Revolution and Nasser's Pan-Arab Nationalism) thinks that the Revolution was master-minded in Cairo and that the Voice of the Arabs provided the link between Cairo and the Yemen -- the place of the Revolution. According to him the Voice of the Arabs not only incited the Yemenis to revolt against the Imam, but it hailed the coming revolution and introduced its leaders before the coup de tat. In special broadcast to the Yemen, "the Voice of the Arabs gradually made clear the pattern intended for the revolution in al-Yemen"; four months before the coup de tet, it broadcast "a blueprint for a Yemeni Republic based on Arab Nationalism". "Nasser's propaganda campaign showed results during the year. Their nature reflected much more the impact of the Voice of the Arabs than local activities, and illustrated well the power of... radio."

1. Ingrams H., 1963.

2. Ibid. I am not concerned with Ingrams' views nor his interpretation of the events. What is important is his argument that the radio and the broadcasts from the Voice of the Arabs, are important factors in the political situation of the whole region. Whether this is a good thing or bad, is beside the point.

In 'Aden and the Protectorate (this includes the Ḥaḍramaut), the Voice of the Arabs plays just as important a role as in the Yemen. All former Governors of 'Aden accuse, in their published writings, the Voice of the Arabs for inciting the workers in 'Aden and the tribesmen (Gabā'il) in the Protectorate. The workers strike and the tribesmen make armed revolts. One of the main reasons for postponing the creation of the South Arabian Federation in 1956, was the fear induced by the Voice of the Arabs on some of the Sultans. "Individual Rulers were mentioned by name (by the Voice of the Arabs) and the faint-hearted began to hedge and counsel a postponement until the atmosphere was more conducive to calm considerations".¹

In Ḥaḍramaut, whose townspeople are "more sophisticated than anywhere else in the area outside Aden",² there is a similar, though not as violent, political situation. There the people of the towns "listened to the radio and knew all the propaganda theme from the Voice of the Arabs by heart. They include a strong nationalist element." According to the former British High Commissioner for 'Aden, "the main problems of the Qu'āiti State were a nationalistically minded city mob ... which required constant watching." Another problem was caused by "a number of turbulent tribes

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1. Hickinbotham, T. 1958. Sir Tom Hickinbotham was the Governor of 'Aden and the Protectorates between 1951 and 1956.
 2. Johnston. 1964. High Commissioner for Aden between 1960 and 1963.

in the interior" who revolted a number of times (the last time being in 1961) and required punitive expeditions by both the Sultan's army and R.A.F. to put them down.

In 1947, there were two political parties in Ḥaḍramaut, but they were later banned; even Cultural Clubs with political orientation have since been banned. Thus by 1962-63 all political demonstrations were being done by school boys.¹ Even school girls, for the first time in Ḥaḍrami history, once staged their own demonstration against the Government (1963).

The general political situation in Ḥaḍramaut then is far from being calm and settled.² Inherent in the society are factors which are generally correlated with the rise of Nationalism. The fact that organised political activity is outlawed, makes the 'nationalistically minded' townspeople even more receptive to broadcasts from the Voice of the Arabs which has now been joined by the Republican San'a Radio. Broadcasts from these radio stations have specific programmes directed at the "occupied south". Within Ḥaḍramaut itself, its three weekly papers (printed in Mukalla) are always full of demands for political changes. As a result of these internal and external pressures, the Qu'āiti Government is now considering introducing some political changes (e.g. writing a Constitution, probably permitting political

1. I saw two such demonstrations in June 1963, at the capital - Mukalla.

2. For a fuller description of the important political events of Ḥaḍramaut till 1961 see M.Gibrils "Madīnat-ul-Muhājirīn especially Ch.V ("On the Road to Revolution").

parties and introducing some form of elections). The mass media is thus an important factor in the political situation of Ḥaḍramaut. The Voice of the Arabs especially, has increased the political consciousness of the people by constant 'political education'.

This political education makes Ḥurēiḍah participate in the ideology of Pan-Arab Nationalism of the wider Arab field. In this way, the 'mystical' feeling for unity is given expression and this partly explains the popularity of the Voice of the Arabs. At a lower level, the Voice of the Arabs provides sanction to particular Nationalist movements. It is at this level that the ideology propounded by the Voice of the Arabs is translated into political action. Political organisations and activities (whether open or underground), and the political education of the broadcasts, are different aspects of the same phenomenon referred to as Pan-Arab Nationalism. Although this is a subject outside the scope of the Anthropologist,¹ the important point here is that Ḥaḍramaut cannot be isolated from what goes on at this high level of Pan-Arab Nationalism. In fact, I will go further than this and stress that Ḥaḍramaut has been considerably affected by both the 'new ideology' of Pan-Arab Nationalism and the concomitant political movements at the regional level. Thus a proper analysis of the situation in Ḥurēiḍah

1. For a theoretical discussion of this point see Gluckman (1964), especially the essay by F.G.Bailey.

must relate it with this wider context.

But what is the effect on Ḥurēiḍah in particular, of this interaction with the wider field? Since organised political activity was outlawed and since I did not carry out extensive attitude tests to find out the changes in the value system of the people of Ḥurēiḍah, it is difficult to measure the effects of the important force of Pan-Arab Nationalism. However by analysing two recent events in Ḥurēiḍah, it will become clear that the 'new ideology' from the wider field has provided another dimension within which the local conflicts are fought. Events, personalities and political alignments in the wider field, are identified to the cause and become the symbol of, the two conflicting 'blocks' within Ḥurēiḍah.

The Cultural Club 1961.

Early in 1961, two of Abubakar's sons, both of whom are nationalistically minded, discussed the possibility of forming a Cultural Club in Ḥurēiḍah. The elder of the two sons -- Ḳāsem -- is a school teacher and 22 years old; the younger son (18 years) is a student. Both have been to Saudi Arabia and 'Aden where they worked and studied. Abubakar encouraged them to form the Club and promised them his support.

