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FAMILISM AND THE URBANIZATION
OF RURAL VILLAGERS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION
OF SAUDI ARABIA

presented by

Abdulrahman Asseri

has been accepted towards fulfillment
of the requirements for

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Major professor

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FAMILISM AND THE URBANIZATION
OF RURAL VILLAGERS IN THE SOUTHWESTERN REGION
OF SAUDI ARABIA

By

Abdulrahman Asseri

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

FAMILISM, AND THE URBANIZATION
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OF SAUDI ARABIA

By

Abdulrahman Asseri

The people of Saudi Arabia are going through many changes. As this society passes from a rather provincial, traditionally oriented form of social organization to a more sophisticated, cosmopolitan urban style, familism values and familial behaviors are being modified. With the installation of developmental programs in the kingdom since 1970, many rural areas have adopted urban patterns and practices, discarding the more traditional behaviors which strongly reinforced familism as a way of life.

My study attempts to explore these patterns of change in familial behaviors among the people of Alain, a small remote rural village in the mountains of southwestern Saudi Arabia. Fifty-one households in Alain were initially surveyed for the purpose of determining the basic socioeconomic characterization of the village and its families. All adults 45 years or older and 15 to 25 years of age were interviewed additionally to explore the generational differences in familistic attitudes. A total of 118 respondents were included. For comparative purposes, fifty-six twelfth grade students (males and females) were also surveyed. Seven in-depth case studies were constructed. Several

informant interviews with older residents helped to establish the village history. In effect, qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to compare the past and present social organization of Alain and the changing values of its people.

Three general hypotheses guided my analysis: 1) the older generation is more familistic than the younger generation; 2) females are more familistic than males; and 3) the uneducated are more familistic than the educated.

Findings show that there are some differences in the degree of familism among the two generations. The younger generation appears less familistic than the older generation. The erosion of familism, however, is more obvious with respect to the larger kin group than the immediate family; concern for the immediate family appears less affected. The younger generation shows less interest in adhering to familial norms relative to the larger kin group.

No gender variations were found. A significant variation was observed between educated and noneducated young people; the educated are less familistic than the noneducated.

Several socioeconomic factors probably caused such familial changes among the people of Alain such as the increase of wealth and education; availability of modern technology; availability of cheap foreign labor; increase in land prices which causes land quarrels and increased religious awareness through the study of Islam creates restrictions for the people who, in the past, were practicing many traditional familistic behaviors that conflicted with Islam.



Dedication

To my mother Maddia Asseri. She never learned how to read and write but she was always concerned about my studies. My mother spent part of her life working to help me to continue my education. I dedicate this work to her.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xiv
 CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION	 1
Problem	1
Importance of the Study	3
Familism	4
Familism and Urbanization	10
Familism in Saudi Arabia	14
Conclusion	18
 CHAPTER II: HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF ALAIN	 19
Early History	19
Five Settlements	21
Isolation	23
Tribal Origins	28
Concluding Note	31
 CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY	 32
Hypotheses and Theoretical Argument	32
Research Procedures	34
Field Problems and Necessary Modifications	36
Field Work Situation: A Diary	38
Study Variables	42
Statistical Analysis	44

CHAPTER IV:	VILLAGE SOCIOECONOMIC ORGANIZATION	46
	Settlement Pattern	46
	Family Structure	53
	Occupation and Division of Labor	57
	Land Ownership and Agricultural System	62
	Availability of Modern Technology	65
	Housing Structure and Familism	69
	Concluding Notes	76
CHAPTER V:	CHANGING NORMS	77
	Visiting Exchanges	77
	Exchange Courtesy and Sympathy	85
	Mutual Aid and Help (Villagers' Daily Lives)	92
	Unexpected Guests	96
	Offering Help	98
	Exchanging Financial Aid and Support	99
	Exchange of Respect	100
	Concluding Comment	107
CHAPTER VI:	FAMILISM AMONG VILLAGERS: PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES	108
	Case 1: Ali	108
	Case 2: Mohammed	112
	Case 3: Salmah	116
	Case 4: Fatimah	121
	Case 5: Saad	125
	Case 6: Yasir	127
	Case 7: Ahmad	128
	Insights from the Case Studies	130
	Concern and Care for Fellow Villagers (larger kin group)	130
	Obedience and Care for Parents	131
	Responsibility for Kin Group Members	131
	Family Authority	132
	Male Domination	132
	Importance of Kin Purity	133
CHAPTER VII:	FAMILISM DIFFERENTIATION	134
	Measuring Familism Attitudes	134
	Clarification of Items	136
	Familism Attitudes	142

Male Patterns	143
Female Patterns	150
Gender/Age Differences	154
Familism Scale	155
Dimensions of Familism	157
Intensity of Familism	169
Summary and Discussion	176
 PTER VIII: SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS	 180
Familism Past	180
Familism and Urbanization in the Village	184
Socioeconomic Impacts on Familism	189
Summary	194
Conclusion	194
Study Implications and Recommendations	195
Recommendations for Future Research	196
Familism and Rural Urban Differentiation	196
Gender Differentiation	197
A Longitudinal Study	197
Limitations	197
 ENDIX	 199
 LIOGRAPHY	 219

LIST OF TABLES

	<u>Page</u>
Socioeconomic Characteristics of Household Heads in Five Settlements of Alain	58
Attitudes Toward Visiting Obligations, by Age/Gender Status	79
Attitude Toward Obligatory Return Visiting by Gender/Age Status	80
Factors Believed to be Affected Decreased Inter-Household Visiting, by Gender/Age Status	82
Attitude Toward Traditional Exchange of Courtesy and Sympathy, by Gender/Age Status	86
Attitude Toward Obligatory Help in Certain Situations, by Gender/Age Status	97
Attitude Toward Obligatory Financial Assistance on Certain Occasions, by Gender/Age Status	101
Attitude Toward Obligatory Financial Assistance by Gender/Age Status	102
Attitude Toward Form of Address in Recognizing Older People, by Gender/Age Status	104
Attitude Toward Proper Form of Correcting An Older Villager's Remarks or Behavior by Gender/Age Status	105
Male Ranking of Familism Attitudes	144
Female Ranking of Familism Attitudes	153
Scale Reliability	156

	<u>Page</u>
Correlation Matrix of Familism Scale Items	158
Rotated Factor Matrix (Familism Scale Items)	159
Importance of Caring for Parents, by Age: Means and Standard Deviation	160
Importance of Caring for Parents, by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation	161
Importance of Co-Villager Relations, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation	162
Importance of Co-Villager Relations, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation	163
Importance of Family Cohesion, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation	164
Importance of Family Cohesion, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation	165
Importance of Putting Family First, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation	166
Importance of Putting Family First, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation	167
Importance of Parental Obedience by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation	168
Importance of Parental Obedience by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation	169
Intensity of Familism, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation	170
Intensity of Familism Among Males: Mean and Standard Deviation	171
Intensity of Familism Among Males: Mean and Standard Deviation	171



Intensity of Familism, by Gender: Means and
Standard Deviation

172

Intensity of Familism Among the Older Generation
by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

173

Intensity of Familism Among the Younger
Generation, by Gender: Mean and Standard
Deviation

173

Familism by Education: Means and Standard
Deviation

175



LIST OF FIGURES

	<u>Page</u>
Ruins of Old Village	22
Asphalt Road Which Connects the Village With Other Areas	26
Dirt Road That Connectsects the Village With Other Areas	27
A Face of the Village--A Man in Village Formal Dress	29
The Settlement of Al-Hatar	47
Site of the Settlement of Pattalh	51
Farming Structure in the Village	64
Stone Houses and Brick Houses	72
New Villas in the Village	75





CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

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Rural villages in Saudi Arabia are experiencing profound changes in both biological organization and cultural norms. Rural people are absorbing urban values and adopting urban behavioral patterns. Familism, which once dominated rural Saudi Arabia's social, political, and economic institutions, has begun to erode, I believe, from the pressures of urbanization and individualism.

This study is an attempt to explore if, and the extent to which, the people in one area, the village of Alain in the southwestern region of Saudi Arabia, have become more individualistic and less familistic in their attitudes and behaviors. In particular, I will take into account generational differences among the old and the young in terms of their social behavior patterns and attitudes.

I assume that the people of Alain have a strong familial system. This system has been preserved for a long period of time due to the relative isolation of the village. Its location, between two huge valleys and three high mountains, had helped to maintain this isolation. The isolation was due to the lack of a road, a school, health services, sophisticated means of communication, and the great distance from cities. A lack of social autonomy in Alain was evident. Accordingly the people of Alain had

established a very strong familial system not only to govern their behaviors but also to facilitate their survival.

As a tribal and rural society, the social organization characteristic of the southwestern region of Saudi Arabia has been traditionally familial. In 1970, when the First Developmental Program began in Saudi Arabia, the southwestern region, as in other parts of the kingdom, began experiencing some changes in both economic and sociological aspects as well as in familial norms.

People began migrating from their home communities to the cities. With new roads, better mass communication, and more modern forms of transportation, the relative isolation of rural areas was no longer a major obstacle to the processes of development. Rural people became more involved in the activities of modern society as many began seeking off-farm jobs. Education became readily available to everyone. The State began to exert a strong influence on the lives of village people. Police departments and governmental agencies reached into even the most remote areas.

Rural people gradually began adopting new patterns of urban life. They are more likely now to go to the police instead of to the clan chief (shikh) when dealing with village conflicts. They often travel thousands of miles to seek jobs, leaving their families and kin behind in the village. Young people aspire to obtaining an education and a salaried occupation, rather than marrying at an early age. People in the villages also are more likely to hire someone to do a job for them instead of asking kinfolk or neighbors for assistance. Many individualistic behaviors now appear in rural community life, not only in southwestern Saudi Arabia, but in rural and tribal areas throughout the kingdom.

This study aims to explore some of the changes that have occurred in the familial system in rural areas and the determinants that may be associated with these changes.

Three general questions are addressed:

1. What is the meaning of familism in the village and what are the patterns and norms of mutual aid and reciprocity are currently practiced by rural people in the southwestern region in relation to their families and extended family networks?
2. Are there any generational changes in degrees of intensity of family and in obligations?
3. What social and economic determinants are associated with individual motivations and the degree of commitment to familial norms and with generational differences?

Importance of the Study

Thomas and Lyneis (1978) wrote:

During the latter part of the 19th century, a preservationist movement began emerging in the United States. This included architects, archaeologists, anthropologists, theologians, history buffs, sociologists, and others who saw something valuable (which they termed "heritage") slipping away in the face of the onslaught of the modern world.

This statement and similar writings by other authors alerted me to a similar problem in Saudi Arabia. Modernization and development had reached every corner of Saudi society; influx of urbanization has caused profound social changes.

The familial system, once the dominant form of social organization that controlled and regulated the behavior and activities of rural people, seems to have declined in

effectiveness as a result of urbanization. People seem to want to free themselves from their family obligations. They are inclined toward an attitude of individualism. This phenomenon is especially relevant to the future of Saudi Arabian society and should be thoroughly documented. In fact, we are witnessing a change from a familial, tribal society to a modern, urban society.

Thus, I was eager to talk with people in the village (Alain) who are aware of the area's history and who have observed both the traditional customs and the newer behaviors. Such documentation would be very important for any future researcher or investigator interested in studying Saudi Arabia's rural social structure in general and familial norms in particular. According to Heller (1976):

In spite of general speculation concerning the changing function of the family and the purported decline in importance of familism in favor of individualism, there has been little empirical research directed toward determining the extent to which familism is subscribed by various segments of the public. Little is actually known about the relationship between urbanism and familism (p. 73).

Heller's argument is especially critical in the case of Saudi Arabia since very little has been written about the subject in a direct, scientific way.

It is hoped that this study will make some fundamental and basic contributions to the topic.

Familism

The concept of familism, in general, refers to a set of rights and obligations pertaining to members of a given kin network. According to Heller (1976), there are three interrelated conceptual levels of familism: 1) familism as a social organization; 2)

amilism as behavior; and 3) kin member attitudes concerning obligations toward other family members

Sorokin (1930), on the other hand, argued that familism was "the term used to designate the types of social organization in which all the social relationships and institutions are permeated by and stamped with the characteristics of the family" (p. 41). He believed there were eight characteristics that distinguished familism in rural areas:

1. "The attitudes of rural youth and their desire to marry at an early age. Such an inclination embodied their weaker inclination to remain single, and thus be freer from the family organization than the urban population.
2. Paying taxes was the collective responsibility of the family as well as paying fines for deeds and crimes committed by members.
3. The social status of the person was first of all determined by the status of the family into which he or she was born.
4. The morals, laws, and mores of such a society strongly guarded the stability of the family through their provisions for the inviolability of the marriage vow and the stability of the bonds between parents and children.
5. The relationship between ruler and subjects was paternalistic or patriarchal.
6. In a rural family the solidarity of its members was organic and spontaneous rather than contractual. Sorokin deemed that such characteristics occurred naturally as a result of close co-living, co-working, co-acting, co-feeling, and co-believing.
7. The economic organization of a familistic society was also stamped with the traits of the rural family.

8. Any aspects of rural society, whether mores, beliefs, or arts, quite clearly demonstrated familistic traits" (Sorokin 1930:47).

Sorokin argued "that humans could not exist as isolated atoms. Humans associate with other people to overcome their own loneliness and for biological, social, and moral well-being. In a familial society, the family is the institution that serves all of the preceding purposes. This is opposite from an urbanized society where other associations must perform these functions at least to some extent" (Sorokin 1930:48).

He also believed that

When a person is freed from family ties, he or she appears to find him/herself in a kind of social emptiness, facing lonesomeness and unbearable isolation. Thus, it appears that unless one understands familism, one cannot grasp the soul and essence of the Gestalt of rural society (p. 48).

Kulp (1925) provided an extensive explanation of familism. For him:

Familistic arrangements and practices are the core of the village community. All purposes, all proposals, all conduct, all gains, all standards and ideals are referred to family norms and evaluated by comparing the fortunes of familistic groupings, economics, and religion. "Whatever is conducive to the welfare of the members of this familistic group, to the performance of their special function, maintenance, or worship, is considered good while everything else is bad" (p. 187).

For Kulp (1925) familism is a "form of social organization in which all values are determined by reference to the maintenance, continuity, and functions of the family groups" (p. 188). He said that this kind of social organization was distinguished from any other in the world (i.e., capitalism or socialism).

Familism is "exclusiveness" centered around a familial relationship, a division of the social environment into "we" (certain specific kin members) and "they" (non-kin members). Familism can be viewed as a set of role expectations, role behaviors, and/or perceptions (Ibid., p. 423).

Burgess and Lock (1945) developed an ideal typical definition of familism, arguing that an ideal construction of familism must include the following characteristics:

- "1. The feeling of all members that they belong to the family group and that all other persons are outsiders.
2. Complete integration of individual activities for the achievement of family objectives.
3. The assumption that land, money, and other material goods are family property involving the obligation to support the individual members and give them assistance when they are in need.
4. Willingness of all other members to really support the other members.
5. Concern for the perpetuation of the family as evidenced by helping an adult child in beginning and continuing an economic activity in line with family expectation and in setting up a new household" (pp. 35-36).

Heller (1976) reviewed various definitions of familism. In particular, he noted the following:

By familism is meant spending time, money, and energy on family life; marriage at young ages, a short childless time-span after marriage, large families, and other such characteristics are indications of familism (Bell, 1956, p. 276).

By familism is meant the ascendance of family interests over the interests of individual members as expressed in the maintenance of family tradition, property, social contacts, and occupational pursuits (Wilkening, 1954, p. 33).

Familism . . . is . . . a social system in which behavior, and values are dominated by family, rather than individual, interests (Cleland, 1955, p. 249).

Familism . . . is the subordination of individual interests to those of the family group (Rohwer, 1950, p. 826).

eller argued that in spite of the different wordings, the definitions were very similar. However, familism cannot be practiced without norms to regulate and organize its behavior and attitudes. According to Loomis and Beegle (1950), norms are the rules which govern the application of means in order to accomplish the social system's ends and objectives. In sports they are the rules of the game plus such general standards as those associated with "fair play" or "sportsmanship." In some systems they are specified as "ethical principles." All social action is related to such norms as folkways, mores, and customs (p. 786).

. . . [T]he rural social system determines the status of its members by assigning the role and responsibility of each one. For example, rural people have various types of norms. They recognize and/or delegate authority, grant rights, mete out punishment, and give rewards according to the traditional norms (p. 820).

Familistic norms are expressed by patterns of reciprocity, are obligatory, and involve the "give and take" principle. The best known essay on the matter of reciprocity was written by Marcel Mauss (1954). He first raised the concept of reciprocity to a central location in anthropological discussion. He focused on different types of transfer (gifts) and examined the importance of reciprocity in primitive and peasant societies. Mauss' analysis pointed to the simple rules of the obligation to give and the obligation to receive in familistic norms.

In a comprehensive analysis, Mauss (1954) noted:

In the systems of the past, we do not find simple exchange of goods, wealth and produce through markets established among individuals for it is groups, and not individuals, which carry on exchange, make contracts,

and are bound by obligations; the persons represented in the contracts are moral persons--clans, tribes, and families; the groups, or the chiefs, as intermediaries for the groups, confront and oppose each other. Further, what they exchange is not exclusively goods and wealth, real and personal property, and things of economic value. They exchange rather courtesies, entertainments, rituals, military assistance, women, children, dances, and fests; and fairs in which the market is but one element and the circulation of wealth but one part of a wide and enduring contract. Finally, although the prestations and counter-prestations take place under a voluntary guise they are in essence strictly obligatory, and their sanction is private or open warfare. We propose to call this the system of total prestations (p. 3).

Malinowski (1926) focused on reciprocity as the key to the economic life of the people studied. By elevating the concept of reciprocity to a central position in the analysis of social organization, the principle of "give and take" pervaded all tribal life and became the basis of its social structure. Moreover, reciprocity and other distributional modes of transaction between kinsmen conformed to an obligation to give and an obligation to receive, but more importantly an obligation to return. In this research, the notion of obligation is the departure point for the theoretical argument.

I believe that all social exchange patterns that take place in the case of rural Saudi Arabia are bound by some kind of obligation. Each member of a village conforms to the norms of obligation as part of the familial social organization that is a foundation of the rural society in Saudi Arabia as well as in similar societies around the world.

In Saudi Arabia, "familism" is a term that one can use to describe: the feelings of mutual cohesiveness and the mutual exchange of care, concern, respect and support among immediate family members and the larger extended kin networks.

Such care, concern, support and respect is reflected in patriarchal obedience to and the assumption of individual responsibility for the well-being of all family members. The

family's needs dominate all individual designs, behaviors and actions. Such obedience and responsibility are strongly supported by religious beliefs (Islam).

Family dependency and obedience are based on the subordination of children to their parents, wives to their husbands, youngest to the oldest, women to men. Parents, men, and husbands must assume ultimate responsibility for providing social care, financial support, and to protect their subordinates.

Each family unit, however, is considered a part of a larger extended kinship group and is obligated to conform to kin norms. These norms emphasize kin unity for in the urban environment, at least in the past if not now, kin unity is essential for social and economic security and consequently, takes precedence over almost all other concerns.

Family and Urbanization

"Theories and research concerning familism have an interesting history in both American and European sociologies. The study of rural vs. urban living patterns was of special interest to sociologists and anthropologists during the 1930s and 40s" (Heller 1972).

"Urbanization has created profound changes in the role of the family as a social organization, particularly where the modern city was seen standing in stark contrast to rural society" (Heller, 1972, p.6)

Wirth (1938) attributed the decline in family social significance to the loss of its functions to specialized city, state, and even national agencies such as health maintenance, welfare, education, recreation, and social advancement (p. 21).

Redfield (1947) saw the folk society in contrast to the modern city. He felt that the way vast and complicated urbanites and even the urbanized country dweller live today is enormously different from the small, inward facing folk society member with its well integrated and little changing moral and religious conceptions (p.306)

Wirth and Redfield considered urban life as nonfamilistic, nontraditional, secularistic, fragmented, and swiftly changing. Until the 1950s, sociologists, particularly in America, perceived the increasing industrialization with its concomitant urbanization as leading to a weakening of the family as an institution, with familism giving way to individualism. By the 1950s, some kind of theory and research emerged within family sociology (Heller 1970:6).

Schwarzsweller et al. (1970) studied Appalachian families and the social change that occurred in that remote rural area. They found that:

Appalachian families are in some respects different from the kind of families one finds in urban America. Where life in Appalachia especially during earlier frontier times, made it necessary for kin group members to look to each other for many things and to count on each other in many crises (p. 94).

They also felt that as rural Appalachia moved into the mainstream of the modern world, Appalachian families would undoubtedly "play an increasing role in facilitating or rendering the processes of change" (p. 89).

Bell (1957) studied familism and suburbanization. The study took place in suburbs in the Chicago area. Data were collected from 100 recent arrivals to that area. The study assumed that "familism upward vertical mobility

and consumership are among social choice patterns that may be linked to the recent suburban moves in American society." where

an increasing segment of population of the United States seems to be choosing familism as an important element in their lifestyle. Suburban moves express an attempt to find a more suitable location than the central city in which to conduct family life (p. 276).

Bell found the data supported the hypothesis that new suburbanites were largely persons who have chosen familism as an important element in their lifestyle and in addition suggested a relationship between the desire for community participation or sense of belonging and/or the move to the suburbs" (p. 282).

Cleland (1953) studied* familism in rural Saskatchewan. He suggested the goal of the study was to detect possible changes in the familistic pattern which had been assumed to be more characteristic of pioneer days. He addressed certain questions to about 160 Saskatchewan farm families. The conclusion he reached was that

Grain farm families are the stronghold of traditional family characteristics as regards family integration and the division of labor among family members. In these aspects the livestock and mixed-farm families may have changed most. In their degree of integration, families living in the areas of moderate population have declined more than families in other areas (pp. 249-250).

In Tunisia, Camilleri (1967) studied modernity and the family. The objective of the study was to clarify the temptations and effects of modernity on the Tunisian domestic life. The research was based on six surveys carried out in Tunisia between 1960 and 1966, using interviews and questionnaires on samples of young people.

After describing the traditional Tunisian family as socially central, Camilleri found that modernity had become a very real temptation because of the profound restructuring

Tunisian society recently accomplished by the latter in opposition to the colonizers
 o in other respects provided the model (p. 591).

Therefore, the attitude of young people within their own parental families tended to change. Since young people became more personalized and as the possibility of leaving their groups rather than inserting themselves more deeply in it (p. 593).

Arensberg and Kimball (1940) in their study of Irish rural life, found that:

the sociological conditions of Irish rural life are those determined in a system of relationship among persons based upon the form of family, family subsistence, and familistic custom (309).

Sussman (1954) attempted to establish the importance of selective factors affecting
 tionships between families at two generational levels (family continuity). The study
 ple was drawn from ninety-seven families of New Haven, Connecticut and suburbs
 were middle-class, white Protestants whose children had married and left home. The
 y employed a family continuity scale. It found that "family continuity between
 erational levels was greater when a child married a mate of similar cultural
 ground and met parental expectations by having a traditional courtship" (p.21).

In the Philippines, Sinner (1976) studied modernization and family extension. The
 attempted to investigate the relationships between modernization and the level and
 of membership extension beyond the nuclear care in Filipino families. Data was
 from "the 1970 Philippine Census of Population. The analytical units were sixty-
 politically defined Philippine provinces" (p. 161). The study found that "the higher
 el of provincial modernization, the higher the average number of non-nuclear
 old members" (p. 161).

Zimmermann et al. (1935), in their study of Ozark families, described seventeen criteria characterizing the family in that society. They found that Ozark families in contrast with urban or semi-urban families experience an almost complete absence of divorce. The tolerance of family problems by the community and the willingness of family members to remain with the family in spite of difficult conditions, in order to keep the family intact, was sufficient evidence of a more stable union (p. 280).

Aldous (1976) in a study of grandparents, parents, and married children over three generation lineages hypothesized that frequency of visiting was directly related to the extent kin contacts contributed to the well-being of the nuclear family. The corollary hypothesis stated that interaction with kin outside the nuclear family would be inversely related to the extent kin contacts were seen as threatening. The hypotheses were supported with respect to female respondents. Women respondents had more contacts with female relations when help was given in domestic role performance (pp. 22-23). Martin's (1967) study of four Adelaide samples found that intensity and nature of kin contacts were affected by residential propinquity of kin, state in the family life cycle, number of children within the family, social participation of husbands and wives, and family class status (p. 24).

Patrilism in Saudi Society

Lipsky (1959) stated that in Saudi Arabia, "descent is traced through the paternal and family structure reflects the importance of this principle in kin group or lineages which are organized around related males" (pp. 83-84).

ole (1975) describes the familial system in rural Saudi Arabia as:

An extension of the kin system which includes a large number of people in close relationships. All members of one generation are addressed as brother or sister, all members of one's mother's or father's generation and above are addressed as mother or father, and all members of one's children's generation or below are addressed as son or daughter.

The terms for grandfather and grandmother also include all ancestors, no matter how far removed. The term for father's brothers (and consequently father's brother's son/daughter) is commonly extended to refer not only to one's actual father's brother, but to any distant relative of generations ago.

However, we should observe that family structure and familial norms in Saudi society derive legitimacy from the religion of Islam. Al-Juwayer (1984) indicated that "in Saudi Arabia the family and religion are part of one institution. Much of the social, economic, and political life is still organized in terms of the family or tribe" (p. 64). Accordingly, for a better understanding of the family structure and familial norms in Saudi society, we must take into account Islamic ideals and practices, which ultimately led to an awareness of many of the familial behaviors and attitudes characteristic of the people in rural as well as in urban Saudi Arabia.

Patia (1976) wrote that family bonds are so strong in Islamic culture that all members suffer a loss of face after the dishonorable act by any person in the family. He noted that in Islamic and Arabic family cultures, the most significant dishonor that pains a man is when his sister, daughter or niece is involved in sexual misconduct.

Al-Juwayer (1984) described family rights and obligations in Islam; he thinks that:

it was traditional in Islam for young people to be married with their parents' permission. Divorce is considered only as a final option, and the woman's role as mother is accorded very high status in Islam.

In terms of rights and obligations, regulating men and women in Saudi Arabia and other Moslem societies, the Q'uran states that "men will maintain the family" (p. 64). Men are the maintainers of women because Allah made some of them (men) exceed others and by reason of what they spend of their wealth.

Accordingly, we find that in an Islamic culture, the Muslim wife is responsible for the care of the home and for the welfare of the family. She is also expected to obey the judgment of her husband, due to this divinely dictated status as the person responsible for running the family (p. 46).

Polygamy is an accepted practice in Islamic cultures. While monogamy is the norm in Islam, men are permitted to have more than one wife if the man concerned is able to fulfill all of his obligations to each wife (Ibid., p. 48).

Muslims tend to have many children, not only to help them in their daily business, but because Islamic teachings direct Muslims to have many children in order to increase the Muslim population. Because of this, Muslim men prefer to have more than one wife and many children.

Under Islamic law, a Muslim woman remains under the control and care of her father. On attainment of puberty, she theoretically obtains all the rights and privileges that belong to her as an independent human being. For example, women in Islam are entitled to share in the inheritance from their parents, along with their brothers. It must be noted, however, that even though a woman has the right to inheritance, familial members usually ignore her right of inheritance and substitute something else to keep the inheritance intact such as in the case of family lands. A woman usually does not receive her land portion and her brothers do not expect her to ask. If a woman does request her share of inheritance, no one can reject her request according to Islamic law.



Obedience to parents is considered the most important value for a Muslim family. According to the Q'uran, God ties acceptable worship to obedience to parents. No one may disobey his/her parents. Muslim children are responsible for the care of their parents in times of illness. Moreover, in Islam all Muslims are considered as one united family. An attack upon one of them is considered an attack on the entire family. Such a viewpoint encourages Muslim people to look after their neighbors and friends as well as their family. All Muslim neighborhoods are very respectable in Islam. The prophet Muhammad stated that no one may become fully Muslim if he/she disturbs or does wrong to his/her neighbor. Moreover, according to Islamic law, a certain amount of money and goods usually are collected by the sheikh or the state workers to be distributed to the poor, not only in the rural villages, but in the urban centers as well. This kind of institutional cooperation and assistance is called "zakah."

Al-Otaiby (1988) pointed to another type of instituted cooperation and assistance, practiced by people in the southwest part of Saudi Arabia. He found that in the village of 'Amnah the sheikh, chose between three and twelve men from different kinship groups, called Asharh. Their job is to assess every household's crop after it is thrashed; 1/12 of the whole crop is taken. This is called "ushur." Then after all the portions are gathered and brought to the village store, it is divided into four parts: (1) 70% distributed among the village poor according to family size and need; (2) 20% to the workers who collected the "ushur"; (3) 5% is the share of the village sheikh; (4) the remaining 5% is usually given to the head of the mother tribe (pp. 196-107).

He also observed that when two (not necessarily kin) families were short of labor tools and/or animals, they agreed to work interchangeably on each



other's lands during the entire growing season and at its end, divided the crops.

In times of housing construction, and especially after the walls were built, the owner called on his kin (usually male villagers) to assist him in doing the roof. It was common for the villagers to help bring in and cut the large timbers used as house poles and/or roof supports. It was also common for village workers to be reciprocated in the provision of a meal after the job was complete (which usually took one-half to a full day of work) (Ibid., p.).

Conclusion

The conclusions I draw from these great bodies of literature are:

Despite the different studies of familism in different parts of the world, not much has been written about familism in Saudi Arabia. Familism in Saudi Arabia should be viewed as a special, but not unique, case where family relations are heavily dependent on religion.

People in Saudi Arabia are members of a devoutly religious society. Any sociologist or anthropologist wishing to study familism or analyze any aspect of Saudi society must first understand Islamic teachings. Muslim lifestyle is based on Islamic teachings as are most familial norms.

However, there are some exceptions to this system--some traditional familial norms are different from Islam, but Saudi Arabians are now trying to diminish these differences as they become more educated and more knowledgeable of Islamic teachings.

CHAPTER II

HISTORY AND BACKGROUND OF ALAIN

Early History

Alain is a small village composed of about 58 houses, seven of them unoccupied. It is located in the southwest region of Saudi Arabia, about 95 km northwest of the city of Abha, the capital of the southwest region and about 15 km northwest of the city of Dhahran (see map no 1).

According to informants, the village of Alain got its name from the streams of water in the mountains of Meran which mark the village's boundary on the eastern side. In Arabic, "alain" has two meanings. The first is "eye" and the second is "the small stream that emerges from the mountains."

The people of Alain believe that not long ago, their village was called "Al Bahah" for the first place that used to be the original residential area before they moved to the new area "Alain" (see Figure 1). However, recently the name of Alain became the more common designation among all the villagers and surrounding areas. In the official documents it is called "Ain Al Dreab" in order to distinguish it from other places that are locally referred to as "Alain."

A detailed map of Saudi Arabia illustrating its administrative divisions. The map is color-coded to show four main regions: Northern (light blue), Eastern (light green), Western (light orange), and Central (light yellow). Major cities are marked with red dots, while other towns are marked with blue dots. The map also shows the Persian Gulf, Red Sea, and surrounding countries: Iraq, Jordan, Oman, and Yemen. A legend in the top right corner defines the symbols used: red dot for National Centers, blue dot for Regional Centers, green dot for District Centers, and black dot for Other Towns. A dashed line indicates the Boundary of Planning Regions. The map includes labels for various cities such as Riyadh, Jeddah, Mecca, Medina, and Dhahran, as well as geographical features like the Arabian Sea and the Gulf of Aden.

Legend:

- Red dot: NATIONAL CENTERS
- Blue dot: REGIONAL CENTERS
- Green dot: DISTRICT CENTERS
- Black dot: OTHER TOWNS
- Dashed line: BOUNDARY OF PLANNING REGIONS

Regions and Major Cities:

- NORTHERN REGION:** Tabuk, Ha'il, Buraydah, Unaiyah, Mayma'h, Zulf, Qatif, Dammam, Al Khobar, Dhahran, Jubail, Yanbu', Medina, Jeddah, Makkah, Taif, Bani Makkah, Asir, Abha, An Nammah, Qunfudh, Adulay, Rihlat Almasad, Aofa, Salva, Jazan, Farsan Islands, Sumbat.
- EASTERN REGION:** Dammam, Al Khobar, Dhahran, Jubail, Yanbu', Medina, Jeddah, Makkah, Taif, Bani Makkah, Asir, Abha, An Nammah, Qunfudh, Adulay, Rihlat Almasad, Aofa, Salva, Jazan, Farsan Islands, Sumbat.
- WESTERN REGION:** Jeddah, Makkah, Taif, Bani Makkah, Asir, Abha, An Nammah, Qunfudh, Adulay, Rihlat Almasad, Aofa, Salva, Jazan, Farsan Islands, Sumbat.
- CENTRAL REGION:** Riyadh, Buraydah, Unaiyah, Mayma'h, Zulf, Qatif, Dammam, Al Khobar, Dhahran, Jubail, Yanbu', Medina, Jeddah, Makkah, Taif, Bani Makkah, Asir, Abha, An Nammah, Qunfudh, Adulay, Rihlat Almasad, Aofa, Salva, Jazan, Farsan Islands, Sumbat.

Alain existed about 500 to 600 years ago. First it was located on the peak of the mountain called "**Al Gahabah**," about two miles away from its current location.

At first, the people were mostly Bedouins who were pastoralists. They were at war with people around them. Therefore they chose to settle at the top of the mountain to get a good strategic position to observe possible threats. When the wars ended, they decided to leave the old village and establish farms down in the valley. That was about 100 years ago, when the whole village was moved to its present location in the valley, but no one can provide an exact explanation as to why and how people actually moved to the valley. Some say that the move was because of a lack of farm land at the mountain top and the availability of fertile lands down in the valley. Other informants attribute this movement to the valley to a smallpox epidemic about 150 to 200 years ago. Survivors left the mountain site to escape to a fresh environment.

Five Settlements

Generally Alain is small and a relatively remote village, bounded by three large mountains which play a major role in isolating the village from external influences. The mount of **Meran** is at the eastern edge. The mount of **Behlah** is at the western edge. The mount of **Altawilh** is at the southern perimeter. On the northern side is a deep valley called **Al Rish** (see map attached). The five settlements that compose Alain are scattered between those mountains. A settlement is a group of households concentrated in a certain place a little bit away from the other group of households. Each household has its own name to distinguish it within the village.



Figure I. Ruins of Old Village



The first settlement is called "**Al Hatar**" which is considered the oldest residential area in the village. It is located on the east side of a small hill that carries the same name as the settlement, **Al Hatar**. This small hill divides the village into two parts: the east and the west. The people living on this hill can view the whole village, and perhaps that was the reason the early residents settled in this particular place (see map attached). The second settlement is **Baeer** which is considered a relatively new residential area established by wealthy residents who migrated away years ago. **Baeer** is located on the west side of Al Hatar.

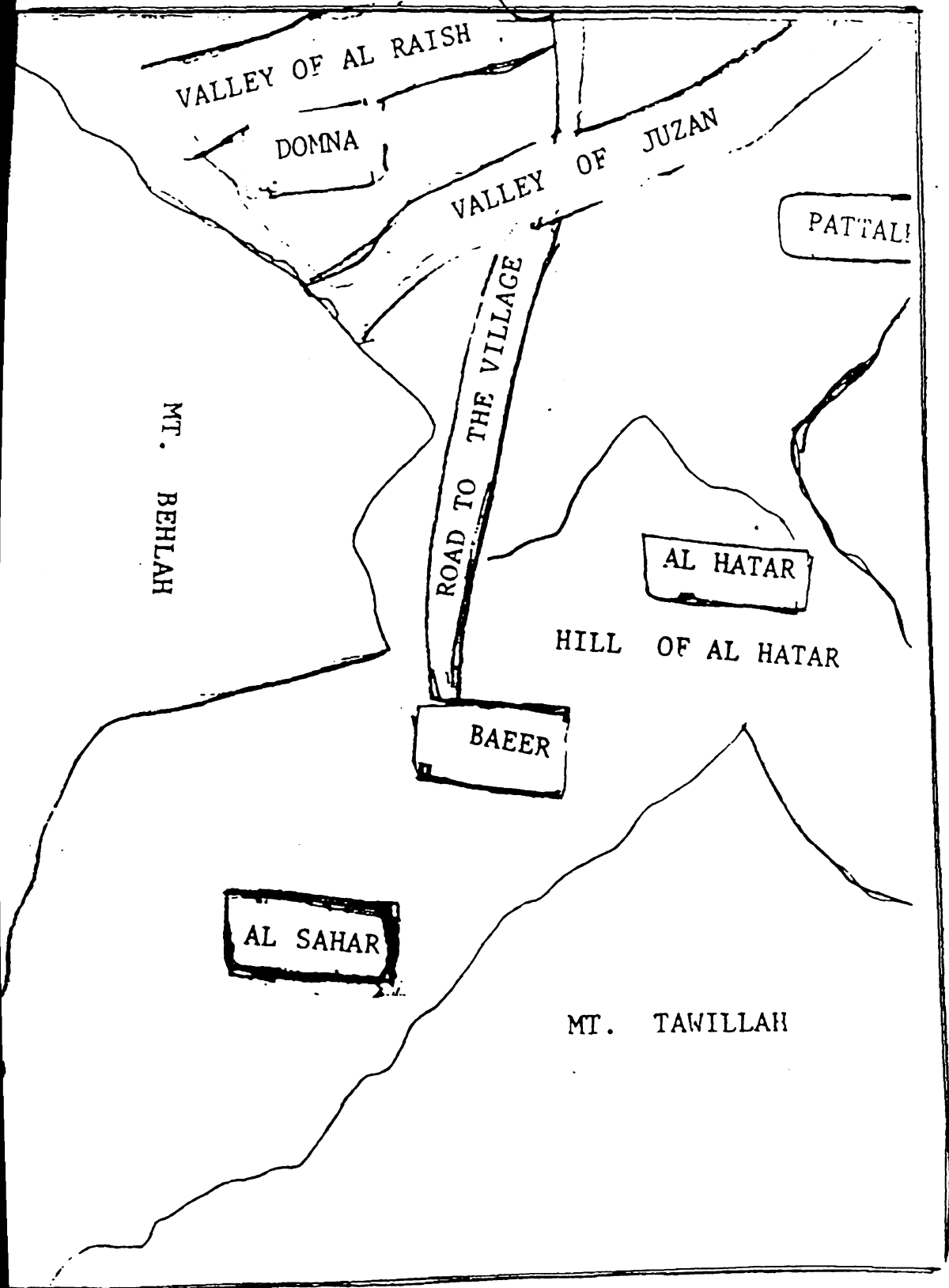
Domna is the third settlement established about 40 to 50 years ago by black people after they got their freedom and left their masters' homes. **Domna** is about two miles northwest of the main village. The fourth settlement in Alain is **Pattalh** which is located under the mount of Maran. **Alsahar** is the fifth settlement located on the west side of the village near the mount of Behlah. It is considered an extension of the Baeer settlement; only a few farms divide the two settlements (all these settlements will be discussed in Chapter Four).

Isolation

Alain, as is true of many villages in the kingdom, was effectively isolated from outside influences for many years until the highway from Jeddah to Muhyial to Abha was built. This highway connects the village to other villages in the area and exposes it to outside influences, facilitating more involvement with the region. Also a small country road was built two years ago to connect the village to the main highway. However, this

Map II

Alain's Five Settlements



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small country road is only serviceable during the dry season. During the rainy season, Alain is completely isolated from the outside for one or two days due to the deep valley of the Jozan which divides the village from the highway. No bridge spans this valley. No asphalt road connects the village's five settlements with each other. Only dirt roads are available and those roads become undrivable during the rainy season (see Figures 3 and 4).

Earlier, the people of Alain suffered from a variety of diseases which were common in the area, such as smallpox and malaria. Many residents died due to the lack of medicine or medical centers in or near the village. Even now there is still no medical center in the village, and therefore the people have to go to Targish five miles away or Muhyal ten miles away if they require medical treatment. Some of the poor who do not have cars or close relatives or friends are occasionally unable to go for treatment no matter how critical their condition.

Until now there is no public electricity in Alain, although most of the villages in the area have electrical service from the government. But the people of Alain still depend on their own small generators.

Fifteen years ago there was no school in the village. Village children had to walk five miles away in the village of Targish. Now a school has opened in Alain, but unfortunately, it is still in brick houses which are not really suitable to be used as a school. Education for girls was not available in Alain. People did not wish to educate their daughters until they finally found themselves behind. Other villagers around had already enrolled their girls in schools nearby. As a result, the people of Alain were split



Figure 2. Asphalt road which connects the village with other areas.



Figure 3. Dirt road that connects village settlements.

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on the issue with some people in favor of educating girls and others opposed. The more liberal individuals sent their girls to Targish about eight years ago to learn, while some conservatives still believe that education for girls is "senseless." However, the liberal group has gained in the battle and a school for girls opened in Alain about four or five years ago. However, like the boys' school, it is still being held in a rented villa originally designed as a home, not as a school.

Alain is not atypical of remote rural villages in the southwestern region.

Tribal Origins

The people of the Alain are called the **Al Dreeb** tribe. They originally came from the **Onazzah** tribe to the east of the Arab peninsula about 500 to 600 years ago (according to the elderly informants of the village). A long time ago, **Dreeb**, the grandfather of Al Dreeb, came with his people to the area. They were a hungry people and landless. They were Bedouin travellers when they arrived in this land now called Alain. They attacked its people and stole their crops. The resident people went to their sheikh to complain about the strangers who attacked them and ate their produce. He decided to meet their head person who was Dreeb. Dreeb met him and he asked him to give them land to settle. The sheikh of **Al Raeesh**, the people who occupied the land which Al Dreeb attacked, asked one of his fellows to trick them by taking them all the way down to the border of Tahamah. However, Dreeb and his people were not aware of the area, and they followed the guide until they discovered that he was trying to trick them by taking them away from their lands to another tribal land in order to get rid of



Figure 4. A face of the village--a man in village formal dress

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them. Dreeb and his people decided to stop and not go any further. They killed the guide and sent his body with his horse back to his people as a message to the sheikh of **Al Raeesh** which said that "where the head of your fellow is heading, the border between us was made." Then Dreeb and his people settled in the area. They first settled on the top of the mountain on a hill called **Al Gahabh** which is considered a very strategic and safe location. In the beginning, none of the people surrounding them wanted them, and they were involved in wars with the neighboring tribes. Finally all people around accepted them as owners of the area they had conquered. When the people in the surrounding areas accepted them, they felt safe, and they spread all over the high land they had conquered.

Then the Dreeb divided the occupied land between his three brothers and their fellows. There were three brothers under the government of the oldest one, Dreeb. One of the other brothers, was call **Homedhy** had to chose to settle in **Bargh**, 20 mails from Alain. The other one, called **Gohini**, chose to live in **Bagrah** 15 miles from Alain. While the third brother **Dreeb** stayed in the same area Alain. The fellows of Dreeb were composed of six lineages: **Al Haiza**, **Al Hasaan**, **Al Audah**, **Al Guallah**, **Al Mafragah**, and **Al Imnames**.

The **Al Hasaan** is considered the largest group. **Al Haiza** is the second largest group, and **Al Guallah** the third and **Al-Imnames - Al MafraGah** respectively. Now the total of all those groups who represent the residents of Alain is totally one hundred males and eighty three females involving all ages.

