

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNITY IN SHIMSHAL, PAKISTAN

**DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES:
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND MODERNITY IN SHIMSHAL, PAKISTAN**

By

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A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial

Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Philosophy

McMaster University

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Abstract

Conventional approaches to evaluating international development programmes undervalue the local contexts within which development initiatives occur. Programmes are most often assessed according to economic criteria, which do not fully represent the aspirations and concerns of community members. Consequently, formal development evaluations are poor reflections of a programme's total influence on the social organisation of communities and the daily lives of community members.

Two objectives guided my research. The first was to develop an approach to evaluating rural development programmes, at the level of individual communities, which was more sensitive to indigenous social contexts and priorities than are conventional approaches. My second objective was to demonstrate the utility of this new approach by using it to evaluate the influence of Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) initiatives on Shimshal community, Pakistan. The first objective was theoretical; the second, empirical.

The study begins by addressing the initial objective with two major theoretical points. First, I draw from the critical social theory of Habermas to develop the concept of community sustainability, which I offer as a universally acceptable standard against which to evaluate the results of development programmes. Community sustainability is defined as follows: (a) a universally desirable, ideal state; (b) in which community members' shared norms and supporting institutions are established consensually; (c) where decisions are validated according to those shared norms within accepted institutions; and (d) where those norms and institutions, and changes to them, are supported through time by the material resources available to the community. According to this conception programmes should be evaluated in terms of their influence on community decision making processes, and not on specific technical innovations.

Second, I employ Matthews' sociological work to suggest that we can evaluate the contribution of development programmes to community sustainability by examining their influence

on decision making in four areas of organisation: social, political, economic, and ecological. These, when integrated with the larger concept of community sustainability, facilitate the identification and definition of four categories according to which community sustainability can be empirically evaluated: social vitality, political validity, economic viability, and ecological volition.

I applied this framework to interpreting the nature of sustainability in Shimshal community, in northern Pakistan, and to evaluating the influence of an initiative by the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme to create village organisations in Shimshal. Two main research strategies were employed. First, I analysed historical and contemporary texts to provide the following contextual understandings: (a) Shimshalis' formal interpretation of their community; (b) outsiders' historical and contemporary perspectives on Shimshal; (c) the history of community sustainability in Hunza (of which Shimshal is a part) over the past two centuries; and (d) the objectives and achievements of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme in the villages of northern Pakistan.

Second, I engaged in seven months of ethnographic fieldwork in the community of Shimshal. Field notes collected during my two visits were coded along two dimensions: (a) into four theoretically-derived categories (social, political, economic or ecological); and (b) into inductive categories, each of which represented some theme or narrative of Shimshali lived experience (eg. formal education) relating to the creation of AKRSP village organisations. These two dimensions of analysis integrate in an interpretation that utilises small case studies to assess the influence of AKRSP initiatives on the sustainability of Shimshal's four areas of social organisation.

This process of evaluation reveals that Shimshal has become more sustainable in the past half decade because village organisations created by the AKRSP have facilitated an increasingly consensual form of decision making within an increasingly rationalised culture and society. That AKRSP village organisations have facilitated this change is due mainly to the social and cultural context of Shimshal, particularly an indigenous tendency toward community autonomy and collective decision making.

The study's significance relates to its initial objectives. First, the approach to evaluating agency development I advanced improves on conventional approaches to programme evaluation, and also contributes to the evaluation of social change more generally. Second, the application of this evaluation approach to AKRSP development in Shimshal contributes to AKRSP's practical understanding of the influence of its endeavours in Shimshal, and provides guidance for improving development efforts in Shimshal and elsewhere within its programme area.

Acknowledgements

First and last I am thankful for Nancy's support and encouragement.

Several individuals within the academic community have provided valuable guidance and criticism. I gratefully acknowledge the contribution of the professors who served on one or more of my thesis committees: Steve Lonergan, Barry Smit, Ralph Matthews, John Eyles, Vera Choinard, Les King, Jonathan Crush, R.J. Preston and D. Jamieson. I extend special thanks to John Eyles, Kenneth Hewitt, Kenneth MacDonald and Pamela Moss for their enduring scholastic and personal support.

I am indebted to the following institutions and individuals for their financial and logistical assistance: the Geography Departments at McMaster University and Brock University, Professors Steve Lonergan and Barry Smit, the International Development Research Centre (IDRC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the Aga Khan Rural Support Program (AKRSP), and the Snow and Ice Hydrology Project (SIHP). I am also grateful for the assistance and friendship of Michael Junkov at AKRSP, and that of Loris Gasparatto, cartographer at Brock University.