The two brothers then contacted Ḥurēiḍah's migrants abroad, informing them of their intention and asking them to

contribute news of the migrants to a newsletter which would be edited by the two brothers. The appeal was mainly directed to young migrants from all strata. The response, from Ḥurēiḍah and abroad, was good. A newsletter was then edited by the two brothers (written by hand) and then hung on the wall outside their house.

At this point Abubakar took up the project and wrote letters to most of the 'important men' of Ḥurēiḍah, asking them to join him in forming the Club. The term Saiyid preceded all the names on each envelope i.e. all those invited, 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās, were addressed by this term. In Ḥurēiḍah this term Saiyid had always been exclusively applied to 'Aṭṭās only, since they belonged to the Sādah stratum. Never before in the village has a prominent 'Aṭṭās used the term publicly to refer to non-'Aṭṭās.¹ Ordinary 'Aṭṭās also never used the term to non-'Aṭṭās, even privately. As was expected most of the 'Aṭṭās were angered and displeased by this, especially since it was used 'officially' (i.e. in writing) and by no lesser a person than their own political leader. On the other hand, non-'Aṭṭās were highly pleased by this 'recognition', especially because it came from Abubakar. As a result, most of the 'Aṭṭās opposed the Club while the non-'Aṭṭās enthusiastically supported it. The meeting was attended mainly by the latter with very few 'Aṭṭās.

1. For a further discussion of the use of this term see Chapter I.

The Club was then formed with Abubakar as its President and Ḳāsem, his son, as the secretary. Another young 'Aṭṭās (the son of the Deputy President of the Council) was made the Publicity Officer, a Bāsahl was made Treasurer, and a Gabā'il, a Ḥirthān and an Akhdām adopted as members of the Committee. Funds were collected and a Constitution was written. The main aims of the Club, according to the Constitution, were:- (a) to promote culture (thagāfah) in Ḥurēiḍah; (b) to provide a social centre, with facilities, where young men can meet and spend their leisure hours profitably, and (c) to unite and promote 'brotherly' feelings amongst the people of Ḥurēiḍah. Abubakar lent the Club a house, many of his books for the library, and furniture (chairs, tables etc). Evening classes were started to teach people writing and reading and simple arithmetic. Ḳāsem and the Publicity Officer were the teachers, and most of the students were non-'Aṭṭās. Football games were organised, and the Bāsahl 'offered' the ground -- since it was the only suitable place in Ḥurēiḍah for playing. The newsletter was edited by Ḳāsem, his younger brother (as a volunteer) and the Publicity Officer.

One of the first major activities undertaken by the Club, was to organise a meeting to celebrate the independence of Algeria. At the celebration, Abubakar gave a long and rousing speech about the brotherhood and unity of the Arabs, and the 'equality' of people taught by Islām. He indirectly

attacked those who opposed the Club by saying that they must 'march with time'. In August 1962, the Club, after long preparation, staged a play at the Mashhad ziāra whose theme was to show the ideals of Islām in upholding 'equality' amongst its converts during its early period. After this the initial enthusiasm began to fade away and the regular activities of the Club dropped one by one. Thus by October when the Sultan visited Ḥurēiḍah, the Club found it very difficult to gather a team in order to display a show of gymnastics to the Sultan. At the end of the year, the resignation of the Bāsahl Treasurer (during the 'Aṭṭās-Bāsahl dispute) was the final act in the fall of the Club. Now it exists in name only and its premises have been closed.

One immediate reason for the failure of the Club was that the majority of its supporters are drawn from the young men of Ḥurēiḍah who are the most mobile group. For instance, in January 1963, the Publicity Officer and the Gabā'il member of the Committee, left Ḥurēiḍah for Kuwait in search of work. At the same time the Akhdām member went to Mukalla and took a job there. The second immediate factor in the failure of the Club, was the strong opposition and effective boycott by the majority of 'Aṭṭās. Apart from Abubakar and his two sons, the Publicity Officer and about five other young 'Aṭṭās, the rest refused to join the Club and opposed it by spreading rumours that the Club 'was not a good place' for children and young men to go to. Both these factors

partially explain the failure of the Club.

However the most important factor was the fall of non-'Aṭṭās confidence in the Club, because they thought that it was not serving their interest. In the first place, the Club was effectively run by the 'Aṭṭās; Kāsem, his younger brother and the Publicity Officer were the most active members, for the simple reason that they had the time, facilities, ability and enthusiasm to run the Club. The most important decisions were first discussed by Abubakar and his two sons and later put to the Committee for endorsement. Secondly many non-'Aṭṭās soon became suspicious of Abubakar's motives in starting and running the Club. There is a strong belief among non-'Aṭṭās that 'Aṭṭās are always united, that they never quarrel publicly and that the interest of their House is always important in their actions. Thus Abubakar's setting up of the Club, against 'Aṭṭās opposition and manifestly for the benefit of non-'Aṭṭās, puzzled many of the latter. The fact they considered Abubakar as a clever man (shāṭir) and a politician (siyāsi) increased their suspicion that he wanted his 'power' (sulṭah). This suspicion was fanned by the open opposition of the Ṣūfi Mansab who grumbled that Abubakar not only had 'usurped' the powers of the Mansabs, but was destroying the institution in his attempt to gain personal power. Thirdly, many non-'Aṭṭās believed that the success of the Club would enhance the reputation of

Ḥurēiḍah in the country. But since Ḥurēiḍah is known as the "'Aṭṭās town", this would merely increase 'Aṭṭās reputation and prestige which is ultimately against the interest of non-'Aṭṭās.