People of Alain now are distributed in the village as follows:

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Al Hassan is distributed in the settlements of Al Hatar, Baeer, and Domna. Al
 aiza lives on Baeer, while Al Gauallah lives on Pattalh. Al Imnames lives in Alsahar.
 l Auadh is distributed on Al Hatar, Al Sahar, and Baeer. The last league is Al
 lafraga who live in different houses distributed in the village.

oncluding Note

Alain has undergone tremendous changes in the last two centuries. The first
 llage moved from its original location to its present one in the valley; the population
 became more adaptive to the stable life of farming rather than a pastoral, more nomadic
 festyle.

In the last twenty years, the change became more obvious with the initial
 evelopment plan. The village is no longer isolated; there are now paved roads, new
 hools and differentiated settlements. Communications with the outside, rapidly
 banizing world has created profound changes in the people of Alain. These changes in
 rms and patterns of interaction of the villagers will be discussed in the following
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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Hypotheses and Theoretical Argument

Familism is a significant factor among the rural population living in the southwest region of Saudi Arabia. All social relationships are tied to family considerations. The family is the fundamental and essential repository of every individual's personal identity. This familial system is evident in many ways. However, familism in its extended and nuclear states has been exposed to some patterns of change associated with urbanization, modernization, and development recently taking place in Saudi Arabia.

I believe that a change in the familial system occurred gradually, starting with the larger kinship grouping, then progressing to the parental family. Extended family relations are especially vulnerable to urbanization. Individual loyalty to kin and clan tends to lessen as individualism, which seems a necessary precondition to urbanization, increases.

As I see it, Saudi society is now at an early stage in the weakening of its familial system and is poised to enter a new era of family relations. Modernization and urbanization seem to be encouraging individualistic behavior. The younger generation is especially vulnerable to the intrusion of western values and urban norms. Therefore, I hypothesize that:

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H1: There are generational differences in attitudes and behavior toward the centrality of the family and kin. If so, this would suggest that a general erosion of familial and kin norms is occurring.

However, my initial observations indicate that a general erosion of familial behavior, if indeed it is occurring, differs in degree and qualitative character by gender.

Gender differentiation, for example, is likely in terms of family loyalty and feelings of familial obligations. My argument here takes into account that women in Arab societies are less exposed to the outside world and to the forces of modernization; this is particularly so in rural areas where men have had more opportunities to broaden their social and cultural experiences. It may be that this assumption is less valid in the case of urban women in Saudi cities. But even in urban centers, women have fewer opportunities to participate in non-familial activities. In light of this argument, there are many obstacles that still force women to stick to the traditional familistic system. It is plausible to hypothesize that:

H2: Females tend to be more familistic and loyal toward familial norms than are males.

My third line of reasoning is that the increase of an individual's educational achievement results in a decrease in loyalty and adherence to familistic norms.

Educated people usually look to familial obligations as hindrances which prevent them from achieving individual goals. Young rural people are now taught by urban teachers who have been trained in urban schools and who represent urban ideologies. In textbooks and teachers, students learn that individual achievements and individual development are valued very highly and worthy of societal recognition; the importance

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of adherence to family norms tends to be de-emphasized. In time, feelings of familial obligations are weakened. Such arguments suggest that:

- H3 The higher educational achievement, the weaker the adherence to familial norms.

Research Procedures

For exploring the research hypotheses and questions, a survey procedure was used. An appropriate questionnaire was designed to gather the necessary information. However, in order to broaden my understanding of the processes of change and the societal meanings associated with them, I systematically interviewed "in-depth" a number of selected subjects. These "case studies," which focused especially upon historical trends and personal experiences, enabled me to assess the socioeconomic changes that have occurred in the lives of village people and that have ultimately affected their familial relations as well as their way of life.

Village population survey. The total population of Alain was sorted into four groups, according to gender and age: (a) male residents 45 years and older; (b) female residents 45 years and older; (c) males between the ages of 15 and 25 years; and (d) females between the ages of 15 and 25 years. For my purposes, the decision was made to omit from the survey middle-aged people 26 to 45 years and children under 15 years.

The youth groups (those 15 to 25 years old) were born at the beginning of a period when societal changes began to occur very rapidly. The First Development program was initiated in 1970.

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Student sample survey. For comparative purposes, students at a nearby high school in the city of Muhyail were surveyed. A self-administered questionnaire was given to all 12th grade students. There were 31 male and 25 female students present at the time the research was conducted. It should be noted that 12th grade is the highest level of education available in the entire area. I wanted to test the role of education. And I wanted to use the student sample as an interesting group to compare with the village sampling. I wanted to know if young people with more education were less familistic than those with less education or none at all. I also wanted to know whether or not the people of Alain were more or less familistic than those living outside Alain.

Household heads interviews. I wanted to obtain a general picture of the socioeconomic characteristics of each household, such as income, education, occupation, and marital status. All household heads were interviewed and a total of 51 questionnaires were obtained.

Case studies. A number of in-depth interviews were obtained from some village residents. My aim was to explore village history and to trace the evolution of familial behaviors and attitudes. Respondents were selected to represent a range of experiences in Alain. A total of seven in-depth interview case studies was completed. The following individuals were included: a male in his late sixties, a male in his late fifties, a female in her late sixties, a female in her late fifties, and three males in their twenties.

The selection of these case studies was based on the following considerations:

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1) The people included were very cooperative, knowledgeable of village history and capable of communicating and speaking frankly with me without hesitation or formality.

2) While gathering the household information I asked many people for permission for such life history interviews; only those people who agreed were interviewed.

3) These people represent two generations, and two different sets of life experiences which I hoped would give me a clearer picture of the changes that had occurred.

Also, it should be noted that I had no access to interviewing young females; cultural restrictions make this impossible.

Field Problems and Necessary Modifications

"Tradition" problem. I aimed at getting about 120 returned questionnaires from the village to represent the four categories of village youth and seniors, males and females, by 30 cases each. However, several problems arose:

1. Some of the younger village women refused to participate in answering the questionnaire. Only 23 agreed to do so, even though the interviewer was a very lovable woman in the village. She was a teacher in the school and respected by the villagers. Some of the women felt they should not give their opinions in public, no matter who was asking the questions.

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2. Some of the senior females in the village were illiterate, mentally ill or deaf, and some, even though able to comprehend, had difficulty understanding the interviewer's adjustment to the local dialect. Only a total of 28 cases out of the 35 collected were suitable for analysis.

3. "Traditional" problems prevented the investigator from distributing the questionnaire for self-administration to the young female students in school. Despite obtaining permission, both oral and written, to distribute the questionnaires, it was not possible to explain the procedures directly to the young female students. At best, we must regard the female student sample as an interesting, but not very reliable, comparison.

"Hospitality" problems. Because my father was a village elder, and I maintained home in the village, it was difficult to gather data. There were many invitations to stay for lunch or dinner, and it was not polite to refuse these invitations. If refused, the interviewees would insist, informing me that a meal had already been prepared. In order to lessen these gestures of hospitality, a question dealing with hospitality was dropped; when the issue of hospitality was brought up, it generated invitations for a meal.

Emotional problems. Because the research deals with familism and the changes that have occurred, some research questions brought emotional responses. A number of senior females cried during the interview as they told of being lonely and neglected, and how they wished that the social relationships of the past continued to exist today. There was much discontent expressed about children and relatives. Sometimes, too, discontent was expressed about spouses, and the investigator had to calm the emotional responses in order to complete the interview. In most cases, the investigator asked the

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Curiosity" Problems. One of the more curious senior citizens in the village volunteered to accompany me wherever I went in the village. He was trying to listen to the answers of the people and compare their answers with those of others. Sometimes he volunteered to assist the respondents when he felt that the respondent didn't answer a question in the appropriate way. It was necessary for me to be direct and frank and tell him that his presence was not desirable because the research was confidential.

Field Work Situation: A Diary

A variety of methodological approaches and instruments were employed to combine the qualitative (case-study) and quantitative (survey) aspects of the study.

Even though the study was conducted in a very small village, composed of 51 households, the majority of the houses are nuclear-family residences.

The field work took 12 days to complete and on some days I worked from 7 a.m. until after midnight. I arrived at the village and started work on March 8th. The Mosque, a central gathering place for the villagers was used as a place to address the villagers collectively. After prayers, I stood up and explained the purpose of my study, and the need for cooperation. That same night I established a schedule; the village divided naturally into five settlements. I visited each settlement consecutively, and remained there until the data were collected. I was helped by a cousin as well as other residents in making a list of the village people to be included. This enumeration proved to be very helpful as it allowed me to identify all those to be interviewed in each house as well as those who should be excluded according to the age criteria.

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Since people in the village wake up early, I too was up by 6 a.m. and beginning to arrange interviews by 6:30 am. With those who had not previously been at home, I set a designated time for an interview. Occasionally, I interviewed people at their place of work if that was convenient for the respondent.

There was difficulty in interviewing some of the women, especially the young women. I could not speak with them because of local customs and therefore, I was forced to hire an educated woman to interview them. I explained to her how to administer the questionnaire. I noted other questions that might be asked of her and the right way for them to be answered.

My first day of data collection was not entirely successful. I was disappointed. Many of the senior citizens, because of my accent, had difficulty understanding the questions. To solve this problem, those who experienced difficulties were invited by my cousin to meet and the questions were translated into the local dialect. Once the questions were understood, the group helped me to phrase the formal Arabic words into the local dialect. The next day my interviews went better. It was good to have the dialect problem solved. In the evening, I invited all the young men 15 to 25 years old living in the first settlement of Pattalh. Questionnaires were distributed to them and they were asked to fill them out under my administration.

The third day of fieldwork was devoted to senior women in the first settlement. I was accompanied by a cousin's wife who introduced me and explained the purpose of the study. We visited each home individually, and all the interviews were successfully completed that day.

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The fourth day began with a meeting of more than two hours with the woman who was hired to interview the village girls. The questionnaire was explained in depth. After the meeting the respondents in the second settlement of Baeer were interviewed by me. I was becoming more fluent with the local dialect and the village people were becoming aware of my aims. Interviews with men in the next settlement were completed by early evening. Later, the young men in that settlement were invited to the home of the researcher and the same procedure was followed with the first settlement.

On the fifth day, at 8 a.m. I met with the woman who was interviewing the young girls. She was pleased that the girls had no trouble understanding and completing the questionnaires. She was given more questionnaires to be used in the second settlement (Baeer) and we discussed questions that needed to be clarified.

I then visited houses individually in order to interview women over 45 years in the second settlement. This was a difficult day for two reasons: (1) two of the women were mentally ill and did not understand anything, and (2) five were totally deaf and since I did not know in advance of the interview, I had trouble communicating.

By 10 p.m. of the fifth day, all the interviews with women in that settlement had been successfully completed, with the exception of seven cases that had to be withdrawn from the study.

On the sixth day I visited the Boys' High School. Questionnaires were distributed to the 12th grade students.

I returned to the village and completed field interviews in the third settlement (Al-r). There were only six households. That evening I interviewed all youths in the

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settlement at my home. Because only a few were literate I had to conduct these interviews separately.

On day 7, the woman interviewing the young girls returned with completed questionnaires and discussed some of the problems that arose and attempted to find solutions to the problems. One of the most difficult problems was that some of the illiterate girls refused to participate. Although my cousin's wife visited those who had refused, she too was not successful in convincing them to participate.

By 11 a.m. fieldwork was started in the fourth settlement (Domna). By evening all interviews with the males were completed with the exception of two who were out of the village that day. The youths of this settlement were interviewed that evening too. There were few problems with this group of young men.

On the eighth day I interviewed the two men who had been out of the village the previous day. Then I went to the Girls' High School at Muhyile. The questionnaires and a formal letter to the principal were given to the guard so that the questionnaires could be distributed to the 12th grade students.

That afternoon I interviewed the women in the fourth settlement.

On the ninth day, I visited households that had been skipped earlier. I completed interviews in the fourth settlement. Again, I interviewed the young men at my home.

My remaining days were dedicated to in-depth interviews with selected respondents as interviewing the respondents from the last settlement (Al-Sahar). After I met with all the village elderly and young residents, I had a general picture of the

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My in-depth interviews were conducted in the respondents' homes. I asked permission to record the interview and it was granted in all cases. But if a respondent showed sensitivity to the tape-recorder, I turned it off, but I listened to the informants as they related their stories, opinions, and experiences. In cases where the information was not electronically recorded, I made notes of the interview soon after getting back to my home.

Study Variables

This study employed a set of dependent and independent variables to explore the social changes and to delineate the differences between the younger generation and the older generation in terms of their attitudes and loyalty to familial obligations and norms. These variables are as follows:

Degree of Familism. To measure the degree of familism, a summarized scale was constructed with items devised specifically for this purpose. My procedures were similar to those of the classic Burgess and Locke approach to familism, the procedure used by Schwarzweller and Brown, and Heller's familism scale. Necessary modifications were made for the Saudi Arabian context. With the assistance of my advisor, I developed a familism scale which we felt tapped a wide range of familial values and attitudes in Saudi society. The scale was tested for validity and

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reliability, and modifications were made before final administration. Only 17 items were actually used from the original battery of 30 items and these were later reduced to 14 items (see Appendix). In Chapter 6, I will discuss in more detail the procedures used to construct this scale.

Age Differences (Generations). Age probably plays a major role in the degree of family loyalty and kin exchange reciprocity. It is expected that those who were born before the oil boom (1970) are likely to be more oriented toward family and kin groups than is the new generation (persons born after 1970). This hypothesis was explored by asking a series of questions about the understanding and practice of some patterns of collective mutual aid and reciprocity relevant to generational differences and changes that occurred. The questionnaire probed visiting patterns, exchange of labor, and of financial aid. Some questions were designed to provide open-ended answers to give respondents more latitude in answering the questions as he/she thought, and some closed-ended questions to measure the degree of familism obligation starting from general to specific and from family as a kin group to family. Such techniques were employed to measure the direction of familial attitudes among the respondents and the differences between generations and their preferences for conserving familism as a kin or family obligation.

Gender differences. The gender variable is very important for measuring any degree of gender differentiation in the generational attitudes toward change. It was expected that females would probably be more conservative than males. Males are

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exposed to more external factors affecting their loyalty toward family obligations than females are. Females are less exposed to outside effects such as migration, working outside the village, attending school, and so on. Therefore, we assumed that there might be some variations among the males and females in their attitudes and behaviors toward familism.

Education Differences. This variable is used to determine whether or not people who have obtained more education will become less oriented toward the large kin group and become less likely to conform to participating in communal activities and ultimately become less familial in their attitudes and behavior. To observe this variable, the same questionnaire and the scale were distributed to the village people as well as to those who had obtained the highest level of education in the area, 12th grade students.

Statistical Analysis

The exploratory nature of this study requires that we use descriptive strategies of data analysis. Therefore, in Chapters 4 and 5 we use single frequency percentage and crosstabulation.

In Chapter 7, for the purpose of exploring variations in the degree of familism among males and females, young and senior educated and noneducated, multiple correlation, as well as factor analysis, was used to determine the relationships between the scale items.

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One-way ANOVA and means were used to measure and to test the hypothesis that there is a variation between respondents based on their age, sex, or educational achievements in terms of their familial attitudes and adherences.

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CHAPTER IV

VILLAGE SOCIOECONOMIC ORGANIZATION

Alain, once relatively remote, is no longer isolated from the outside world.

This integration into the larger Saudi society has affected all aspects of life--social, economic and ecological.

Settlement Pattern

Alain is composed of five small settlements, based on blood ties and land ownership: Al Hatar, Baer, Domna, Pattalh, and Al Sahar. Households generally are nuclear family units.

Some noteworthy differences between these five small settlements must be considered. My attention focuses on variations in terms of education levels, work and occupation, land ownership, incomes, and the available modern technology.

Hatar: The Al Hatar settlement is the oldest in this area. It is located on the east side of the small hill that carries the same name as the settlement, Al Hatar. The hill divides the village of Alain into two parts: the east and

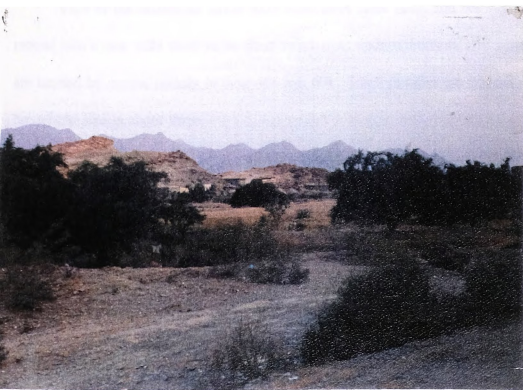


Figure 5. The Settlement of Al-Hatar

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the west. The people living on this hill can view the whole village, and perhaps that was a reason why the early residents settled in this particular place at first. Currently, this settlement is occupied by Al Hassan and Al Dhurss who are cousins. There are only five residences. One of them is a new, modern villa and the other four are stone or brick houses.

Four of the household heads have lived there since birth, and one family has moved into a new villa there to be close to relatives upon retirement. All households are headed by males, mainly in their 40s and 60s. Small families are typical; median household size is about three.

Farming is the main job for all household heads. Some of them--in addition to farming--have part-time jobs in government or private business. The education level is higher than in the other settlements. Only one of the household heads is illiterate; the others have had elementary and intermediate schooling. The average income is so quite good; most earn between 1 and 3 thousand Saudi Riyal per month.

Beer: Baeer is a relatively new and growing residential area established by some wealthy villagers. It is located to the west of Al Hatar. There are 16 occupied homes and two empty houses built by former villagers now residing outside the village. The rentee landlords built their houses so as to have a place to come back to in the event of a crisis or upon retirement.

In general Baeer is considered the shining face of Alain. The buildings are beautiful and many are modern villas. Most of the village's services are concentrated

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The asphalt road, that connects Alain to the main highway, ends in this settlement.

Moreover, people in this settlement can receive two television channels while all of the other settlements, except Al Shar, receive only one channel (because of the mountainous terrain).

Baer has the largest families ranging from one to fifteen people per house with a median of four. The majority of households are nuclear families headed by males. But there are a few households headed by widows or divorced individuals.

About one-third of the household heads in Baer completed intermediate school. About one-third are completely illiterate.

Most of the residents are farmers and many have a secondary occupation, as a government employee, trader, or tractor driver. Many farms are irrigated; this indicates that Baer farmers are better off than farmers in the other settlements.

Income is relatively high; two-thirds of the families have monthly incomes of more than 3,000 Saudi Riyales compared with the average per capita in Alain of 1,000 R. or less. Also, all homes enjoy the availability of electric power, washing machines, TV, indoor pumping water, refrigerators, and so on.

Domna: Domna was established about 50 to 60 years ago by Black slaves after they were granted their freedom and left their masters' homes. It is a little off the main road, about two miles northwest. Recently some non-Blacks purchased nearby land and settled here. There are about 17 households. Family size ranges between one and

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nine. The majority of household heads are males with most being married and living with their spouse. There is a high percentage of divorced and widowed persons.

Also, the family structure is more likely composed of branch families, such as teenaged brothers and divorced sisters. which we did not find in the former settlements. For example, some of the households heads have sisters living with them.

Domna has a high percentage of illiterates. Even though farm ownership is not common, many of the residents claim that they are farmers, but actually, they are not really farmers, but farm laborers. Because they are landless, most households seek employment in a variety of different jobs. The percentage of governmental employees is relatively high. But, the average income in this settlement is not very high; the majority earn less than 1,000 Saudi Riyals a month.

This lower income level can be explained by the high percentage of senior people between the ages of 40 and 60, and a few who are older than 60. Being retired they have no jobs.

Pattalh: The Pattalh settlement is a very picturesque part of the village because all the houses are surrounded with farms and green trees (see Figure 4.2). It was established by the Al Guallah about 15 or 20 years ago. However, even though the area is beautiful, only a few people wish to settle here because of the dirt road connecting it with the other quarters. During the rains, this settlement is often totally



Figure 6



Figure 6. Site of the Settlement of Pattalh

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isolated from the rest of Alain for one or two days. Moreover, the residents are bothered with daily attacks by monkeys who live in the mountains nearby. The monkeys come down from the hill every morning to eat the crops and even to attack children and small livestock. Sometimes dangerous wild animals, such as wolves, prey upon farm animals during the night.

Thus, there are only eight homes in the area. Family size ranges between one and 12 people. Most household heads are male, and most are married and living with their spouses. All work as farmers, but two-thirds have a secondary occupation as government employee, trader, or Imam of the local mosque.

About half of the household heads are illiterate; about three-fourths are between 40 and 60 years of age. Most earn less than SR 1,000 a month; most own a car. The houses tend to be built of stone. About 50% of the houses have no washing machines or TV, a third have indoor plumbing water, and the majority of households own a car.

Sahar: Al Sahar is a small settlement of only five houses located on the west side of Alain near the hill of Behlah. It is some distance from the main village, but it is an extension of the Baeer settlement. Many farms join the two settlements.

Al Sahar has experienced a profound exodus of its population to different settlements, particularly to Baeer. It has become much smaller in terms of the number of houses located in this settlement. Average household size is four. The main occupation of the residents is farming. The majority have a low monthly income of

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less than SR1,000 per month, and education is not so common among the Al Sahar residents. Most of the residents are illiterate. The majority own land for farming; one family has more than six pieces of land.

Family Structure

Family Size: Households in Alain are organized as nuclear family units; an extended family structure is no longer common. There are only two or three exceptions to this (brothers or uncles living with a family). In a few cases there are homes with one person, male or female, living alone. Usually these are older persons who were left behind after the migration of their sons or daughters. The average household size in the village is four people. About 11 cases of the total 51 cases in the village households have only one person. However, we find some households are composed of 12 to 15 people concentrated mostly in the Baer settlement.

The average number of children living in the household is two sons and one daughter. Such findings can be explained by the fact that sons stay longer in the parents' house after the age of adulthood than daughters do, even though the majority of the sons leave their parents' homes at an early age seeking jobs outside the village. Accordingly, we find that about 72.5% of the households indicate that they do not have any sons in the 15 to 40 age group living with them in the household. The Domna settlement has the highest proportion of total sons living in the village (33.3%). Daughters, on the other hand, are less apt to be living at home, and the majority (52.9%) have no daughters at all living with them. The remainder has daughters less than 16 years of age which can be

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attributed to the custom of early marriage in the village. Girls usually get married between 13 and 15 years of age, while the boys usually wait until they reach their 20s or more which gives them more opportunity to stay longer in the parent's house.

Migration is another factor that is associated with the disintegration of the extended family structure in the village. Of the total households, 47.1% have at least one son who has migrated from the village and about 22% have at least one daughter who has migrated. Fathers and mothers usually stay in the village waiting for a visit from their children who indicated that they usually visit weekly, monthly, or yearly, depending on the distance between the city where the son or daughter lives and the village, but no one indicated that their sons or daughters were absent more than one year without visiting them regardless of distance involved in traveling home.

My findings show that the family structure in Alain tends to be a small nuclear family. The relationships between family members is still very strong and children still have a strong loyalty toward the village and their people.

Household Headship: Most heads of households are males (74.5%). Female heads of household are those who had been widowed or divorced; they are generally elderly females living alone (see Table 4).

There are 113 male residents in the village and 83 female residents. Most male residents live alone after the death of their spouse or after a divorce. They usually stay in the village. Females, on the other hand, after the death of a spouse or a divorce sometimes marry outside the village and move away.

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Marital Status: In Alain, married residents who live with their spouses are in the majority (64.7%). Divorce is not common; only a small proportion of residents (13.7%) are divorced. Widows are more common--I found about eleven widows who lived alone after the death of their spouse out of fifty-one total households.

Among the youth, men tend to remain single longer than women in Alain. Women marry much earlier than men. Fathers in Alain try to marry their daughters off as soon as they reach adulthood because they are afraid of gossip. Girls might get involved in some relationships with males prior to marriage, and this would be bad. So fathers try to avoid this possibility by forcing daughters to get married at an early age such as at 14 or 15 years.

Another reason for early marriage is that the women of Alain are illiterate or semi-illiterate, and their chances of getting a job are nonexistent. Since their only goal is to get married and raise a family, they usually want to get married at an early age.

Males also do not have much opportunity to obtain an education if they remain in the village. But they can travel outside the village seeking jobs or education. Accordingly, some of them get married at a later age, similar to the pattern of city youths, i.e. between 20 and 25 years of age. But if female villagers reach the age of 20 without getting married, their chances of getting married become less and less. Further, male youths usually prefer younger wives. This is the nightmare of Saudi women; women who are 25 to 30 years old feel that maybe no one will be interested in marrying them except an old man or a man who has more than one wife.

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However, in Alain, most married men have only one wife. There are only twoceptions.

e: In terms of age, 64.7% of household heads are between 40 and 60. 23.5% are 60rs or more, and only a small proportion (11.8%) are between 20 and 40 years of age. is pattern suggests that most of the village youth have migrated from the village and y the elderly stay. For example, 72.5% of the villagers do not have any sons above ages of 20 to 40 living with them in the household.

ucation: In the southwest region, as in all Saudi Arabian regions, formal education is ew phenomenon going back only about 40 years. In rural areas, however, education ne somewhat later and only started about 15 years ago. Education was confined to the rmal education circles as in the village mosque where the Motaw, the most educated son, usually taught the children Quran, math, and simple Arabic writing.

In a village like Alain, formal education did not exist until the late 70s. Therefore, find that about 45.1% of the village males and 60.8% of the females are totally erate (Table 4.1).

It appears that all the five settlement areas have a high proportion of illiterate dents whether male or female. As Table 4.1 shows, the majority of those who had al education are concentrated in elementary education while the intermediate, high ol, and B.A. holders only represent a small number of the residents whether among

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males or females. This reflects the fact that Alain is typical of the Third World villages with a high percentage of noneducated population.

However, male education is at a somewhat better level than that of females because males have more opportunities to seek education outside their villages. Females, on the other hand, have fewer opportunities to obtain a formal education, but also the education of women has faced strong objections by rural conservatives who consider the education of women to be a shame and the first step toward the westernization of women. In Alain the boys' school was established 11 years before the girls' school (which was started just about four years ago).

In spite of this, 33.3% of the females in the village have had an elementary education. Intermediate, high school, or B.A. holders among the village girls are less common--only 1.2%. People in the village still believe that the education of women is not important and the only place for a woman is in her husband's home. Accordingly, women should not have more than an elementary school education which allows her to read the Quran and learn simple math.

Occupation and Division of Labor

Agriculture is the main occupation. In the village generally the majority of men work as farmers, with a few exceptions who consider farming to be a part-time job in addition to their job as a government employee, mosque Imam, or tractor driver.

The Black people, on the other hand, have no farms, and because they are landless they hold different kinds of jobs. In the past they have worked as drum beaters at the

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Table 4.1 Socioeconomic Characteristics of Household Heads in Five Settlements of Alain*

(number of households)*

Criteria	Pattalh	Settlements				Alain Total	
		Baer	Al-Hatar	Doma	Al-Saher	N	%
Education							
Literate	4	5	1	9	3	22	43.1
Read & Write	1	2	0	2	1	6	11.8
Intermediate	1	3	2	3	0	9	17.6
High School	2	6	2	3	1	14	27.5
Total	8	16	5	17	5	51	100
Income							
Less than 1000 SR	5	10	2	9	3	29	56.9
1000-2000 SR	1	5	2	4	1	13	25.5
2000-3000 SR	0	1	1	3	0	5	9.8
3000 +	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>7.8</u>
Total	8	16	5	17	5	51	100
Marital Status							
Married	5	11	5	8	4	33	64.7
Divorced	2	4	0	5	0	11	21.6
Widowed	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>13.7</u>
Total	8	16	5	17	5	51	100
Employment							
Employed	0	1	2	3	0	5	11.8
Unemployed	6	12	3	10	2	33	64.7
Total	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>23.5</u>
	8	16	5	17	5	51	100
Occupation							
Government	8	13	2	8	4	35	68.6
Private	0	3	2	7	1	13	25.5
Unemployed	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5.9</u>
Total	8	16	5	17	5	51	100

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occasions of marriage or circumcision. Also, they work as hired laborers to cut trees or harvest the farms in addition to their work as bedmakers. They usually make beds and chairs from wood and palm trees to sell. Some work as cultivation toolmakers and do blacksmith jobs. These days some of them still do the same jobs, but the majority acquired an education and have become involved in governmental appointments.

In terms of gender and occupation, women are all considered housewives. Not many work at a paid job, except for the women who work in the girls' school. The number of women farmers has declined and only a few of them still practice farming.

The division of labor in terms of gender is obvious. Women are responsible for the housework such as bringing water from the wells or streams and grinding the grain or preparing dough, doing all the cooking, bringing the wood for the fire, cleaning the house, and washing the dishes and clothes.

In farming, women usually are responsible for planting the seed. They follow their husbands or relatives planting and sowing the seeds using special tools. Also, during harvesting, women usually are responsible for cutting the stalks and carrying them to the threshing place.

Men, on the other hand, do all the other farming jobs, such as cultivation, cutting the crop, and so on, and they are not responsible for any jobs inside the house except for special occasions. When there are guests, such as at marriages, circumcisions, and so on, men usually do most of the jobs that are regularly done by women. They bring wood for the fire, prepare food and slaughter animals, prepare coffee and tea and so on. During

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special occasions, women are only responsible for grinding the grain to make dough and they prepare coffee and tea for the women in the women's section.

The children in the village are responsible for taking care of the livestock. They take them to pasture near the village. Usually the small children are responsible for the small animals, and the older children are responsible for the big animals. Girls are mostly responsible for the sheep, while boys take care of the goats. It seems that the reasons for such division of labor goes back to the nature of animal behavior. Sheep are usually quiet, and they don't need too much care in contrast to the goats which tend to be more active and require much care. Also, the children sometimes help their mothers in bringing wood for the fire or bringing water from the wells or stream for drinking.

Children, too, are responsible for protecting crops from birds and animals. They usually stay on the fields from sun up to sun down to prevent monkeys, deer, and other animals from eating the crops. Men usually take charge of that job during the night. Nowadays farming is still the main occupation of the villagers. About 68.6% of village residents work as farmers (Table 4.1). However, many new nonfarming jobs have become common among the villagers. Of the village population, 41.2% have extra jobs in addition to their jobs as government employee, trade, tractor driver, and mosque imam. As a matter of fact, all of these extra jobs in addition to farming are considered to be new occupations in the village in particular and the area in general as a result of the economic development and modernization that has been taking place.

For example, Imam at the local mosque is considered a very new occupation in the Kingdom. It has been only during the last decade that this job has been a voluntary

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position (without any expectation of payment) and held by the most qualified religious person available. The other jobs, such as tractor driver, or trader, are also considered new occupations. Only a few years ago no tractors were available in the area or in the village and all the villagers practiced farming in the traditional ways of using oxen for cultivation.

Teaching also was not available in as systematic a fashion as it is now. The mosque Imam was the most educated person who took charge of the job without pay and in a nonformal way. The only available job for the public was farming in addition to some simple handicraft jobs which were exclusively carried out by the Black residents.

Income: The village population has a very low average household income that is equal to or less than 1,000 Saudi Riyals (equivalent to about US \$267 per month in 1990). About 56.9% of the households can be found in this category. The other half is distributed as follows: 25.5% have between 1,000 and 2,000 Saudi Riyals a month, 9.8% between 2,000 to 3,000, and only about 7.8% of the village people have more than 3,000 Saudi Riyale per month.

The settlements of Pattalh and Al Sahar have the lowest income levels, 62.5% and 60.5%, respectively, with less than 1,000 S.R. (\$267). Those two settlements also have the highest percentage of the category of those who have more than 3,000 S.R. (\$900).

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Land Ownership and Agricultural System

Alain is an agricultural village. Farming is the main occupation. The farms are composed of small fields separated from one another in order to allow each field to accumulate water in times of rain (see Figure 4.3). Most of the farms depend totally on rainfall, and people usually make their cropping schedule to conform with the time of rainfall. As a matter of fact, Alain is in a region that is considered very vital for farming; it is called the "Kingdom's food basket." Even though water is never adequate, crops are usually harvested three times before they are taken off to cultivate a new crop. Corn and sorghum are the major crops in the village besides vegetables.

Recently some people in the village have dug wells for irrigation, and they have started to grow crops, such as vegetables and fruits which are new crops in the village. Some of the farms are irrigated by streams.

Noticeably, some of the old, traditional villagers started to make jokes of those who have changed their main production and they usually attribute any problems to that change. Some of the old farmers laughed at me and pointed to one of the farms that was irrigated by a well and planted with vegetables. They said that the soil had become less fertile and more salty and that it was a punishment of God because changes had been made in the irrigation system of the village.

In terms of cultivation, however, all the farmers in the village have become more dependent on new technology and equipment, such as tractors, plowing machines, etc. It is hard to find traditional equipment which usually consisted of two oxen pulling a plow or two oxen pulling a piece of flat wood to break up the ground for planting.

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However, harvesting season is still the only time when villagers depend totally on the traditional way, by hand.

Some farmers use modern technology in farming and planting. They have started using consultants and go for advice to the agricultural extension office nearby in cases of crop disease. But most villagers do not pay any attention to the new ways.

No large-scale farming exists in the village and all farmers own only small pieces of property. Cooperative farming is not popular in the village, except during the dry seasons when people divide the land close to the stream and become involved in some kind of cooperative farming. When the rain falls the people leave these temporary farms and go back to their original farming. In the past, livestock was not considered part of the farm and a few people have only a small number of goats and sheep which go for milk or meat.

Recently the number of people who raise goats and sheep has been rising. On the other hand, cows and cattle were most common, but now are almost gone, and it is difficult to find a cow in the village, except for a small number which are used for milking. In the Black settlement, people raise chickens for sale and they have a small number of goats, sheep, or cows for sale.

In terms of land possession, 9.8% of the households have between one and three pieces of land. Around 21.6% have between three and six pieces of land, and the remaining 23.5% of the village households that own land have more than six pieces of

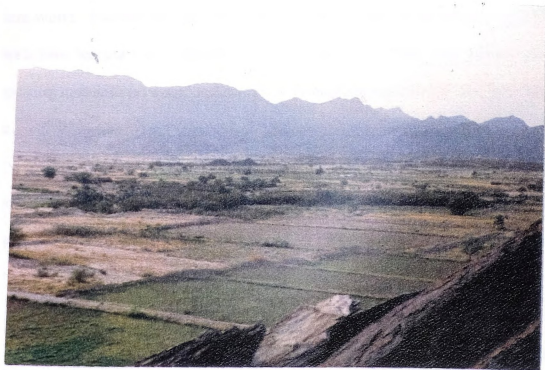


Figure 7. Farming structure in the village

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Availability of Modern Technology

Although the total income of the village household appears very low, which explains the poverty of the majority of the village people, we can argue that the standard of living for the majority of residents is better than in other rural communities of the Third World. That can be explained by the availability of most modern home appliances which have become very important in people's daily life. They have become totally dependent in their lives on such technology as washing machines, stoves, cars, televisions, etc.

We would also argue that the availability of these appliances has affected the family relationships both directly and indirectly. People are becoming more and more dependent on machines to meet their daily needs than on each other, as was once true. Fathers, mothers, and children are becoming unaware of many things that they used to do in the past. Public electricity, for example, is one of the most important things that is not available in the village. The village of Alain is one of those remote villages that still depends totally on individual electric generator motors.

In the village's five settlements, we find there are some residents who still depend on the traditional way of using kerosene lamps for lighting. If we take into account that the area is very hot and dry in the summer season, we can imagine how much people suffer without electricity.

Washing machines also have become common. People in the southwest region used to wash their clothes in a nearby stream or small lake. Men and women usually

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carried their clothes and went there to wash them by hand, using some kind of tree leaves as soap. Later they used a big trough into which they put the clothes and in which they washed them with their hands using real soap when it was available. Nowadays, particularly the last two or three years, as the general electric motor became available, many people in the village bought washing machines. Now about 66% of the village population have washing machines.

However, the availability of washing machines in most households has affected neighborhood relationships in an indirect way. Before these machines men and women would usually gather together at the nearest stream to chat as they washed their clothes. They would enjoy working together washing their clothes and this was a social event. Now, everyone does his/her own laundry in the privacy of their own home and they miss out on the opportunity to gather together for such a purpose.

Television also became available in the villages of Saudi Arabia. However, only a few public television channels are received in the southwest region where the Western and Eastern regions watch more channels due to their close proximity to the Gulf States and Egypt. In Al Ain some settlements watch the two channels while others are not able to watch television at all due to the effect of the mountainous terrain on television reception. In total, about 66.7% of the village residents have television in their houses.

Another reason for the absence of television in some houses is that some people have no electricity (often older people). Television cannot be operated without electricity, and some households do not have rechargeable batteries. Some residents do not want to have television, even though they have electricity and the ability to purchase one because

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they believe that it is forbidden due to religious beliefs. Television shows bad pictures and so some avoid bringing it into their homes.

The availability of a television in each household or at least in the majority of households, has had a great impact on family relationships and on familial relationships in the larger context. People in the village used to gather together each night to chat, visit and to exchange information. When television came to the village, each family became more individualistic and more desirous of staying at home to watch television rather than to visit with neighbors. Even within the family itself, people have become less and less interested in talking to or exchanging information with each other. They all gather to watch and listen to television without any comments.

Many of the village youth have been caught up in the charisma of some of the television actors or villains which in one way or another causes some problems within the family. It can lead to divorce or a young person running away or children being disobedient to their parents, or lacking respect for older people. All of these are considered new things for village life and most residents believe that television is the direct cause of such changes.

Life has become easier for women in the village who used to be responsible for providing the house with needed daily water. They usually had to wake up very early in the morning, before the sun had risen, to go to the nearest well or stream to fill up their "garbah," usually were made of goat skins and then carry the water back home on their backs in order to provide the family with the necessary water for washing and drinking. Later people developed a way to bring water from the water tank right up to the village

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fill water by filling small tanks provided at home to put water in. Nowadays, some still use this method to obtain the daily supply of water. Some have even built private water storage and extended the water pipes to their houses. However, it appears that most of the village houses still suffer from the lack of plumbing water and we noted that the majority (86.3%) depend on their own water storage and the other 13.7% pull water out with their own hands.

Women also are no longer responsible for bringing wood for cooking since the women in the village have bought a new modern stoves for cooking purposes. The stoves are very small, used only for heating and they do not have an oven. They burn wood. Noticeably, some residents are still scared to use those stoves. They are afraid at night for themselves and their children. The older residents will advise against the use of this kind of stove, and they usually exaggerate the telling of various stories of how people have been burned or are dead due to the wrong use of the stove in nearby villages.

Refrigerators have helped women also to keep things fresh. In the past, there were different methods in the village as well as in the rest of Saudi Arabia for keeping things cool and fresh. For example, people used to put things that should be cold on top of a wall exposing it to air currents and after a while it becomes somewhat cold. Another way, and especially for drinking water purposes, they would put water inside a container and leave it for several hours until it became nice drinkable cold water. Recently, especially when electricity became available in the village, we find that the majority

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village people shifted to depending totally on the refrigerator (80.4%). However, even those who do not have a refrigerator in their homes usually share one with their neighbor.

Owning a car in the village is very prestigious and a privilege too. The villagers usually look to the car as a very important indication of wealth, and many insist on having a car even though their income is very low. They borrow money. Another reason that households need their own car is the lack of public transportation in the village, on one hand, and the norm of privacy which is required of each family to be alone and not to appear in front of the others or to share their car due to the need for the women to be veiled.

About 62.5% of the households own cars. This percentage is very high considering the low income. The family car is a very important possession.

Also I should mention that a car in the village is not only for private use, but also for rent. People who do not have a car usually go to those who have one and ask for a ride and offer to pay. Some people in the village have become very greedy and individualistic and will not give rides to anyone who will not pay. Many of the older people do not approve of this behavior.

Housing Structure and Familism

We can argue that the types of housing in any society would give the first impression of the culture of the society: conservative, liberal, close, open, familistically oriented, individually oriented, etc. In the southwestern region of the Kingdom, we notice there are three types of housing: stone houses, brick houses, and villas. We shall

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fly explain each pattern and explore how housing structures can play a big role in family relations and cultural change.

Stone Houses (Traditional): In the village of Alain about 23.5% of the houses are built of stone. Most of these are concentrated in the Pattalh settlement. People brought stones from the nearest mountains and cut the stones to take special shapes, and mixed them with smaller stones called Lakaf. The walls of this kind of architecture are relatively wide, between half a meter to one meter in width. The height is between three and three-and-a-half meters. Since no wide windows are available for this type of house, small windows are used which allows air to enter while they do not allow for views out or people to see into the house. This kind of architecture has been adapted in the region, as in other villages in the southwest, as a result of the tribal wars that were taking place in the area. Accordingly, people built their houses to be more secure in times of conflict and to give the person inside the opportunity to see through the small hole which is called a "Gatra" without allowing the person outside to see the person inside. This gives the person inside the opportunity to surprise the person outside. However, these types of houses are considered to be a little bit large and wide. In terms of room's width, they are about 6 to 10 meters in width. Accordingly, people put a pillar of strong wood in the center of the house called a damad. This pillar holds another strong beam which lies on the two walls of the house to hold the other small pieces of wood that lie on both sides. The best way to describe such a construction is as a vertebral column. These old stone

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houses have neither bathroom nor kitchen. Accordingly, the villagers go outside to seek private place.

The other obvious characteristic of the old traditional style settlement is the crowding of the stone houses together. All neighborhoods are in a small area that allows people to share the walls of each other's houses for protection, brotherhood, and economy. Therefore, in old settlements we find that two or three houses have at least one wall that is shared. Also, most houses open on one area called Darb--or Haush--which resemble a back yard in Western houses. However, they are in the front of these Alai houses. People usually share the same darb. All the neighbors who share the open space gather in the afternoon or evening to enjoy chatting about activities and events during the day. Such a house has played a major role in keeping people together and has helped to make them feel that they are united in one family and that they care for each other, worry about each other, and know everything about each other. Accordingly, they all feel like one family living in one house.

Brick Houses (New): The second type of house in the village is the brick house which represents the majority (54.9%) of the village houses nowadays. Most are concentrated in the Domna settlement. The brick houses are considered relatively new in the village.

About ten years ago, many rural villagers began adopting this new housing structure, and then began to leave their stone houses in preference for brick houses which are less expensive and easier to build. This type of house is now found throughout the



Figure 8.

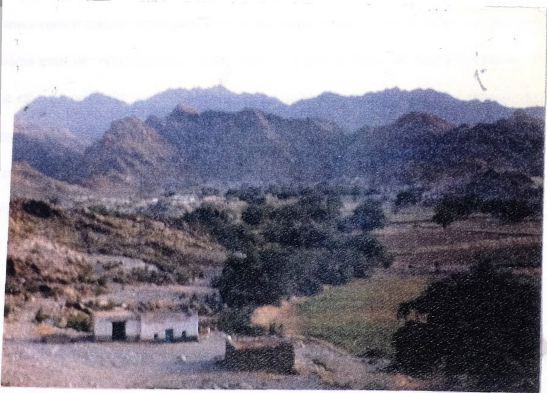


Figure 8. Stone houses and brick houses

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southwestern region and many other rural areas in the Kingdom because of the availability of foreign laborers who are experts in laying bricks. The brick houses take the same shape as stone houses, except that the brick houses have large, wide windows in contrast with the old stone houses which had no windows.

Many villagers started building this type of house by first adding one or two rooms constructed of brick beside their old stone house. Year by year they add on new rooms until the entire house is completely changed to what they call a baytshabi. With the emergence of this new housing style, a new housing strategy began to appear. People began to build walls to separate the houses, and a new era of familial privacy was begun. Consequently, each household began to build a surrounding wall to give the residents more freedom and privacy inside. This new strategy is associated with the introduction of brick construction, but there are many other factors that probably contribute to such changes.

The new brick houses also have a main outside door which is a new style in the village. The traditional stone houses have no wall, fences, or outside main doors. They were all open to welcome anyone, anytime. In contrast, to enter the new brick houses which have walls and doors, people have to knock on the doors and ask for permission. This kind of housing segregation and separation started about ten years ago and perhaps as a result, people have become more conservative and individualistic (certainly there is a parallel).

The new brick houses also contain an indoor bathroom which is a new amenity in the village. The old stone houses had no conveniences like this. Also, a separate room

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a kitchen has now been added to most houses; the old houses had only a fireplace in the middle or corner of the house which was used for cooking purposes. Wood is the fuel that had been available and the people had only a few utensils and dishes available for cooking.

The heavy wood that was once used for roofing has been replaced by small light wood that is imported. The people prefer these new types of roofing for two reasons: (1) because they are less expensive and (2) they are easier to obtain and to carry.

In short, the introduction of brick housing in Alain has been accompanied by many significant social and cultural changes.

g: The third type of housing is the villa which is a well-known housing style in large cities in the Kingdom and throughout the Middle East. However, the Saudi villa usually has a surrounding yard built of cement with a height of about two to two-and-a-half meters to give the family some additional privacy.

The villa style was adopted as a new housing fashion in mid-1983 by some young people who migrated from the village. They built these houses to stay in while visiting relatives in the village. Most of the villas are not presently occupied and the largest one is being used as a girls' school. Only a few of the villas are occupied by residents.



Figure 9. New villas in the village

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I believe that the villa type of housing represents the extreme attitude of families becoming more and more conservative and individualistically oriented. The villa gives a great deal of privacy which was not available either in stone or brick houses. People in the village now tend to build their new villas in very remote and quiet areas, regardless of the availability of building sites in more settled areas. They prefer to be away from people as much as possible and enjoy more privacy.

cluding Notes

Alain's socioeconomic organization is now emerging from an era of traditionalism and familial interdependence and entering an era of urbanization and greater self-reliance. People now are more sophisticated and more dependent on themselves and their immediate families rather than on the larger collectivity. Despite the fact that they still depend on farming for much of their livelihood, they no longer practice the traditional methods of farming, which demanded mutual aid and cooperation among families. Machines and hired labor now perform most of the work.

As the people became more comfortable with living away from each other and more inclined to seek their own privacy, the youth of the village were more likely to leave the village to find jobs or to seek better education.

Urban factors, it seems, have forced people to be more focused on the nuclear family rather than on the larger kin group. This social transformation from a collective, rural society to a more urban, individualistic society, and the associated patterns of behavior are the subject in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER V

CHANGING NORMS

As suggested in the preceding chapter, Alain has experienced some profound social and economic impacts of urbanization and modernization. In this chapter, I will discuss several aspects of changing village norms, morals, and customs that are associated with these impacts. I will focus especially on norms of visiting, sympathy and courtesy, a system of mutual aid help, exchange of labor obligations, sharing of production and consumption, and other familial reciprocities.

Living Exchanges

In the past, the people of Alain lived together in very close neighborhoods. Their lives were often attached to each other. Neighbors shared a common living space and interacted with each other daily. They never felt that formal or arranged visits were necessary. They felt that they and their kinfolk lived in one large house with many rooms, each room housing a family.

Recently, however, people began to live separately away from each other. Even within the immediate family, each adult child wants to live in his/her own house. Seeing a neighbor is more difficult and not a normal result of everyday living. Greater effort is necessary if one wants to interact with kinfolk.

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In an open discussion with men and women in the village, I learned that women claim they are still very united and concerned for each other, more so than the men. They attribute this to the daily conflicts and quarrels about such things as land and farming quarrels which are experienced by the men. The village women are not quite as busy as they had been in the past as they no longer have to haul firewood or drinking water to the house. The women are now able to use modern technology for daily household tasks, and this gives them more time to exchange visits and spend their leisure time with one another. Therefore, I found that about 75 percent of older females in the village still believe strongly in the necessity and obligations of exchange visiting. However, when a family visits another family, the return visit appears more obligated. Ninety-six percent of older females believe that returning a visit is obligatory. On the other hand the village men have become busier with their farm work and the extra jobs they acquire to provide a better standard of living for their families. Accordingly, their free time for exchanging visits is limited. Some of the men say that they have daily contact with the other men on the farms, at their jobs, and at the mosque. Through these contacts, they talk and exchange information with one another, so they do not have to visit each other in their homes unless there is a special occasion that forces them to attend and visit one another. However, most respondents believe the exchange visits among people are decreasing due to some obstacles raised by several factors: women's veils, new wealth, general idleness, business pressures, and quarrels over land (see Table 5.3).

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Table 5.1 Attitudes toward visiting obligations, by age/gender status

Gender/ Age Status	obligated to all	obligated only to relatives	obligated only for special occasions	not obli- gated, only desirable	don't know	<u>Total</u>	
	%	%	%	%	%	N	%
Female 25	61.0	26.0	6.5	6.5	0.0	(31)	100
Female and over	63.9	33.3	2.8	0.0	0.0	(36)	100
Male 25	65.2	26.1	0.0	4.3	4.4	(23)	100
Male and over	75.0	21.4	3.0	0.0	3.6	(28)	100
Female Student	64.5	16.2	12.9	6.4	0.0	(31)	100
Male Student	76.0	16.0	4.0	4.0	4.0	(25)	100

Table 2

Gender
Age
Status

Male
15-25

Male
45 and

Female
15-25

Female
45 and

Male
Student

Female
Student

Table 5.2 Attitude toward obligatory return visiting, by gender/age status

gender/ age status	obligated to all	obligated only to relatives	obligated only for special occasion	not obli- gated, but desirable	don't know	N %	
male 5-25	38.7	64.0	48.4	12.9	0.0	(31)	100
male 5 and over	47.2	2.8	50.0	0.0	0.0	(36)	100
female 5-25	60.9	0.0	21.7	17.4	4.3	(23)	100
female 5 and over	96.4	0.0	0.0	3.6	0.0	(28)	100
male student	67.7	12.9	3.2	12.9	0.0	(31)	100
female student	80.0	16.0	4.0	0.0	0.0	(25)	100

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A woman's veil is one of the principal factors that keeps people from visiting each other. Until ten years ago, women's faces in the southwest region were uncovered. They wore long dresses and went outside to participate in work with men in the fields. Men and women met each other regularly and exchanged greetings and talked in a direct manner. About ten years ago, a stricter interpretation of Islamic religion grew in the area. According to Islamic beliefs, women should not meet or talk with men in a direct manner while their faces are uncovered. People in the village, as well as all over the southern region, became more aware of such religious prohibitions through the local schools and the teachings of "uulama" who visited the area and explained to residents the right and wrong of Islamic principles.

People in Alain began to build high walls around their homes to prevent anyone from seeing women inside their homes. They also began putting outside doors on their homes; visitors have to knock and this gives women more time to cover their faces.

These new restrictions accorded a deep and profound change in people's relationships. In the past, all male cousins were allowed to sit and talk with their female cousins while the women's faces were uncovered. They were considered brothers. Nowadays, women don't meet their cousins or talk with them unless they are prohibited from marrying them. (In Islamic religion, a man and woman who have been breast-fed by the same woman who is not their mother or just a mother of one of them are considered brother and sister and are therefore prohibited from marrying one another.)

Table 5.3

Gender/age
Status

Male
15-25Male
45 and overFemale
15-25Female
45 and overMale
StudentFemale
Student

Note:

Figure 5.3 Factors believed affect decreased inter-household visiting, by gender/age status

Gender/age status	women now veiled	people wealthier	inter- personal careless- ness	people busier	more stress	more land quarrels	<u>Totals</u> (N)
Female 25	45.2	29.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	74.2	(31)
Female and over	52.8	22.2	8.3	2.9	0.0	86.1	(36)
Male 25	17.4	39.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	56.5	(23)
Male and over	39.3	35.3	3.6	0.0	0.0	78.6	(28)
Female dependent	32.3	38.7	0.0	0.0	16.1	87.1	(31)
Male dependent	64.0	32.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	(25)

Note: Respondents were given more than one option and consequently percentages are variable (referring to % of respondents mentioning a specific factor).

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People in Alain are divided into two groups: for and against women wearing veils.

Older people believe that such behavior, even though it is good because it is based on God's direction, encourages a kind of isolation among the people. Many old males in the village complained to me that the young females did not open the door for them when they came to visit if their fathers were not at home, or they ran away to hide when they saw older men. Some of the elder village males regard these girls as their own daughters because they virtually raised them or saw them grow up with their own children.

As a matter of fact, not only does the veil issue restrict visiting among the people in Alain, but it also restricts visiting in the area as a whole. In the past, when a guest came to any home and the man of the house was not available, the woman assumed the man's role--she greeted the guest, slaughtered animals, prepared lunch or dinner, made coffee, and provided the guest with every comfort until her husband came home. Now no one is allowed to enter the house if the man is not available, even though the guest may be a close friend or relative (except the fathers, brothers, or uncles).

Another factor that contributed to the change in visiting patterns was the differential change in economic status among the residents after the oil boom and the introduction of developmental programs. As some residents became more wealthy than others, they associated more with other wealthy people. There was a division in the village between the wealthy and the poor. These two classes are to some extent now separated socially.

Male and female students strongly reflect these changes and are quite aware of the reasons. Other respondents note that the change in visiting patterns come from being

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less or because of business pressures and land quarrels. For whatever reasons, we can conclude that nowadays informal visiting in the village is restricted to very close relatives. Nonrelatives are not visited without a prior invitation and making specific appointments unless there is some kind of emergency.

Making a formal appointment for a visit is a new phenomenon in the village. When an appointment is arranged by sending one of the children to the family to be visited, who advises them of the wish to visit. In most cases, assent is given.

In the past, this type of formality was not necessary. People visited at any time. One just came to say hello and sit awhile. People felt as if they were part of one large family and didn't need the formality of setting an appointment with their "family" because the village houses were considered part of one huge village house.

Some of the old people still don't believe in setting up formal appointments for visiting. Some are disappointed when they find no one to welcome them, especially when the man of the house being visited is not available (then the woman will not answer the door or will ask the visitor to return at a later time).

Among close family members this type of formality still doesn't exist and most people feel that they can visit their close relatives--father, mother, brother--daily or weekly, depending of course on the geographical distances. Respondents indicated that they still exchange visits with their relatives regularly in a nonformal sense, but do not do so with other villagers.

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Exchange Courtesy and Sympathy

The exchange of courtesies and sympathies is part of familistic behavior in Alain.

As mentioned in my discussion of exchange visits, there is a tendency in the behavior of some villagers to formalize visiting patterns by limiting them to close family members instead of to the extended kin group. However, in some situations people feel obligated to visit and participate physically and emotionally as expressions of their relationships with other relatives or co-villagers. Some of these situations mentioned by respondents are: (1) participation in funerals; (2) welcoming or bidding farewell to persons visiting the village; (3) visiting a hospitalized co-villager; and (4) congratulating relatives or co-villagers for the birth of a child. I will briefly discuss each of these familial behaviors, the extent to which people still believe and practice them, and who strongly feel an obligation to participate in such events.

Participation in Funerals: Funerals are very sad and special occasions that may not be ignored by anyone in the village. Most of the villagers in Alain agree that whatever neighborhood, relatives or co-villagers think about each other, they feel that they are strongly obligated to come and participate in the funeral of a co-villager or relative (Table

Table 5.4

Gender/ traditional
Age exchange
Status situation

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Male 1. Funeral
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Female 1. Funeral
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Female 1. Funeral
45 and 2. Welcom
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4. Newbo

Table 5.4 Attitude toward traditional exchanges of courtesy and sympathy, by gender/age status.

Gender/ Age Status	Traditional exchange situation	Obligated to all	Obligated only to relatives	Not ob- ligated, but desirable	Don't know	Totals	
						N	%
Male 25	1. Funeral	85.2	14.8	0.0	0.0	31	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	66.7	33.3	0.0	0.0		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	44.4	41.7	11.1	2.8		100
	4. Newborn	41.7	30.6	22.2	5.6		100
Male and over	1. Funeral	58.0	35.5	6.5	0.0	36	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	45.2	32.2	6.5	16.1		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	38.7	54.8	6.5	0.0		100
	4. Newborn	29.0	45.2	16.1	9.7		100
Male 25	1. Funeral	60.9	17.4	13.0	8.7	23	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	60.9	21.5	8.7	8.7		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	69.6	30.4	0.0	0.0		100
	4. Newborn	39.1	52.2	4.3	43.0		100
Male and over	1. Funeral	76.9	21.4	7.1	3.6	28	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	76.9	17.9	7.1	7.1		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	57.1	35.7	3.6	3.6		100
	4. Newborn	60.0	32.1	3.6	3.6		100

Male 1. Funeral
Student 2. Welcom
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3. Visit Ho
pital
4. Newborn

Female 1. Funeral
Student 2. Welcom
or Good
3. Visit Ho
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4. Newborn

Table 5.4 (cont'd.)

male student	1. Funeral	51.6	20.0	16.0	3.2	31	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	64.5	24.0	8.0	0.0		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	35.5	32.0	12.0	3.2		100
	4. Newborn	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		100
female student	1. Funeral	60.0	20.0	16.1	4.0	25	100
	2. Welcome or Goodbye	68.0	24.0	8.0	0.0		100
	3. Visit Hos- pital	52.0	32.0	12.0	4.0		100
	4. Newborn	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0		100

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However, most of the villagers, as well as students, indicate that their participation in funerals had changed extremely from what it used to be, according to what they called "religious awareness." People in the area used to gather in the house of the deceased and stay for three days, sharing with the relatives in their grief. The guests used to bring food along with them, and tried to make the deceased's relatives feel that they still had a family who cared about them and shared their grief. The family of the deceased usually did not do anything. The other relatives or co-villagers took care of everything: prepared food for them, cleaned their homes, took care of their children and animals or land if it was time for crop harvest. On the day of the funeral, all the men and children in the village went with the dead person to the gravesite, while the women stayed home to prepare food for the men and sent it to them at the grave.

In recent years, this type of ceremony for funerals has been discontinued. Only the old men go to participate in the funeral and to say some words and pray with the family of the deceased. Only very close relatives or friends stay for the burial; all the others go back home. No one eats anything or brings anything to the family, unless they are close friends or relatives. Moreover, the women in the village, who once contributed financially to all the funerals, rarely do so now. But they still usually donate a little money to the family that had the funeral.

Welcoming or Bidding a Farewell to Visitors: An individual who returned from a long period of absence was not a common event years ago in Alain. People did leave during a crisis or in the dry season, that usually for only short periods of time. With the

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connection of the village to the outside world through better communication and better transportation, people in Al Ain as in the entire southwestern region of Saudi Arabia became expert at long-distance migration for long periods of time.

At the beginning of this era (which started about 20-30 years ago), people in the village started a new tradition to welcome back their fellow villagers from travel. When a member of the village returned after a long absence (usually a tour of duty with the army), the entire village--young and old, men and women--gathered in his house at the time of his arrival. When each man came to the house, he would shoot a gun as a greeting to the relative or co-villager. They stayed at his house all day and night. It was the host's responsibility to feed them all. Usually, he provided his family and guests with ample gifts to prove that he had not forgotten them during his absence.

There were two directions of obligation: (1) the returning villager was obligated to give gifts to all villagers as well as to his relatives, and (2) the villagers were obligated to come to welcome him.

Simultaneously, when someone left the village for a length of time, all the villagers gathered at the traveler's home. The women cried and the men kept silent or gave advice. Usually the men accompanied the person leaving to the car that would carry him to his new destination. All the villagers felt they were obligated to do this without exception. Nowadays, however, after traveling and migration have become a part of the villagers' lives, if a village member leaves or returns, no one goes to welcome him or see him off, except his very close relatives or friends. If the villager will be away less than a month, no one goes to see him off. However, despite that, the majority of respondents

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still believe that they are obligated to welcome or see off relatives or co-villagers: (see Table 5.4). On the other hand, only a few people said that they actually participated the past year in a welcoming or farewell celebration for people from their village who were not close relatives. The female residents are more likely to have participated. As some women indicated, "we are still more united than the men."

(3) Visiting Hospitalized Persons: Staying in the hospital is a new phenomenon for the villagers. In earlier years, no hospitals were available and people got sick and died without any medical treatment. And in the past, when members of the village, regardless of their gender or age, got sick, the whole village came to stay close to him/her. They remained all night near the patient to care for him/her, taking turns sleeping, until the person either recovered or died.

In the late 1970s, when hospitals first became accessible, people in Alain expanded their old obligatory norm to include hospital visits. Usually most adult men and women went to visit a co-villager who was hospitalized. If the hospital was not located in the nearby town, they would travel hundreds of kilometers to visit. But over time, the villagers have become more and more careless about this matter, only visiting the person if he/she was hospitalized in a nearby hospital, and a close relative or friend.

However, despite a growing lack of concern about visiting sick co-villagers unless their condition is critical, most villagers believe that visiting the sick is obligatory even though not a relative.

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We can attribute such feelings to the fact that visiting a sick person is expected in the Islamic religion. Because most villagers, both men and women, believe very strongly in the Islamic faith, they feel they should say "yes, we are obligated," even though they no longer consistently manifest this attitude in actual behavior.

(4) Celebrating the Birth of a Child: Newborns, particularly boys, were a great event years ago in Alain and other villages, because the people believed that when a boy was born, one more strong fighter had been added to the clan. Therefore, when a member of the village had a baby boy, the villagers came to visit and everyone shot guns into the air as part of the celebration and as a greeting to the new baby. In the case of a baby girl, the villagers only congratulated the father with words of praise, but they did not celebrate as heartily.

Currently, no villager really celebrates the birth of either a boy or girl, except among close family. The reason for this change may derive from the fact that people do not fear the possibility of outside attack any more; they feel more safe and secure. Their need for protection by the village or the clan is no longer important and there is more concern for the individual rather than the village as a whole.

Many of the villagers in Alain whom I met indicated that in the past they knew all the boys and girls in the village, whatever their age. Now they don't even know the children of their relatives unless they hear their full names. Such an admission reveals clearly that the villagers have become less interested in, and somewhat careless about, extended family relationships, devoting more concern to immediate family.

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Mutual Aid and Help (Villagers' Daily Lives)

In the villager's daily lives there are several occasions that reflect family unity, where the whole clan gathers to accomplish some job for one or the other of the clan. Such obligations are a part of the village culture and socioeconomic system. Some of these are: (1) cooperation in agricultural enterprises; (2) cooperation in building; and (3) cooperation in helping at a marriage and with the arrival of guests from outside the village.

(1) Exchange Labor: Because of the lack of modern equipment in the past, people in Alain were forced to look to a very strong familial system to meet their daily needs and to survive. For example, they used to cooperate in preparing the farm for planting. When a villager felt that he needed help from his co-villagers, he told them the day before. All the people he asked gathered together the next day with their oxen and worked for him until the job was done. He was obligated to provide them good food as a reward. During the harvest, all the villagers helped each other, with the men and women gathering at a farm to help the person who had the job. The men harvested the crops and the women helped store the crops or required them to the threshing floor. Harvesting at each farm took no more than one day to complete.

There was a kind of integrated cooperative system involved in the care of livestock. Neighbors with a small number of livestock could have them watched over without cost by those with many. In times of crisis, such as floods, which often

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caused considerable damage to the farm of one or another village member, all the villagers gathered with their oxen the following day to repair the damage.

When a house was being constructed and especially after the walls were built, the owner of the house would call his co-villagers to assist him in adding the roof. It was also common for co-villagers to help bring and cut the large timber used as house poles and roof supports. During the building, men and women had different types of tasks. Men worked in carrying the wood and in building the house while the women prepared the food and coffee for the men.

The male relatives of the person building the house took charge of killing the animals for proper meals for the laborers. On such occasions, the men and women sang songs loudly to reflect their unity. This pattern of interchangeable labor was considered an obligatory system. No one had the right to reject participation in such jobs. Nowadays, cooperative labor by villagers is becoming increasingly rare and most all construction work is done by foreign labor.

) Sharing Agricultural Production and Tools: In Alain, farm families had to exchange their agricultural production and tools as part of their familial social system. During harvest, needy families sent their children to the wealthier families to get some of the crops (kesabh). They did not return empty handed. According to Islamic regulations (which regulate most social relations and interactions) when people harvest their crops, they should give a portion, depending on the quantity available, to the poor of the village (this is called zakah).

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People without oxen asked relatives or co-villagers to lend their animals so they could do their own cultivation. The other party could not refuse.

When guests came to a villager and the host was empty-handed or had no animal to butcher for them, he turned to his neighbors for assistance. He could go to his neighbor or relative and choose any one of his sheep or goats to slaughter for the guest. If the owner protested or was not satisfied with such actions, the person with the guest had the right to cut off the animal's legs and leave it as a punishment to the owner. By village law, the owner had no right to object.

When people were totally dependent on animals as a means of transportation, they used to exchange their camels and donkeys to be used for carrying grain and bringing water from the streams.

Now most of these norms have been gone. Everyone in the village now is dependent on his own possessions except among the close relatives.

(3) Marriage Celebrations: When one of the villagers got married, the whole village felt they were obligated to participate and help celebrate this joyful occasion. Men usually took care of killing animals and preparing food and coffee while the women ground the grain for bread. Children were responsible for bringing wood for the fires and water to drink and wash with. During the day and throughout the night of the marriage, the village changed into a beehive of activity. Everyone, even the smallest child, had a task to fulfill. The small children were responsible for tying up the donkeys of the guests, and preventing the animals from escaping. They might

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also pour tea and coffee for the guests. Black females were responsible for preparing the bride and helping her to dress, adorn her with jewelry, comb her hair, etc. The black males did the same for the groom.

When the marriage party ended and the groom decided to take his bride from her parents' home to his home, the village women accompanied her all the way from her parents' house to her husband's house. Many interesting customs were observed. On such an occasion, one of the old women took charge of leading the group on their way. After they gathered at the bride's parents' house, they put everything belonging to the bride onto camels or into cars to carry to her husband's home. But this was done very slowly to indicate that the bride was in no hurry to leave her parents. Such a trip could take as long as a day, regardless of the distance between the two homes which sometimes the house next door.

The men would fire shots into the air from time to time to greet the bride and her company. The women would refuse to move and the men would have to fire another shot. This kind of event reflects the fact that all the women in the village considered the bride as one of their own girls. They all gathered to join her and assist her in setting up her new home. After they arrived, each woman of the village had to bring with her some kind of gift, usually household utensils or dishes.

Men gathered to join the groom. Every man over the age of 18 had to give the groom some money. The sum was not important, but giving it was. Sometimes the poorer members of the village had to borrow money. Such a donation is called refdah, which means "assistance."

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It should be noted that most of the mentioned customs are still practiced in

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Unexpected Guests

When unexpected guests arrived in large numbers, the village's men gathered and divided them into groups. Each one took a group to his home to feed. In the case of only one unexpected guest, all the villagers came to the host's house and participated in helping the family take care of the guest. All of the villagers treat each guest as if he were their own and tried to show the guest how united their village was. I should mention that this custom is still surviving in recent days in Alain (Table 5.5).

Table 5.5

Gender/
Age
Status

Male
15-25

Male
45 and over

Female
15-25

Female
45 and over

Male
Student

Female
Student

Table 5.5 Attitude toward obligatory help in certain situations, by gender/age status

Gender/ Age Status	marriage of co- villager	guest comes to village	sickness of vil- lager	birth of child	N	%
	%	%	%	<u>Totals</u> %		
Male 15-25	25.8	54.8	12.9	3.2	(31)	100
Male 45 and over	27.8	72.2	0.0	0.0	(36)	100
Female 15-25	56.5	39.1	0.0	0.0	(23)	100
Female 45 and over	35.7	64.3	0.0	0.0	(28)	100
Male Student	16.1	17.1	3.2	6.5	(31)	100
Female Student	32.0	60.0	0.0	4.0	(25)	100

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Offering Help

Older people in Alain still believe that they are obligated to offer help to their neighbors or relatives in times of need, without first being asked. But young men and women are no longer as strong in sharing their parents' ideas; only 25.8% of the young men and 47.8% of the young women feel obligated to help without being asked first.

The older people believe that it's wrong to say no if a person asks for help. Such behavior is considered an integral part of the Arab culture. Some villagers note that if the request involves an urgent or critical situation, they should rearrange their daily responsibilities to help the individual. However, if the situation is determined to be less critical, the individual can be asked to wait a bit while the others finish their daily tasks.

The change in the helping patterns from what they used to be in the past is due to various factors. For example, modern equipment does the work faster and more accurately than hired workers. Wealth is another factor, that, as mentioned by the villagers. As individual per capita income has increased in the village, people have more money to allow them to do what they want to do. They no longer have to depend on others for assistance in their daily work.

A third factor is the availability of cheap, foreign labor willing to work for low wages. People in the area, as well as all over the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, have become very dependent on foreign labor. However, even though the majority believe that people have become less helpful than they used to be, they all agree that they will

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not refuse if any of their co-villagers asks for help. Even though rural villagers, like the people of Alain, no longer diligently practice a helping system as strictly as in the past, they still strongly believe in its concept and in the way of life it represents.

Exchanging Financial Aid and Support

Exchanging financial aid is the best indicator of the strength of familial integration in Arab societies. Arabs, rural and Bedouin, have always practiced some kind of obligatory financial exchange of aid in times of crises, such as blood conflicts. No one member can be excused when a person calls for assistance. However, this assistance is conditional that the victim should be not relative or co-villager if a person commits a murder or injures someone of his village, he usually is ignored by his people and no one offers to help him.

In general, people in Alain used to be involved in different kinds of financially integrated systems. When a member of the village, regardless of his close relations, was involved in a car accident, the villagers cooperated in some kind of obligatory insurance that forced them to pay the other party for the fault of their own member. In the case of a fire, people used to donate as much as they could to the member whose house was burned.

According to Islamic directives, in all Muslim societies people are obligated to offer some financial help to needy people. Most villagers believe in these directives. This system lets people take part of their finances (about 2.5%) and a certain amount or number of their other possessions (such as livestock or crops) and give it to the

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poor in the area. No one is excused from this system (called zakah), not only because of strong familial obligation but because it is a directive from Allah (God) and no one may disobey Allah.

Marriage is another situation in which all men and women in the village are obligated to donate money to the groom to help him financially and to pay the marriage expenses. However I noted that the exchange of financial aid among people in Alain is being changed as have other aspects of the village's familial organization. In general the change in financial aid is relatively less than in other aspects. Some of the respondents complain of their financial aid obligations to the village members, particularly to the poor who have no cars for they believe they should not have to pay anything unless the person is a close relative. However, they still believe they are obligated to blood relatives, but that they are not necessarily obligated to assist in marriage, if the relationship between the parties is not very close. In short, many financial assistance situations that were once generally common among the villagers have become exclusive only among close family members (see Tables 5.6 and 5.7).

Exchange of Respect

The exchange of respect among villagers in Alain is one of the most obvious indicators of familial behavior. Young people used to be very respectful of the older members of the village. Village children were never allowed to be rude

Table 5.6

Gender
and Age

Male
15-25

Male
45 and over

Female
15-25

Female
45 and over

Male
Student

Female
Student

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Table 5.6 Attitude toward obligatory financial assistance on certain occasions, by gender/age status.

Gender and Age	Occasions of Obligations					Totals	
	village marriage %	liability payments %	natural disasters %	village guests %	don't know %	(N)	%
Male 15-25	25.8	67.7	3.2	3.2	0.0	(31)	100
Male 45 and over	19.4	30.6	2.8	12.1	0.0	(36)	100
Female 15-25	60.9	39.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	(23)	100
Female 45 and over	35.7	14.3	0.0	64.3	0.0	(28)	100
Male Student	51.6	25.8	3.2	3.2	16.4	(31)	100
Female Student	52.0	36.0	0.0	0.0	12.0	(25)	100

* The respondents were asked to mark only one occasion as the most important occasion that always felt obligated to offer financial aid in.

Table 5.7

Gender/Age
Status

Male

15-25

Male

45 and over

Female

15-25

Female

45 and over

Male

Students

Female

Students

Table 5.7 Attitude toward obligatory financial assistance in crisis situations, by gender/age status

Gender/Age Status	obligated to aid any co-villagers	obligated only to help relatives	not obligated but desirable	don't know	Totals	
					(N)	%
Male 15-25	35.5	54.8	3.2	6.5	(31)	100
Male 45 and over	33.3	58.3	2.8	5.6	(36)	100
Female 15-25	34.5	34.8	0.0	21.7	(23)	100
Female 45 and over	50.0	32.1	7.1	10.7	(28)	100
Male Students	54.8	32.3	6.5	6.5	(31)	100
Female Students	54.2	20.8	25.0	0.0	(25)	100

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to an older person or to disobey his/her orders. People in the village were once considered to be part of a large family. The children were cared for and disciplined by all members of the village. No parents took exception when someone else punished their child for wrong doing.

Small children often were once asked by village members to perform small services, such as taking along additional livestock to watch, or to bring something or to deliver or pick up something. The children had no right to reject the order, or they could be punished by the village member and by their parents as well.

All the villagers addressed the older people as "mom" or "dad." The girls and boys were sons and daughters to these elder members. Today it appears this practice persists as fairly common in the village, particularly among males: 61.3% of the young males and 86.1% of the old and 64.3% of the old females believe that people in their village still used this pattern of addressing people (Table 5.8). However, the educated males and females are less interested in following this custom of addressing people. Only 35.5% of the males and 40% of the females believe that they should use "mom" and "dad" when talking with older members of their village.

Young females in the village share the same notion (56.5%), they also are uncomfortable with addressing old people as "mom" and "dad." Interestingly enough, the young women are the most liberal group in the village!

In the case of reactions toward the wrongs that might occur against the young from the old, only the older men believe that the young should keep silent

Table 5.8

Gender/
Age
Status

Male
15-25

Male
45-over

Female
15-25

Female
45-over

Male
Student

Female
Student

Table 5.8 Attitude toward form of address in recognizing older people, by gender/age status

Gender/ Age Status	Forms of Address				Totals	
	"Dad" or "Mom" %	"Uncle" or "Aunt" %	first name %	don't know %	(N)	%
Male 15-25	61.3	25.8	6.5	6.5	(31)	100
Male 45-over	86.1	13.9	0.0	0.0	(36)	100
Female 15-25	34.8	56.5	8.7	0.0	(23)	100
Female 45-over	64.3	32.1	3.6	0.0	(28)	100
Male Student	35.5	32.3	0.0	0.0	(31)	100
Female Student	40.0	16.0	36.0	8.0	(25)	100

Table 5.9

ActionMale
15-25Male
45-overFemale
15-25Female
45-overMale
Students

Female

Table 5.9 Attitude toward proper form of correcting an older villager's remarks or behavior by gender/age status

<u>Action</u>	keep silent	correct politely	correct bluntly	don't know	<u>Totals</u>	
					(N)	%
Male 15-25	38.7	51.6	0.0	9.7	(31)	100
Male 45-over	72.2	19.4	5.6	2.8	(36)	100
Female 15-25	30.4	60.9	8.7	0.0	(23)	100
Female 45-over	35.7	50.0	3.6	10.7	(28)	100
Male Students	25.8	74.2	0.0	0.0	(31)	100
Female	16.0	76.0	0.0	8.0	(25)	100

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and not say anything as a form of respect (see Table 5.9). The other five groups, including old women, indicate that they would politely correct the older person when he or she said something wrong. This suggests that people are beginning to reconsider the practice of unquestioned respect for the older people of the village. One no longer need not keep silent when elderly people say something wrong. They must, however, be polite and courteous.

The older men in the village, on the other hand, complain of the rudeness of youths, saying that the young disobey them and don't respect them.

Education and socialization have been identified as two main factors in the change in children's respect for their elders. Some villagers feel that when children become educated, they grow rude because they feel they know more than the old people. The children feel their thoughts and opinions are better than those offered by their elders, who have neither education nor knowledge, and whom they often describe as "empty-headed."

The older people see the young as less experienced with life. They think they know more than the young because they are more experienced. The young, they say, should listen to them and follow their directions. Inevitably, conflict arises between the two age groups, causing misunderstanding and disagreement on many issues.

The second factor that people see as a reason for the change in the degree of respect among village people is socialization. People of the village, especially the old, believe that people now don't behave. In the past, each member of the village considered the village children as their own, and was given the right to deal with them as they saw fit. In the past, everyone in the village helped in

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teaching and socializing the children, who also came to respect the older members. Everyone needed everyone else. The need for others has now changed and parents become upset when village members do any wrong to their children.

Concluding Comment

It appears that the people of Alain are attempting to adjust their perceived ideals of perfect social relations with the reality of what is actually practiced. When I asked any villager about familial behaviors such as visiting, helping, etc. they answered that they felt obligated to practice such behaviors with their larger kin group. However, when asked if they usually did what they believed should be done, the answer was "no," with the villager adding, "I would like to but our people are no longer doing this."

This is common--everyone blaming everyone else for the lack of familistic practices. I discussed this matter with many of the villagers of Alain; they all felt the same. They express nostalgia for their past familial system, with its warmth of relationships and concern. At the same time, they appreciate that times have changed, that the village has changed, and that people too have changed; so they have little choice except to become a part of the changes.

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CHAPTER VI

FAMILISM AMONG VILLAGERS: PERSONAL PERSPECTIVES

For a personal perspective of familistic norms, customs and behaviors among the villagers in Alain, several people were interviewed more informally. In each case I attempted to overview the individual's personal experiences and attitudes and thereby gain a more comprehensive picture of life in the village, the basic concerns of its people and their relationships. My aim was to note the social changes that have occurred, and the differences that have resulted between the older and younger generations in familistic attitudes, goals and behaviors. As I had mentioned earlier, these cases were selected based on previous observations while I was doing my household interviews. I found that some people were more knowledgeable and cooperative than others. I selected several for more in-depth interviews. These are some of them.

Case 1: Ali

Ali is a male in his late sixties, married with five children (three girls and two boys). Four of his children are married, and one is still a student in high school. Ali comes from a distinguished family. His father and brothers were the only ones in the entire village who knew how to read and write. They were schooled in Yeman after they

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had migrated there during one of the crisis periods that occurred in the home region. Because they could read and write, they were in charge of prayer in Alain and led the people in Friday prayers.

Moreover, this family was not only the most educated, but also one of the richest families in the region. Ali, the youngest son, is very bright and very popular among his peers. Things did not always go well for this family. When the great smallpox epidemic hit the area, many people died, and there were only a few survivors. Ali's family was hard hit by the disease. They were dying one by one every day before the eyes of the little boy, and he was unable to offer any assistance except his tears and prayers. One day when Ali woke up early in the morning before the sun had risen, just as everyone in the village does, he found that all the neighbors were gathering and crying over the last one in his family to die. All of his older brothers were dead. Tears were not enough and life became more and more difficult. No one could take care of him as he had no relatives in the village, since the entire family had died.

Ali migrated to Tahmah to live with one of his distant uncles, his only remaining relative. Three days and four nights he walked and rode with some people who were going there until they reached Tahmah. His uncle welcomed him and attempted to make him feel at home, but there is no lap like a mother's lap, and no home like the village. Ten years he stayed in Tahmah, where he learned to read and write, and to do some simple math.

When Ali became 19, he decided to go back to Al Hejaz to his people and his village. This decision did not happen arbitrarily, but occurred after much thought and the

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urging of one of his teachers. The teacher had been encouraging him to go back home and to become a leader of prayers in the village as his family had done. Also, Ali had reached the age of marriage, and he wanted to marry one of the village girls.

When Ali arrived at the village he realized that it was not his home anymore and that the people were not his people. There was no mother, father, sister or brother. He felt lonely and gloomy even though all of the village people gathered to welcome him and tried their best to make him feel comfortable. The return of Ali was a major event in the village, for the village people had stopped praying at the mosque after Ali's family had died since no one was qualified to lead them in their prayers. The mosque had become neglected over the years. Ali changed all that.

History repeated itself. When the villagers discovered that Ali knew how to read the Quran and pray in the correct way, they cheered and said, "goose babies should know how to swim." From that time Ali became responsible for prayers, writing letters, making marriage licenses and he became a valued person in the village. Every villager wanted Ali to marry his daughter, but Ali thought only of his childhood love who was still very beautiful and unmarried. He decided to marry her and one year later they had their first child, a girl.

Although poor, Ali was very intelligent and worked very hard. He became one of the more successful men in the village. His wife was a frugal woman, and saved until they had enough for a new house and were able to modernize their farm.

Ali and his wife had five children. Recently, all have left and married except for the youngest. The eldest son lives in Tabuck where he serves as a soldier. Two girls live

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in near-by villages with their husbands who worked for the government and return to work in agribusiness in the area after he retired. Another daughter lives with her husband in Tabuck where he works as a soldier in the Saudi Army.

Ali has built a modern villa in the settlement of Pattalh where many of the wealthier people in the village have settled. He is still responsible for leading the people in their prayers, even though now there are a lot more educated than Ali. People in the village still respect Ali and place him at the top of the social hierarchy in the village.

When the school for boys first opened, they asked for a guard and servants to take care of the school and to serve teachers by cleaning the classrooms, make tea for the school staff, and so on. Not one of the village men was willing to work at this new job since it was considered shameful. But it was a necessary task. Ali volunteered. People in the village could not say anything nasty to him because of who he was, but they were surprised by his actions.

Nowadays Ali still works in the school earning a good salary. He also takes care of his farm and his business. He is still one of the more distinguished and respected people in the village.

Discussion: Ali's story gives us some indication of the strength of kin and family relations in Alain in the past. Ali spoke of his neighbors' grief for the deaths of his family members. Clearly, the people of Alain were concerned about each other and tried to care for one another.

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Ali also mentioned that after the death of his family, he moved to live with his distant uncle in Tahamah. This event provides us with an explicit example of the obligation of kin and family members (however distant) to care and help other relatives in times of crises or need. Such care and concern is expected, as demonstrated by Ali's uncle accepting him into his home. Ali knew that in this familial system the distant uncle would welcome him and receive him without question or protest.

Another indication of kin concern and care was in Ali's warm welcome by his people in Alain when he returned. He remembers that "All the village people gathered to welcome me and tried to make me comfortable."

Case 2: Mohammed

Mohammed is a man in his late fifties. He worked outside the village for 25 years and returned. He is married with four children (three boys and one girl); the eldest son is in high school and the youngest son is 5 years old.

Mohammad grew up wealthy. His father was the sheikh of Alain, and owned many lands and livestock. However, when Mohammad was about 15 years old, his father and mother died. He moved in with his half-brother (same father, but different mother). At age twenty, Mohammad got married to his uncle's daughter and established his own home. But they did not get along together and were divorced after two years of marriage without children. Mohammad felt lonely and depressed and decided to leave the village to seek a job outside. He and his best friend travelled to Abha to get a formal document

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that certified their nationality (Saudi Nationality Card). This document is necessary to get a governmental job.

At that time, no one in the village had such a document since they all lived and died in the village and nationality certification was not necessary. After two days of steady walking they arrived in Abha, without knowing where to go. They tried hard to find the house of a person whom they knew. Eventually, they located the husband of a former village girl, and he welcomed them and helped them get the cards.

Mohammad and his friend decided to travel on to Taif. They found a car going to Taif, and spent five days and nights driving, climbing high mountains and dropping to deep valleys until they finally arrived in Taif very exhausted and weary.

In Taif they were helped by Mohammed's uncle, one of the village men who had migrated to serve in the Saudi army. He told them that finding a job took time and they must be patient. But first they were asked to join him in going to the barber. Long hair was unacceptable in the city. Mohammad's friend agreed, but Mohammad did not because he was very handsome and hair was something girls in the village took into account when evaluating a man. Mohammad insisted on keeping his long hair until he got a job. But his uncle prevailed. It was the most unforgettable day of Mohammad's life.

Eventually Mohammad joined the Army and lived in Taif for five years before moving to Jeddah. He married his uncle's daughter and she moved with him to Jeddah. Mohammad enrolled in the army's adult education program. He earned a high school diploma and became an officer. After eleven years, Mohammad and his wife still had no

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Mohammad was like all the boys who left Alain. He visited the village from time to time to see his brother and sisters. He bought some farmland in the village and built a house near his brother's house. When Mohammad retired, he decided to move back to the village with his family, even though he had two houses in Jeddah. He had a good pension from the government.

Mohammad now manages his farm in the village plus a small grocery shop in Myhile, a city near the village.

Discussion: Mohammed's case is another example of exchange care and concern among Alain kin family members. This is seen in several examples, such as when Mohammed was about fifteen years old; his parents died and he moved in with his half-brother (same father but different mother). The event reflects the obligations of family members to look after and care for each other.

Mohammed's brother felt responsible for his younger sibling after the death of his parents. If Mohammed had had a full brother, he might have had a choice of whom to live with. Since he only had one half-brother, the obligation and responsibility of this brother toward his younger brother was greater. The older half-brother accepted this responsibility willingly, without complaint.

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Mohammed's story also indicates how villagers valued kin ties and how these ties played a major role in facilitating the migration process from the village to other areas. This is illustrated when Mohammed wanted to travel to Abha and asked about one of his kin people who had married one of the village girls. The kin member helped Mohammed and his friend.

Mohammed's story also shows the effect of kinship on choosing employment. Most migrants from Alain enlisted in the Army, as did Mohammed's uncle. This is quite common among the villagers who mostly work in the Army; the first of the village's migrants chose this occupation.

Mohammed's story provides a clear picture of the typical practice of preserving kin purity. Endogamous marriages, like Mohammed's to his cousin (uncle's daughter) are most common among village people and serve to assure family unity and one's identity with the family group.

Mohammed's visits to the village to see his relatives are strong indications of the strength of family relations among the villagers. Such relations seem unaffected by migration or urbanization.

Mohammed's desire to settle in the village after his retirement is another indication of the strong ties between villagers and their families. Mohammed had the opportunity to live in Jeddah where he had a good salary, but he wanted to be close to his relatives and friends in the village.

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Case 3: Salmah

Salmah is a woman in her late sixties, recently widowed and residing with her daughter in the village. She is descended from a Bedouin family that lived in the mountains with their goats and camels. The youngest girl in the family, she was the favorite.

She had a very happy early childhood until she reached 8 years of age when both her parents died. She then moved in with her oldest sister and husband. They were kind and took good care of her. At fourteen, she married her uncle's son. Two years later, she had her first son, and then her husband died. She moved to Tamah with her sister. At seventeen, she remarried to a wealthy man in Tehamah. But six months later she got divorced because she did not fit into her husband's lifestyle. He was an important person and his house was a social gathering place. She was too young and inexperienced to deal effectively with her social duties.

She returned to live with her sister and her husband in Tehamah. Not long after, a man from Alain visited Tehamah on business and stopped by to say hello to her sister and husband. He met Salmah and was attracted to her. They fell in love and married. She moved with her son to live with the man in Alain.

Salmah inherited a good deal of wealth from her parents. Since her new husband was very poor, she brought all her belongings and gave them to him. He bought lands and built a stone house. After ten years of marriage, her husband decided to leave the village to enlist in the Saudi army, the only job available for an uneducated man. Salmah and the family tried to discourage him from going, but he would not listen. When he left,

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Salmah had to assume responsibility for herself, her children, their farms, and their livestock. It was very difficult for her, but she handled it well. One year after her husband's absence, their house burned, and they lost everything--their money, crops, clothes, and other belongings. Salmah was badly burned, and had to be hospitalized. It took one month for her husband to hear what had happened. He returned and built a new house and stayed beside his wife until she was well. Then he returned to his army post in Taif, sending money every month to her. Unfortunately, his older brother received the remittance, hid the money, and used it for his own benefit. Salmah never received anything.