Abubakar's primary concern is to maintain his political power and curb the growing antagonism between 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās which has been given a new dimension by Nationalism. It is in this new field that Abubakar makes his most strenuous efforts to recruit non-'Aṭṭās' support. Within his own group, there is no danger of being outflanked by another leader for two reasons:- (a) there is no one amongst the 'Aṭṭās who is of the same stature and ability as Abubakar, apart from his ailing and older nephew who is confined to the house because of ill health; (b) his power within Ḥurēiḍah is also sanctioned by ties outside Ḥurēiḍah. Thus Abubakar is safe from competition and serious revolt from his own group. Because of this he can go a long way in his attempt to recruit non-'Aṭṭās without jeopardising his own position. Thus of all the 'Aṭṭās élite, he alone is pro-Nasser. He has two large photographs of Nasser in his guest room, which 'annoy' the Sādah, as he often declares. All leading 'Aṭṭās have pictures of the former Imām of Yemen, King Husein of Jordan, the late King Faisal of Iraq, hung on the walls of their reception rooms. (These personalities are all Hashimite i.e. descendants of the Prophet). At Abubakar's

guest room, politics is a constant subject of discussion at the daily gatherings and Abubakar generally supports Nasser in such discussions. Thus his speech at the celebration of the Algerian independence, was full of praise of the Algerian heroes and support for Pan-Arab Nationalism. Once he even rebuked the Şūfi Mansab for being excessively 'conservative'.

Abubakar's political stand and his attempt to portray himself as a 'modern person', is aimed at recruiting non-'Aṭṭās support. But his most important step in this direction was the setting up of the Club itself. Thus the strong 'Aṭṭās opposition and their attack on Abubakar, is used as an example of his sincerity and as 'proof' that he is concerned with the interest of all the people of Ḥurēiḍah and not only that of the 'Aṭṭās. The use of the term Saiyid in addressing non-'Aṭṭās had a symbolic significance to both blocks; it showed that Abubakar was a modern man and believed in the 'equality' of people.

The theme of 'equality' dominated the activities of the Club. It was stressed in the celebration speech, in the play, and the whole atmosphere at the regular 'social gatherings' and activities of the Club. This is a recognition of the importance of the 'new ideals' or the 'modern outlook' which pervades the village and which is associated with the wider force of Pan-Arab Nationalism. Abubakar's perception of this new factor in the situation made him take his most controversial actions in this field. The importance he and



Top picture: The Cultural Club of Hureidah wellcoming the Qua'ity Sultan on his visit to the village.



Bottem picture: The Cultural Club advertising its activities at the Mashhad ziara.

most people attach to this aspect of social activity, is an indication that the people are preoccupied with the system of stratification in Ḥurēiḍah. This preoccupation is expressed in the conflict between the two blocks and the antagonism that exists between them. This has become the most important cleavage in Ḥurēiḍah overshadowing and minimising the traditional divisions within the non-'Aṭṭās block. Hence the strenuous efforts of Abubakar to minimise the antagonism and to stop non-'Aṭṭās becoming a strong anti-'Aṭṭās block. By stressing the theme of 'equality' and the unity of the people of Ḥurēiḍah, he is trying to meet the complaint of non-'Aṭṭās and at the same time make the whole of Ḥurēiḍah as one unit. In this attempt, Abubakar uses the language of Nationalism because it is now the prevailing idiom throughout the country and because the non-'Aṭṭās justify their opposition to 'Aṭṭās in this language. But the failure of the Club showed that Abubakar was not successful in his attempt and that the antagonism between the two blocks was just as strong if not stronger. This was shown clearly by the intense but predictable reaction of the people of Ḥurēiḍah to the Yemeni Revolution.

HUREIDAH'S REACTION TO THE YEMENI REVOLUTION.

Early on the morning of the 27th September 1962, an 'Aṭṭas accidentally¹ tuned on San'a Radio. The 'Aṭṭas had a transistor set and was sitting with a group of people at the Market Square. He heard martial music which sounded out of place from San'a Broadcasting Station.² Soon the music was interrupted with an announcement that a coup de tet had successfully overthrown the recently installed Imām,³ and that a Republican Government had been formed under the leadership of 'Abdalla Sallāl. The announcement became longer and included violent attacks on the Imām as a person and his régime. It justified the coup de tet by calling it

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1. Until then San'a Radio did not broadcast in the morning.
 2. During the last seven years, people all over the Arab World had become familiar with a number of set pieces of martial music composed mainly in Egypt. Such music was only broadcast at times of important political crisis. Most of the coup de tet that have taken place during this time, have all been followed immediately by broadcast of this music from the Radio Station of the particular country. The music is interrupted regularly for important announcements. This normally lasts for a few days until the crisis has 'subsided'. Thus people have come to expect important announcements when they hear such music. Since the music is 'revolutionary' in spirit i.e. it appeals to the 'people' to be militant in times of crisis, it is normally heard from the Voice of the Arabs and the Broadcasting Stations of the more militant countries ('the liberated countries'), such as Iraq, Syria, Algeria. Thus San'a Radio, before the Revolution, was the Station of a 'reactionary country' and such music was not expected to be broadcast from there.
 3. Imām Ahmad died on September 19th, and was succeeded by his son -- Badar --. The coup de tet took place in the night of the 26th, and was announced early next morning.

"a revolt of the poor and oppressed people" against the "unjust and oppressive rule" of the Imām and his "reactionary cliques". It promised a new social order of "justice, equality and freedom".

The immediate reaction of the small group who listened to the announcement intensely, was a complete surprise. The group consisted of an 'Aṭṭās shopkeeper (owner of the radio set), who had spent four years in Zanzibar and three years in Saudi Arabia; the 'Aṭṭās vice-president of the Local Council who had never been abroad; the leader of the Ḥirṭhān group, who had spent five years in Saudi Arabia; and a young Akhdām¹ who was born in Africa and had spent a number of years in Saudi Arabia and 'Aden before coming to Ḥurēiḍah. Within a few minutes, the leader of the Bāsahl left his shop and joined the group. Other people who were scattered in different parts of the Square, congregated on the small group. The group was situated under the shadow of my house, and I was called within five minutes when the announcement was first heard.

The first committed comment came from the 'Aṭṭās vice-President, who expressed his shock at the reported killing of the Imām and said that the coup de tet would fail like the many previous attempts at rebellions against the Imām. The Imām, according to him, was not called seif al-Islām (the sword of Islām) for nothing. The young Akhdām's

1. He was a member of the Committee of the Cultural Club.

comment was more 'nationalistic' in language which was in support of the Republican coup de tet. He said that the Revolution was necessary to end the 'injustice' in Yemen and to bring the country forward from its present conditions which were those of the 'middle-ages'. The 'Aḥḥās shopkeeper was guarded in his reaction, but came down decidedly for the Imām. The Ḥirṭhān leader was puzzled and found it difficult to believe that the Imām had been overthrown. From what he had seen of the Yemen (he passed through the Yemen on his first trip to Saudi Arabia), he thought that the Imām's power was too strong to be removed by a coup de tet. However he gave a lurid picture of how the Imām 'oppressed' the peasants and villagers. The Bāsahl leader expressed a non-committal surprise and then returned to his shop. The rest of the crowd had a 'mixed reaction' -- some expressing support and others opposition to the Revolution (ṭhawrah). All however were surprised since no one had expected such an event to take place in the Yemen. Many considered the Yemenis as more 'backward' than the Ḥaḍramis, and until recently, some Yemenis seasonally passed through Ḥurēidah begging and performing magical acts (siḥir). Jokes were made about the 'beggars making a Revolution' i.e. they thought it was an absurd and a comical situation. At the same time some praised the 'fearlessness and bravery' of the Zēidis (zuyūd).

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1. Followers of Zēidi Shī'a sect, headed by the Imām of the Yemen who was both the religious head of the sect and the ruler of the country. The Yemen is roughly divided into the Zēidi minority (one-third) in the north and the Sunni majority (two-thirds) in the south. The latter are the backbone of Republican supporters. The Ḥaḍramis are all Sunnis.

and some predicted a 'bloodbath' (madhbah), between them and the Republicans.

Late in the afternoon, the market was unusually crowded. There were five radio sets, all tuned to San'a Radio which by this time was making rousing and revolutionary speeches, and announcing names of tribes and important people who had declared their support for the Republican régime. At this time it was becoming clear that the 'Aṭṭās were supporting the Imām -- at least those present at the Market Square. Republican support at the Square, came mostly from a group of non-'Aṭṭās 'led' by the young Akhdām. These young men were highly pleased and made many disrespectful references to the Imām and his 'lackeys' in the Yemen who have now been overthrown. The 'Aṭṭās were sullen and angered by this 'talkative' group; some 'Aṭṭās retaliated by making insulting remarks at the 'traitor Sallāl' and made nasty insinuations about his descent status as a dha'if i.e. of the Masakīn stratum, saying that 'treachery' is the sort of thing one expects from such people (the Masakīn). When darkness fell and people dispersed, it was clear that the 'Aṭṭās had identified themselves with the Imām, since he was a Saiyid, and therefore supported his cause. Some of the non-'Aṭṭās however wholeheartedly identified their support with the Republican Government.

During the next few weeks, all conversation in Ḥurēidah was dominated by the subject of the Yemeni

Revolution. In all gatherings, at the Market Square, the shops, Abubakar's guest room, and at samar (night gatherings in the houses where people visiting sit and talk and drink tea) in most houses, conversation was dominated by heated discussions on the Revolution. Feeling rose very high between 'Aṭṭās, as supporters of the Imām, and non-'Aṭṭās who supported the Republican Government and opposed the Imām. During this time, six people at different occasions were stopped from fighting as a result of arguing on the Yemeni situation. Three 'Aṭṭās and three non-'Aṭṭās took opposing sides. As time passed, it was clear that 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās was the main cleavage in the strong reaction to the Revolution. Even Abubakar supported the Imām. Amongst the non-'Aṭṭās, most of the men supported the Republicans, although there were some (especially the older generation) who were uncommitted. But even the uncommitted non-'Aṭṭās said that they knew why the 'Aṭṭās strongly supported the Imām. At this time rumours were spreading in Ḥurēiḍah that the Revolution had reached parts of the Ḥaḍramaut and that some of the Gabā'il tribes were taking up arms in its support. These rumours lasted for a number of days and although they were unfounded, many people at the time took them seriously and some believed that eventually the rumours will be realised. Attitudes in Ḥurēiḍah went through a remarkable change. The Akhdām for instance became more aggressive and vocal in their denouncing of 'Aṭṭās domination. Their jokes

became distinctly political, and street jibes against the 'Aṭṭās became open and frequent. Even some 'Aṭṭās widows were heard muttering a welcome to the Revolution, because when it comes to Ḥurēidah "it will bring freedom to marry" i.e. to marry non-'Aṭṭās. The 'Aṭṭās on the other hand complained the Masakīn had become more arrogant (kibr) and that 'modern changes' was 'spoiling' many people including some of their women.