A year later Salmah's husband returned to the village for a visit, and saw how badly his wife and children had fared in his absence. He asked his wife why she had not bought new clothes for herself and the children with the money he sent monthly. When she told him that she did not know anything about that money and that she did not even know that he had been sending money, he got very upset and decided to take them with him to Taif.

After moving to Taif many problems emerged, and Salmah and her husband became alienated. Her husband became very nervous and dealt with his wife and children as if they were some of his soldiers in the army. The wife could not understand, but she was patient and tried to be gentle with him.

Three years after their arrival in Taif the family experienced some important events. One of her boys died at the age of seven. Her only daughter got married. Salmah grew more lonely and sad. Her husband became more nervous and started beating her

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Back in the village, Salmah found everything that they had left behind was gone. Her husband's brother had taken over everything which had originally belonged to her. They had to work as farm laborers and, with the addition of only a small amount that the father was sending to his children, they hardly survived.

One and a half years later her husband came back to the village and took his boys to live with him in the city. After they left, Salmah felt lonely and decided to live with her eldest son who was in his twenties. The son was living in another village because he was not from Alain. Salmah was welcomed and stayed with him until he got married. Six years later, one of her other sons enlisted in the army as his father had done, and asked her to come to stay with him in Taif. She liked the idea because she wanted to be with them. But when she arrived in Taif her ex-husband was already married to another woman.

Salmah stayed with her son in Taif for about five years until he too got married. Then she felt that he did not treat her as she was used to being treated. He became very tough and rude. She felt his wife was the reason, and she decided to move out and live with her youngest son who was about sixteen years old. He had been living with his father but after he saw that his mother could no longer stand to live with his older brother, he decided to take care of her. They rented a small house in Taif. The boy was

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studying in a religious school which offered him about SR 210 a month, just enough for him to barely survive. Salmah decided to raise goats and chickens.

Two years later they were doing better economically. The son did well at his studies in the high school. He also fed the goats every day. It was not easy , but they all worked very hard to survive.

When the son graduated from high school, he decided to complete his B.A. and since there was no university in Taif, he migrated to Riyadh. It was a difficult decision for both of them, but there was no choice. When the son left, she again felt lonely and gloomy. Her older son was not concerned about her and neglected them all. She decided to go to Jeddah to live with her daughter's family. But this was only temporary, even though they were nice and generous to her. She decided to go back to her original village to reside with her eldest boy.

She lived there about two years, and was very happy. One day they were waiting for his return from Makkah, but he did not come back, as he had been killed in an accident. Although in despair, she stayed in the village with her boy's family for three years until her youngest boy, who lived in Riyadh, had graduated from the university. She joined him in Riyadh and stayed with him for one year, but she did not like big city life. She moved back to Alain where her daughter now lived.

Discussion: Salmah's case presents another side of family obligations and exchange care among family members. The older relatives feel responsible for the younger and no

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one can excuse them from this responsibility. Salmah's sister took care of Salmah after her parents died and again when she was divorced from her first husband.

Salmah's case illustrates how village residents feel obligated to sacrifice their own comforts for the sake of their family members. This may be seen when Salmah's husband left his job to return and care for his sick wife until she recovered.

Another indication of Alain's family social organization is the dominance of men over women in the village, regardless of age. In Salmah's case, it was her youngest son, a boy still attending high school, who felt the responsibility of caring for his mother and accepting the expenses of such an obligation. He spent his small allowance of \$80 to feed himself and his mother because it was his duty as a man.

Another example is the feeling of responsibility and domination of any male relative toward a female relative. In Salmah's case, her husband placed her under the care of his brother, sending the latter the money he wished Salmah to have for household expenses and needs instead of directly.

Within the village's familial system, it is the custom to assign responsibility for one's family to a close male relative until the husband returns. The designated caretaker has the same power as the husband over the family--people deal with him as they would with the husband. If the relative abuses this power and takes advantage of the family (as did Salmah's brother-in-law), the only one who is allowed to correct him is the absent husband.

Salmah's case also is an illustration of the custom of marrying girls off at a very early age. Salmah was only fourteen when she married her first husband; this is a

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common age for girls to marry in Alain. It is also common for girls to become mothers at age fifteen, divorce at sixteen, and marry again at seventeen.

Case 4: Fatimah

Fatimah is a married woman in her late fifties living with her husband and two boys, 18 and 25 years of age. She is a pleasant person, simple and explicit.

Fatimah grew up in the village of Alain as an orphaned girl after the death of her father at the time of her birth. She never saw him, and never knew a father. At the age of 7, her mother was giving her many responsibilities which were above her abilities. She was the only girl in a family of five brothers. They were no longer as well-off as they had been when the father was alive. Accordingly, they all had to work hard to obtain the necessary food and clothing. Life was not easy in the village, and there was not sufficient food for all. She walked five miles every day to the home of a rich woman who gave her some tasks to perform. It was a dangerous trip. One day she was nearly killed by a camel.

The family decided to migrate to Tehamah to seek a better life and to save for the future. It was a very hard trip from the village to Tehamah and took seven days of steady walking. They had no camel or donkey to ride.

Eventually when they came back to the village from Tehamah, their situation was better. They finally became one of the richest families in the village.

As is common for the village girls, when Fatimah reached the age of 14, her family decided to marry her to one of her three cousins. She selected one that she

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thought was quite gentle and dependable, but as it turned out, he was also economically the poorest of the three. She disproved the proverb, "When poverty comes in the door, love jumps from the window," because she loved him very much and, as she had expected, he was gentle with her.

Fatimah and her husband lived in her family's house until they had their first son. Not one of her family gave him clothes or other gifts. They were completely broke. They asked their family for help, but they responded negatively, saying it was not their responsibility--she had married the man, and he was responsible for her and not them. Fatimah was devastated, but determined. She and her husband decided to leave her family and set up their own house, no matter what the cost.

One morning, before sunrise, they left for an unknown destination, having no place to go. They built a small hut to stay in temporarily. Her husband asked his brother for his portion of their father's estate. It was a very small amount, but Fatimah and her husband invested it in a quick profit project. They bought some small goats and lambs to raise. Six months later their goats and lambs were worth much more than their original price (perhaps even six or seven times as much). They sold some of them for a piece of farmland and sold the others to buy some young goats and one cow. Their life became better and their standard of living improved quickly.

They decided to abandon the tiny hut and build a real stone house like the majority of the village people had. When they had finished and moved in, it was an unforgettable day for them. They raised three sons in this house.

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Fatimah's husband started to work as a trader. He bought some commodities from Tehamah and sold them to the village people for double the price. He was also skilled with the sewing machine, and made all his and his family's clothes. They bought a sewing machine and started a sewing business. It was an excellent idea. Although he had to travel to Jeddah to buy the sewing machine, when he returned to the village he had many jobs waiting for him. His new business made him famous for 30 km around because his sewing machine was really something unique in this area; his was the first sewing business.

Day by day they became richer until they became the richest family in the village. They bought a lot of land and livestock.

But death was a constant presence in the village. Fatimah's husband died in his early thirties and the young woman found herself responsible for herself as well as her children and their wealth.

Fatimah was a wise and dependable woman, and refused to get married again. She worked as hard as ever to save and conserve her husband's wealth. And she was successful until her eldest son grew up, and she could turn over to him all the responsibilities. But he was still too young and the responsibilities were heavy so she advised him to migrate to Taif to join the Saudi army. Three years later her second son was old enough to migrate and he too followed his brother's path to Taif to join the army. Fatimah maintained their village home.

She stayed with her youngest son, and felt lonely and gloomy after her older boys left. Eventually, she decided to marry again. Her family was upset with her because she

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made her own decision regarding the man she would marry. She ignored them all and said that she would live her life as she chose since she was big enough to make her own decisions. She accused them of not knowing anything about her. Now she is living with her new husband in the village and she is very happy with him, and her boys come to visit her from time to time. They are all married now, and they have their own lives and families in Taif.

Discussion: Fatimah's case is an example of the domination of family authority over all individuals, particularly over the female family members. Fatimah's relatives forced her to select a husband from the men they had deemed appropriate--three cousins.

This illustrates the custom of endogamous marriages within the village, which is designed to preserve family purity and unity.

Also, this case shows another aspect of the old familial system--that the married child should remain in the house of his/her parents to care for the parents until the children begin to arrive. Once the young couple has children of their own, they are allowed to set up their own home. Fatimah mentioned that she remained in her parents' home until she had her first baby, despite the fact that her parents were treating her very badly and neglecting her, her husband, and their baby.

Fatimah's case also supports our previous argument of perceived male domination--Fatimah gave her boy all the family possessions by the time he reached adulthood, even though he was really far too young for such responsibilities. It is worth mentioning that

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the villagers usually encourage their boys to be responsible and prepare them for important tasks as they near adulthood.

Fatimah's story suggests that the familial system and strong family authority usually does not provide an individual with the freedom to make his/her own decisions. But Fatimah did make her own decisions when she chose a second husband after her first husband died. All of her family stood against her but she ignored the family's protests, saying that her Islamic teachings supported her independence. These teachings in fact encourage women to make their own decisions, but in the village context, the teachings are ignored in favor of the more traditional familial customs which do not favor women's rights.

Case 5: Saad

Saad is a young man who is newly graduated from a university and living by himself in the village. He was born into a middle-class family which is relatively small compared to the typical large Saudi family in the village. He is the youngest child and the only son; there are three daughters.

When Saad was eleven, his mother died, and this broke up the whole family. The father remarried and the three girls married too. No one remained at home. His father moved in with his rich new wife, and Saad moved in with one of his sisters. She was kind and tried to give him the warmth and love that he had lost when his mother died.

Saad finished secondary school and wanted to enter military school because of the good pay allowing him to complete his high school education. But his cousin heard about

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his plan and tried hard to discourage him because he was such an intelligent and hard working boy. He thought he would have a great future if he finished his study in a regular school. Saad's cousin encouraged him to come to live with him in Riyadh. He stayed there one year, but he and his cousin did not get along.

They were always fighting and arguing and finally Saad decided to go back to the village, but his other cousin asked him to come to live with him in Taif and he did. He stayed in Taif for one more year, and then moved back to stay with his sister in the village. During that year, he finished high school and entered the university at Abha. In Abha he felt more independent and enjoyed the freedom he had of spending his monthly allowance, a stipend that is paid to Saudi students at the universities. He was able to buy all that he needed.

Last year Saad graduated from the university and returned to live alone in his old house in the village. He goes to work as a teacher in the secondary school and then returns home to take care of his father's livestock. He is a very obedient son. Just a week before I met him, he hired a shepherd to take care of his father's goats and sheep. He is looking for a wife.

Discussion: Once again, Saad's case supports the custom of an older family member caring for a younger member. In this instance, Saad's sister cared for her little brother after their mother's death.

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Family opinion is also very strong and can affect an individual's decisions. Saad's cousins managed to persuade this young man to complete his studies instead of dropping out of school.

A person's education and social status, however, appear to be unimportant with regard to family relationships in Alain. Although Saad is a teacher and college graduate, he feels no shame in caring for his father's livestock. He is presented as a role model to other youngsters in Alain, because he respects his father and cares for him. He will not leave his father for a rich wife--Saad feels obligated to care for his father, particularly since he views his father as too old to care for himself or his possessions. Saad's case is not unique in Alain. Many young men and women do the same for their parents, reflecting the strong family relationships among the residents of this village.

Case 6: Yasir

Yasir is a young student in high school. He is very intelligent and hard working. He lives with his family: father, mother, three sisters and two brothers. His father is an old blind man and his mother is a very old woman. He is the next youngest in the family with just one small boy being younger than he is.

Yasir's life is a mixture of very hard work and pressure for the future. He travels about six miles to Mhiyle everyday to go to the high school where he is in the 12th grade. He is at the top of his class. Everyone in the village and school loves him and gives him special consideration. When he comes back home each day, he usually takes

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care of his family's livestock and watches over his blind father for a few hours. His nights are usually dedicated to studying and doing homework.

Yasir is planning to enter the college of medicine if he obtains good grades. He wants to be a doctor and he wants to specialize in the eyes. His father's sickness has strongly affected him, and he always thinks about him and dreams about the day when he can help him to see again.

Discussion: Yasir's case is also illustrative of the young child being obedient to his family's wishes. Yasir cares for the family's livestock upon his return from school every day; when he is finished with the animals, he cares for his blind father.

Family problems and needs affect the young of Alain. Yasir, because of his father's eye problems, dreams about becoming a doctor.

Case 7: Ahmad

Ahmad lives with his family: father, mother, one brother and one sister. His father is a farmer and his mother, illiterate, is a typical village woman.

In his twenties, Ahmad is the eldest son. Coming back from school one day when he was sixteen, he began thinking about dropping out of school. The mathematics teacher had beaten him in front of the class. Ahmad, a sensitive boy, hated the school, and especially math.

When he got back home, he told his story to his father. Being a typical village man, his father said, "If you don't do wrong to him, he will not do so to you unless you

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deserve it." Things didn't get better and he had to repeat tenth grade three times. Eventually, Ahmad decided not to continue schooling and decided instead to join the army. But he was officially too young because his birth certificate was incorrect. Most women villagers refused to go to the hospital for delivery, preferring to stay at home. Therefore, just a few people are certain of their exact birth dates. And in the Islamic culture, they do not celebrate birthdays.

Ahmad's age was officially given on his birth certificate as four years younger than his actual age. His father made that mistake on purpose so that Ahmad could stay at home to help on the farm by driving the father's tractor. Sometimes he worked for village people for pay with his father's tractor.

Ahmad is waiting until he is officially 18 years old so that he will be able to enlist in the army.

When we met, I talked to him about continuing his studies. On the second day of our interview he said that he would once again enroll in school. Now he is studying in a regular school. I recently received a letter from him, telling me that he had passed the tenth grade and he was happy. He wants to become an agricultural extension officer because he loves farming and wants to help the people in his village.

Discussion: Ahmad's case shows the ability of an individual's family to govern a young person's decisions. Ahmad's father allowed the incorrect information to be recorded on Ahmad's birth certificate in order to make sure his son remained at home and, as it turned out, to keep him from enlisting in the Army. Ahmad could have easily proven his correct

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age by going to the local clinic. However, he respected his father's desires and waited the additional four years, working in his father's business as a tractor driver to help his father and family.

Ahmad exemplifies the strong ties of Alain's people to their village. He is an example of a person who cares about his kin and family by appreciating their problems, respecting their wishes and trying to help them. It is well-known that Ahmad could earn far more money working in the city, but he wants to be close to his family and his people and provide them with the services they need. He wants to become an agricultural extension worker in his home region.

Insights from the Case Studies

The cases noted provide us with some insights about the familial system in Alain. This system, strongly familistic, emphasizes several fundamental values or dimensions of concern. They can be outlined as follows:

Concern and Care for Fellow Villagers (the larger kin group):

The people of Alain were and are very concerned about each other. Such care and concern is noted in every aspect of their daily interaction and especially in the important events in their lives. Older people frequently mention such concerns in relating their life histories. Ali, for example, described how his neighbors gathered in his house early one morning to care for his sick brother and how they welcomed him when he came back from Tahamah. Mohamad's story is that kin and relative facilitated his migration and

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employment. However, we also noticed that such strong kin concern and care are seldom mentioned by the younger generation. The young people appear less concerned about such relationships than do the older. It seems that kin relations are becoming less important for the younger generation.

Obedience and Care for Parents

Family relations seem very influential among both the older and younger generations. We observed that most of the people interviewed gave several examples of parental care and how the younger generation helps the older. Fatimah, for example, lived with her parents after she got married in order to care for them and to help them despite the fact that they were treating her very badly. Saad too illustrates this behavior. He expected to live in the village after graduating, for he wanted to be close to his father and to take care of him even though his father had neglected him while he was growing up. Yasir's case is interesting in that he wanted to be an eye specialist to treat his father. Ahmad acquiesced to his father's wishes that he remain in the village.

Responsibility for kin group members

The third familial dimension that we observed from these cases is the feeling of responsibility among people of Alain. This responsibility can be seen in many situations where the older relatives feel responsible for the care of a younger relative. As we saw in the cases of Ali, Salmah, Mohammad and Saad, their older relatives took care of them after the deaths of their parents. Such feelings of responsibility are very common, even

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now when a person feels obligated to look after his/her relatives, particularly if those relatives are very young or women. If there is no adult male relative, the oldest female relative takes charge of the responsibility of caring for the younger relative until the latter grows up or the woman is married.

Family Authority

Family authority is another dimension of familism I observed. The strength of family authority over individual need can be noticed in many cases. Individual plans are always influenced by family concerns. The individual has no right to decide one's own future, particularly females. Fatimah and Salmah provide us with perspectives on the nature of such authority; both women were forced to marry in line with their family's wishes, not their own. Fatimah struggled to arrange her own second marriage. Saad and Ahmad also illustrate this. Saad's cousins played a major role in persuading him to continue his education. Ahmad's father forced him to stay with him in the village. We conclude that familial authority appears very strong, especially over children and females. It will remain the same as long as male domination over females persists.

Male Domination

Male domination is obvious in Alain's familial system. Salmah, for example, mentioned how her brother-in-law had taken all her belongings and she couldn't do anything to stop him. Also, she described how she gave her young male child the responsibility of being the head of the household even though he was still too young for

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such responsibilities. As the only man in her household, he was supposed to be the head. Fatimah did the same thing; females in Alain are used to such domination. Only a few reject such practices--most continue and accept patriarchal norms even today.

Importance of Kin Purity

The people of Alain insist upon marrying their daughters to their cousins within the kin circles. Such endogamous marriages were adopted in order to maintain the purity of kin on the one hand and to protect family possessions on the other. We noticed that Alain men usually married women from Alain. The younger generation, however, appears less concerned with such a single-minded approach to marriage. It should be noted that young people are marrying earlier.

Overall we conclude that these case studies demonstrate that the "traditional" familial system in Alain was based strongly on obligations to the larger kin group while the current system is focused more on the nuclear and conjugal family.

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CHAPTER VII

FAMILISM DIFFERENTIATION

Measuring Familism Attitudes

Familism norms have some similarities in most traditional societies. There are also diversities as well. The diversities usually are due to cultural differentiation among societies. These cultural differentiations must be taken into consideration when formulating an appropriate familial scale.

The familism scale used in Alain was based on earlier scales used in Western societies for similar purposes. But to be applicable to Saudi culture and circumstances many items required several necessary modifications. Initially, the scale was composed of more than thirty statements which measured different aspects of familism, but after field testing, it appeared that only seventeen items were appropriate for the purposes at hand. My aim was to tap a general sense of familism; I wanted to take Saudi familism into account in both its larger sense (villagers and larger kin group) and in its smaller sense (immediate family and close kin).

To assess familism in its general sense, tribal norms, values and kin obligations were considered. The following statements were employed to measure the intensity of familism among kin:

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Changing Job

If a man's job contradicts his family's values that severe conflict develops, he should find a new job.

Arguing with Parents

A young person should never argue with his/her parents even if the parents are wrong.

Altering parental decision

A young person should never try to get his/her parents to change their minds about an important matter once the parents have decided.

Suing Villager

It is "okay" to sue the village or kin if he/she did wrong.

Leaving parents

Married children should stay close to their parents in order to take care of them.

Suing Relative

It is okay to sue a relative (e.g., father, mother, uncle,

Marrying outside

It is never acceptable for a person to marry outside his/her tribe.etc.) if he/she did wrong.

Parental illness

Married children should stay close to their parents in order to take care of them.

Refusing invitaion

A person should never refuse a social invitation from any member of his/her village, clan, kin, or relative whether or not he/she is busy.

Debt obligation

A person is strongly obligated to pay the debt of his/her relative if the relative cannot pay.

Putting family first

A person should always consider the needs and interest of his family and parents as more important than his /her own.

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Sharing House

A person should always be ready to share his/her house with a relative if he/she is in need.

Marrying Cousins

A father should not marry his daughter or sister to a person outside of her cousins.

Staying at Hotel

It is wrong for a person to stay at a hotel when visiting a city where he/she also has kin.

Insults to family

If a member of the family is insulted, you should act as if the insult were against you directly and you should act against the person who insulted your relative.

Having many children

It is good in today's world for a person to have many children.

Seeking advice

A person should talk over his/her important decisions (such as marriage, employment), and with his/her family before taking action.

Clarification of items

Changing job: Should a person agree to adhere to family norms and values and be willing to sacrifice his/her own comfort and livelihood if his/her lifestyle conflicted with kin values? In the southern area, and in other areas of the Kingdom there are some types of job classifications as either "high" or "low." Such classifications are usually based on jobs where farming is considered the highest and manual occupations like carpenters, blacksmiths, and patchers are considered the lowest.

A person from a high-class family (farmer) would not accept lower work whatever his need. If he did so, he would totally withdraw from his clan and kin, and be ignored socially. No one would marry him or his children. Therefore, obeying kin values is a

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kind of necessity for a person to be recognized socially. Therefore, this statement, "changing job," was included as an indicant of familism.

Arguing with parents: Obeying one's parents and caring for them is a central element and the cornerstone of the Islamic and Saudi familial systems. People here give special consideration to this matter not only because of their familial values but also because it is part of their religion and God's teaching.

According to the Quran:

Thy Lord hath decreed that ye worship none save Him, and (that ye show) kindness to parents. If one of them or both of them attain to old age with thee, say not "fie" unto them or repulse them but speak unto them as a gracious word (23). And lower unto them the wing of submission through mercy, and say: My Lord! Have mercy on them both as they did care for me when I was little (24). "Israa," p. 280.

Therefore, a person in muslim socieyt is obligated to obey parents and not challenge their opinions or argue with them unless if the opinions conflict with religious beliefs. Therefore, this statement was included to test to what extent people respect their parental opinion, even if it went against their own opinions.

Altering parental decisions: As we noted in the previous statement that children in a Muslim Society are encouraged to respect parental opinion and not argue with them unless what parents said contradicts Islam; otherwise absolute obedience is required by the children once the parents have made a decision. Therefore, we noted that in Arab and Muslim societies parents decide everything for children (such as marriage and employment).

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as it is today. Therefore, this statement was included to measure whether children still respected parental decisions even though such decisions went against their desires and interests.

Suing villager: This was unacceptable within village customs. The villagers feel very close to each other; they consider themselves to be one family. If one does wrong, the sheikh solves the problem. In the past, the sheikh was considered the top authority in the village and was responsible for solving all the village's problems. Nowadays, I believe that the village sheikh's authority has begun to decline and people are going to the police department or to court to sue each other. Therefore, the statement, "suing a villager," is an attempt to measure two important familial behaviors: the strength of kin relations and the perceived strength of the sheikh's authority as an example of kin unity.

Leaving parents: It was common for children in Saudi society in general and in Alain in particular to remain in their parents' homes after marrying, especially married males. I assume children are now more inclined to leave their parents' homes and set up their own households after they marry, seeking some privacy and comforts of their own. Therefore this statement was included to measure this aspect.

Suing relatives: It is shameful for a person to sue a relative, no matter what the relative did. Family problems should be solved within the family. Usually an older person in the family takes charge of solving family problems and quarrels. I was interested in testing this aspect of familism among the people of Alain to find out whether or not people still believed in such a value.

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Marrying outside: Endogamous marriages were common among the people of Alain, indicating their larger kin group relations and their tribal values. Such marriages maintained tribal purity and kept large kin identity from being weakened by marriages outside the tribe, particularly if the other tribe is considered socially lower than them. A person who breaks this norm was ignored socially and even his children had no chance of marriage with any girls in Alain. Therefore, this statement was included to measure to what extent people in Alain still believe in conserving familial purity and large kin unity.

Parental illness: Care and concern about parents in times of illness are very important matters for everyone in Alain and elsewhere in the Kingdom. People were usually obligated to care for parents, particularly in times of need, illness or in old age. Because of the importance of this matter, nursing homes are rarely found in Saudi Arabia because people still believe it's shameful, wrong and disobedient of God's teachings if they send their parents to such homes. Even though I observed some patterns of change in this aspect, this statement is an attempt to test the depth of such change.

Refusing invitation: The obligation of accepting a social invitation from any kin member was necessary as an indication of the closeness to each other and an indicator of exchange care and respect. Refusing such an invitation without a good excuse would cause both relatives and villagers to ignore that member socially. Therefore, this statement was included to measure the extent that people in Alain still believe and currently practice such an obligation where people are often too busy to accept social invitations, even for a relative.

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Debt obligation: Persons in a Muslim society are obligated to pay parental debts if the parents are unable to pay. In the Muslim beliefs, the child and his/her possessions belong to the father. I was interested in finding out if the people of Alain still believed in this value.

Putting Family first: It is expected that in a familistic society, a person will sacrifice his/her benefits for the sake of the family. In a society like that found in Saudi Arabia and in the village of Alain, such actions are expected because of the close relationships between family members. Each member is to consider the need of his/her family more important than his/her own needs.

Sharing house: Caring for a relative in times of crisis is so common in Muslim and Arab cultures that a person is strongly obligated to share his house with a relative in times of need. No one excuses any person from this duty. Such an obligation was necessary when life was simple and people were in strong need of one another. Now life is more sophisticated and people are more demanding of their privacy. Sharing a house with others disturbs such privacy. Therefore, I was interested to know how people these days still respect this matter.

Marrying cousins: In Alain and all over the Kingdom people reserve their daughters for their cousins since the time they are born.

The family usually decides that each girl should be promised to a male cousin regardless of age or interests. Such an action sometimes causes real problems if one of the children refuses their parents' selection. I was eager to find out whether or not people still believe in such norms.

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Staying at a hotel: Hospitality is another way of expressing familial behavior. People from one kin group, village or tribe usually maintain strong kin attachments. Therefore, whenever a person goes to a place where relatives or kin members are present, he must stay with the relatives instead of going to a hotel as an indication of kin relations. Ignoring such family norms is considered shameful and may cause angry feelings or problems among kin members or relatives. We assumed that such familistic behavior began to diminish gradually as people began staying in hotels while visiting or traveling to another city. Therefore, this statement was included as an indicant of familism.

Insults to family: The insults to family statement was included to measure how families in Alain deal with each other. Does each family consider its member more important than other large kin group members? In case of insults to the family, how does the family usually react to the matter? Does everyone only care about him/herself or does he/she care for one another and support each other? In general, this statement was included to observe what would be the reaction if anyone does wrong to a family member.

Having many children: We know that in most familistic societies having many children is greatly encouraged as a means of increasing kin numbers. In Alain such a necessity was created due with the frequent tribal wars in the area. A large tribe was easily destroyed and acquired the land of a smaller tribe. Nowadays people are less likely to engage in tribal wars and the need for large numbers of kin and tribal members has decreased. Therefore, this statement was included to measure this issue and the extent to which people still believed in having a large family size and many children.

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Seeking advice: Family authority is an important issue in a village like Alain where males and families dominate every individual's decisions. Children and women should not decide anything for themselves where families decide everything. A person is expected to seek his/her relatives' advice before taking any action or making a decision. Therefore, I am interested in testing this matter and the extent to which the people of Alain still believe in such familial values.

Familism Attitudes

In this section I will attempt to make some comparisons between familism statements to explore the variations between the younger and older generations as well as between males and females. Comparisons are based on the respondent's ranking of each statement and percent of agreement.

There are seventeen items. Older males and older females are taken as the base for these norms.

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Male patterns

1. Older males: Older males in Alain consider family authority as the basic element in their familial norms. Almost all older males believe that seeking a relative's advice is necessary before a person acts on any important decision such as marriage, divorce, employment, etc. This reflects that older males still believe that the family should have strong power over its members in which all decisions are discussed collectively by family members before any final decision is made. It should be noted that parents in Alain are still try to exert some kind of domination over all family matters.

Paying parental debts is the second most important issue ranked by older males. Older males believe that all their children's belongings belong to the parents. Children are therefore not only obligated to pay but also to give a part of their money to their parents if they are in need. According to Islamic faith, a person is responsible for the debt of his parents if they are unable to pay. In Islamic tradition, "the son and his possessions belong to his father."

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Table 7.1. Male Ranking of Familism Attitudes (percent and ranking)

Statement	Older Males (n = 36)		Young Males (n = 31)		Male Students (n = 31)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Seeking advice	94.8	(1)	38.7	(14 tie)	52.2	(7 tie)
Debt obligation	88.9	(2)	72.4	(3)	39.1	(11)
Sharing house	80.6	(3)	58.1	(7 tie)	60.9	(3 tie)
Suing relative	77.8	(4)	74.2	(2)	60.0	(2)
Staying at hotel	66.7	(5)	41.9	(14 tie)	30.4	(13)
Putting family first	63.9	(6)	77.4	(1)	30.1	(14)
Arguing with parents	61.1	(7 tie)	41.9	(14 tie)	52.2	(7 tie)
Insults to family	61.1	(7 tie)	38.7	(14 tie)	60.9	(3 tie)
Suing villagers	60.4	(9)	58.1	(7 tie)	52.2	(7 tie)
Refusing invitation	58.3	(10)	38.7	(16)	43.5	(10)
Marrying cousins	55.6	(11)	48.4	(11)	34.8	(12)
Altering parental decision	50.0	(12)	61.3	(5)	56.5	(5 tie)
Parental illness	45.2	(13)	71.0	(4)	67.9	(1)
Leaving parents	44.4	(14 tie)	58.1	(7 tie)	56.5	(5 tie)
Changing jobs	44.4	(14 tie)	58.9	(6)	17.4	(17)
Marrying outside	36.1	(16)	32.0	(17)	21.7	(16)
Having many children	27.8	(17)	58.1	(7 tie)	26.1	(15)

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The third issue to which older males gave special consideration is sharing their house with relatives in times of need. Older males believe that in times of crisis, a person should open his house to welcome his relatives. In Arab and Muslim norms, people are obligated to share their homes with relatives in times of need. Many families still practice such family traditions. Recent events such as the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait illustrates these customs. Many Kuwaiti families moved to Saudi Arabia to stay with distant relatives whom they might never have met otherwise. Because there was a need, Saudi-based families welcomed their Kuwaiti relatives and provided them with all necessities. Therefore, we noted in the fifth important issue the people in Alain used to stay with relatives or co-villagers while visiting a place away from their homes, staying in a motel was considered shameful for both parties, the host and the guest. If this obligation was not observed, the offender was punished by the kin with social shunning. The older males appear strongly inclined to maintain the same old image of shame and rejected the idea of staying at hotel completely, indicating, "Why should we stay in a hotel when our relatives are available?" I noted that some of the older males did not even know the meaning of the word "hotel" until I explained it to them. This indicated that they had never used hotels.

Putting family first is a sixth family matter for older males in Alain. It implies that the needs of their families are taken as more important than their own needs. This is seen in the parents' attitude to sacrifice their own goals for their children. Only a small number of older males indicate that their children should stay close to them while the majority believe that children should be concerned with their futures and should not stay close to their parents. These results explain the feelings of responsibility by older males toward their families and

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the desire of a better future for them. This responsibility, however, requires absolute obedience by children and other family members to the parents. For example, the majority of older males believe that arguing with parents is an unacceptable matter. In Muslim and Arab societies, when people want to insult a person, they usually call him/her a "parent disobeyer," which causes the person to be neglected and ignored by all known people. For this reason, the majority of older males indicate that they would not argue with their parents whatever the condition. Such feelings of responsibility can be seen as well in the strong attitude of older males who believe that if any family member is insulted by someone outside the family, the family should support the relative. Such support, the majority indicate, is conditional and based on several factors: (1) the relative should be the victim, not the aggressor; (2) the victim should not have taken his rights in the time of aggression; and (3) the relative should not commit immoral acts. If one of these factors was involved, the relative would not be supported--in fact, he might even be punched!

Such an interpretation reflects the rational manner by which older males in Alain interact with each other within their familial systems. On the other hand, more than three-fourths of the older males believe that suing a relative is something unacceptable, whatever the relative did.

It was found that several issues are considered less important to older males in Alain--these issues were mostly related to the large kin group, for example, the feeling of obligation of accepting a co-villager's invitations, or the idea of endogamous marriages. This seems to indicate that older males in Alain are becoming more open-minded. They are more oriented to marry their daughters to others outside the cousin circle and more flexible to refuse or

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accept others' invitations depending on their circumstances. This flexibility can be seen as well in their attitude regarding changing a person's job if that job contradicts family values. Such flexibility would not have been seen twenty or thirty years ago where this matter was very important and critical. As a result of the traditionally strong familistic culture, which places some jobs into a lower or higher status, lower jobs should be exclusive to non-tribal origins and should not be taken by a family member if the family is considered a tribal family. Moreover, it is interesting to note that the flexibility of older males in Alain has become quite obvious in other issues, such as: older males no longer believe in restricting marriages to inside the large kin group and having many children is no longer important. This appears to reflect that even the older males are becoming more inclined to a smaller family size. Such a result would not have been found twenty or thirty years ago where a large family was more desirable.

2. Younger males: For younger males, putting family first is the most important matter. Such a priority can be seen in many ways: about three-fourths of the younger males believe that a person should not sue a relative whatever happens. At the same time they believe strongly in the obligation of parental debts and the importance of staying close to their parents in times of need. They also believe that parental opinion is to be respected and that a person should not alter parental decisions. However we noted that younger males believe that arguing with parents is acceptable if that is for the good of the family; if the parents insist, however, the parental decision is always valid.

On the other hand we note a great tendency among younger males in Alain toward freeing themselves from many family values that they think are no longer important. For

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example, younger males don't mind staying at hotels. They also appear unconcerned about co-villagers' invitations or restricting themselves to marriage inside the clan. It also appears that younger males are strongly inclined to make their own decisions regarding their personal matters.

3. Male students: The importance of caring for parents is the most important value for younger male students. The values that rank from one to six by students are all related to the matter of caring and concern for family. Caring for parents is the central element. However, it is surprising to note that the male students are less concerned about the obligation of parental debt particularly when they appear strongly concerned about caring for parents.

Male students also appear more concerned about their own matters rather than their family's matters. I have no explanation for these results. I believe that the issue of endogamous marriage is not an important matter to the male students. Such results are expected because students have different criteria for a wife from their parents or grandparents. The level of education obtained has encouraged the male students to look much further for more educated wives regardless of relationships.

Also an important issue for students is the concern for type of employment. Students show no concern at all for the rank of higher or lower jobs. Having many children also appears to be of little importance for students who seem more inclined to have a smaller family.

4. Male patterns compared: Older and younger males have some similarities regarding some familial values. For example, a similar attitude is found among the two generations

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regarding the suing of relatives. Both generations believe that family problems should be solved within the family whatever the problem. A similar attitude is also found between the two generations regarding the acceptance of the idea of endogamous marriages. Older and younger males in Alain as well as students no longer believe in such norms, which were once common and important. Both generations also agree that having many children is not desirable in these days according to life expectancy and the cost of child-rearing.

On the other hand, we noted some patterns of diversity among the two generations regarding the importance of family authority. Younger males show more inclination to free themselves from the power of family. They appear more eager to make their own decisions. Older males, on the other hand, still believe that children should stay under the control of the family regardless of their age, position and/or level of education. Likewise, we noted that children also show a great desire to avoid the restrictions of some family obligations. For example, younger villagers and students no longer believe they should stay with their kin while traveling out of their village. Older males disagree with this matter. They still strongly believing that a person should stay with relatives or kin wherever he/she goes.

I noted also that younger villagers seem more inclined to adhere to familial norms than male students. Such observations are noted in many situations, such as in putting family first, debt obligation, and so forth. In general, students show the highest level of rejecting some traditional values. Therefore, we conclude that among males, older males are the more familistic and male students are the least familistic.

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Female Patterns

1. Older females: A feeling of dependency is the most obvious value for older females in the village--more than three-fourths of the older females believe that seeking a relative's advice is the most important issue. Older females give the immediate family a great deal of care where the majority refused the idea of suing relatives and consider parental debts and caring for their parents a central element. The older females believe strongly in being involved in relatives' problems and helping to solve them. In times of crisis and parental illness, older females believe that a person should stand beside their relatives for care and support, sharing his/her house and supporting relatives if anyone insulted them and the relative was the victim.

Endogamous marriages appear no longer important to older females. Only a very small number still believe in such matters. It also appears that older females have less interest in having a large family.

Arguing with one's parents seems more acceptable for older females than altering parental decisions. Older females believe that a person has the right to tell his/her opinion, but if the decision is made, children should obey that parental decision. Because of the large amount of free time that older females have in the village, it appears that older females still give social invitations a great deal of concern--the majority believe in the obligation of accepting an invitation. Suing villagers is more acceptable for older females than suing relatives--only a small portion of them agree that a person should sue his/her relatives if he/she did wrong while the majority agree that if the villagers did wrong, it is permissible

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to sue him/her. Such results indicate that older females are no longer concerned about co-villagers as much as they are relatives.

2. Younger females: Seeking relatives' advice is the main value for younger females in Alain, indicating their dependency. The important values to them were family affairs, such as parental debt, sharing the house with relatives in times of need and so forth.

On the other hand, younger females in the village show less concern about the matter of staying close to parents during times of illness. Such a result provides no explanation except the lack of reliability of younger females' responses. We note as well that younger females strongly agree on exogamous marriages. Only a few believe in having many children. Some traditional values such as changing jobs or staying with relatives while traveling is no longer important to younger females in Alain. Also, accepting co-villagers' invitations is not an important matter to them--only a few believe in that.

3. Female students: The younger female students consider seeking relatives' advice as a basic value. Females in the region who are educated still believe in family authority and family domination over all decisions. Putting family first and parental care are also very important matters to young female students. Younger female students show a higher tendency for care and concern about co-villagers' social invitations than younger females in the village. About three-fourths of the female students believed that. However, they also strongly believe in suing a villager if he/she did wrong. It is interesting to note that female students prefer marrying their cousins, which may explain the high number of unmarried educated females, particularly those who have passed the age of 25. On the other hand, female students agree

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with younger village females on the importance of endogamous marriages within the tribal circle.

Female patterns compared: A similar attitude exists among older and younger village females and female students toward the feeling of dependency and acceptance of family domination. Both generations regard seeking a relative's advice as basic. I also noted that both generations have a similar attitude regarding the lack of importance of marrying only within tribal boundaries. Such familial norms seem to me no longer important for both generations.

A similar attitude exists among older and younger village females toward giving equal consideration to the importance of parental debt--female students pay only a small amount of attention to this matter.

A similar attitude appears to exist among older and younger village females toward having only a small number of children. On the one hand, it is interesting to note that the majority of female students, in contrast to the older and younger females, believe in having many children.

Among the two generations, I noted that younger female villagers as well as the students agree on some family norms, such as challenging parental decisions or leaving the parental home once they are married.

Similarly both the younger village females and students agree on the unimportance of keeping some old traditional norms, such as: changing jobs and staying with relatives or kin while traveling. Older females, in contrast, show slightly more concern for these matters than their younger counterparts.

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Table 7.2. Female Ranking of Familism Attitudes (percent and ranking)

Statement	Older Females (n = 28)		Younger Females (n = 23)		Female Students (n = 25)	
	%	Rank	%	Rank	%	Rank
Seeking advice	78.6	(1)	66.7	(1)	73.9	(1)
Suing villagers	75.0	(2 tie)	51.6	(6 tie)	72.0	(2 tie)
Debt obligation	75.0	(2 tie)	61.3	(2)	56.0	(10)
Parental illness	71.0	(4)	44.0	(13)	72.0	(2 tie)
Insults to family	67.9	(5)	45.2	(11)	44.0	(11 tie)
Refusing invitation	65.7	(6)	48.4	(8 tie)	71.0	(5)
Sharing house	64.3	(7 tie)	54.6	(4 tie)	44.0	(11 tie)
Arguing with parents	64.3	(7 tie)	54.6	(4 tie)	44.0	(11 tie)
Putting family first	60.7	(9)	58.1	(3)	72.0	(2 tie)
Having many children	50.0	(10 tie)	41.7	(14)	60.0	(9)
Staying at hotel	50.0	(10 tie)	35.5	(16 tie)	44.0	(11 tie)
Changing jobs	42.9	(12 tie)	35.5	(16 tie)	36.0	(15)
Altering parental decisions	42.9	(12 tie)	48.4	(8 tie)	64.0	(8)
Marrying cousins	42.9	(12 tie)	48.4	(8 tie)	68.0	(6 tie)
Marrying outside	39.3	(15)	38.7	(15)	28.0	(16)
Leaving parents	28.6	(16)	51.6	(6 tie)	68.0	(6 tie)
Suing relative	28.6	(16 tie)	48.4	(8 tie)	28.0	(16 tie)

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In general, I noted that the younger village females are the least familistically oriented. This may be due to a lack of reliability of the younger females' responses.

Gender/Age Differences

A similar attitude was found among the majority of both generations and sexes regarding the unimportance of some familial norms in villagers' lives, such as changing job, endogamous marriages and having many children. These values seem no longer important. In contrast, I noted that a general agreement regarding the importance of other values in relation to immediate family affairs. For example, both generations and sexes agree that suing relatives is something unacceptable, no matter what the situation. A similar general agreement exists on the importance of paying parental debts (with the exception of male students, who disagree)

Among the older generation, a general agreement was found regarding the importance of family authority. Family domination is still something respected and considered important for all.

The younger generation, on the other hand, shows two different attitudes regarding this matter. Younger females believe strongly in such family domination; younger males try to make their own decisions. Such results reflect the fact that older males are still trying to exert some types of domination over their families as a part of their feelings of responsibility toward their dependents. Females, however, represent the strong beliefs of the dependents. Even educated females consider seeking a relative's advice as a basic element.

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The older and younger females appear more inclined to sue villagers than the older and younger males, even though both sexes and generations are in favor of such matters. This shows the weakness of a shiek's authority and the inclinations of villagers to seek solutions to their problems outside the kin and clan group.

Some patterns of diversity also are found among the two generations regarding the matter of arguing with parents. The younger generations appear more inclined to argue with parents than the older generation. The younger argue that the world has changed and parents should be aware of that. Sometimes, parents want their children to follow in their footsteps. Since that is impossible, the children try to convince their parents of their own views but if the parents insist, children in most cases accept parental decisions.

We conclude that several familistic values are losing their importance. On the other hand, there are some familistic values still very strong among the people of Alain, particularly those related to immediate family affairs. This result suggests that familism among the people of Alain is still very strong in terms of matters directly relevant to the immediate family, but in terms of matters relating to the larger kin group, familism seems to be weakening.

Familism Scale

From the item by item analysis, some patterns of variation between the two generations and both sexes were observed. However, we wanted to use the 17 items as a collective measure to assess degree of intensity of familism. Therefore, the 17 items were tested for scale reliability to establish internal consistency. The item-total score

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Table 7.3. Familism scale item reliability test

Item Number and Label	Item Total Correlation	Alpha if Item Deleted
1. changing job	.3679	.6929
2. arguing with parents	.3659	.6931
3. altering decision	.2333	.7072
4. suing villagers	.1512	.7155
5. leaving parents	.0843	.7224
6. suing relatives	.0135	.7263
7. marrying outside	.2886	.7013
8. parental illness	.4690	.6824
9. refusing invitation	.2784	.7024
10. debt obligation	.4483	.6859
11. putting family first	.3596	.6938
12. sharing house	.3273	.6973
13. marrying cousins	.2875	.7014
14. staying at hotel	.4316	.6859
15. insults to family	.2902	.7011
16. having many children	.2457	.7056
17. seeking advice	.4858	.6822

Note: Alpha = .7128

Standardized item alpha = .7140

N = all 118 villagers

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correlations showed a high reliability between items; an overall alpha (.7140) indicated that the scale reliability was acceptable (see Table 7.3).