As the civil war in the Yemen took shape and each side increased its military strength, attitudes in Ḥurēidah hardened. Conflicting claims on the progress of the civil war, made the source of daily news an important problem. Similarly at the wider level, there were divisions and new alignments arising from the Yemeni Revolution. In Ḥurēidah every afternoon people would bring their radio sets to the Market Square and tune to different Radio Stations for the latest news. Republican supporters would listen to San'a Radio while the opposing side would listen to the Pirate Radio of the Imām hastily set up immediately after the coup de tet.¹ In the evening the Republicans would listen to the Voice of the Arabs, while the Imām supporters would range widely listening to 'Aden Radio, Saudi Arabian broadcast, the BBC and even Radio Israel, in order to get information and 'facts' to contradict the Republican's claims about the

1. At the Market Square, the two sides kept in discreet and separate groups.

progress of the war. Thus each side had different 'facts' about the progress of the war and this increased the tension and the incessant arguments. The two sides in Ḥurēiḍah identified themselves with the respective forces in the wider field. The Republicans were the Nasser supporters (Abubakar became anti-Nasser at this time) and were accused by the other side as being 'communists'. The 'Aṭṭās on the other hand were accused of being 'imperialist supporters and reactionaries' since they were on the same side as Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Britain and even Israel. They would believe London and 'Aden but not Cairo, which, according to the Republican non-'Aṭṭās showed which side they belonged in the wider ideological battle.

The reaction to the Yemeni Revolution dramatised the importance of the 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās cleavage which had been developing for some time. As the situation in the Yemen settled down to a prolonged civil war, the Revolution became a symbol of the 'coming changes' to both sides. To the 'Aṭṭās the Revolution symbolised a deliberate change in the social order in which the traditional principles and ideals of the society are radically displaced and substituted by a social organisation based on "modern" principles and ideals as expressed by the ideology of Pan-Arab Nationalism. It symbolised the situation in Ḥurēiḍah, because the Imām was a Saiyid -- a kinsman -- and the Sādah groups in Yemen ruled the country.¹ The Revolution was also a symbol to non-'Aṭṭās

1. Brown, W.R. 1963.

for the same reasons. It overthrew the domination of the Sādah and placed at the helm of the country, a Masakīn (Sallāl) from the "oppressed and dominated stratum" of Yemeni society, thus reversing what was thought to be an inviolable social order. It brought home to them that all the fiery Nationalist talk from the Voice of the Arabs about changing and reorganising the society for the benefit of the 'oppressed', was possible and attainable. The Revolution therefore symbolised the structural conflict of interests existing in Ḥurēiḍah between the 'Aṭṭās and the non-'Aṭṭās. The idiom of Nationalism through which this conflict was expressed suddenly became an idiom expressing a real and actual situation closely related to that of Ḥurēiḍah and geographically within its 'backyard'. It was not surprising therefore that the Revolution in the Yemen, raised the structural conflict in Ḥurēiḍah to an ideological arena and made it the dominating issue until my departure in July 1963. The continuation of the civil war in the Yemen, fanned the debate in Ḥurēiḍah and gave it a longer life. It created in Ḥurēiḍah and throughout the country, a "Revolution fever".¹

Both the Cultural Club and the Yemeni Revolution provided a new arena in which 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās cleavage expressed itself. The formation of the Club by Abubakar showed not only the importance of the cleavage, but also the

1. I use this phrase in the same sense as "Federation fever" the latter was used to describe the opposition of the Africans to the Central African Federation. See Watson 1958, p.213.

necessity of using the 'new ideology' in order (according to Abubakar's thinking) to remedy the cleavage and remove the antagonism. But the failure of the Club showed the strength of the antagonism between the two sides. The Revolution dramatised this antagonism and evoked the fears and hopes of the two blocks. It made clear that the root of the conflict was concerned with change. One side opposed it and insisted on the status quo, while the other side hoped for the change and demanded it. The Revolution was thus seen as a foretaste of what would happen in Ḥurēiḍah (and in Ḥaḍramaut in general) if the status quo is changed, not necessarily in the same way, but certainly to an approximate extent as the changes in the Yemen. The stakes in the conflict then, was nothing less than the system of stratification in Ḥurēiḍah. The 'Aṭṭās as the dominating group have the "ideology" (in Mannheim's sense) of maintaining the status quo, since their interest is in it. The non-'Aṭṭās on the other hand, are the dominated group and are therefore the "utopian" who want change in the society since they believe that their interest will be best served in the coming social order.

The question that arises here is why does the conflict centre on the system of social stratification? There are two answers to this. Firstly the structural reality of Ḥurēiḍah today shows that the control of economic resources within Ḥurēiḍah is unevenly distributed and that this is correlated with the traditional social hierarchy. It also

shows that within the political system, the 'Aṭṭās control almost absolutely the political power within the village context. As a result, the 'Aṭṭās dominate Ḥurēiḍah politically and economically. This has produced an antagonistic cleavage in terms of politico-economic power, between 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās. The conflict is based on a traditional cleavage -- within the framework of the stratification system -- but the antagonism between the two sides has been sharpened by the changing conditions, since in the new situation a possibility of change exists. It is not surprising therefore that structural conflict is expressed in terms of the system of stratification.

Secondly, as has been pointed out in Chapter II, the system of stratification in Ḥaḍramaut has been a subject of violent discussion amongst the Ḥaḍrami community in the Far East. The Sādah defended the system, marshalled religious arguments to justify it (or at least their own position in it) and organised themselves both abroad and in Ḥaḍramaut to maintain the system. On the other hand, non-Sādah have violently attacked the system and have appealed to Islamic authority outside Ḥaḍramaut in order to condemn and counter-act the religious arguments of the Sādah. Abroad they organised themselves and took positive action to eliminate stratification amongst themselves i.e. the non-Sādah (the reformist Irshādi). They built their own schools, had their own propaganda paraphernalia and spread their ideas to

awaken the Ḥaḍramis from Sādah 'indoctrination'. The debate between the two sides covered detailed aspects of the stratification system as it operates in Ḥaḍramaut. Such symbolic aspects of stratification as the kissing of the hand, exclusive terms of address and hypergamous marriage, became the subject of heated attack and defence. During the many years of conflict between the 'Alawī and Irshādi in the Far East, there was a constant interaction of people and ideas between the community abroad and Ḥaḍramaut itself. The controversy in the Far East was ultimately incorporated in the society in Ḥaḍramaut itself. In the past however Ḥaḍramaut was isolated from the rest of the Arab World, but since the War, it has become incorporated within the turbulent Pan-Arab Nationalism of the Arab World. Thus the traditional 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict provides a historical framework and a point of reference within which present day conflicts are fought. The very notion of 'reform' that is to say, deliberate change in the society, is not a 'modern' thing in Ḥaḍramaut or in Ḥurēiḍah. However the 'modern outlook' whose main source is Nationalism, not only provides a new idiom and new ideas to the debate, but decidedly strengthen the Irshādi case. In this sense, the Sādah are fighting a losing battle.

In the context of Ḥurēiḍah, the 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict has been latent within the village even before the post-war period of 'peace' and change. Many incidents have

occurred in the past between 'Aṭṭās and the non-'Aṭṭās returning from Indonesia. One famous incident is always recounted in which a Gabā'il took a vow in Indonesia that he would come to Ḥurēiḍah, take an 'Aṭṭās woman and return with her to Indonesia where he would marry her. He did this but while waiting to sail at Mukalla on his return, the Sultan (under 'Aṭṭās pressure) stopped the woman and returned her to Ḥurēiḍah. Other incidents are recounted in which non-'Aṭṭās Irshādi returning from Indonesia, have deliberately stopped conforming to certain rules related to the stratification system, especially those which symbolised the superior status of the 'Aṭṭās -- such as kissing their hands, calling them Saiyid or ḥabīb, visiting their shrines or participating in the 'Īd ritual of 'paying respect' to the 'Aṭṭās at the Friday mosque. One particular Gabā'il (now dead) is renowned for his public attack on 'Aṭṭās 'domination' and inciting non-'Aṭṭās to stop being the 'blind slaves' of the 'Aṭṭās. All this was before the establishment of the Qu'āiti State, when 'Aṭṭās 'power' (spiritual) was at its highest. The 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict thus laid down the foundation on which the 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās blocks developed under the present politico-economic conditions of Ḥurēiḍah. It also provided the precedence and ideological justification for the unity of the non-'Aṭṭās block. The recent dominance of Nationalism in the region increased this unity and provided it with a more relevant idiom with which to fight their

struggle. The Yemeni Revolution thus symbolised a historical trend which both blocks thought was inevitable and made it the issue of their conflict.

From the discussion in the two sections of this chapter, two things have emerged. Firstly, there has developed in Ḥurēidah, a structural conflict between two political blocks -- the 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās -- which dominate the political activities of the village. Secondly, the wider force of Nationalism has provided a new and more relevant dimension to the historical 'Alawī-Irshādi controversy, thus providing a deeper framework within which local conflicts are fought and the stratification system made the issue at stake. The question that inevitably arises is why is the local conflict expressed mainly as an ideological attack on stratification and not an actual breakdown in terms of major activities against the rules of the system?

The answer to this question has two aspects. In the first place, within Ḥaḍramaut as a whole, the political and economic changes have not been profound and extensive enough to minimise the importance of this form of stratification. Politically, in spite of the establishment of the Qu'āiti and Kathīri States, the Sādah still 'exert a particular influence' on these States, according to former Governor Johnston. The Wazīr of the Qu'āiti State is in fact an 'Aṭṭās, and although recruitment into the Government is

theoretically based on achievement and qualification, the political system as a whole allows for no avenues in which the population at large can participate and wield political power. As a result, we see in a local situation as that in Ḥurēiḍah, the 'Aṭṭās have in fact increased their political power. Similarly, in the economic field, there have been no major economic enterprise in industry nor has there been any increase in agricultural area or productivity. What has expanded is the distributive trade -- little shops like those in Ḥurēiḍah -- in most of the villages and towns. This is because the increase in remittances¹ from extensive labour migration, has increased the purchasing power of the people and caused the importation of food and light manufactured goods from the free port of Aden. Apart from the growth in the distributive 'industry', there has been no other economic growth in the country. Thus as a pre-industrialised country with no economic development, Ḥaḍramis have relied almost entirely on migration and not on the economic organisation within the country itself. Within the village context, we have seen in Ḥurēiḍah that labour migration has in fact

1. A senior Qu'āiti Government official estimated that about £2 million enter the country annually as remittances from abroad. The total Qu'āiti Government expenditure and revenue for the year 1957-58, was as follows:- Revenue £617,265. Expenditure £603,845. See Aden Report (1957-58). Pub. 1961. For the year 1962-63 it was as follows:- Revenue £713,103. Expenditure £703,642. See The Middle-East and North Africa 1964-65, London.

tended to maintain the traditional distribution of wealth and the 'Aṭṭās have thereby continued their economic dominance. This is to say that the politico-economic changes within the country as a whole, and within Ḥurēiḍah in particular have not been extensive and profound enough to minimise the importance of ascription as a basis of the stratification system.¹ In Ḥurēiḍah then, ascriptive stratification of the Ḥaḍrami type, is still an important principle of social organisation. This has been strengthened by the distribution of economic and political power within the village.

Secondly within Ḥurēiḍah many non-'Aṭṭās would condemn the system of ṭabaqāt (strata, classes) as being 'out of date' ('ādi) and attack the 'Aṭṭās for upholding the system. Some individuals have in fact acted against certain rules of the system and have made symbolic rebellion against specific acts. Similarly, some 'Aṭṭās, especially Abubakar, have taken specific steps and actions against the rules of the system e.g. the extension of the term Saiyid to non-'Aṭṭās, the acceptance of the principle of 'equality' publicly etc. Yet both 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās act primarily as members of specific groups and categories and in the case

1. Professor Hoselitz argues that economic development in the emerging countries, is closely correlated with a change from the traditional system of stratification based on ascription to another system based on achievement. Hoselitz B.F. 1964.

of the latter, do not generally act as members of a 'block' (e.g. the case of Bāsahl, Case II). This is even more so in marriage in which hypergamy and in-group marriages are rigidly followed. Marriage is significant because in a society with an ascriptive system of stratification, the breakdown of the rule of hypergamy is an important criterion in measuring any change in the system. The fact that in Ḥurēiḏah the marriage pattern has not changed is thus significant. This is mainly attributed to the fact that women, as mothers of the prospective spouses, have important say in the choice of a spouse, and since they do not migrate, they have been least affected by the 'modern outlook' and therefore would tend to uphold the traditional principles in marriage. This is a partial, though important factor, in explaining the marriage pattern. It does not explain the apparent contradiction in other aspects of social activities.