But items 4, 5, and 6 evidenced a lower intercorrelation than other items: 0.1512, 0.0843 and 0.0135, respectively. By excluding these items, the overall alpha was increased. Thus, only 14 items were included. The reliability coefficient of the set of 14 items increased to an alpha of .7447 (and the standardized item alpha = .7463). The 14 items are used with confidence as a measure of intensity of familism (see Tables 7.3 and 7.4).

Dimensions of Familism

Factor analysis was used to determine the various dimensions of familism that can be identified within the "intensity of familism" scale (Table 7.5). Five general factors were obtained:

Factor One: Items no. 8 and 10 have high loading on factor one. This factor will be called "importance of caring for parents."

Factor Two: Items 7, 9, 16 and 17 have high loading on factor two. This factor will be called "importance of co-villager relations."

Factor Three: Items 12, 13, 14 and 15 have a high loading on factor three. This factor, therefore, is called "importance of family cohesion."

Factor Four: Items 1 and 11 have high loading on factor four. This factor will be called "importance of putting family first."

Factor Five: Items 2 and 3 have high loading on factor five. This factor will be called "importance of parental obedience."

Table 7.4 Correlation Matrix of Familism Scale Items

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
1																	
2	.08																
3	.20*	.44*															
4	.17	.19	.08														
5	.01	.01	.07														
6	.02	.10	.08	-.03													
7	.20	.09	.02	.15	.07												
8	.29**	.27*	.20	.01	.03	-.10											
9	.09	.07	.05	.25*	-.14	.13	.08										
10	.33**	.29	.22*	-.02	-.13	-.10	.29**	.07									
11	.33**	.18	.13	.15	.10	-.19	.06	.49**	-.03								
12	.06	.18	.00	.09	.16	.07	.25*	.23*	.24*	.20							
13	.19	.06	.11	-.09	.08	.14	-.08	.25*	.12	.22*	.10						
14	.20	.16	.07	.00	-.02	-.06	.27*	.12	.24*	.01	.10	.14					
15	.14	.13	.09	.04	.17	-.10	.33**	.13	.41**	.17	.19	.22*	.25				
16	.15	.00	.00	.12	.13	-.13	.03	.02	.10	.15	.02	.29*	.15	.31**			
17	.06	.25*	.03*	.15	.04	-.10	.31	.08	.31**	.55	.29**	-.00	.07	.34**	.31		
						.10	.19	.41*	.20	.36**	.12	.38**	.17	.28**	.29		

* Significant at .01.

** Significant at .001.

N = 118

[Note: item numbers refer to item numbers and labels indicated by Table 7.3]

Table 7.5 Rotated Factor Matrix (Familism Scale Items)

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
1 Changing job if against values	.23499	-.02327	.06172	.72367	.19648
2 Arguing with parents	.43173	.07561	.13098	-.03113	.56185
3 Altering parents' decision	.10825	.01197	.05696	.05729	.78474
7 Marrying outside	-.21752	.50196	.13390	.27127	.23972
8 Parental illness	.73540	.10675	-.07423	.13978	.20439
9 Refusing invitation	.04503	.53791	.17616	.27854	.0202
10 Debt obligations	.77838	-.10135	.12255	.19662	.07904
11 Putting family first	.07794	.30214	.02076	.69413	-.15045
12 Sharing house	.42170	.00456	.55536	-.01614	-.40352
13 Marrying cousins	-.24471	.17252	.55850	.26738	.18732
14 Staying at hotel	.05236	.35128	.55586	.14089	.05012
15 Insults to family	.10844	-.04766	.76512	-.09667	.08025
16 Having many children	.05656	.79577	.03915	-.02860	.01244
17 Seeking advice	.47873	.61241	.14751	-.20673	.02148

*14 familism items

Each of these dimensions will be discussed and analyzed in terms of age and gender variations. Differences are determined by analysis of variance.

1A. Caring for parents and age differences (Table 7.6): A general variation between younger and older generations is observed. The older generation shows more of an inclination to care for their parents than does the younger. This finding suggests some kind of erosion in family relations in the village if we consider caring for parents a central element in the familial system.

But no significant variation is found between younger males and older males, while a significant variation is found between younger and older females. This shows that older females are more concerned about caring for their parents than younger females.

Table 7.6. Importance of Caring for Parents*, by Age: Means and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Age Differences</u>					
Young males and females	54	3.1667	.8633	6.3215	.0133
Older males and females	64	3.5313	.7120		
<u>Male Differences</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.4839	.7244	.6194	.4341
Older Males	36	3.6111	.5989		
<u>Female Differences</u>					
Younger Females	23	2.7391	.8643	8.3336	.0058
Older Females	28	3.4286	.8357		

**3 point familism index, with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

1B. Caring for parents and gender differences (Table 7.7): In terms of gender, a significant variation is found between males and females. Males appear to be more

concerned about caring for their parents than females. Younger males also show more of a tendency toward caring for their parents than younger females.

No significant variation is found between older males and older females which suggests that the gender variable is not a major effect alone when controlling the age variable. Also, no significant variation is found between male and female students.

Table 7.7. Importance of Caring for Parents*, by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Gender Differences</u>					
Males, Old and Young	67	3.5522	.6579	.6579	.0032
Females, Old and Young	51	3.1176	.9088		
Total	118				
<u>Young Generation</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.4839	.7244	11.8350	.0012
Younger Females	23	2.7391	.8643		
Total	54				
<u>Older Generation</u>					
Older Males	36	3.6111	.5989	1.0358	.3128
Older Females	28	3.4286	.8357		
Total	64				
<u>Students Comparison</u>					
Male	31	3.0645	.7718	.0918	.7630
Female	25	3.0000	.8165		
Total	56				

**3 point familism index, with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

2A. Co-villager relations and age differences (Table 7.8): There is a significant variation between the younger and older generations regarding the importance of co-

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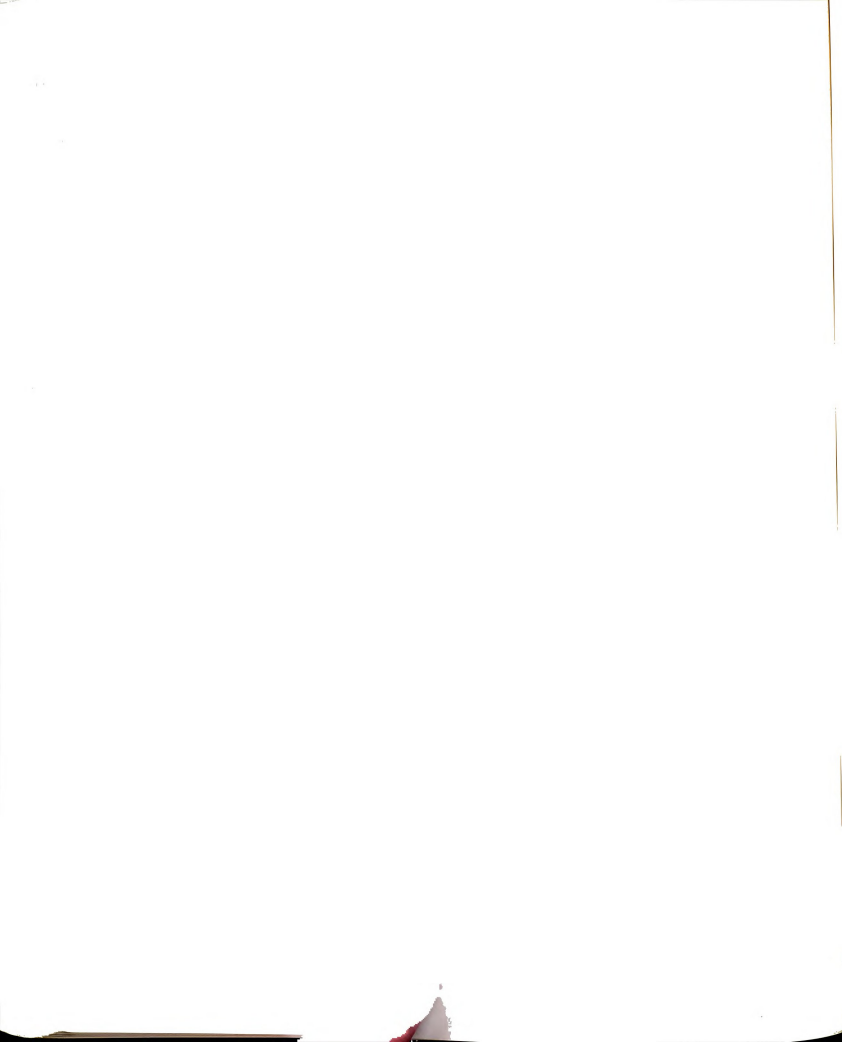
villager relations. The older generation shows more orientation toward co-villager relations than the young. Among males only, however, no significant variation is found between younger and older males. Among females, on the other hand, a significant variation is found between the two generations. Young females show less orientation toward the larger kin group than older females.

Table 7.8. Importance of Co-villager Relations, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Age Differences</u>					
Younger Males & Females	54	5.5741	1.2827	7.9263	.0057
Older Males & Females	64	6.2188	1.2014		
Total	118				
<u>Male Differences</u>					
Younger Males	31	5.6774	1.1658	3.3321	.0725
Older Males	36	6.1667	1.0282		
Total	67				
<u>Female Differences</u>					
Younger Females	23	5.4348	.1802	4.5088	.0388
Older Females	28	6.2857	.1579		
Total	51				

*5 point familism index, with scores ranging from 4 through 8; the higher score is more familistic.

2B. Co-villager relations and gender differences (Table 7.9): By controlling the age variable, the gender variable shows no significant variation between the two sexes among



the younger and older generations. This suggests that gender variables alone are not major determinants of co-villager kin relations.

Table 7.9. Importance of Co-villager Relations, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Gender Differences</u>					
Males, older and younger	67	5.9403	1.1130	.0259	.8723
Females, older and younger	51	5.9020	1.4732		
Total	118				
<u>Young Generation</u>					
Younger Males	31	5.6774	1.1658	.4677	.4971
Younger Females	23	5.4348	1.4405		
Total	54				
<u>Old Generation</u>					
Older Males	36	6.1667	1.0282	.1526	.6974
Older Females	28	6.2857	1.4105		
<u>Students Comparison</u>					
Males	31	6.0645	1.1236	.9150	.3431
Females	25	6.3200	.8021		
Total	56				

*5 point familism index, with scores ranging from 4 through 8; the higher score is more familistic.

3A. Family cohesion and age differences (Table 7.10): Family cohesion varies between the younger and older generations. The older generation shows more orientation toward family cohesion than does the younger. Also, a significant variation is found between older and younger males; older males seem more concerned about such matters than do the younger. No significant variation is found between the younger and older females.

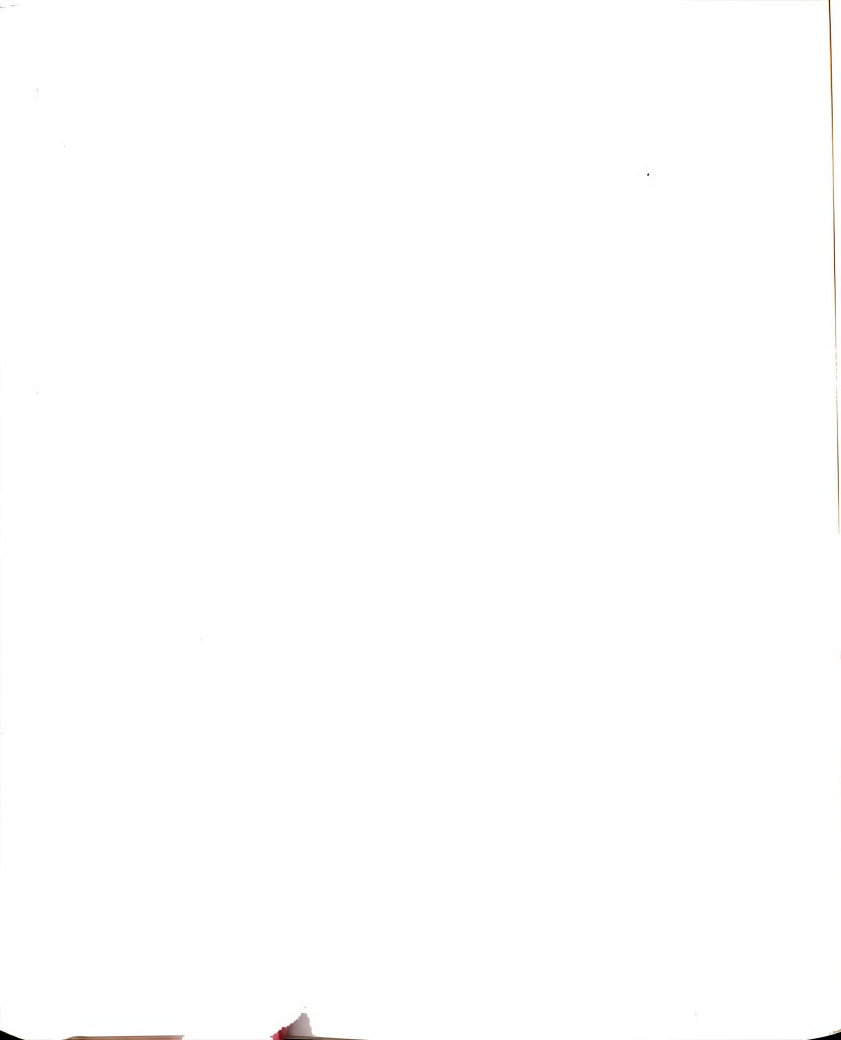


Table 7.10. Importance of Family Cohesion, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Age Differences</u>					
Younger males and females	54	5.8704	1.1824	6.6828	.0110
Older males and females	64	6.4688	1.3089		
Total	118				
<u>Male Differences</u>					
Younger Males	31	5.8710	1.0876	6.8074	.0113
Older Males	36	6.6389	1.2907		
Total	67				
<u>Female Differences</u>					
Younger Females	23	5.8696	1.3247	1.0430	.3121
Older Females	28	6.2500	1.3229		
Total	51				

*5 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 4 through 8; the higher score is more familistic.

3B. Family cohesion and gender differences (Table 7.11): By controlling the age variable, no significant variation is found between either group. Gender variables have no effect.

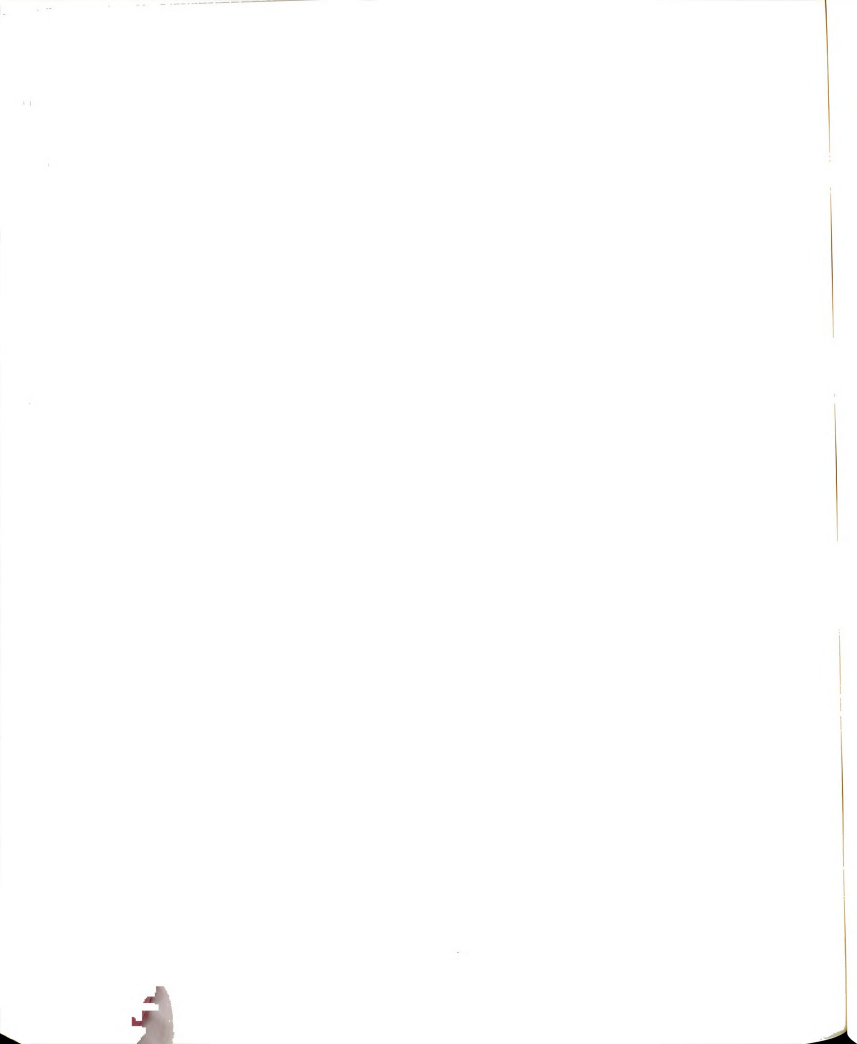


Table 7.11 Importance of Family Cohesion, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Gender Differences</u>					
Males, older & younger	67	6.2836	1.2529	.7390	.3917
Females, older & younger	51	6.0784	1.3243		
Total	118				
<u>Younger Generation</u>					
Younger Males	31	5.8710	1.0876	.0000	.9966
Younger Females	23	5.8696	1.3247		
Total	54				
<u>Older Generation</u>					
Older Males	36	6.6389	1.251	1.3991	.2414
Older Females	28	6.2500	1.3229		
Total	64				
<u>Students Comparison</u>					
Males	31	5.7742	1.2030	1.9308	.1704
Females	25	6.2400	1.3000		
Total	56				

5 point familism index with scores ranging from 4 through 8; the higher score is more familistic.

4A. Putting family first and age differences (Table 7.12): The only significant variation is found for family priority and age between the younger and older females. Older females are more concerned with giving their families more priority than themselves. No such variation is found between the younger and older males.

Table 7.12. Importance of Putting Family First, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Age Differences</u>					
Younger males and females	54	2.9074	.7835	1.0712	.3028
Older males and females	64	3.0625	.8333		
Total	118				
<u>Male Differences</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.1613	.7780	.1690	.6824
Older Males	36	3.0833	.7700		
Total	67				
<u>Female Differences</u>					
Younger Females	23	2.5652	.6624	4.1994	.0458
Older Females	28	3.0357	.9222		
Total	51				

*3 point familism index, with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

4B Putting family first and gender differences (Table 7.13): It appears that the gender variable is a major factor. A significant variation is found between the younger males and younger females; younger males are more inclined to consider family first than are younger females. No significant variation is found between older males and females. Also, no significant variation is found among male and female students.

However, a significant variation is found between males and females in general without controlling the age variable. This shows that males are more concerned about sacrificing their own benefit in favor of their family benefit.

Table 7.13. Importance of Putting Family First, by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Gender Differences</u>					
Males, older & younger	67	3.1194	.7691	3.9494	.0492
Females, older & younger	51	2.8235	.8416		
Total	118				
<u>Younger Generation</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.1613	.7788	8.7607	.0046
Younger Females	23	2.5652	.6624		
Total	54				
<u>Older Generation</u>					
Older Males	36	3.0833	.7700	.0507	.8227
Older Females	28	3.0357	.9222		
Total	64				
<u>Students Comparison</u>					
Males	31	2.9355	.6800	.6582	.4207
Females	25	3.0000	.4603		
Total	56				

*3 point familism index with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

5A. Parental obedience and age differences (Table 7.14): No significant variation is found between all groups regarding parental obedience. This shows that parental obedience still receives much attention from the younger generation as well as from the older generation.

Table 7.14. Importance of Parental Obedience by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Age Differences</u>					
Younger	54	3.0556	.8560	.0588	.8088
Older	64	3.0938	.8493		
Total	118				
<u>Male Differences</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.0323	.8360	.1512	.6987
Older Males	36	3.1111	.8204		
Total	67				
<u>Female Differences</u>					
Younger Females	23	3.0870	.9002	.0038	.9514
Older Females	28	3.0714	.8997		
Total	51				

* 3 point familism index with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

5B. Gender variations and parental obedience (Table 7.15): No significant variation is found between the two genders regarding parental obedience. Both men and women are equally concerned about this matter.

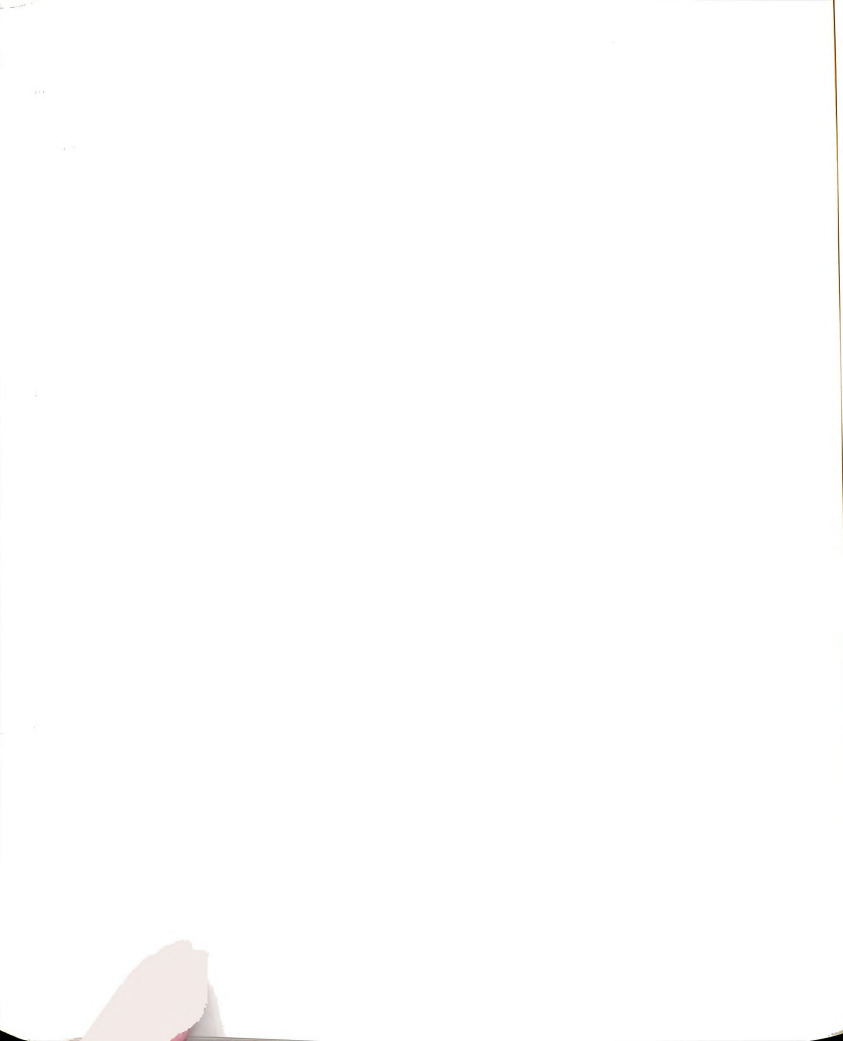
Table 7.15. Importance of Parental Obedience by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

Age and Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>General Gender Differences</u>					
Male	67	3.0746	.8223	.0006	.9809
Female	51	3.0784	.8404		
Total	118				
<u>Younger Generation</u>					
Younger Males	31	3.0323	.8360	.0330	.8189
Younger Females	23	3.0870	.9002		
Total	54				
<u>Older Generation</u>					
Older Males	36	3.1111	.8204	.0339	.8546
Older Females	28	3.0714	.8497		
Total	64				
<u>Student Comparison</u>					
Males	31	3.0323	.7528	.6591	.8088
Females	25	3.0800	.7024		
Total	56				

* Three point familism index with scores ranging from 2 through 4; the higher score is more familistic.

Intensity of Familism

As observed, various dimensions of familism vary among the two generations. In this section of our discussion, we will explore these variations in terms of the 14-item "intensity of familism scale." All 14 items combined are taken as one variable ("familism") to determine whether or not familial intensity differs from one generation to another and from one gender to the other.



1. Intensity of familism and generational differences (Table 7.16): The analysis of variance shows a significant variation between the two generations. The intensity of familism is stronger among the older than among younger generation. The means differences between the two generations supports my hypothesis that:

There are generational differences in the feeling and behavior toward the centrality of the family and kin which reflects that there has been a generational erosion of familial and kin norms.

Table 7.16 Intensity of Familism*, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
<u>Younger Generation</u> (males and females)	54	20.5741	3.0690	9.5139	.0025
<u>Older Generation</u> (males and females)	64	22.3750	3.2342		
Total	118				
<u>Students Comparison</u>					
Male	31	20.8710	1.4461	.2344	
Female	25	21.7200			
Total	56				

* 15 points familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the higher score is more familistic.

2. Intensity of familism among males (Table 7.17): Among males only, no significant variation is found between the younger and older males. Younger males still give familism as much attention as the older males.

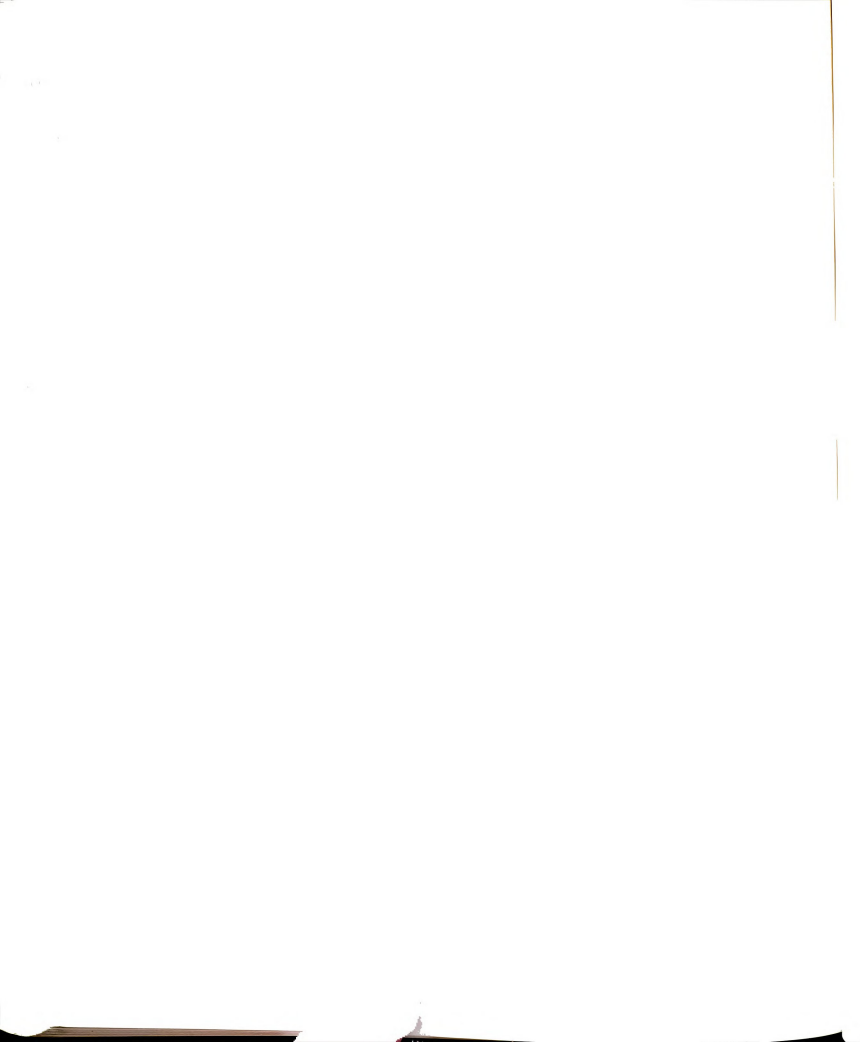


Table 7.17 Intensity of Familism* Among Males, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
Younger Males	31	21.2258	2.7894	4.5171	.0374
Older Males	36	22.6111	2.5442		
Male Students	31	20.8710			

*15 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the lower score is more familistic.

3. Intensity of familism among females (Table 7.18): In contrast to the males, a significant variation is found between older and younger females. Older females are more familistic than younger females.

Table 7.18 Intensity of Familism* Among Females, by Age: Mean and Standard Deviation

Age	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
Younger Females	23	19.6957	3.2674	5.2697	.0260
Older Females	28	22.0714	3.9808		
Females Students	25	21.7200			

*15 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the higher score is more familistic.

4. Intensity of familism and gender differences (Table 7.19): Gender was a major variable in our analysis. We assumed that there might be a gender differentiation between the two sexes. Such an assumption was based upon our observation that males are more exposed to outside effects than females. However, the analysis of variance shows that the gender variable is not a major factor like the age variable. No significant variation is found between males and females, and does not support our hypothesis that

Females tend to be more conservative and loyal to familistic norms than males.

Table 7.19 Intensity of Familism*, by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
Males (younger and older)	67	21.9701	2.7301	2.5789	.1110
Females (younger and older)	51	21.0000	3.8314		
Total	118				

*15 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the higher score is more familistic.

5. Older generation and intensity of familism (Table 7.20): It seems that older men and older women have the same attitudes and concerns regarding familial obligations. No significant variation is found between the older males and older females.

Table 7.20 Intensity of Familism* Among the Older Generation, by Gender: Means and Standard Deviation

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
Older Males	36	22.6111	2.5442	.4346	.5122
Older Females	28	22.0714	3.9808		
Total	67				

*15 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the higher score is more familistic.

6. Younger generation and intensity of familism (Table 7.21): No significant variation is found between the younger males and younger females regarding familial attitudes. Both sexes observe the same concern to family.

Table 7.21 Intensity of Familism* Among the Younger Generation, by Gender: Mean and Standard Deviation

Gender	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	F	P
Younger Males	31	21.2258	2.7894	3.4329	.0696
Younger Females	23	19.6957	3.0690		
Total	54				

*15 point familism scale, with scores ranging from 14 through 28; the lower score is more familistic.

7. Intensity of familism and educational differences: I assumed that education is a major factor affecting familism negatively in a rural society. I assumed that as people become more educated, they also become more urbanized which ultimately affects their adherence to family values and norms. My data unfortunately do not provide strong support for my hypothesis that:

The higher the level of education, the weaker the adherence to family norms.

This does not mean that my hypothesis is rejected but that, due to the nature of the data gathered, it was quite difficult to draw a valid conclusion of whether it is education or age that produces variations in familistic orientation.

No valid comparison between sampling groups exists because there are no educated older females and, on the other hand, only a few of the younger males and females are illiterate. ANOVA and regression analysis is restricted where there are only a few cases or not for variation-comparison. Therefore, I attempted to explore educational variations in a contingency table, using dichotomized variables, which I assumed would give a clearer indication of the effect of education on familism and, at the same time, indicate the strong interaction between education and age which cannot be separated (due to the strong overlapping of variables). Due to the fact that the level of education in the area is very low and high school is the highest level available, I consider those who have elementary school and above as educated and those who have less than elementary school as non-educated.

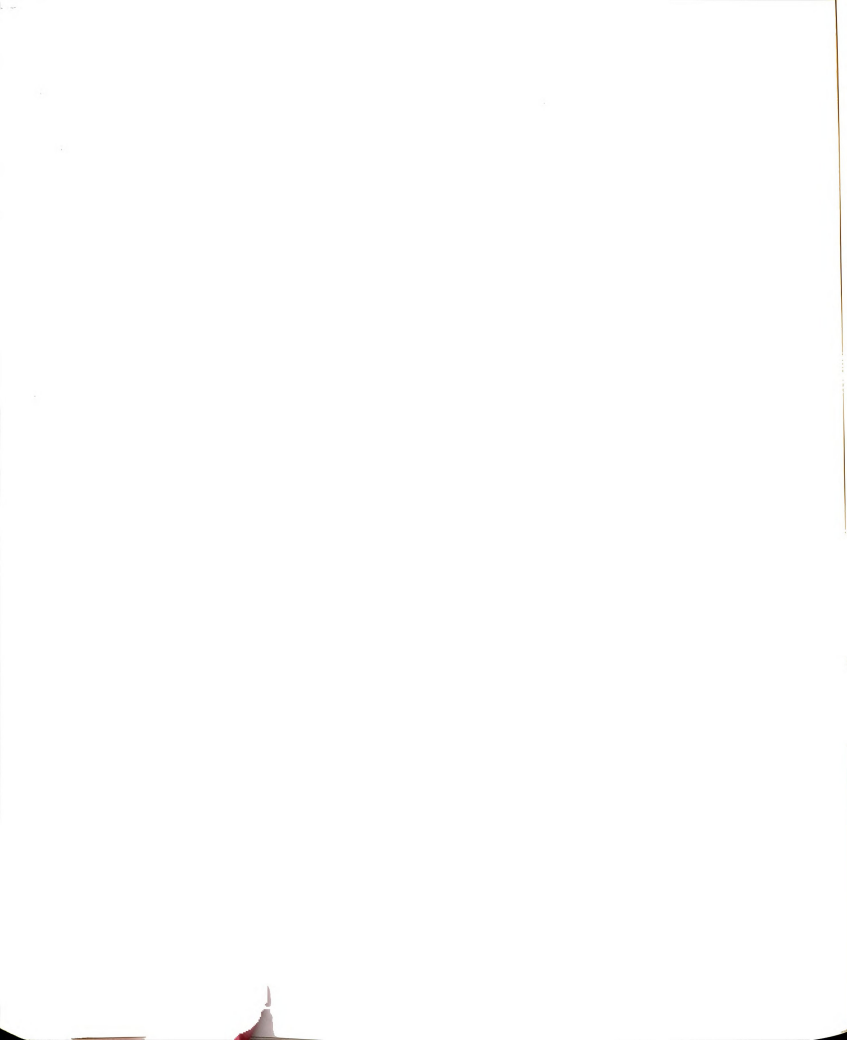


Table 7.22 Distribution of familism scores (dichotomized) by gender, age, and education (percentage).

Familism	Males				Females					
	Older Ed	Uned	Younger Ed	Students Uned	Older Ed	Uned	Younger Ed	Students Uned		
High Familism	44.4	70.4	48.3	50.0	35.5	0.0	60.7	27.8	20.0	64.0
Low Familism	55.6	29.6	51.7	50.0	64.5	0.0	39.3	72.2	80.0	36.0
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	0.0	100	100	100	100
N =	(9)	(27)	(29)	(2)	(31)	(0.0)	(28)	(18)	(5)	(25)

*Note: Familism scores were dichotomized at the mean, with 21 to 28 = high and 14 to 20 = low.

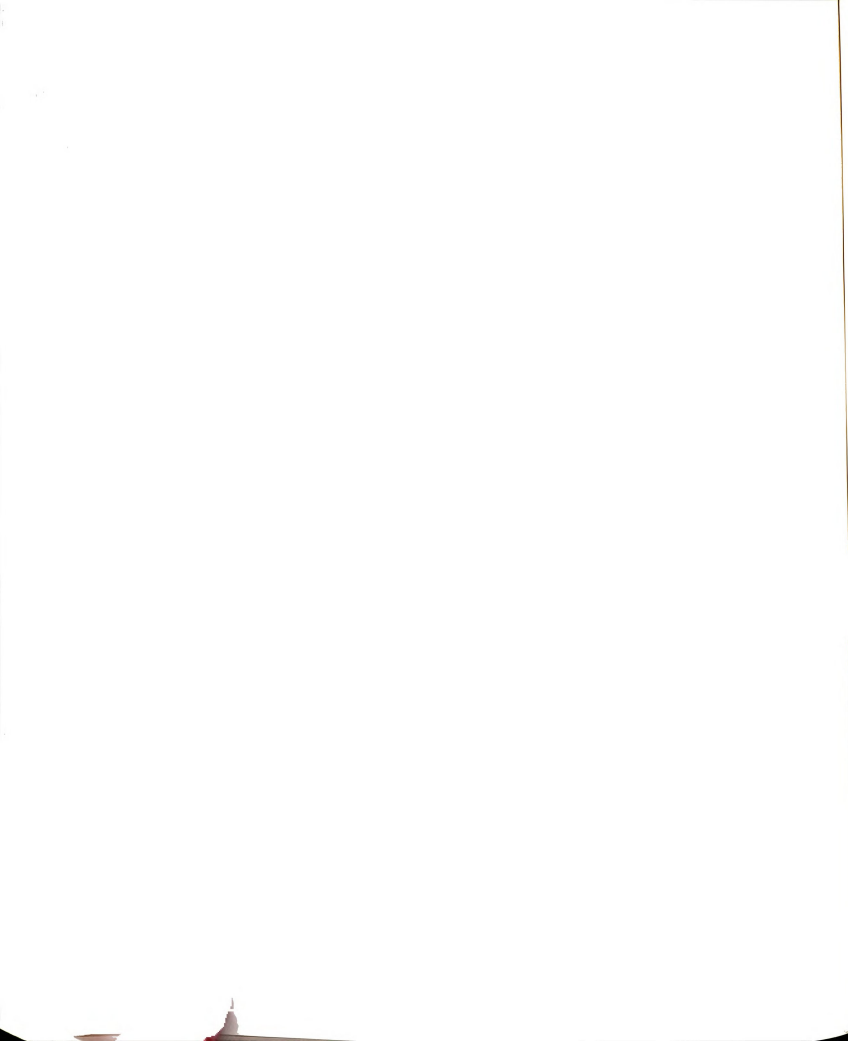
Among the older generation, the non-educated residents are more familistic than the educated residents. Such a comparison cannot be found regarding older females because these subjects are all non-educated. Among younger males, it is obvious that the educated subjects are less familistic than the non-educated subjects; such an argument appears very clear in the case of the students when compared to the younger male villagers.

Younger educated female villagers, on the other hand, show less familistic orientation than female students. The only explanation for such a result may be due to the lack of reliability of younger females.

Summary and Discussion

Within various familial dimensions, it appears there are some variations between the two generations and genders. In caring for parents, for example, the older generation demonstrates more orientation to this matter than does the young, particularly among the older males and females of the village. In terms of gender, it is found that males are more concerned about the care of their parents than are the women.

Such a finding does not accurately convey the reality of village females--a great deal of concern for one's parents is observed among both males and females. However, it must be remembered that the males have more ability to make decisions regarding the care of their parents than do the females, due in large part to the dominance of men over women in Saudi society. A Saudi male is able to offer care in a variety of aspects--financially, physically in choosing to stay with his parents or bringing them to his home--

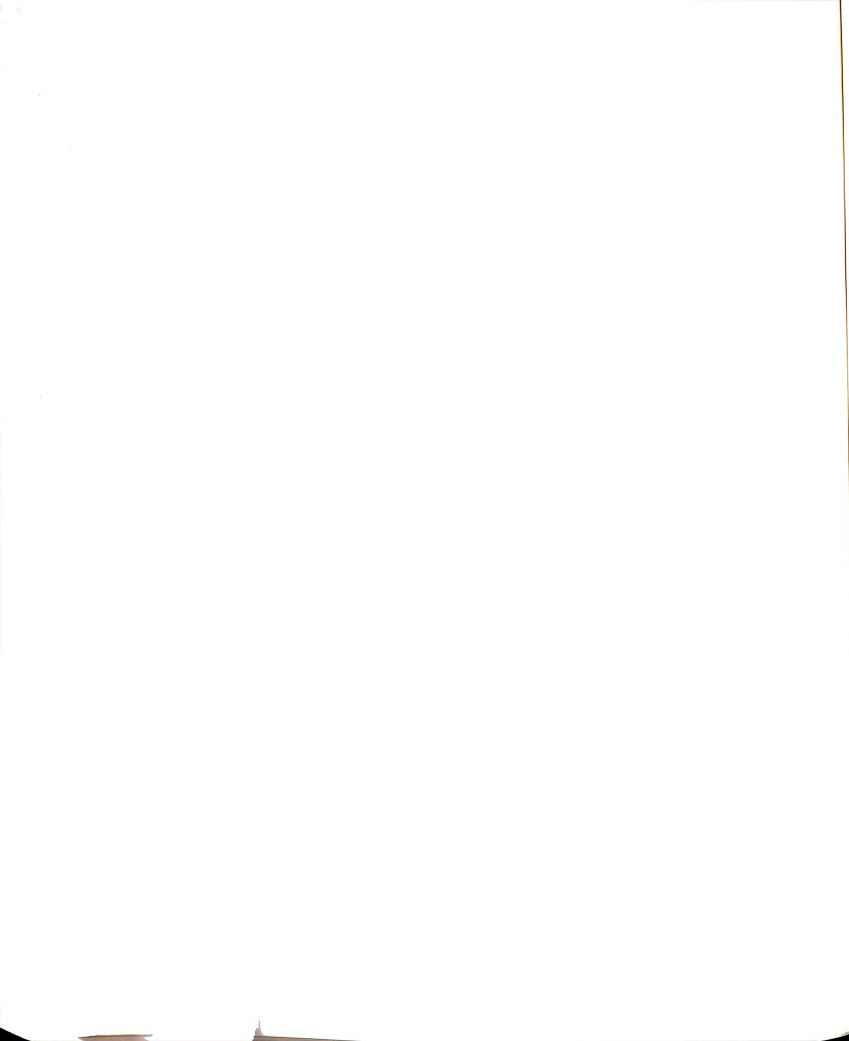


whereas women have fewer opportunities for such decisions because they are restricted by society and their husbands.

In terms of co-villager relationships, it appears that the older generation still pays more attention to their large kin relations than do the young, particularly among the older and younger females. The younger females show less orientation to kin relations--they demonstrate more exclusivity by preferring to concentrate on their immediate families. A significant variation is also noted between the younger and older generations regarding the importance of family cohesion--the older generation shows more concern about the family's unity and cohesion than does the young, particularly among older and younger males. Gender in both dimensions appears to be a non-affected variable.

In terms of putting family first, a significant variation is found between older and younger females. Older females are more concerned about giving family issues more priority than their own. Younger males show more consideration of family concerns than do younger females. In general, males appear more concerned about this matter than females. Such a result is illustrated by the dominant role of men where the man is responsible for his family and all the concerns related to such responsibilities. The role of women is usually more minor when compared to the men.

With regard to the importance of parental obedience, it appears that all generations and genders give similar or equal consideration to the matter of parental obedience. A great deal of agreement is found among all groups, which says that this matter still receives attention from all groups regardless of age or gender.



The degree of familism intensity also varies somewhat from one generation to the next and from one gender to the other; the older generation appears more familistic than the younger. Among males, no significant variation is found between the older and younger. However, females show some variation in terms of intensity of familism when older females show a stronger inclination to be more familistic than younger females. Such results indicate that the generational differences found are among females rather than males.