A more important factor is the process of situational selection. Thus a Gabā'il would for instance attack the 'Aṭṭās on the question of marriage, and his superior status, but would not himself allow his daughter or let his sister marry a Masakīn. He would also consider himself -- as a Gabā'il -- to have a higher status than the Masakīn. On the other hand, non-'Aṭṭās would join together in certain political situations e.g. Case I, the Cultural Club, the reaction to the Yemeni Revolution. In such situations they join together as "equals" and act corporately. This

situational selection is carried to a fine point by Abubakar. He would form a Cultural Club to emphasise the "equality" and "brotherhood" of Ḥurēiḍah's people, make speeches on this theme and even anger his own group by other symbolic acts. Yet he would insist that people are also ranked by descent in spite of equality, that hypergamous marriage is necessary as a consequence of this, and that the 'Aṭṭās have inherent 'sacred powers' (karāmah). By the principle of situational selection, it is possible therefore for a person to perform contradictory activities and invoke contradictory sets of ideals in different situational contexts.

To sum up, I have discussed in the first section of this chapter, the development of 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās conflict. I argued that this development is due to the continuance of the politico-economic dominance of the 'Aṭṭās and the concomitant clash of interests between the two blocks. In the second section, I related this conflict with the wider force of Nationalism and the historical framework of the 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict. Here I argued that both these factors have reinforced the cleavage and provided an idiom and an ideological justification to the conflict.

But in spite of the development of the two blocks and the intense controversy over stratification, I pointed out that no major breakdown of the social hierarchy has taken place in Ḥurēiḍah. This was clearly shown by the marriage pattern. Here I argued that although some structural changes

have taken place e.g. in the political and economic organisations, these have not been the necessary changes which bring about a breakdown in stratification. In fact the small degree of politico-economic change that has so far taken place, has tended to maintain the traditional correlation between the distribution of politico-economic power and the social hierarchy. Yet major changes are possible under the new conditions. Because of this, the ubiquitous 'new ideology' of Nationalism has provided a field in which the stratification system as a whole is questioned. As a result, there is thus a gap, a discrepancy, between the ideological controversy and a major part of the actual behaviour of the people. Hence the principle of situational selection operates to close the contradiction between the ideological commitment of the people and most of their actual behaviour.

CHAPTER VIIICONCLUSION

The system of social stratification in Ḥaḍramaut is today still based on ascription. People are placed in the three ranked strata by virtue of being born in them; they automatically assume a cluster of attributes, roles and statuses as members of their respective strata. Mobility is very difficult. This type of social stratification and the caste system of India, are generally contrasted with the class type of stratification system in which achievement is a basic principle of conferring status and in which mobility of individuals (up and down) is easy and continuously taking place. In the literature of social stratification, a dichotomy is thus always made between these two types -- the ascription oriented and the achievement oriented stratification systems. This dichotomy is correlated with a similar dichotomy in the type of societies in which these two systems are found. Thus the ascription oriented stratification is found only in non-industrial societies, and the achievement oriented type in industrialised societies only. Sometimes the racial differentiation in South Africa and in the Southern States of America, is referred to as a 'caste system' i.e. an ascriptive stratification system in an industrialised 'society'. But this argument has never been developed properly, and the case for calling the two situations as 'caste systems' has been convincingly rejected.

by Bailey.¹ Thus the broad classification of the two types of societies correlated with the two types of stratification system, is valid and generally accepted.

However it has been argued, especially by Professor Hoselitz,² that economic development in the non-industrialised societies, is correlated with a concomitant change in their stratification systems. That is to say, as a society becomes industrialised, so the basis of its stratification system changes from ascription to achievement. "Thus economic development relies upon gradual replacement of the principle of ascription by the principle of achievement in the realm of role allocation."³ The same argument is put forward by Fallers when he says "In modern societies [i.e. industrialised], one's occupation tends to determine one's place in the stratification system. In non-modern societies, on the other hand, one's place in the stratification system tends to determine one's occupation."⁴ The introduction of complex economic and technological organisations in a non-industrial society, are thus central factors in changing an ascriptive oriented stratification system to a class system.

Ḥaḍrami society belongs to the non-industrialised

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1. Bailey F.G. 1963.
 2. Hoselitz B.F. 1964.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Fallers L.A. 1964.