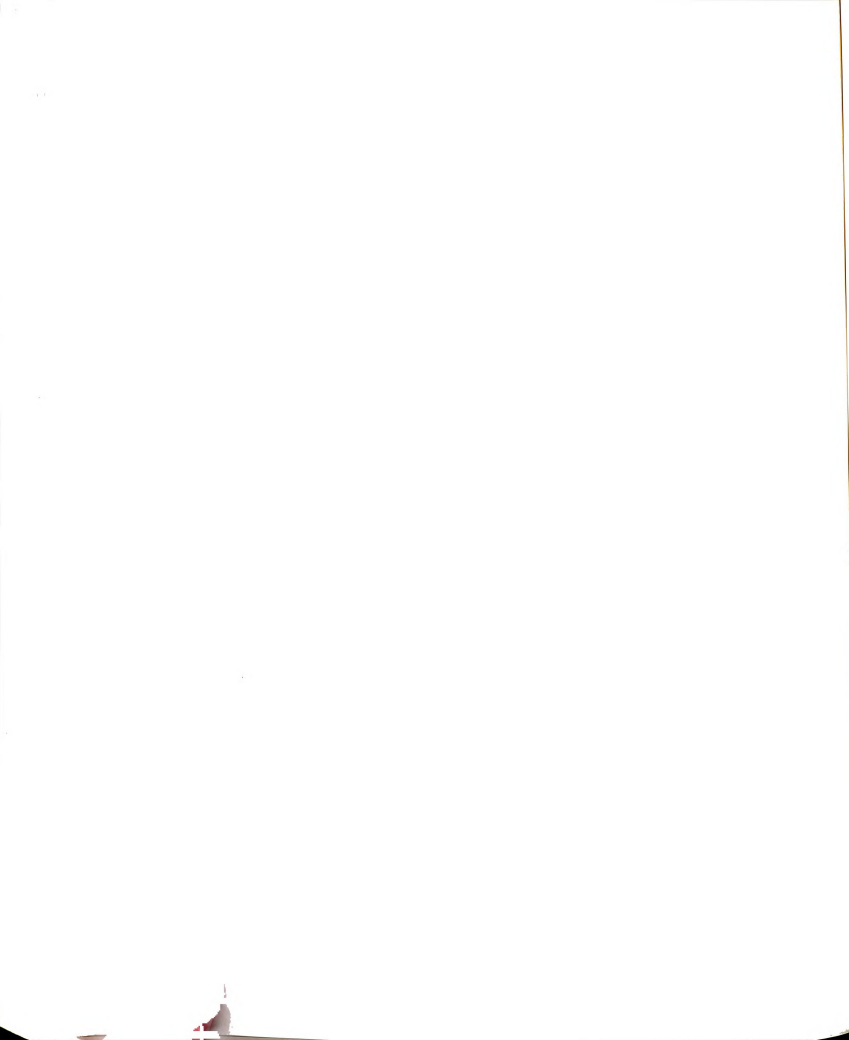
The only explanation associated with such a finding may be due to two important reasons:

1. The lack of reliability of young females' responses that might have occurred because the investigator was not able to interview young female respondents. The only access available was through female interviewers.

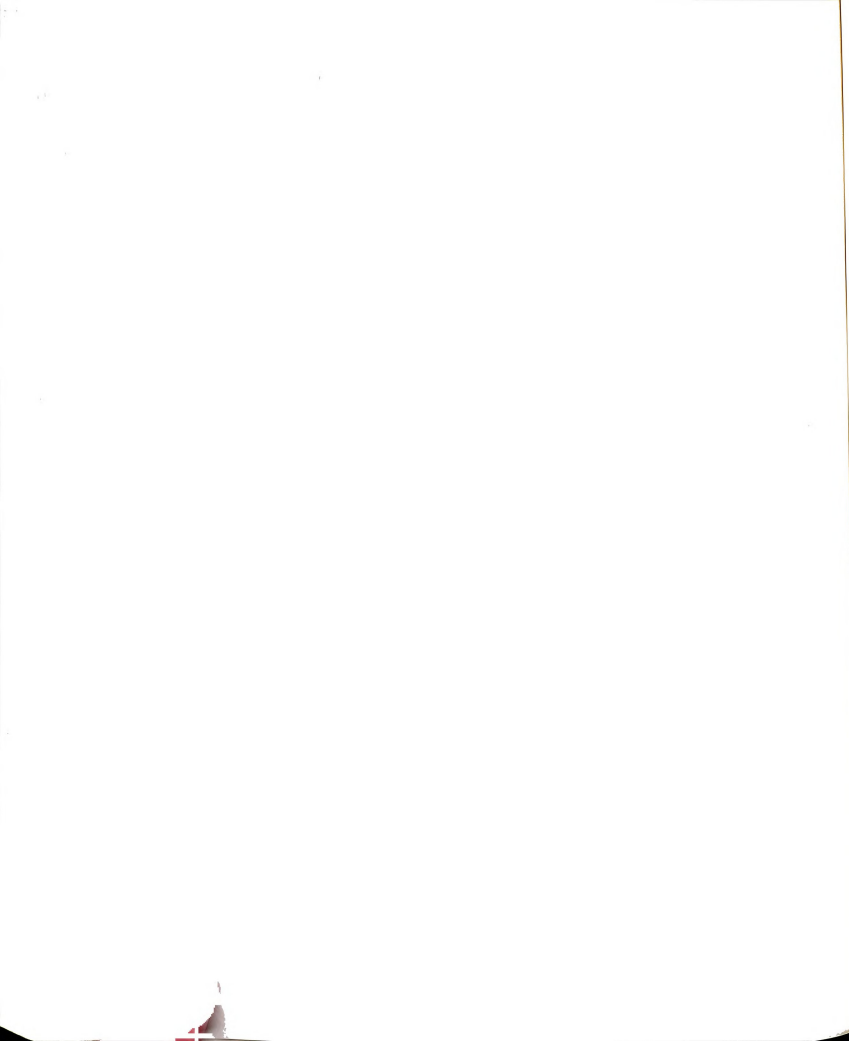
2. The misunderstanding by young females of some of the statements due to the absence of the investigator. Such misunderstandings were taken care of by the investigator with the male groups interviewed. The absence of the investigator may have caused such misunderstandings.

In comparing the two genders, males and females, whether village residents or students, the analysis of variance did not show a significant variation between the two sexes. However, our observations went beyond such findings. We believe that females, particularly village females, still have more familistic orientation than males.

In short, I conclude that the intensity of familism in the village as well as among students is still strong in its smaller sense of immediate family, while there are more



familial erosions among village people as well as students regarding familism in its general sense, the larger kin group and village as a whole.



CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Familism Past

The people of Alain, until recently, had lived in relative isolation for a long time. This kind of isolation, particularly in a harsh, unstable environment, established a strong emphasis on extended kinship ties. It forced family members to care for each other, to look after each other and to socialize their children to respect the village way of life.

Familism in the village was observed as strong, positive relationships among all kin members. The term "kin" refers to the larger kin group. In Alain all co-villagers are considered kin because they all stem from one grand-sector Dreeb. Such kin ties could be seen in the close neighborhoods; the exchange of belongings, farm produce, and tools; involvement in a cooperative labor system for cultivating, harvesting crops and for building houses; the obligatory help given at special occasions, such as marriage, death, circumcision and visits by strangers/guests; and above all, the exchange of warm feelings and compassion. In short, it was a social system based upon particularism and Gemeinschaft-like patterns of social interaction.

All village boys and girls were considered brothers and sisters and all village men and women were fathers and mothers. It was shameful for a child to say "uncle"

or "aunt" to any kin members. If such a thing occurred, the child would be punished as an ill-behaved child. Schwarzweller et al. (1970) observed a similar terminological norm in the case of Appalachian familism; all children in Beech Creek said "uncle" or "aunt" when addressing a kin member. But in Alain, "aunt" or "uncle" were not the correct terms of address--elder kin members are referred to as "mother" or "father." Indeed, any villager had the right to punish for misbehavior any boy or girl in the village as if the child were his/her own. No adult would object to this. Children were raised to respect and obey any kin member.

Helping, caring and cooperation were obligations of the villagers. In times of joy, such as marriage, birth, or the return of a migrant, all the village people gathered in the house of the kin experiencing the occasion to help with the social activities and to share in the feelings of joy. In times of sadness or during a crisis, such as death or sickness, all the people felt obligated to come to express their sympathy and to help. They stayed at the home of the sick kin member, nursing him/her until he/she recovered or died; or they stayed in the home of the deceased kin member for three days to help his/her family share their feelings and offer sympathy.

When a person wanted to build a house, many villagers offered land; others proposed that the house be built near them so that they could be neighbors. On the day the roof was raised, all the men and women came to help.

If a stranger came to the village as a guest, the kin members had the right, according to village rules, to kill any kin's sheep to feed the guest if the host had no

sheep of his own to kill. Other kin members were obliged not to object; to object would draw punishment (the sheep's legs might be cut off and the animal left to die).

The feeling of kin loyalty forced an individual to forget his/her own interests and to focus instead upon the collective good and kin dignity and unity. Individual behavior must aim at satisfying kin needs, not individual needs. If the individual had committed a wrong, the resulting shame would not only fall upon the individual's family but would extend to all kin members. Therefore, the people in Alain established rules that regulated individual behavior. They created a village court which dealt with any behavioral problems within the village and all procedures were conducted according to village norms and customs ("hagug" or "rights" which means rights and obligations).

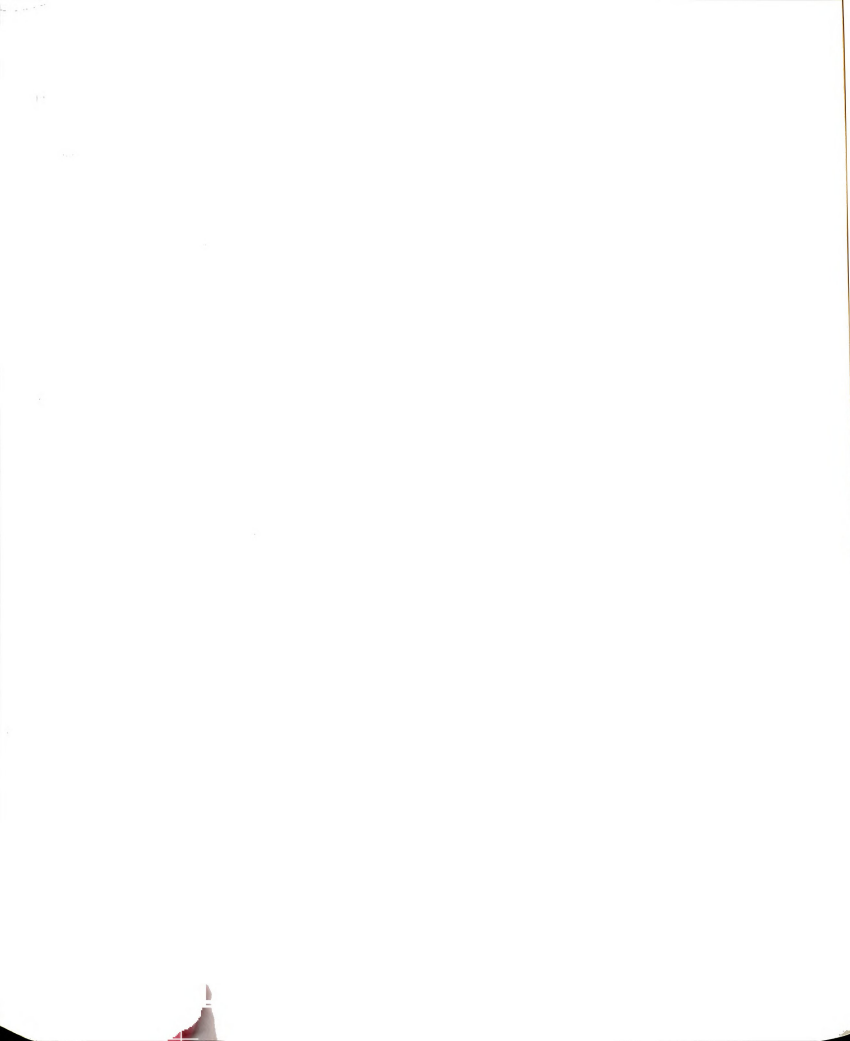
They were also guided by their own norms to help and assist each other financially in times of crisis, marriage and special occasions. Endogamous marriages were most common among the villagers. Kin members seldom sought wives or husbands outside their kin group; they wanted to maintain the purity and unity of the kin group. Children were encouraged to marry at a very early age and were also prompted to have a large number of children to increase the number of kin members. A newborn boy was an occasion for rejoicing and celebration by all the villagers.

After a couple married, they usually remained with their parents, inheriting the home after their parents died. This custom helps to explain the small number of homes in the village.

No large economic, social or cultural differences were permitted among kin members. This equality helped to strengthen family unity. The emphasis was on "we" when referring to all kin members and on "they" when referring to a non-kin member.

"This traditional familistic type of village social organization existed undisturbed for many years: the goals of individuals were fused with goals of the family. No solutions for individual problems were sought except as they related to the family. Expressions of family purposes were not made except as it added to the familism already present in the family" (Zimmermann, 1935, p. 285).

This system of strong kinship ties in the village of Alain is not unique. Many studies in different parts of the world have observed similar familistic patterns. These studies found same kinship organizations that regulated the social interaction between kin group members and with others outside the kin group. For example, Schwarzweller et al. (1970) found similar characteristics of kin social organizations in the Appalachian neighborhoods; Zimmermann and Frampton (1953) in the Ozarks; Leplay (1930) in his study of the stem family; Sorokin (1930) in his study of familial societal characteristics; Heller (1972) in his study of familism and mobility in the United States of America; Arensberg and Kimball (1940) in the case of Irish rural families; and many other studies found similar patterns. These strong similarities across the world leads me to argue that familism is a form of social organization that represents an adaptation to harsh situations despite cultural differences.



Familism and Urbanization in the Village

The village is no longer isolated and many urban patterns have been introduced into village life which could affect a breaking up of kin unity and familial relations. Urbanization has created some patterns of differentiation among the villagers in Alain. The villagers no longer resemble each other. In Alain, as in the Appalachian community of Beech Creek, it once was said that:

If you know how the father and grandfather walk and talk, you will know how the son and grandson walk and talk (Schwarzeweller et al., 1970, p. 86).

But in Alain today, as in Beech Creek today, this statement is no longer true.

Education, through the village school, teaches normative patterns of urban Saudi society, inculcating the young with the culture of the outside. Through the processes of assimilation and substitution, village youth are furnished with the necessary information to become agents of change in the rural community (Schwarzeweller et al 1961., p. 369).

Agriculture is still the dominant occupation of the villagers, but there are many other jobs available now, which contributes to an increased differentiation among kin members. Social status is no longer based on family roots only. But in Alain today, education and wealth (or possessions) also serve to determine individual social status.

Migration has become quite common among village youths as they seek better jobs outside the village. The same thing was found by Schwarzeweller et al. (1961: 89) in Appalachia. Young Beech Creekers who had once settled in the area or remained with their parents were, with the opening-up of the Appalachian region, now inclined

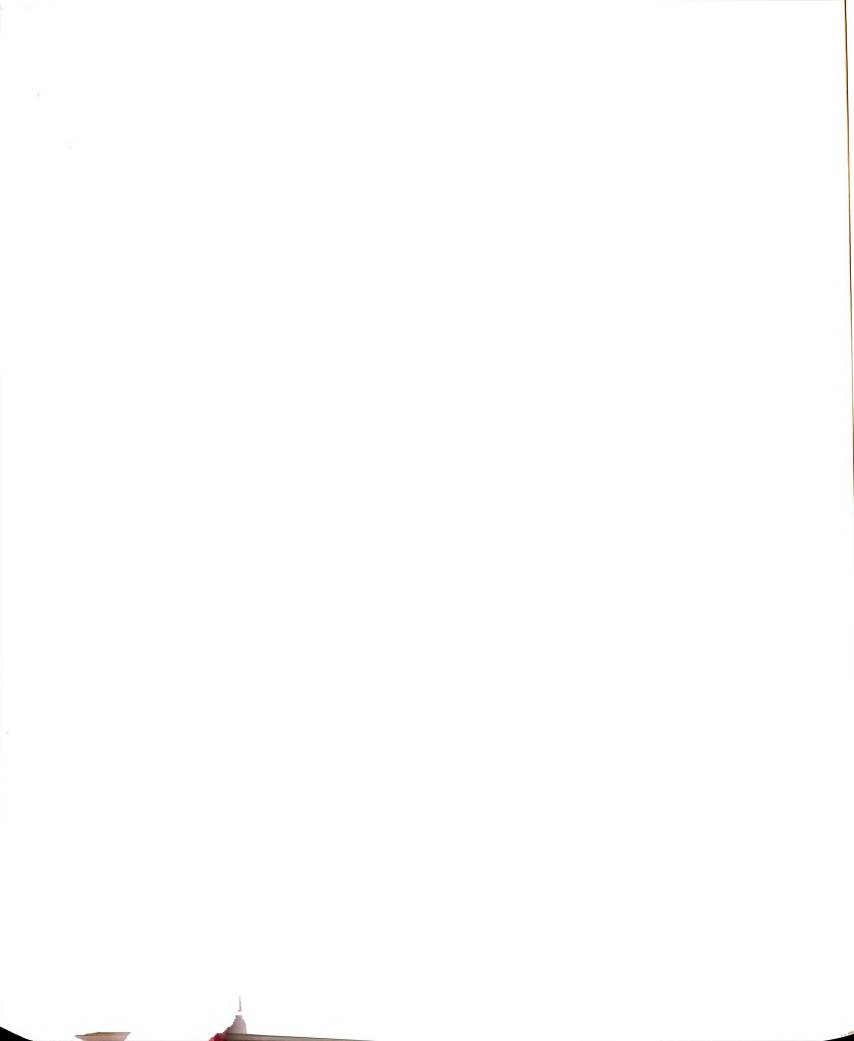
to relocate in areas far removed from their ancestral homestead once they reach adulthood.

Alain villagers no longer feel obligated to kin authority and loyalty. The terms of "uncle" and "aunt" have become more commonly used by children in the village, for children feel that they should only call their parents "mother" and "father." It appears that the network of social obligations has begun to gradually diminish. The close relationships with kin began conflicting with the interests of the immediate family. Many villagers moved from the village, seeking some kind of freedom and enhancement of individual family living. People no longer show much concern for their kin members. No longer do parents teach their children to respect kin members as in the past. Day by day kin loyalty becomes weaker and weaker. As the village becomes more urbanized, the kin system loses more of its strength. The older generation, which enjoyed warm kin relationships in the past, describes those passing days with a feeling of impending gloom for the loss of authority and loyalty. They express their nostalgia with a sense of sorrow:

We were all considered as one family; we lived six families under a tree for more than one month.

I used to know all the village children, now some of my cousin's children I don't know them until they tell me their parents' names.

When one of our village gets sick, we usually send a person or group to bring him or her to the village if it was out of the village. Now I had to walk about ten kilometers to another village to rent a car to take my wife to the hospital. No one of my village wanted to give me a ride. They asked for money and they know that I am broke, that I might be unable to pay the rent.



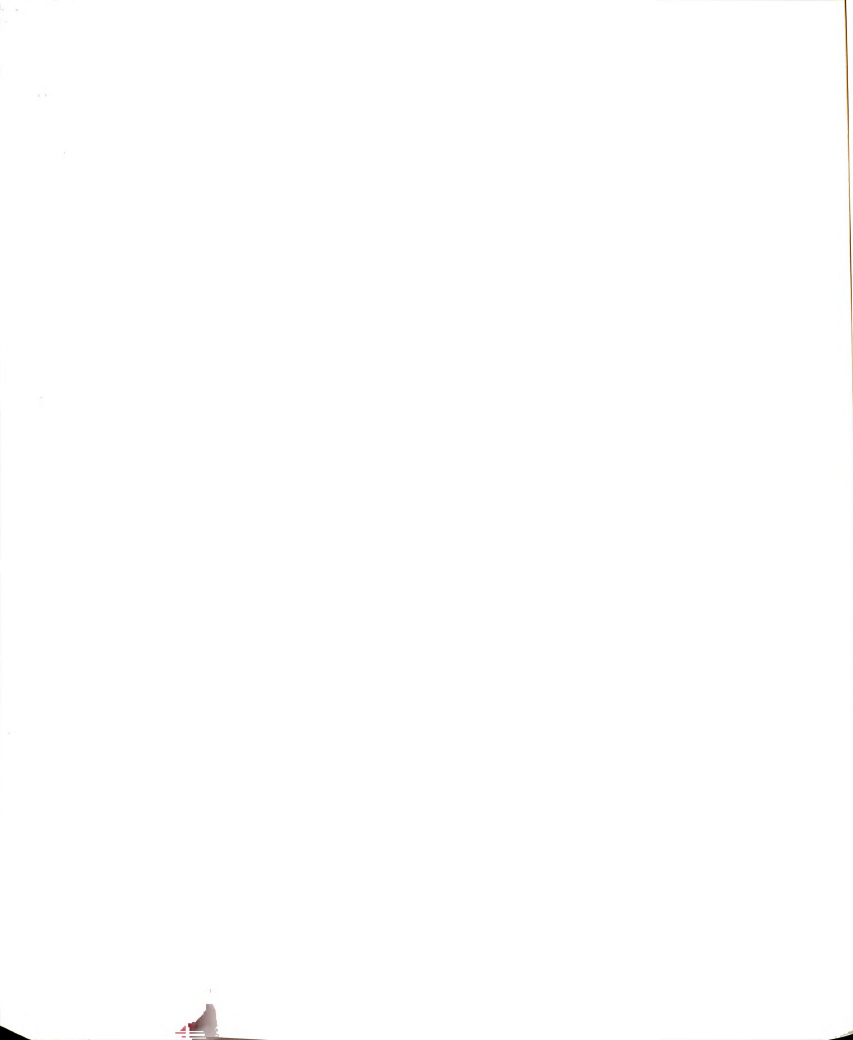
I still remember that when I got sick even our kin in faraway villages came to stay beside me until I got well. Now, I have been sick for more than one month. No one in my village came to visit me.

I carried one of my village on my back from Tehammah to the village. That means I carried him about 250 kilometers.

We used to build our houses close to each other. We were enjoying the warmth of closeness, now everyone wanted to live away from people to have some kind of freedom.

In the past, no one asked you for what reason you have come for. Now you should have a reason to visit.

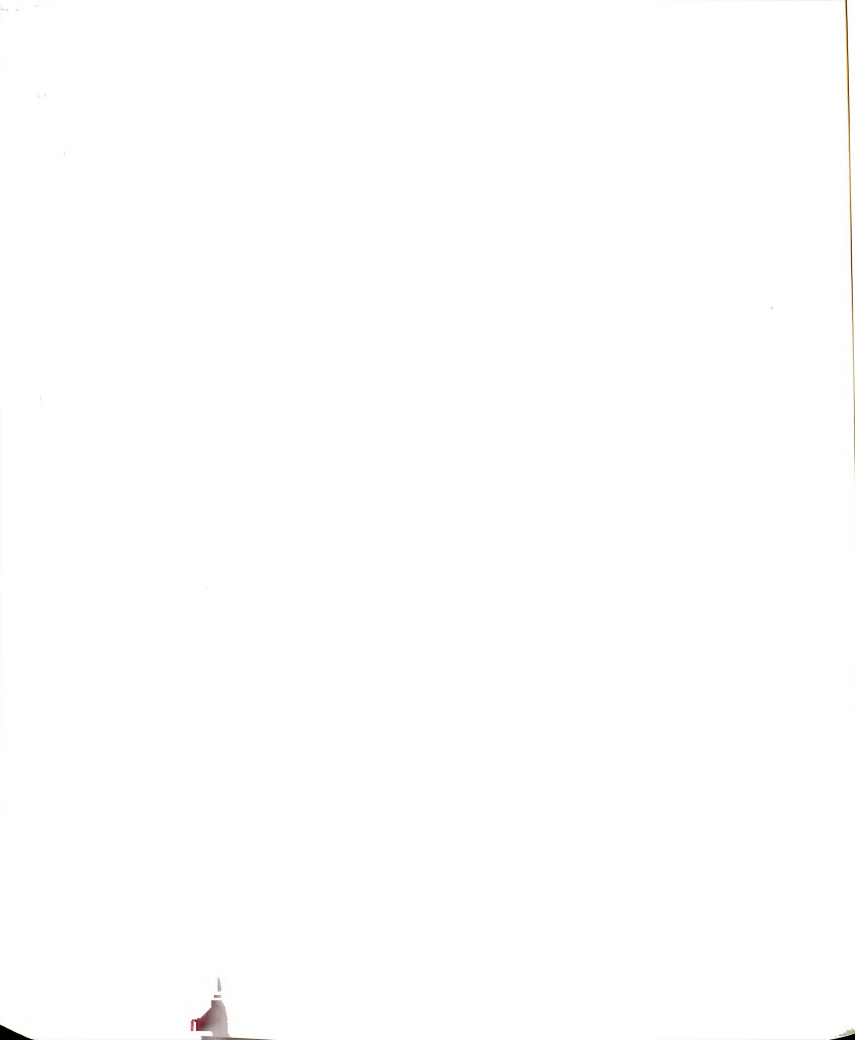
These feelings expressed by the older people of the village are a reflection of the feeling of loneliness and unbearable isolation after the weakening of kin relations. However, although the urbanization process that took place in the village has strongly affected kin relations, immediate family relations are still very strong. Family authority is still dominant over all individual designs. Fathers still exert strong control over their children. Children, despite the fact that they are pulled by urban occupations outside the village, still remain in touch with their home villages and families by frequent visits, ranging from daily visits to annual visits, according to the distances involved. Children also express their familism by monthly or occasional remittances they send to their families to help them enhance their living situations by buying new homes or more land. Such remittances in some families are the main sources of income, particularly in the case of old village women who are unemployed due to the fact that most farm jobs are filled by men or machines and governmental occupations only welcome the educated.



Many village men and women indicated that their children are caring for them and are very dependable and obedient, even though the children no longer live with their parents in the same house. The absent children occasionally come to visit during vacations or holidays or invite their parents to come visit them in the city. In short, familism in its smaller context of "immediate family" seems to be unaffected by urbanization.

However, familism and familial attitudes in the village in general appear less strong among the younger generation than the older generation. A significant variation is found between the older and the younger, particularly between older and younger females. Older females show a tendency to be more familistic than younger females. This may be attributed to variations in response reliability or it may reflect the desire of younger women to free themselves from some familial behaviors which oppress them. It appeared obvious in the educated females' responses when they quoted Islamic and Quranic verses in response to some of the questions, indicating that females have become more educated and more knowledgeable of their rights. This sometimes partially or totally conflicts with traditional familism, but not with general Islamic teachings.

No gender differentiation was found between the males and females in Alain (and such results were not expected) because the primary observation indicated that males had more opportunity to external influences than females, who spend much of their time at home. The recent influx of technology into the area gives females more ease and free time; at least, more time than they had previously. Females spend much



of their free time visiting each other and helping one another while the males seldom do so.

Young males appear more familial-oriented than young females; also, young village boys and girls are more familistic than the high school students. Students showed the lowest level of familism, both boys and girls.

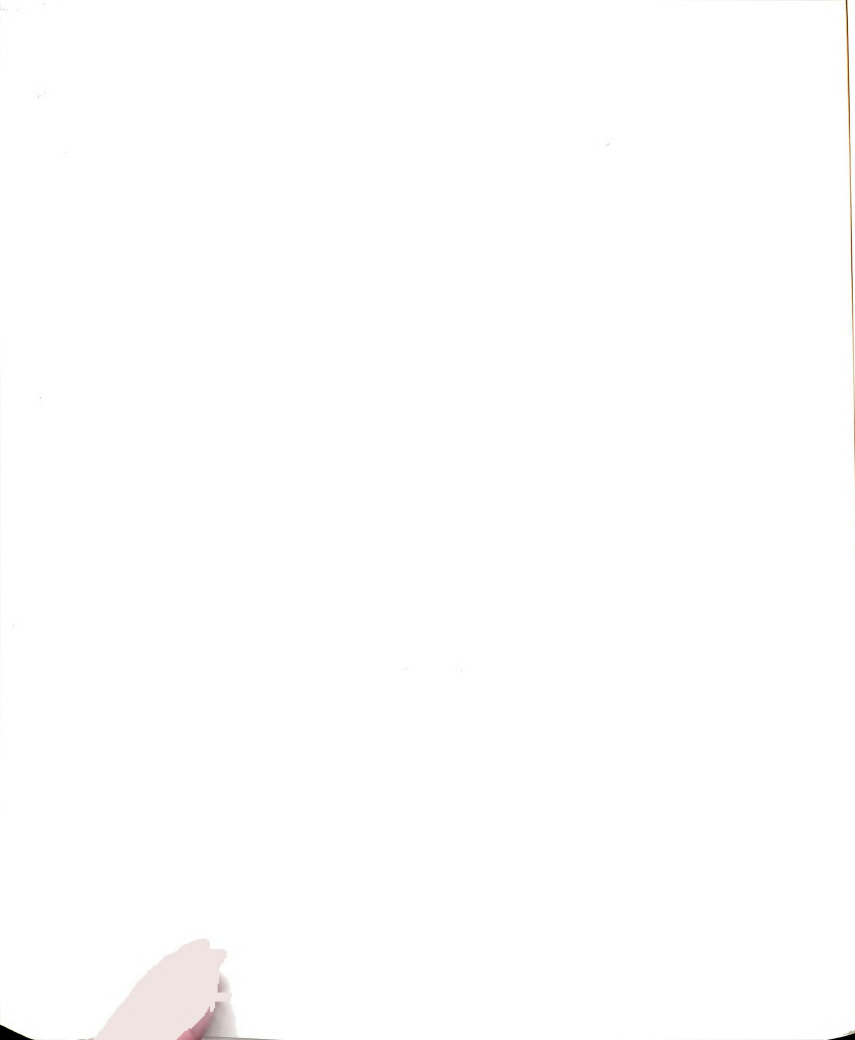
In general, it seems that the illiterate appear more familistically oriented than those with an education. Such results are expected because students usually are exposed through education to urbanizing effects. Such exposure ultimately affects their familial orientation. As Wirth (1938) indicated:

where the distinctive features of the urban mode of life have often been described sociologically as consisting of the substitution of secondary or primary contacts, the weakening of bonds of kinship and the declining social significance of the family, the disappearance of the neighborhood and the undermining of the traditional basis of social solidarity (p. 21).

However, Heller (1972) in his study of occupational mobility and familism concluded that urbanization does not always affect familism, arguing that his conclusion:

has grown out of 20 years of research. Most of this research contradicts 100 years of theory in sociology which assumed that familism has given way under the increasing impact of individualistic, rational, industrial society. This 20 years of research literature has purported to show evidence that urbanism has not led to decreased familism (p. 114).

My findings show a middle point between the two arguments and I conclude that urbanization processes have left an explicit impact on village life that has not affected the strength of nuclear family solidarity in the village, but it has strongly affected familism in its larger sense, namely with respect to the extended family



group. Such effects have come about, I believe, as a result of the socio-economic changes accompanying urbanization.

Socio-economic Impacts on Familism

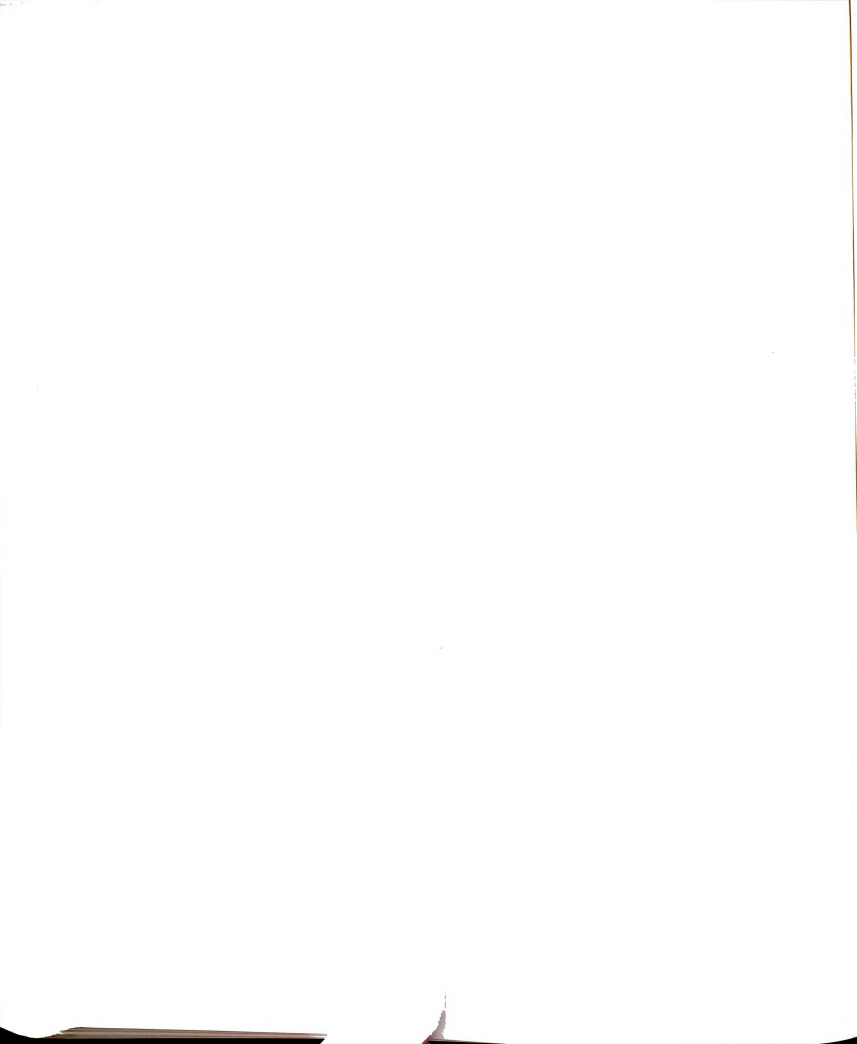
The village of Alain is absorbing tremendous changes in its socio-economic system, created by the rapid spread of urbanization through governmental developmental programs. Such socio-economic changes have affected large kin relationships, but not nuclear family relations.

For example, the housing structure of the village has completely changed from what it used to be. The small stone houses were once close to each other, which allowed people to be involved in special relations as neighbors. This close neighborhood played a role in keeping people together, encouraging them to interact with each other though as they were one family. Nowadays, the modern villas and brick houses, which have become widely available, have caused this village as well as other rural areas in the Kingdom to become more differentiated. It has produced a kind of segregation as people become more individualistically oriented and self-dependent with a tendency to build and live in these houses away from each other, seeking some kind of freedom. Such an individualistic inclination has been supported by the feeling of safety that people throughout the Kingdom enjoyed after they were united by King Abdulaziz. Tribal wars that had occurred between the tribes forced people to live close to each other to help strengthen tribal and kin prejudices and preserve a strong familistic system among the individual kin groups.



People in the villages also have become more secure and their need for one another has become less important. There is no longer a need to have socially-close neighbors or strong familial kin relations. Personal, individual aims and needs have become more important than tribal or kin needs.

Religious awareness is another factor associated with the restructuring of exchange visits to be more exclusive to the immediate family or relatives rather than the wider kin group or co-villagers. As people become more aware of religion according to their exposure to the outside world through education, migration and transportation. Many "aulama" (religious men) visited the area and gave speeches to explain the right and wrong ideas of Islam. Veils for women was the most important topic the aulama focused on. Twenty years ago, southern women uncovered their faces. When the southern women decided to cover their faces and wear the "abiah" (a black cloth) as the correct way to practice Islamic teachings. Several results emerged: women became less involved with men socially and no longer spoke to men unless the men were relatives. Southern women in the past dealt with men and spoke to them with uncovered faces. Such restrictions have forced women to stay at home to avoid contact with men outside the family. Females no longer were able to receive guests in their homes or to extend hospitality to guests in the absence of their husbands. People became more aware of postponing their visits until the man of the house arrived home. People began building high walls to surround their homes to keep their women (maklef) away from the eyes of strangers. Thus, the veil restriction is a major factor assisting in the restrictions and changes in visiting behaviors.



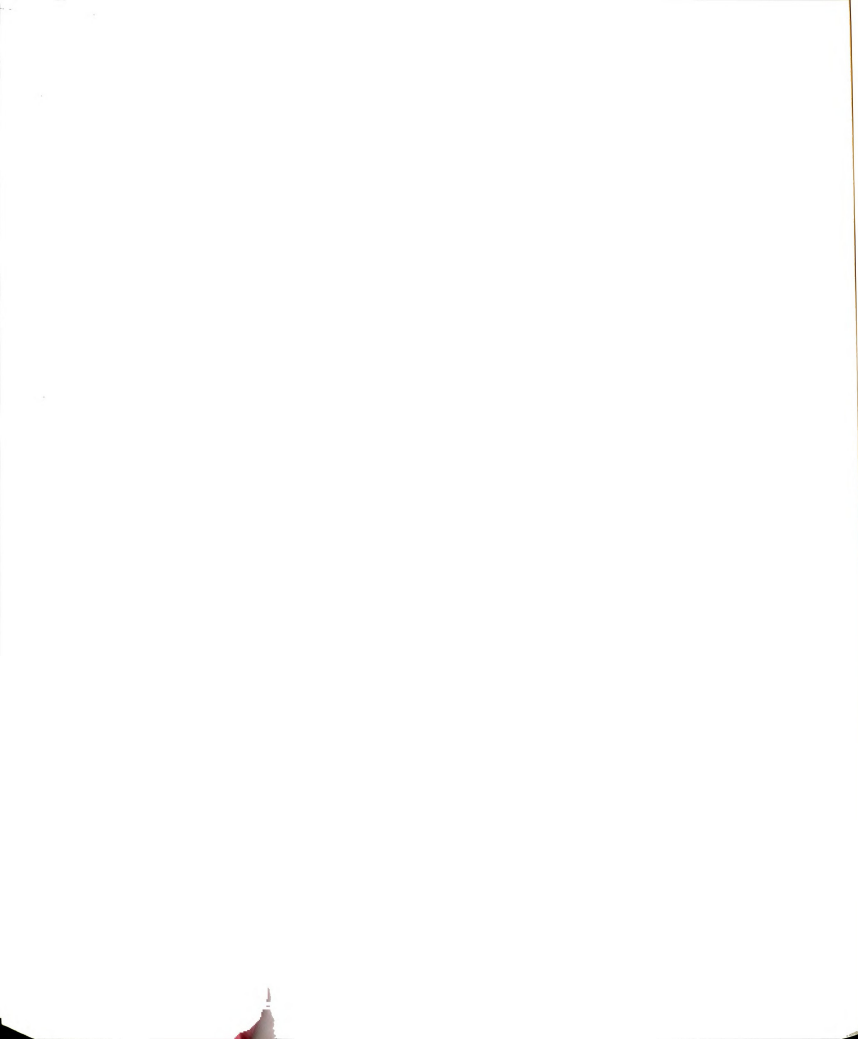
Another factor mentioned by the respondents was the land quarrels which emerged as a result of the increase in land values following the influx of developmental programs in the area. People in the village were concerned about the village's traditional familial system of providing each kin member or co-villager with a piece of land to assist him or her in building a house close to each other. Now even within the immediate family there are quarrels about who possesses the land. Such quarrels have caused absences among people, affecting ultimately their relations.

The other factor that has caused a change in kin relations in the village is the increase of wealth among village people, dividing them into two groups: wealthy and poor. Each group involved itself in social relations with similar groups according to economic possessions regardless of family relations.

The increase of modern technology is also an important factor that affects the helping system among people in the village. Helping others with their daily needs is not practiced as frequently or commonly. People have become more dependent on machines rather than other humans, even though the majority indicated they still felt obligated to offer their help to anyone. However, only a few depended on others.

The availability of foreign workers in the village as well as machines have decreased the need of kin members to depend on one another. Where the cooperative labor system was once practiced by villagers, they now depend on foreign workers and machines to meet their daily needs.

Exchange visits and the offering of sympathy and courtesy among kin members has been affected by the urbanizational process in the village. Village people became



more urbanized and less concerned about one another. Despite this decline in concern, there are still some occasions which receive strong consideration by all kin members.

A funeral is considered the least affected familial behavior--people still believe in and practice this custom in a general obligated manner. Welcoming home newborns is the most affected behavior. People are now less apt to visit the family of the newborn baby as they once did unless it is the family of a very close relative or friend. Because there are no longer tribal wars, the birth of the baby, particularly boys, has become a less important event in the clan or village life and is only important to the parents of the newborn.

People also became less oriented to welcome a co-villager or kin member or see him off after an absence as they used to because migration has become more common. Every day tens of kin or village members leave and return. In the past, only a few did so and that was considered a very important event not to be ignored. Visiting sick people was and still is a very important occasion that people feel obligated to visit, regardless of family or kin closeness. Part of the reason is that religious adherence encourages people to visit the sick, but according to my observation, visiting a hospitalized person has become less of an obligation if the person is not critically ill or a close relative or friend. In the past people felt obligated to stay in the house of the sick co-villager to help and support the family until she/he recovered or died.

Financial aid among relatives and kin also has been affected negatively by urbanization, but its effect is considered slight when compared with other familial

behaviors. People still practice giving financial aid in times of crisis. The obligation of offering financial aid is most common, but it became more exclusive to the immediate family because most people became self-sufficient and economically secure.

Noticeable financial aid became a more familistic indicator than the physical help of relatives, clans or co-village members. People were more willing to offer financial aid rather than physical aid because money was available and with money people could bring in labor to do the job.

Respecting other people, particularly the elderly, became less than what it used to be. Two conflicting points of view have emerged. The older kin argue that children are less respectful to them because their parents encouraged them to do so because people were less united and less in need of help from each other. The younger, on the other hand, felt that the older are not educated and empty-minded; they asked the younger to follow in their footsteps which led them to reject the older. However, respects and care among immediate family members is still very strong in all of the former familial behaviors mentioned. All respondents indicated that their children were very respectful to them, obeying their orders. This reflects the opposite attitude of the general respect and obedience among young children to other kin members.

We concluded that several important factors have caused the decline in kin relations in the village but those factors had little effect on immediate family relations in the village. Some of the effects were very deep and some were slight. As we have seen, some kin norms completely changed; some are still strong; others struggle

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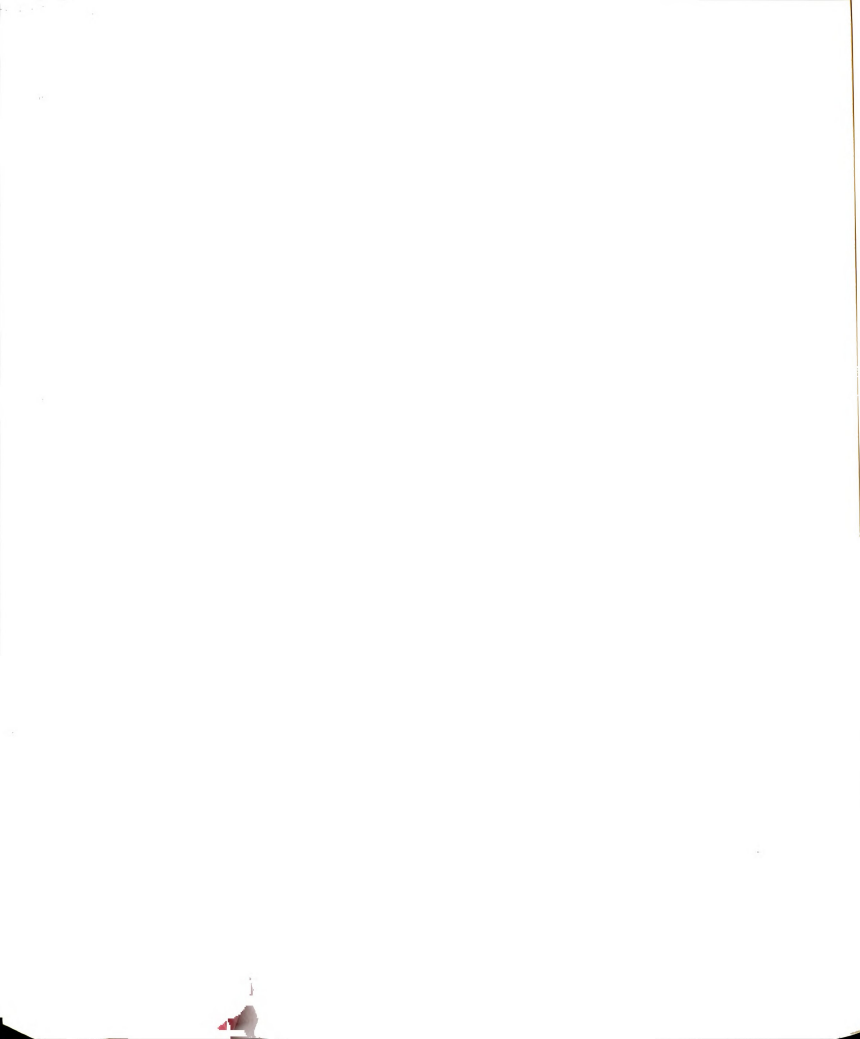
between which indicates that there are some patterns of norms that might be given more consideration than others, which might never be affected by urbanization.