category, since as yet no economic development has taken place in Ḥaḍramaut. As a corollary, its system of stratification is also ascriptive oriented. This partially explains why the social hierarchy in Ḥurēiḍah is still a dominant feature of the social structure, as is clearly shown by the continuity of hypergamy. But societies today are never either industrialised or non-industrialised. In the 1960s all previously non-industrialised 'societies' have been brought into the world-wide economic system, and have been affected by the colonial system, the rise of Nationalism and the attempts at 'social engineering' in the broad sense of the word. Thus although economic development i.e. industrialisation (or modernisation) is a major and often deciding process in bringing about changes in the type of stratification system of a given society, it is by no means the only process. This was clearly recognised by Professor Hoselitz when he said "It is not easy to indicate what factors in a social system are likely to bring about this change from ascription to achievement most rapidly. Such changes as secularisation, the imposition of non-indigenous values especially in the productive sector, the development of new occupational roles, the migration of persons out of their highly culture-bound villages to the culturally more diversified cities, and other related changes may be some of the developments which make possible the decline of ascription and its replacement by achievement principles in

the realm of role assignment. But it is impossible to offer a generally valid solution of this problem, since it depends upon the great variations in underlying cultural norms and existing arrangements in different social systems."¹ Hence to place Ḥaḍrami society in the second of the two industrialised/non-industrialised categories, will certainly not help us explain the processes taking place in Ḥurēiḍah. It would be more useful and helpful to our analysis, if we have a continuum -- starting from no industrialisation to a highly industrialised society as represented by, let us say the American Society. Societies can then be placed at different points on this continuum, using economic development as a basic criterion but at the same time giving importance to other major factors (as those mentioned above by Professor Hoselitz), especially in a society where hardly any economic development has taken place.

Ḥaḍrami society then is one type in which no economic development has taken place within its territory. But at the same time other processes are operating in the society e.g. secularisation, migration, and the imposition of Nationalist ideology. Furthermore, certain politico-economic changes have taken place as part of this complex of processes. To what extent then have these processes and changes affected the stratification system as it operates in the village of Ḥurēiḍah -- the unit of study?

1. Hoselitz, B.F. 1964.

The incorporation of Ḥurēiḍah as part of the Qu'āit: State has meant a radical change in the sense that ultimate political power has been transferred to the Government as the sole authority. This change, important though it is, nevertheless continued the traditional position of the 'Aṭṭās as the 'establishment' of Ḥurēiḍah. That is to say, the 'Aṭṭās have maintained their political dominance within the village. Yet the change has also meant that ultimate power resides outside Ḥurēiḍah and that competition for power between the different groups is possible within the total system. Thus although within Ḥurēiḍah competition is restricted -- by the nature of the new structure and by 'Aṭṭās exploitation of it -- non-'Aṭṭās have been able to establish ties outside the village and in certain situations utilise these ties. This possibility of non-'Aṭṭās acquiring political power, led the 'Aṭṭās to increase their power within and outside the village. This has been possible by manipulating the new political structure, which, by its nature, is highly amenable to this treatment. The result has been the inevitable conflict within Ḥurēiḍah between 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās.

Changes have also taken place in the economic organisation. But the changes have made Ḥurēiḍah's people more dependent on labour migration and not less. As a result cash from outside has become the main source of income without at the same time producing new alternative avenues

in Ḥurēiḍah within which groups could move up and down the economic ladder. As I have argued, this increasing dependence of migration has tended to maintain the traditional distribution of wealth within Ḥurēiḍah. Although the Masakīn, who were formerly dependent on the higher groups for employment are now independent because of migration (as an alternative source of employment), the significance of this is minimised by the paradoxical result that migration has so far continued the traditional economic hierarchy. Thus since the 'Aṭṭās have maintained their economic dominance, and that the local resources in Ḥurēiḍah are extremely limited, competition for economic power within the economic organisation of the village is also restricted. The economic cleavage between 'Aṭṭās and non-'Aṭṭās has thus reinforced the political cleavage which runs on the same line.

This is to say that the type of politico-economic changes that has taken place in Ḥurēiḍah, has led to the development of the 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās cleavage. The cleavage rooted in the conflict of interest between the two blocks as a result of the structural changes, has nevertheless found a ready made historical framework in the 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict. The 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās conflict is seen by the people of Ḥurēiḍah, as a re-enactment in microcosm of the past 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict. The latter thus strengthens the unity of the two blocks in Ḥurēiḍah and provides an ideological justification for their conflict. The narrow

local issues of Ḥurēiḍah's conflict, are raised to a higher plane and merge as a single issue -- an attack and defence of the system of stratification. At this level, the ubiquitous presence of the 'new ideology' of Arab Nationalism provides a new dimension and a more relevant idiom to the conflict. Since both the 'Alawī-Irshādi conflict and Nationalism, advocated as a central theme, a deliberate and major change of the social system, the conflict of Ḥurēiḍah becomes, at this level, concerned with this very theme. The change or maintenance of the system of stratification become the issue in the 'Aṭṭās/non-'Aṭṭās conflict. Hence the Yemen Revolution symbolised both the issue and the contesting blocks of Ḥurēiḍah. It also forcefully brought the whole question down to earth, to an actual situation. Hence the intense reaction and close identification of Ḥurēiḍah's blocks with their counterparts in the nearby Yemen.

It is clear that the system of stratification in Ḥurēiḍah is being questioned and in certain minor aspects changed. This is independent of any economic development within Ḥurēiḍah in particular or Ḥaḍramaut in general. What has taken place in Ḥurēiḍah is correlated with a specific historical factor in the society, and with a general process in which the society as a whole participates intensely with a wider field. In this wider field, the process of economic development is taking place as well as major political conflicts and upheavals. That the developments in Ḥurēiḍah

must ultimately be explained by relating them to processes taking place in the wider field, indicates the degree of interaction between the two fields i.e. the micro and macro fields. But more important, it indicates that we can no longer (at least in the Arab World) study processes in the villages in isolation from the macro field of an ever widening boundary. "In social situations where the key decisions are taken outside the milieu; where 'commanding heights' exist; where the decision may be taken by remote élites rather than by men in face-to-face relationships; where the decision may be imposed and one sided; in all these situations the primary-group orientation is no longer adequate. Equally, where the value-systems are not unitary, and the 'primordial symbols' themselves are objects of manipulation and redefinition, orthodox structural-functionalism cannot help us."¹

1. Worsley, P. In his comment on Eisenstadt's essay "Anthropological Studies of Complex Societies" Current Anthropology 1961. See also the comment of Laila Shukry El-Hamamsy on the same essay.

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