SUMMARY

This study has posed three general questions to be answered:

1. What is the meaning of familism in the village and what are the patterns and norms of mutual aid and reciprocity currently practiced by rural people in the southwestern region in relation to their families and extended family networks?
2. Are there any generational changes in degrees of intensity of family and kin obligation?
3. What are the social and economic determinants associated with individual motivations and degree of commitment to familial norms and with generational differences?

My findings show that familism in Alain meant in the past the strong relationship among all large kin groups. Such kin relations were reflected in their exchange of care, help, sympathy, and kin authority. However, these relations diminished gradually in the village as result of urbanization processes that took place. Thus familism in the present means the strong relationships among immediate family members. Many of the familial behaviors practiced by kin members became exclusive to the immediate family only. Urbanization appears to have had no effect on familism in its smaller sense (immediate family) where authority and relationships among family members is still very strong. However, the young generation appears less



familial-oriented than the old, whether in the general sense (kin) or the smaller sense (family). Males appear more familistic than females, which is the opposite result hypothesized. Educated residents demonstrated less familistic orientation than uneducated.

Several socio-economic factors appear to have caused such changes in familial intensity among the villagers. These include: changes in the housing structure, religious awareness, wealth, greater availability of modern technology and foreign workers, and a growing carelessness based in a lack of need among kin members.

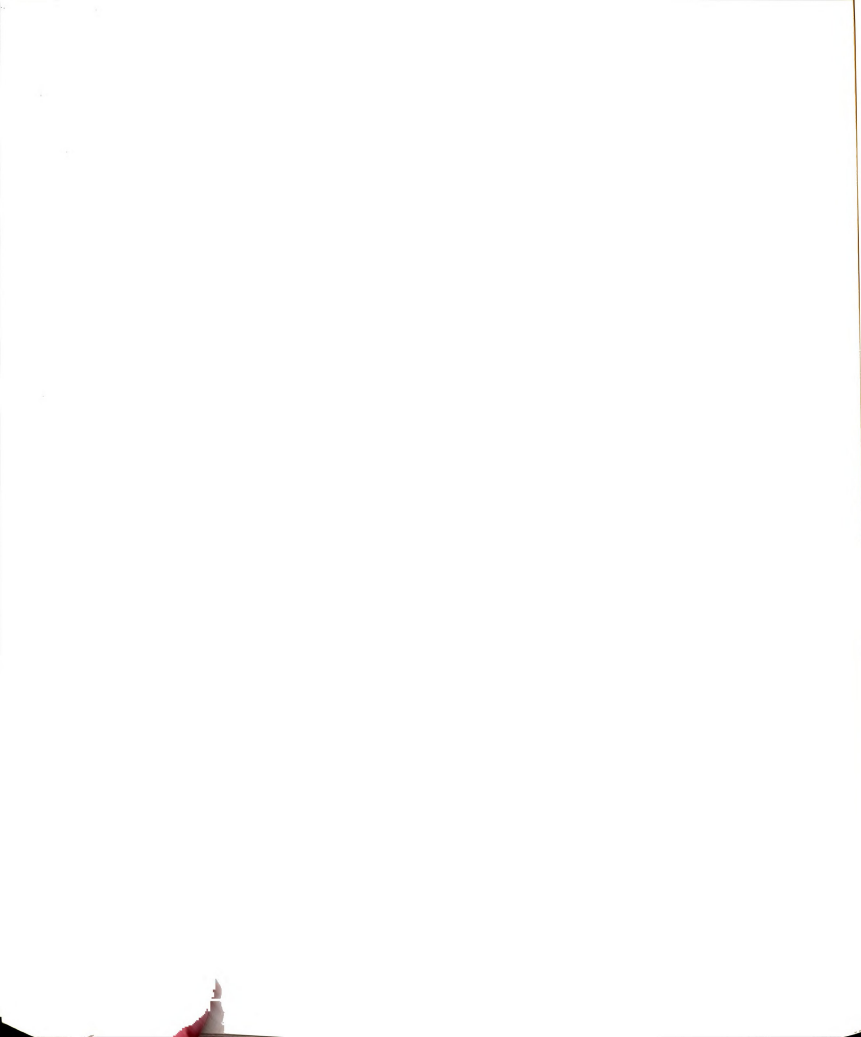
Conclusion

The major conclusion of this study is that the urbanization process has strongly affected wider kin relationships in the village of Alain, but has had no serious impact upon the immediate family. Familism in the village has declined with regard to kin relationships but has remained strong among immediate family members.

The younger generation shows less tendency toward familism as do educated residents. Such generational differences explain that the continuity of familism may be facing a profound weakening in the future as Alain's population becomes more educated and more urbanized.

Study Implications and Recommendations

Saudi society is composed of tribes and kin groups. We generally consider this country to have a tribal society. Despite the rapid growth of development that has



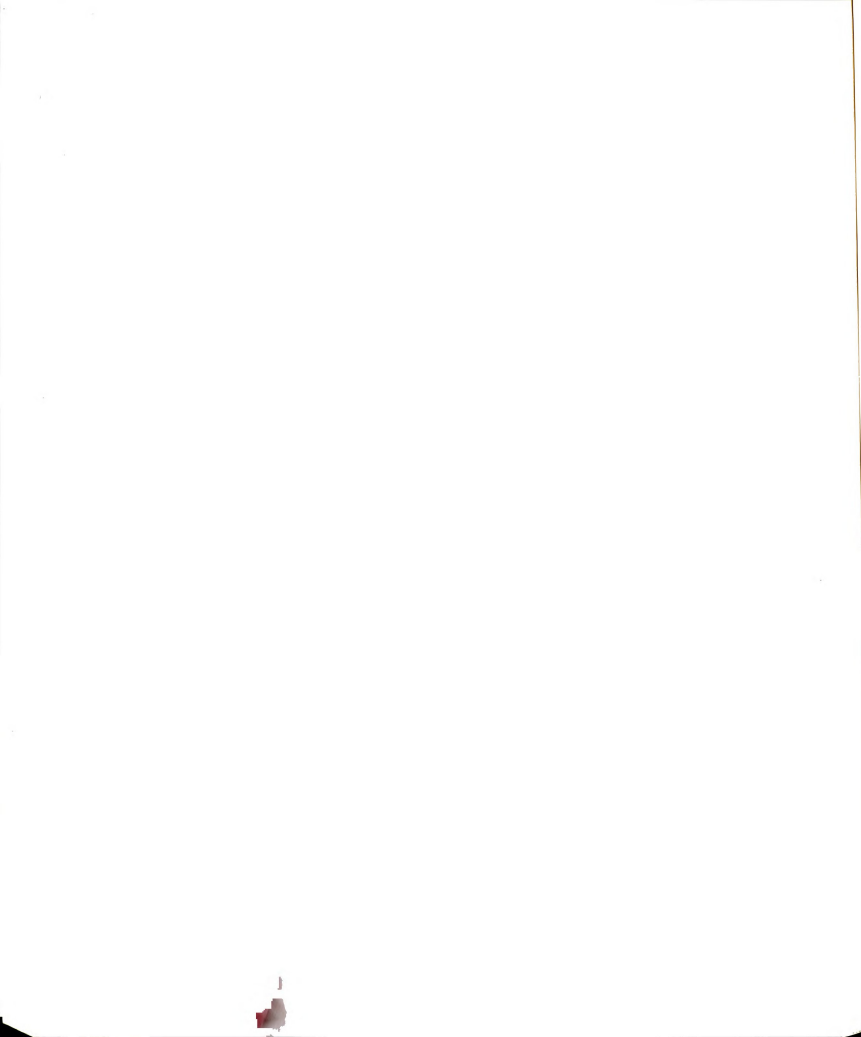
created urban change, tribal norms still play major roles in directing the Saudi people and controls their behaviors. It appears that the rapid urban growth in rural areas of Saudi Arabia will affect many familial norms and customs which will gradually diminish. The time is appropriate to document these norms. Familism has not been studied in-depth in Saudi society despite the fact that there are some articles and books that touched on this topic slightly. Therefore, this study has employed several methodological approaches and developed a familism scale. This basic scale should be improved by future investigators interested in studying familism in Saudi society. Further familial research should be conducted in different parts of the Kingdom to document and record familial norms and customs in order to conserve the traditions and customs for future generations to understand and appreciate.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on my findings, the following issues are suggested for potential future studies.

Familism and Rural Urban Differentiation

Because this study was conducted in a very small, remote, isolated village focusing upon generational differences, a similar study should be conducted in an urban setting such as Riyadh or Jeddah. Researchers may wish to explore the extent to which there are differences in familism between generations in rural and urban areas.



Gender Differentiation

My survey findings reject a significant variation between men and women regarding familism. But my case-study observations went beyond such results, and suggest the importance of further in-depth studies of gender differences to be conducted in the future.

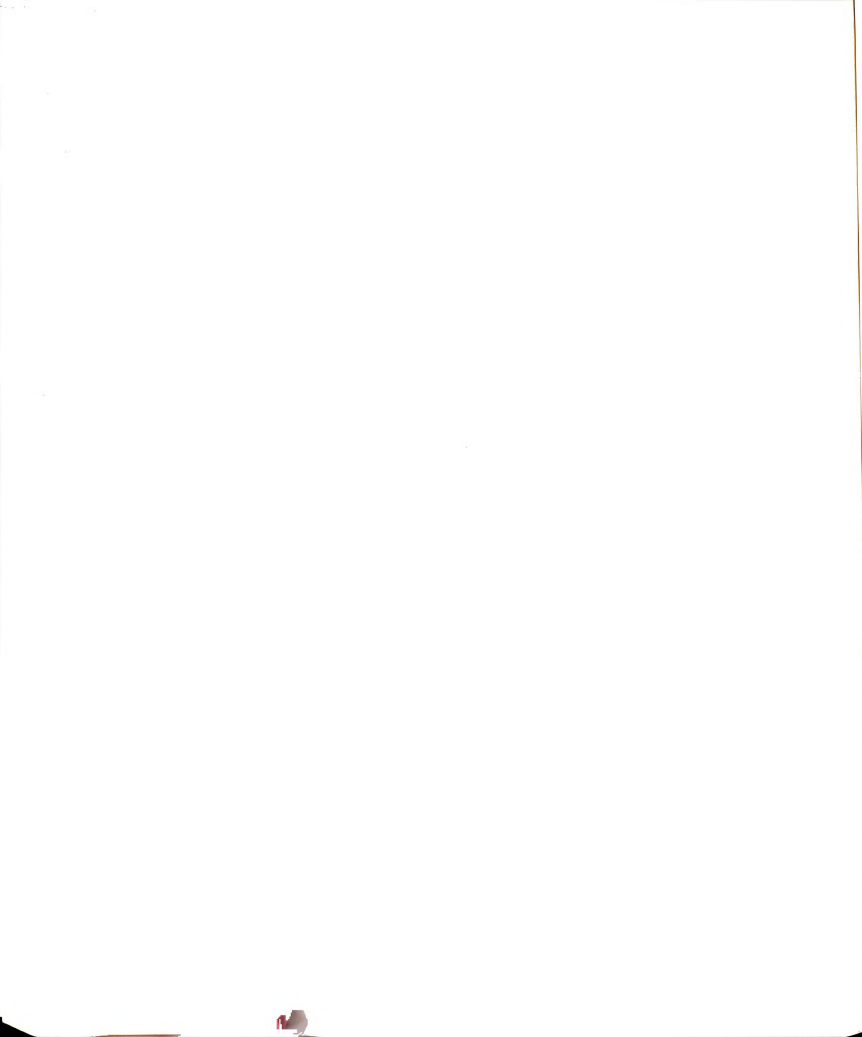
A Longitudinal Study

Finally, a longitudinal study of the same topic in the same setting should be conducted five years from now to measure the social change in people's attitudes associated with urban and social changes in the setting.

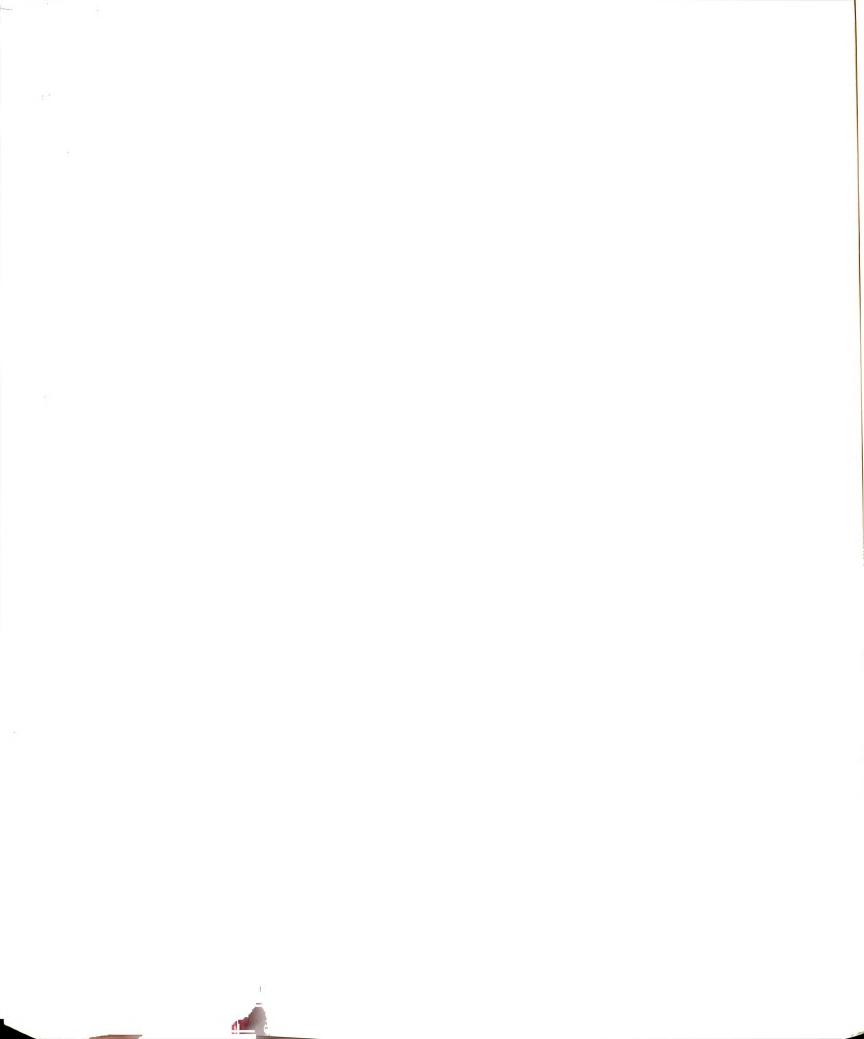
Limitations

This study was conducted in a very small remote area of the southwest region of Saudi Arabia. The findings cannot be generalized for the larger Saudi population nor the whole of the southwest region, but they can be used as a basic primary introduction to the subject of familism. A more comprehensive study of changing family norms within the entire Saudi society or even the southwest region of the country is required.

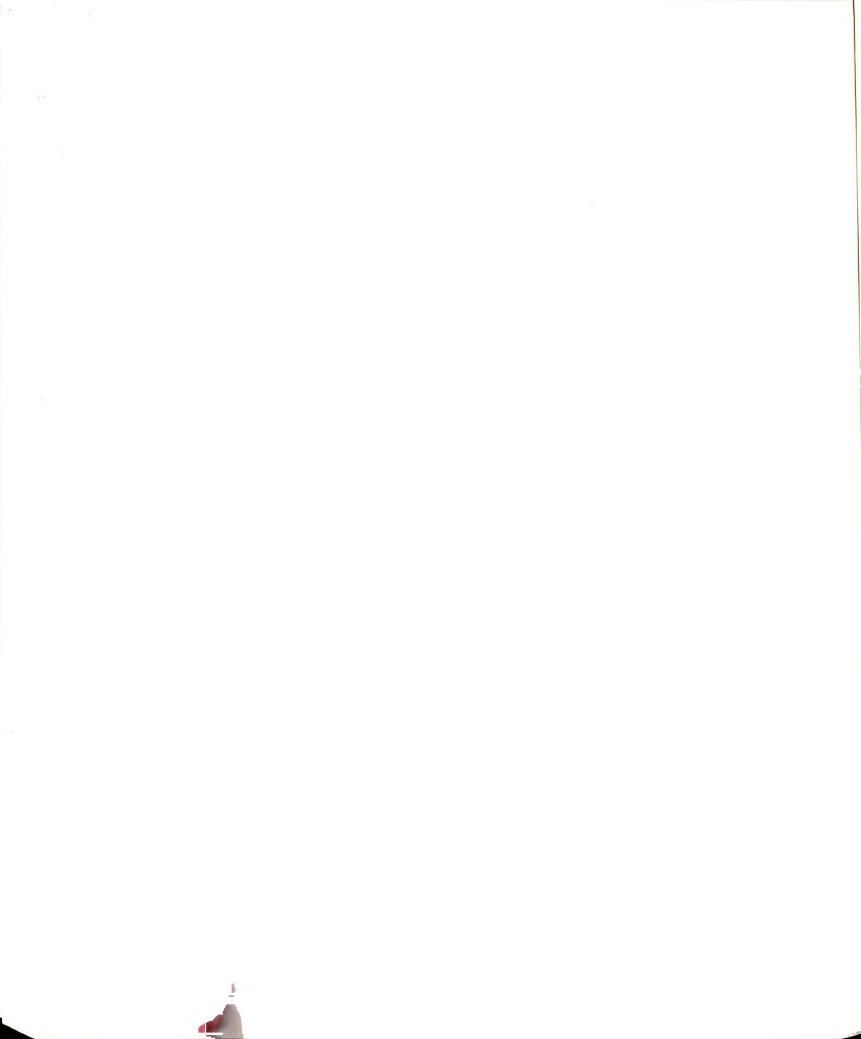
The lack of confidence in the gender variable is due to the lack of interviewing access to female respondents. For future studies, a team of well-trained female researchers is required to obtain better and more reliable results.



Finally, despite the fact that the research findings indicate there are generational differences, such results do not show if the generation gap will become larger in the future or if it will remain the same. A longitudinal study of the subject is recommended to observe such changes in familial behavior.



APPENDIX



Questionnaire #

Interviewer

Date

Household ID #

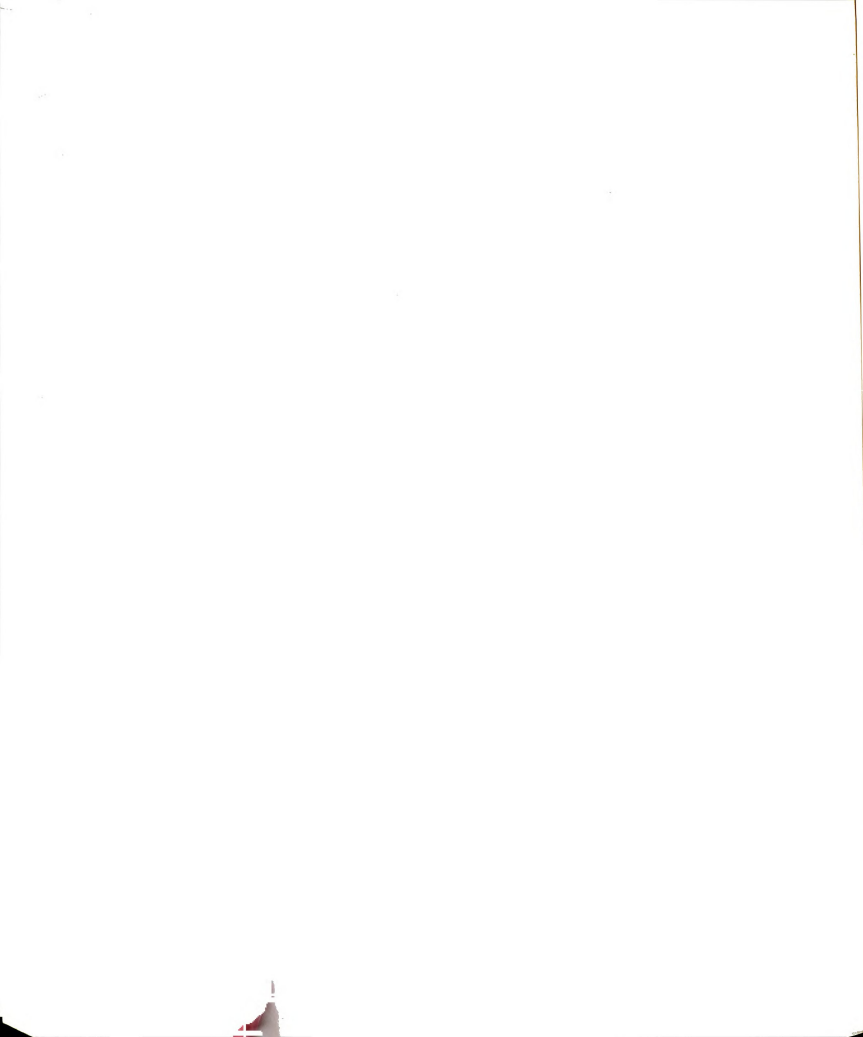
Resident's Place
inside the village

Family Values Among Residents
of the Village of Alain

Resident's Name: _____ (optional)

Relation to the Household Head: _____

All information in this questionnaire
will be kept in strict confidence and
it will not be used for non-research
purposes.



Dear Brothers and Sisters:

Al Salam Aleekum Wa rahmat Allah (God bless you!)

I'm one of the scholars who has been sent by I.M.U. to the U.S.A. to obtain a Ph.D. in Sociology. My dissertation topic concerns familism, norms of reciprocity and the urbanization of rural villages in the southwest region of Saudi Arabia.

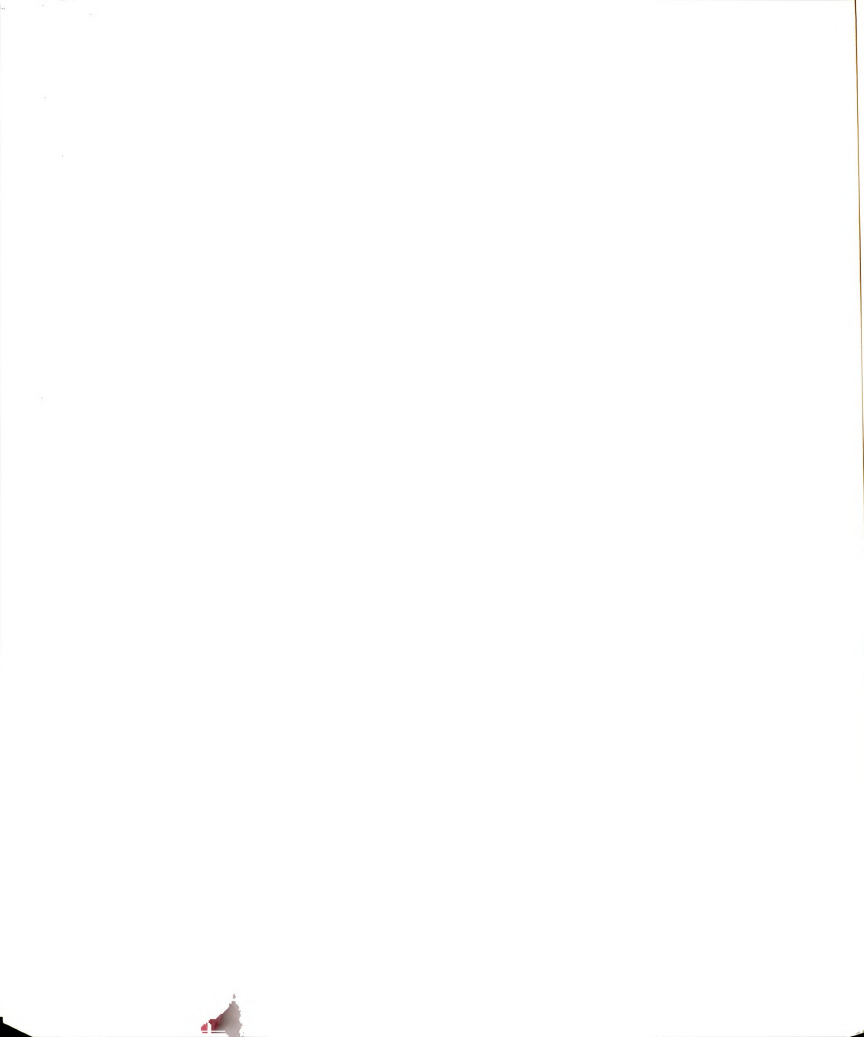
Accordingly, I would be very grateful if you would give me a portion of your valuable time in order to fill in this questionnaire. Your assistance in filling out this questionnaire will be important not only for the completion of my degree but also to increase awareness of various social changes in some aspects of our family life in the southwest.

I would like to call your attention to the fact that the results of this research will appear in a general outcome and will not deal with each case individually. For example, I will not mention anyone's name or any personal information. Also, all of this questionnaire is optional and you can participate or not as you choose. Perhaps you would like to answer only some parts. This is acceptable. However, by answering all questions, my data will be more complete and I would greatly appreciate your assistance because without your cooperation this research could not be done.

Thank you in advance for your kind cooperation.

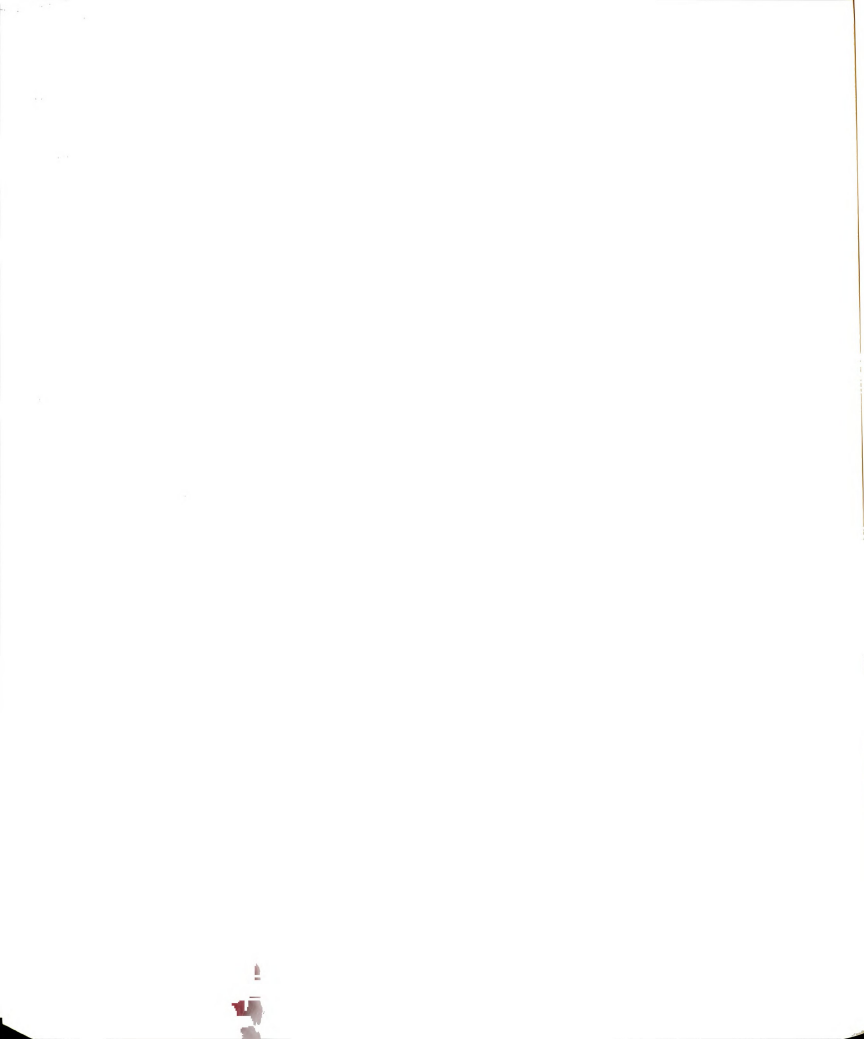
Sincerely yours,

Abdulrahman Asseri
I.M.U.
M.S.U.



FIRST PART

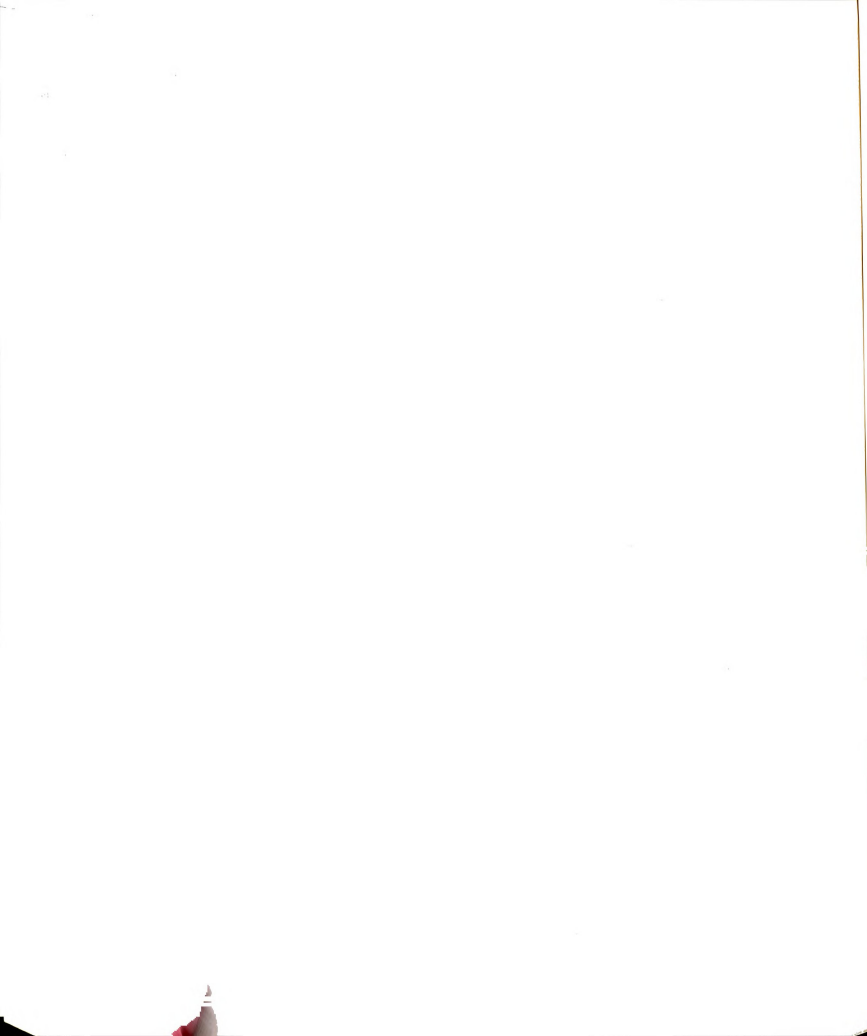
We want to ask you some questions about the kinds of obligations family members, villagers, and neighbors should have towards each other. Sometimes we will ask you to tell us what you think people do nowadays, but generally we want to know what you feel should be the obligation.



Please choose one option and mark it with an (X) mark.

Exchange Visits

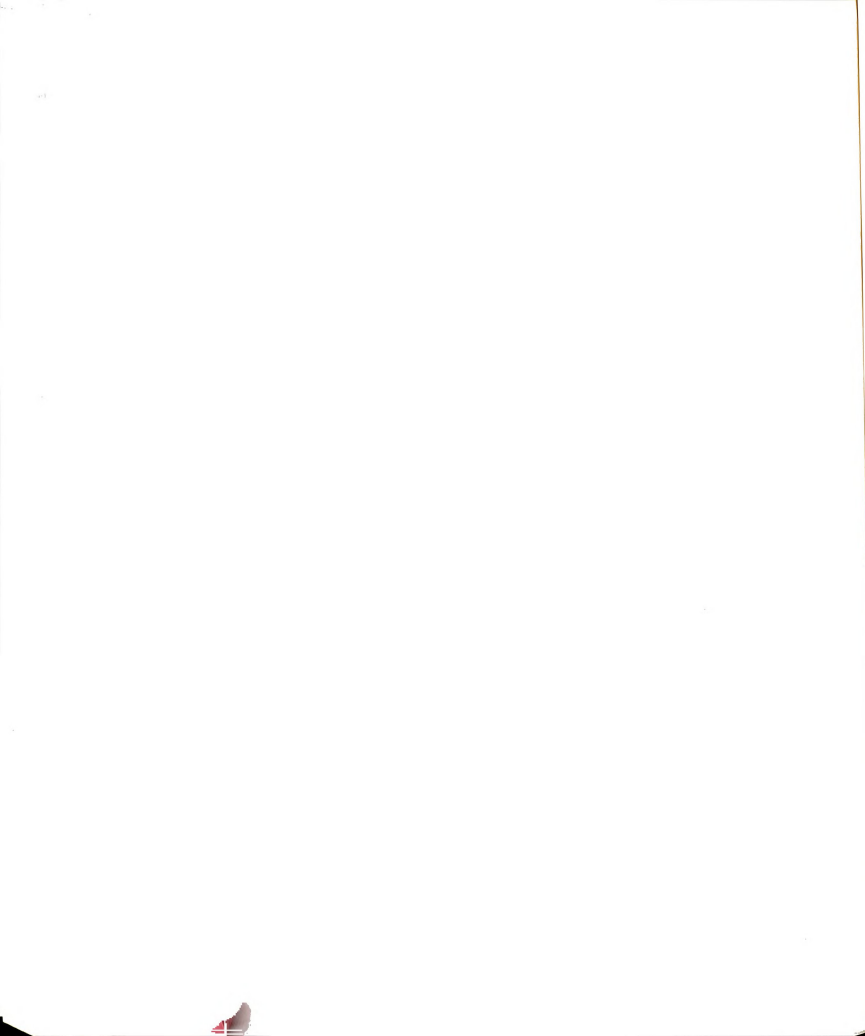
1. To the best of your knowledge and in your opinion, is an exchange visit always obligated among neighbors, relatives, and co-villagers in your village?
 - (1) Yes, it is obligatory
 - (2) Obligated only if they were a relative.
 - (3) Obligated only if there were a special occasion.
 - (4) Not obligated but desirable.
 - (5) I don't know.
2. If a neighboring family visits your family, is your family then obligated to visit them in return?
 - (1) Yes, it is obligated to return the visit in all cases.
 - (2) Only return the visit if there is a special occasion.
 - (3) Only obligated if they are a relative.
 - (4) Not obligated but desirable.
3. Among your people what are the occasions for which people feel obligated to visit each other and for which there is no exception.
 - (1) No certain occasions but it is up to the person.
 - (2) There is certain occasions that cannot be ignored.
 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 4. _____
 5. _____



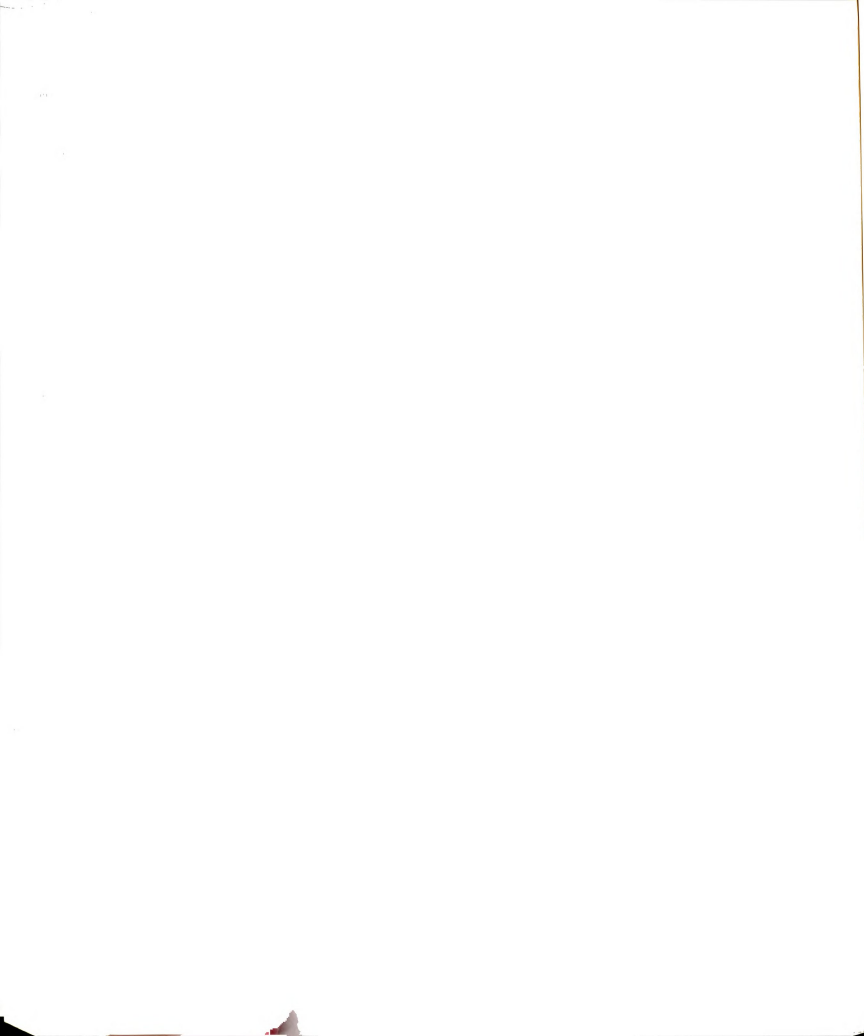
4. Do you think there is any change in the obligation of the occasions related to exchange visits among people which differs from that of the past?
- (1) Yes, there is a change.
- (2) No, there is no change.
5. If your answer to Q.4 was "Yes," what patterns of change do you think have occurred and what are the factors causing such change?

General Courtesy

6. Among your people, when a person has a newborn child, is it an obligation to visit and congratulate him/her?
- (1) Yes, it is obligated in all cases.
- (2) Only obligated if close neighbor or relative.
- (3) It is not obligated but desirable.
- (4) I don't know.
7. Among your people, if a person passed away, is your family obligated to participate at the person's funeral?
- (1) Yes, it is an obligation.
- (2) Only if close neighbor or relative.
- (3) No it is not an obligation.
- (4) I don't know.



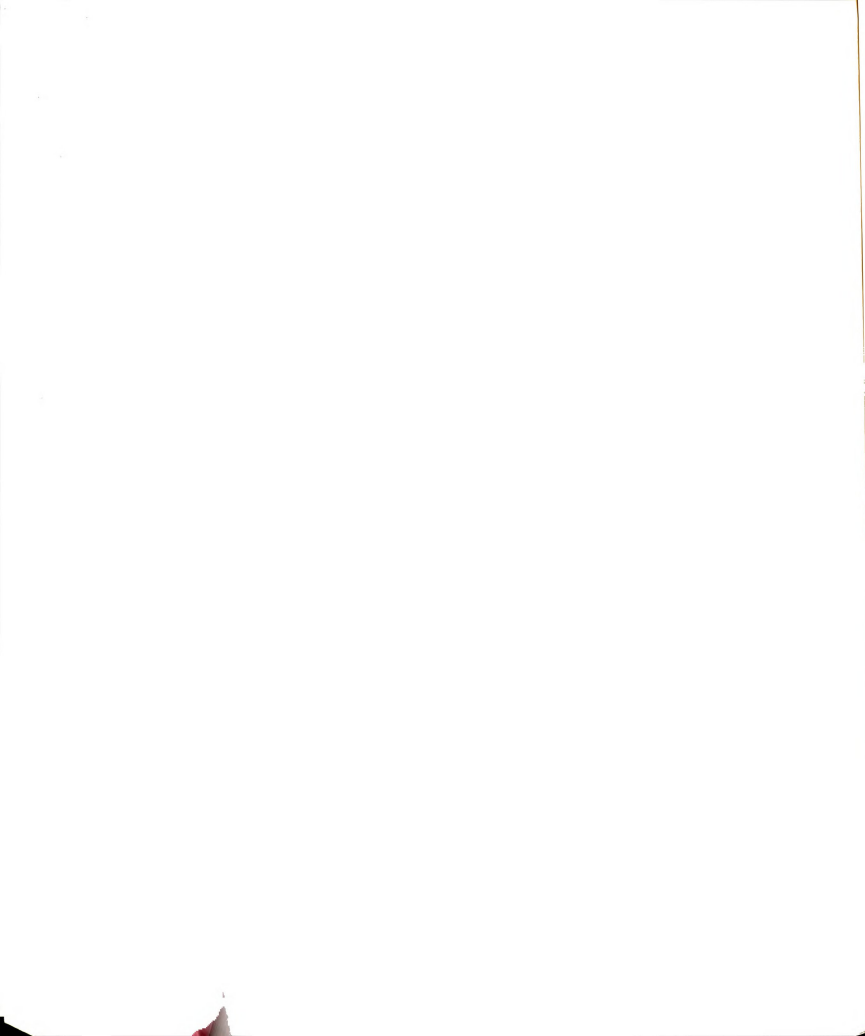
8. Among your people, if a person is traveling or moving away from your village or neighborhood, is it an obligation to go to say good-bye to him/her?
- (1) Yes. It is an obligation.
 - (2) Only if he/she is close neighbor or relative.
 - (3) Not obligated but desirable.
 - (4) I don't know.
9. Among your people, if a person is hospitalized, do you think it is an obligation for your family to visit him/her?
- (1) Yes, it is an obligation.
 - (2) Only if he/she is close relative or neighbor.
 - (3) Not obligated but desirable.
 - (4) I don't know.
10. To the best of your knowledge, do you think the people in your village have changed in the past fifteen years in terms of taking care and concern about each other?
- (1) Yes
 - (2) No
11. If your answer to Q.10 was "Yes," what types of change do you think have occurred and what is your explanation for such change?



Cooperation, Accommodation, and Mutual Aid

Now I would like to ask you some questions related to cooperation and mutual aid among your family and your village.

12. Among your people, if one of your co-villagers, relatives, or neighbors have an important occasion which requires extra work, e.g., guests, marriage, feast, etc. is it obligated to:
- (1) Help even if he/she does not ask for help.
 - (2) Help only if asked for help, or invites you.
 - (3) Go only if it is a relative.
 - (4) Not attend without an invitation even if related.
 - (5) It is not obligated but desirable.
 - (6) I don't know.
13. Suppose you have an important appointment and suddenly some of your relatives or neighbors ask you to help him/her. Do you think you are obligated to delay your appointment to offer your help?
- (1) Yes, I consider it an obligation in all cases.
 - (2) Only if it is a relative.
 - (3) It is not obligated but desirable.
 - (4) I would not delay my appointment in any way and I am not obligated.
14. For what general occasions do people in your village feel that they are obligated to offer help to each other without request from the host?



15. As you see it, do you think people in your village have changed in their attitude toward the exchange of help from what they used to do in the past?

(1) No

(2) Yes (if yes, please answer the next question)

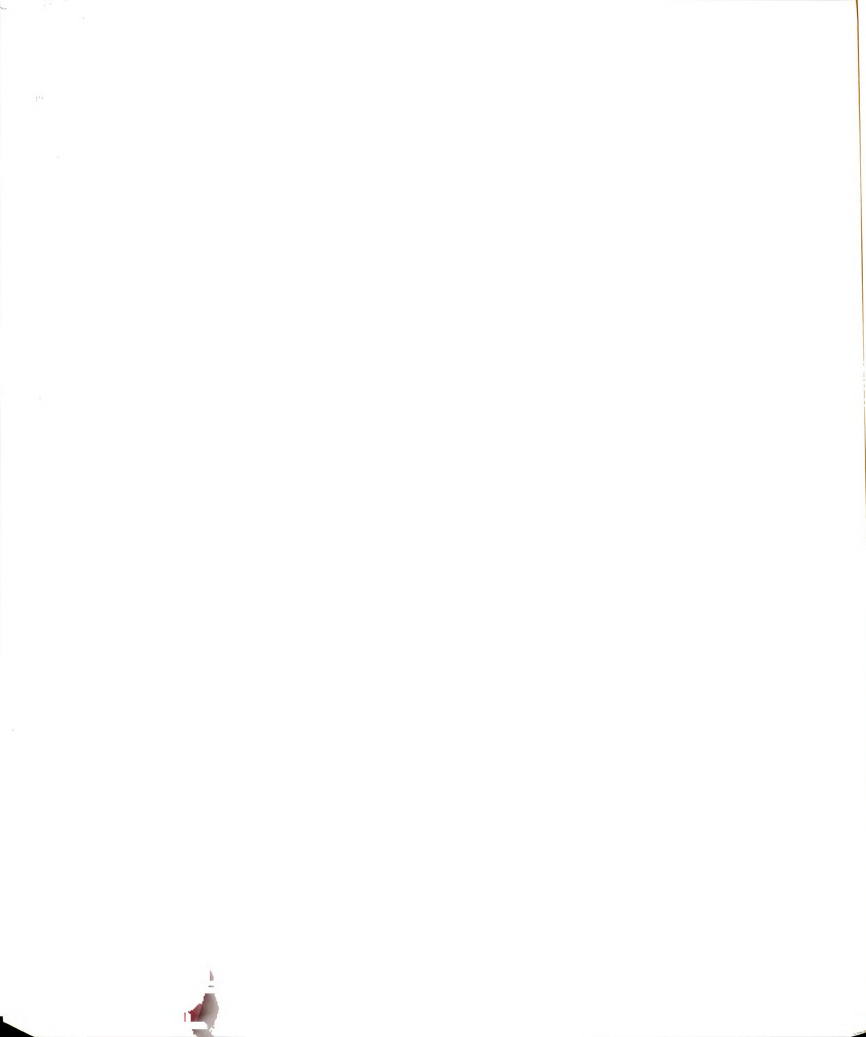
What pattern of change do you think has occurred and what are the factors causing this change, from your point of view?

16. Do you think this change in the exchange of help occurs even among the one family and house?

(1) No

(2) Yes (if yes, please answer the next question)

What types of change do you think would occur and what factors would cause such change?



Financial Aid

Now I would like to ask you some questions about the exchange of financial aid among family members of the tribe and co-villagers.

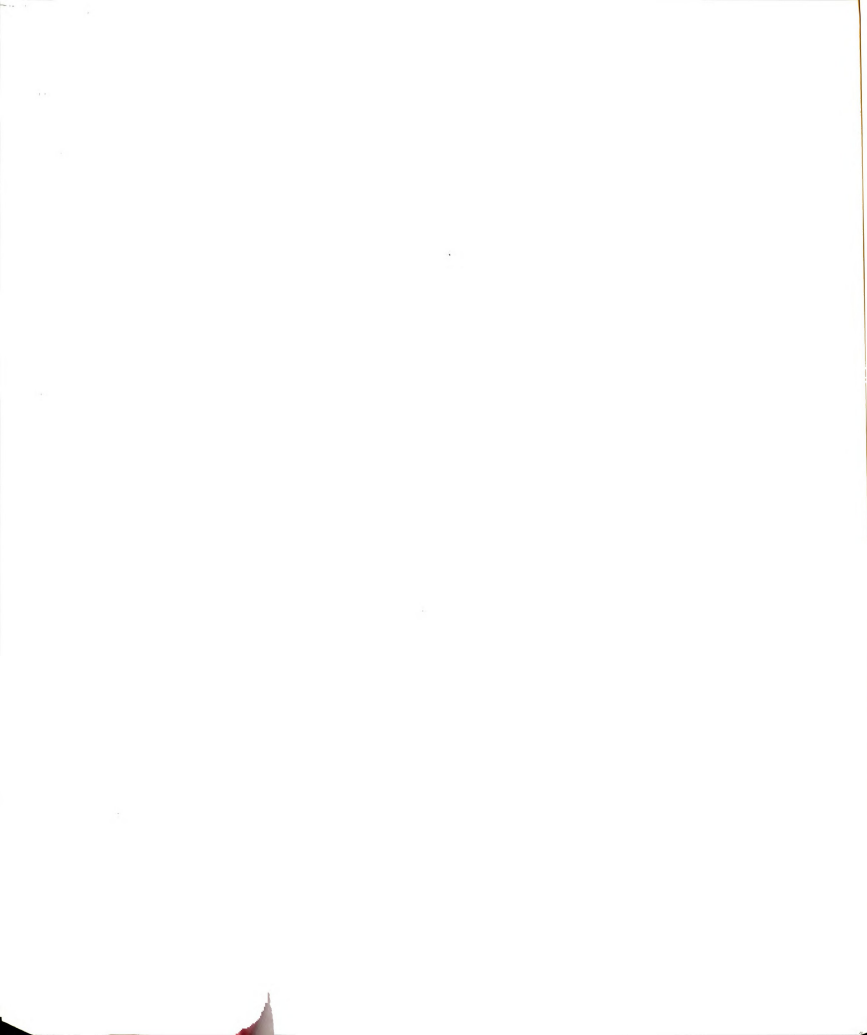
17. Among your people, are the people obligated to help each other financially during times of crises?
- (1) Yes, it is obligated in all cases.
 - (2) Only obligated among relatives.
 - (3) It is not obligated but desirable.
 - (4) I don't know.
18. If you were in need of money or a loan, do you believe it is obligatory to first ask for help from a relative before asking a friend?
- (1) Yes, it is obligatory to first ask a relative.
 - (2) I would ask anyone I knew who would be willing to lend me the money, regardless of the relation.
 - (3) No, not obligated but desirable to ask relative first.
 - (4) I don't know.
19. Have you received any financial aid during the last year?
- (1) Yes
 - (2) No

If your answer was "Yes," from whom did you receive assistance?

- (1) From one of your relatives.

Specify: _____

- (2) From one of your clan.
- (3) From one of your friends.



What was the occasion for the assistance?

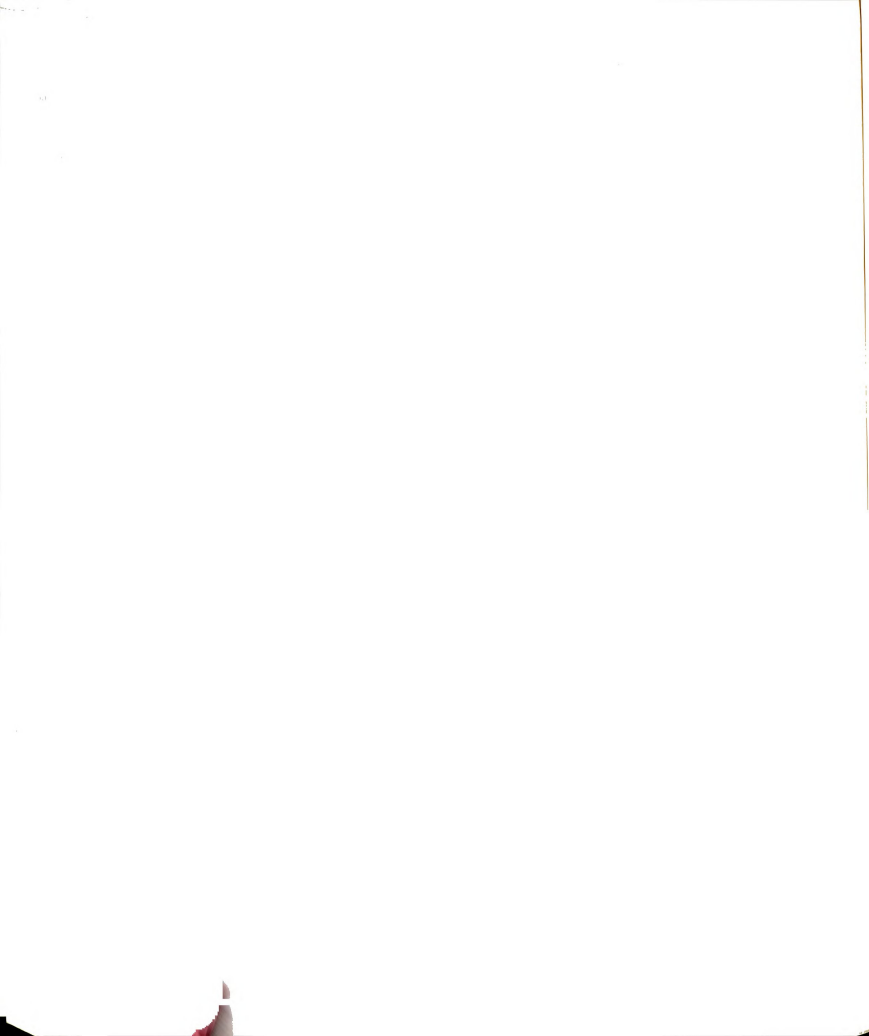
- (1) Marriage
- (2) To pay a Debt
- (3) Blood
- (4) Borrowing

20. What are the occasions that are considered obligated among your people for the exchange of financial mutual aid?

21. To the best of your knowledge, do you see any change among your people and family regarding the exchange of financial aid?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

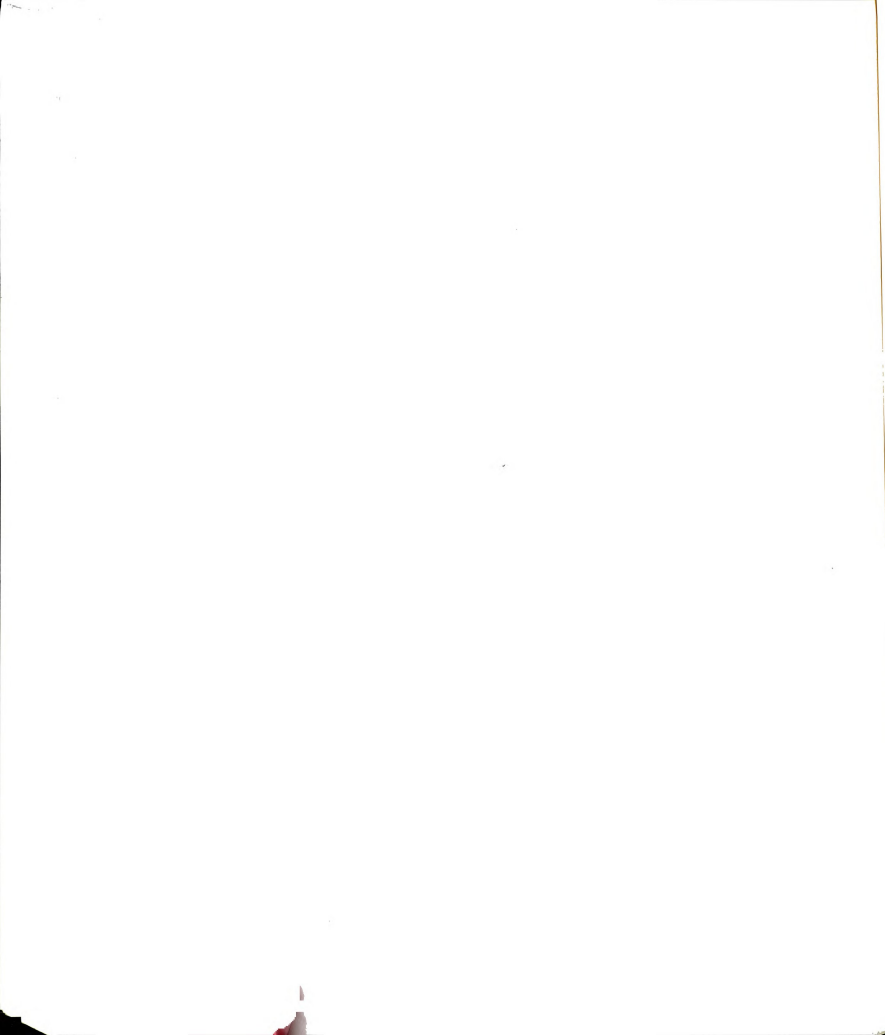
If your answer is "Yes," would you please explain this type of change and what are the reasons for such change?



Respect

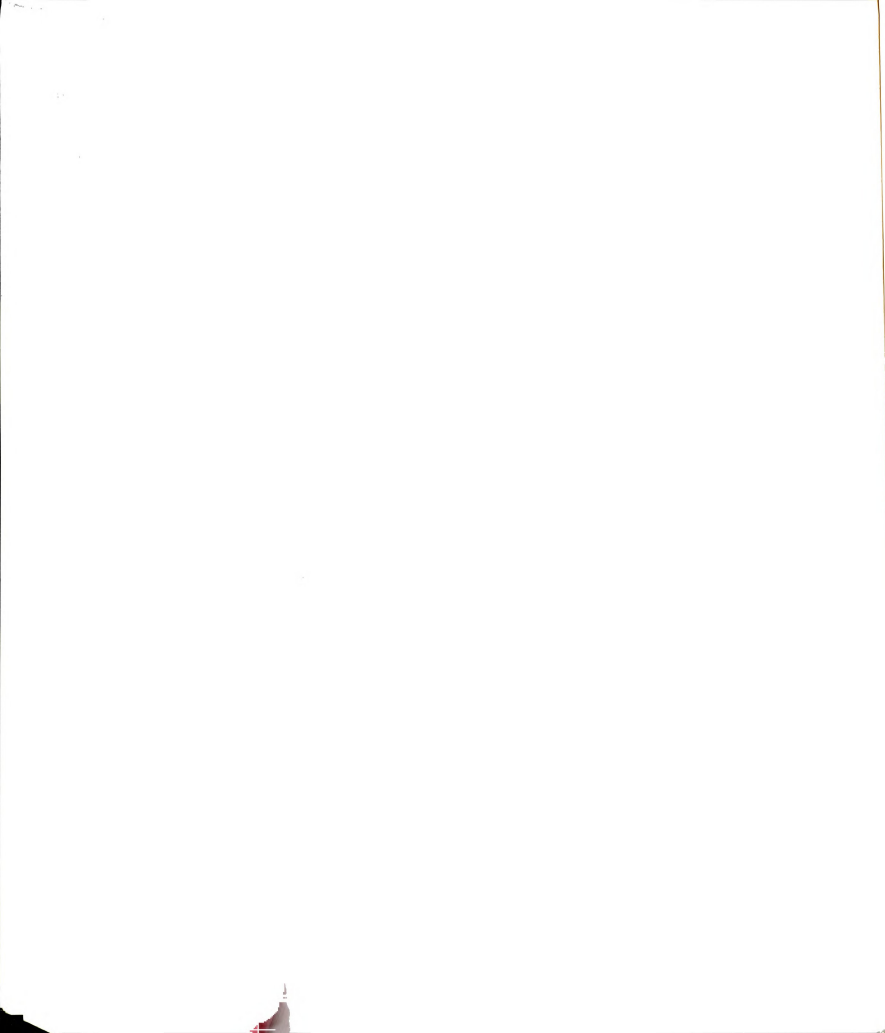
23. How do you usually address a person from your village (but not a relative) who is similar in age to your father or mother?
- (1) Dad or Mom
 - (2) Uncle or Aunt
 - (3) By his/her name
24. If someone from your village (but not a family member) who is similar in age to your parents, said something different from your beliefs, or did something wrong to you, what would be your usual reaction?
- (1) Keep silent.
 - (2) Correct him/her politely.
 - (3) Correct him/her as an equal person.
 - (4) I don't know.
25. To the best of your knowledge, do you see any change in terms of the exchange of respect, especially between the young and the old, do you feel that the people in your village and family have changed in the past fifteen to twenty years, if you had a chance to live in that time and nowadays?
- (1) Yes
 - (2) No

If your answer was "Yes," what types of change do you think have occurred and what are the reasons for such change?



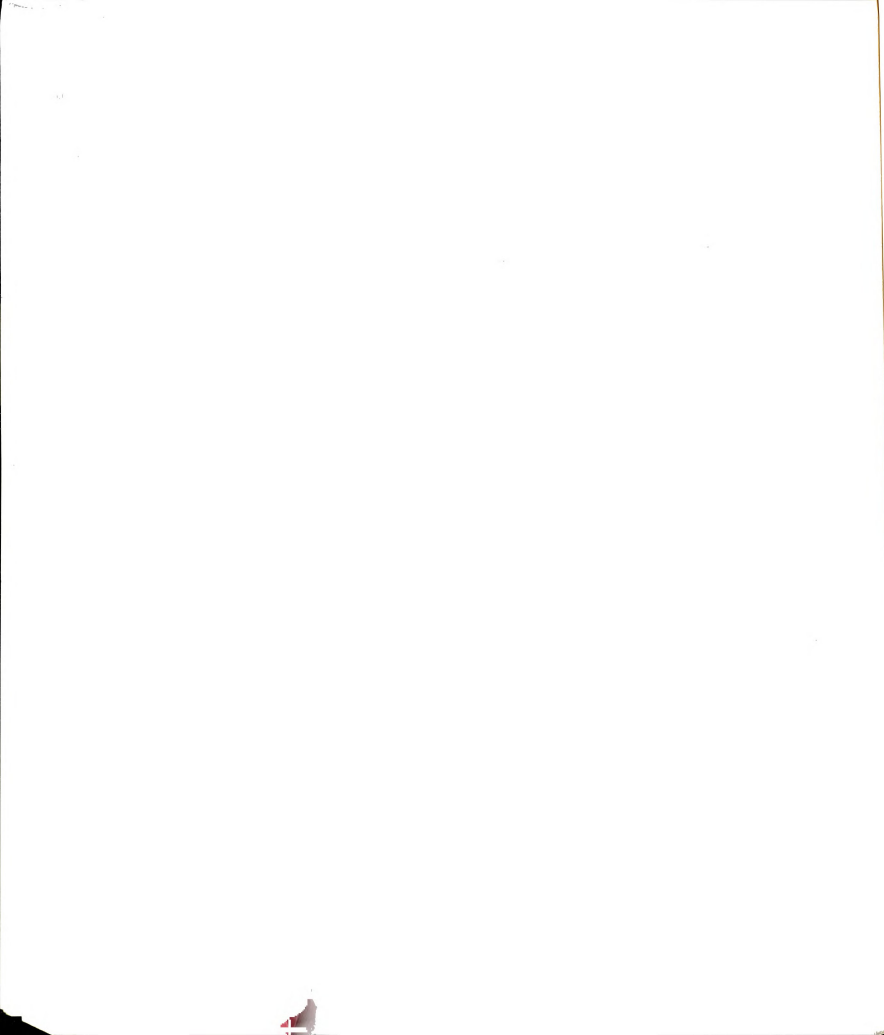
SECOND PART

First, we want to ask you a set of questions about changing family values. There are no right or wrong answers. We just want to find out how people in your age category feel about these things.

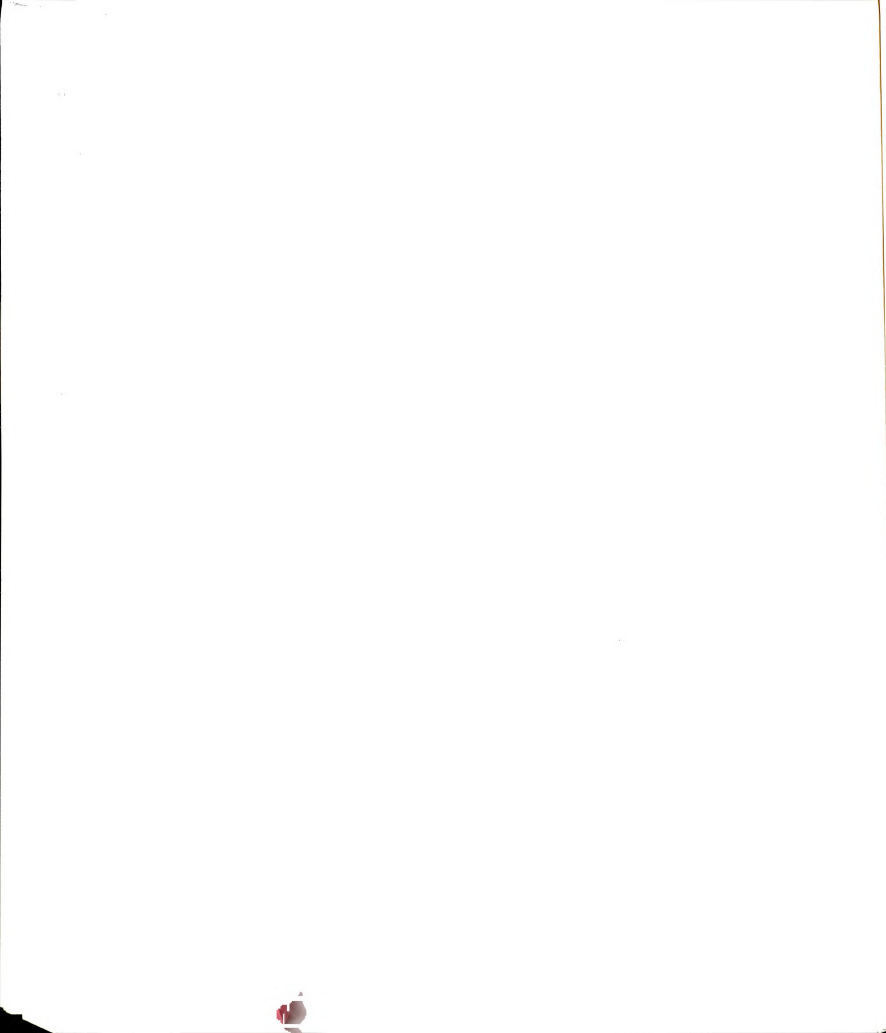


Please mark one opinion only.

	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
1) If a man's job contradicts his family's values so that severe conflicts develop, he should find a new job.			
2) A young person should never argue with his/her parents even if the parents are wrong.			
3) A young person should never try to get his/her parents to change their minds about an important matter once the parents have decided.			
4) It is "okay" to sue the village or kin if s/he did wrong.			
5) Married children should stay close to their parents in order to take care of them.			
6) It is "okay" to sue a relative (e.g., father, mother, uncle, etc.).			
7) A father should not marry his daughter or sister to a person outside of her cousins.			
8) Married children should stay close to their parents in order to care for them.			
9) A person should never refuse a social invitation from any member of his/her village, clan, kin or relative whether or not s/he is busy.			



	Agree	Disagree	Unsure
10) A person is strongly obligated to pay the debt of his/her relative if the relative cannot pay.			
11) A person should always consider the needs and interests of his/her family and parents as more important than his/her own.			
12) A persons should always be ready to share his/her house with a relative if he/she is in need.			
13) It is never acceptable for a person to marry outside his/her tribe if s/he did wrong.			
14) It is wrong for a person to stay at a hotel when visiting a city where he/she also has kin.			
15) It is good in today's world for a person to have many children.			
16) If a member of the family is insulted, you should act as if the insult were against you directly and you should act against a person who insulted your relative.			
17) A person should talk over his/her important decisions (such as marriage or employment) with his/her family before taking action.			



Questionnaire #

Interviewer

Date

Household ID #

Resident's Place
inside the village

Alain Household Information

Resident's Name: _____ (optional)

Relation to the Household Head: _____

All information in this questionnaire
will be kept in strict confidence and
it will not be used for non-research
purposes.

Demographic Information about the household head.

First, would you please give us some information about you (head of the household).

1. Marital status of household head.

- (1) Married, spouse at home.
- (2) Widowed
- (3) Divorced
- (4) Single, never been married
- (5) Married, but spouse does not live with you.

2. Occupation of household head.

What is your main occupation?

- (1) Farming
- (2) Government employee
- (3) Private business (self employed)

Do you have a secondary occupation?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

If yes, please describe: _____

4. INCOME

How much do you think is your total monthly income that is put into your account (include all the income your family earns, e.g., salary, any crop or livestock sales, social security, etc.)

- (1) Less than one thousand S.R.
- (2) Between one and two thousand S.R.
- (3) Between two and three thousand S.R.
- (4) More than three thousand S.R.

EDUCATION

5. Education

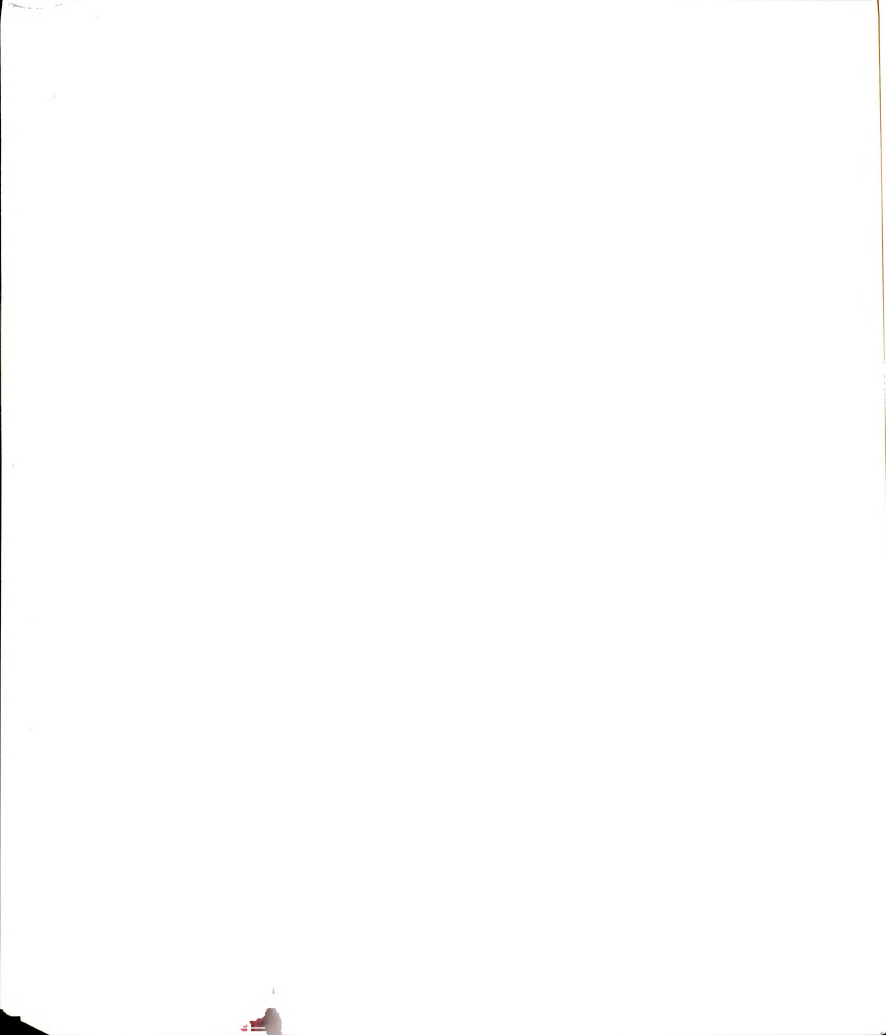
What level of education do you have at this moment?

- (1) Illiterate (neither read nor write)
- (2) Read and write only
- (3) Elementary school or less
- (4) Intermediate school
- (5) High school
- (6) Bachelor or above

AGE

6. Age

How old are you now, do you think? _____



7. LAND OWNERSHIP

Do you own or farm any land?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If yes, how many rahabah do you have or farm? _____

How many total rahabah do you take care of or farm? _____

If your job is farming, who usually works on the farm now?

Do you irrigate crops?

(1) Yes

(2) No

How do you usually cultivate the farm?

(1) By plowing machine

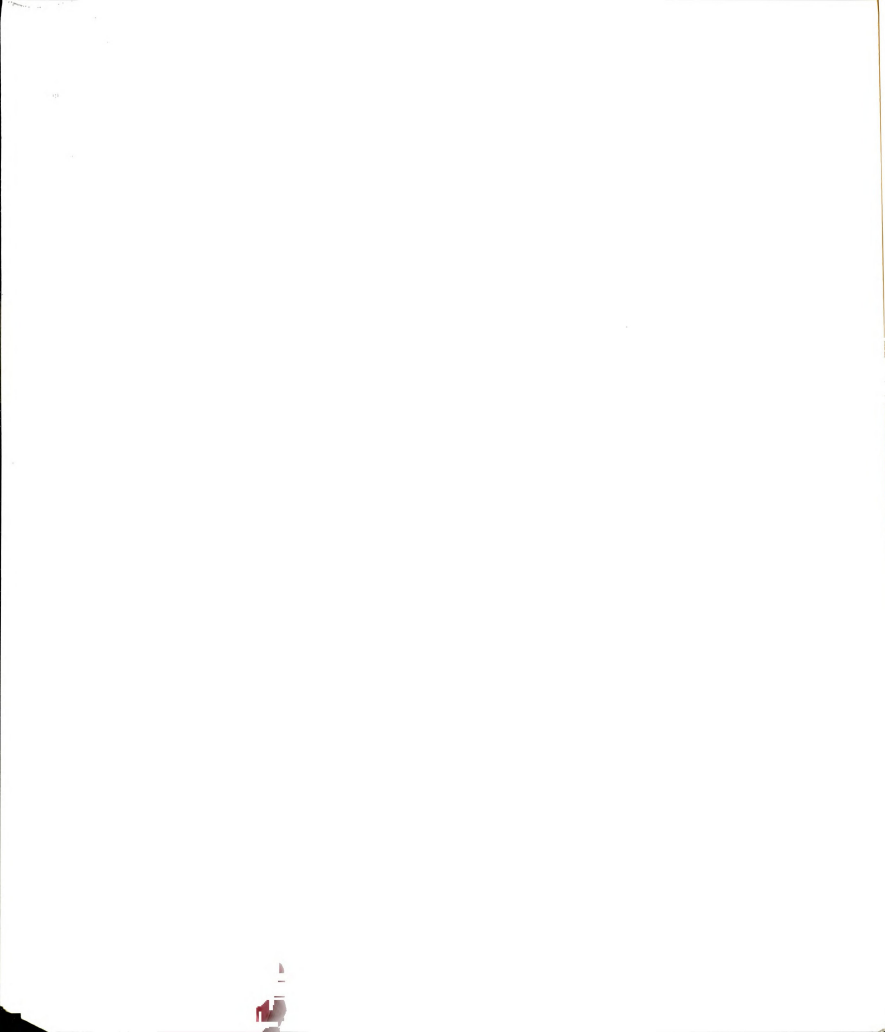
(2) By oxen

(3) Both plowing machine and oxen

Do you own the above equipment for cultivation or do you usually rent it?

(1) Own it

(2) Rent it



8. Type of House

- (1) Villa
- (2) Stone house
- (3) Brick house

Number of rooms in house: _____

Who owns this house where you live? _____

So you have amenities in this house?

___ Yes ___ No

What kinds of amenities do you have?

- (1) Electricity
- (2) Washing Machine
- (3) Radio
- (4) TV
- (5) Indoor plumbing
- (6) Refrigerator
- (7) Stove
- (8) Car

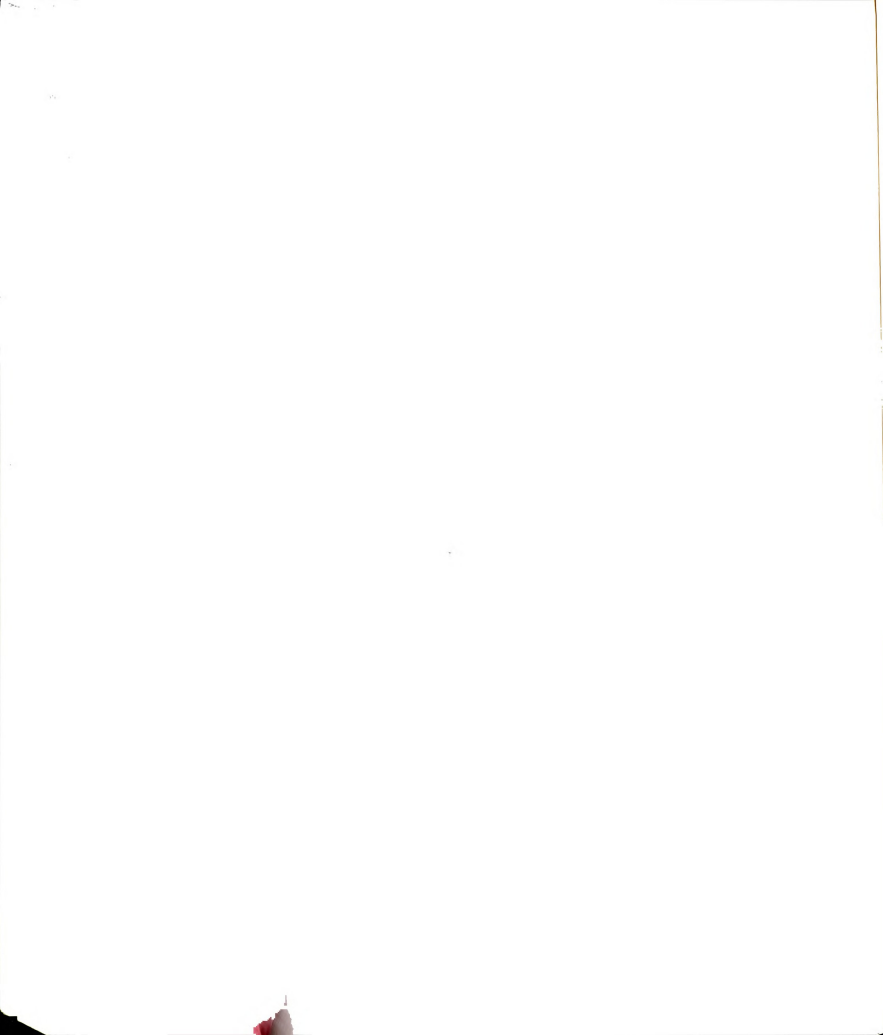
How long have you and your family lived in this house?

_____ years _____ months

Did you live in another place before this house?

- (1) Yes
- (2) No

If yes, when _____



11. Why did you choose this place to live?

12. Where would you prefer to live, if you could choose any place?

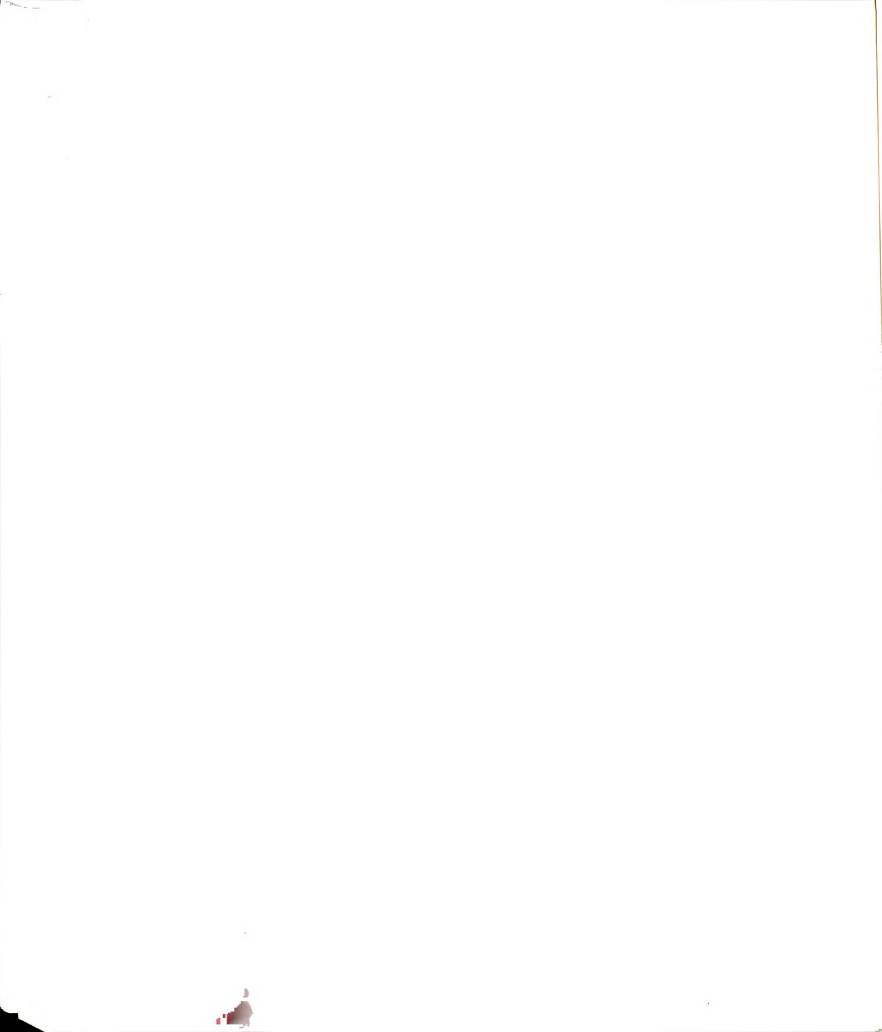
Why?

13. Do you expect to move out of and away from this village during the next 3-5 years?

(1) Yes

(2) No

If "yes," to where do you intend to move?



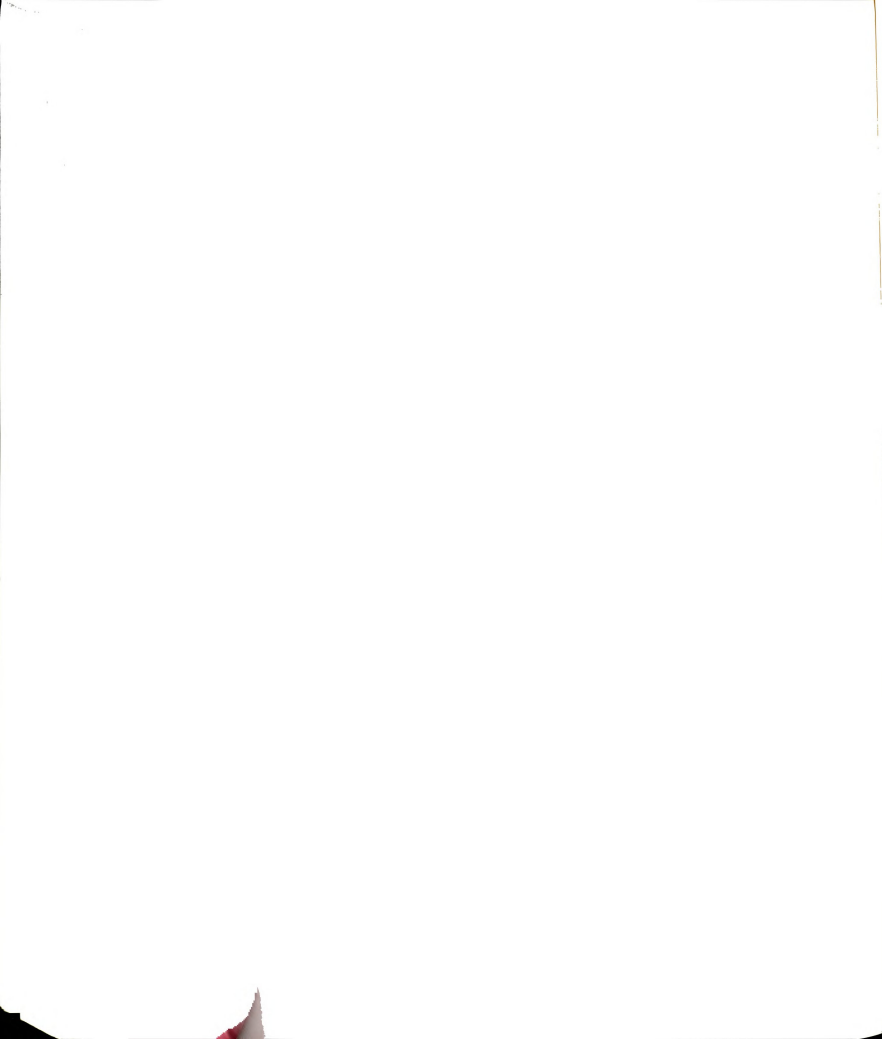
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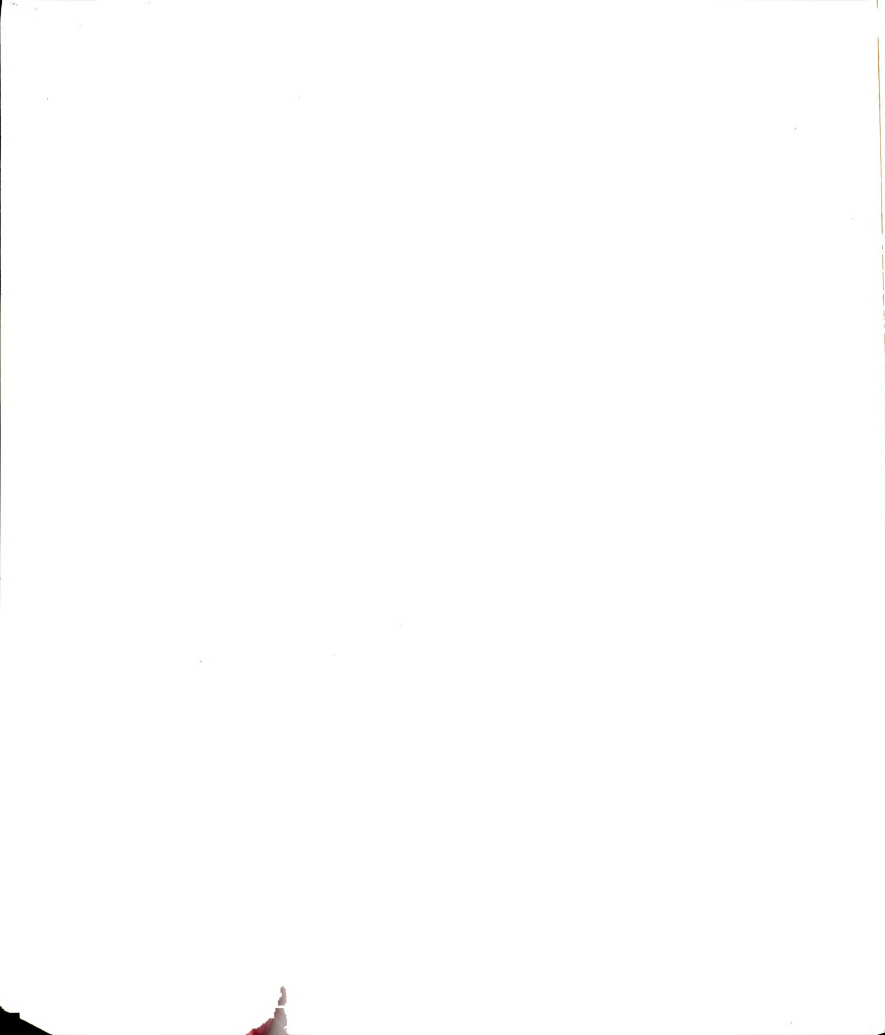
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