Many friends have endeavoured, beyond the call of friendship, to provide me with a supportive context in which to undertake this work. Foremost among them have been Waldemar and Dorothea Butz, Stuart and Jean Cook, Kenneth and Cheryl MacDonald, Christina and Jim Kerr, Pamela Moss, Cameron Wake, Katherine Miller, Pam Carnochan and Jamie Honderich. I also thank Pam and Jamie for their company and assistance in Shimshal.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to the people of Shimshal for an experience which, despite 709 pages of effort, is beyond my ability to express. The friendship of Daulat Amin and his house, *Lumbardar* and Shambi Khan, Hasil Shah, Laili Shah, Ghulam Shah, Ali Rahman, Shefa and Woufa, and many others, is a gift I can only begin to repay. They have given me my dissertation.

Dedicated to the memory of

Stuart Albert Cook

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PART I:
Theory and Method

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to Part I

I address four objectives in Part I. First, in Chapter One, I introduce the thesis as a whole; I briefly summarise what it is that I hope to convey in the document's eleven chapters. Second, in Chapter Two, I provide a rationale, a justification, for engaging in the interpretive project that the thesis describes. To the extent that a central purpose of the thesis is to develop and demonstrate a new approach to assessing the influence (or potential influence) of development on small rural communities, I concentrate on explaining what is wrong with existing development theories. Third, also in the second chapter, I describe, in theoretical terms, an alternative approach to evaluating rural development. Fourth, Chapter Three describes the methods utilised in the study.

1.2 Structure of the Thesis

The thesis confronts a variety of theoretical, methodological and empirical issues. It might be well, therefore, to begin by describing the format in which the document unfolds; in other words, to provide a textual map showing the distribution of material covered, as well as routes among its various constituent elements.

The whole enterprise is linked together by a series of research questions. Two of these are of fundamental importance: how can I conceptualise a new approach to evaluating rural development? and, how can I demonstrate the utility of that conceptualisation in terms of an

empirical context?¹ These two general questions lead to others which are more specific to my particular topic of study, and which underlie the thesis' overall structure (see Table 1.2).²

In Chapter 2.1, the first substantive discussion of Part I, I address the question "what is wrong with existing theories of development?". The answer to that question provides impetus for the thesis as a whole by identifying a failure to consider indigenous social reality as a salient inadequacy of dominant theories of development. In Chapter 2.1 I limit discussion to criticisms of development theory itself. Chapter Four, the first chapter in Part II of the thesis, applies these conceptual criticisms to an empirical situation: how outsiders have interpreted Shimshal community, how their interpretations differ from internal ones, and what the existence of widely divergent views has meant for the development of Shimshal. The evidence I employ in Chapter Four is textual: published accounts by European explorers of the community, and unpublished "guest book" entries of recent European and North American tourists, provide outsider interpretations; a formalised folk history of Shimshal provides an internal interpretation.

Chapter 2.2 addresses the second two conceptual questions: "how can development studies change to address current neglects?", and later "what abstract criteria contribute to make an indigenous community sustainable?". Discussion coalesces around an exploration of Habermas' social theory, particularly his linked theories of communicative rationality, modernity and

¹ The same two questions can be expressed with a different emphasis: what do I want to discover about a particular empirical context? and, what theoretical concepts facilitate that conceptualisation? This second configuration characterises primarily descriptive studies, for example ethnographies, and implies that the study is empirically driven. Such a study requires detailed empirical information, which theory then helps to organise. The emphasis that I have chosen (concept and demonstration of concept) implies that the study is theoretically driven, and therefore empirical information is used to provide a "case", rather than to definitively describe an empirical context. It is worth emphasising at this early stage that my goal is to demonstrate the utility of an approach, and not to provide a detailed ethnography of the subject community.

² The questions listed in Table 1.2 also appear in Table 3.2 (expressed slightly differently), where they are broken into two further levels of precision. The discussion that surrounds Table 3.2 delves into the nature of research questions more generally: for example, the relationship between question and answer, the process of formulating research questions, and the link between research question and methodology.

Table 1.2: Theoretical and Empirical Research Questions

How can I conceptualise a new approach to evaluating development?	How can I demonstrate the utility of that set of concepts?
What is wrong with existing theories of development?	What is wrong with how outsiders have conceived Shimshal? ³
How can development studies change to address current neglects?	What effect has that outsider interpretation had on the community's development?
What abstract criteria contribute to make an indigenous community sustainable?	What are the characteristics of Shimshal's sustainability?
How can an appreciation of community sustainability inform development practice?	How have Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) village organisations influenced community sustainability in Shimshal?

modernisation. I argue that the attempt to facilitate **communicative rationality** among development communities is a more valid and more parsimonious universal goal for development programmes than are the assumed universals of dominant development theories. I then describe, in Habermas' theoretical terms, how a community becomes more communicatively (and instrumentally) rational, how that process is manifest as modernity, and how it may be undermined by a diversion toward modernisation. This description allows me to make a case for **community sustainability** as a specific operational goal for community development programmes. Central to the notion of communicative rationality are **generalisable interests**: objectives shared by all members of a community. I postulate, in Chapter 2.2, that a generalisable interest which is common to members of most communities is a desire to sustain members' communities materially and symbolically in

³ Shimshal is an agro-pastoral community of some 1200 inhabitants located in Pakistan's Karakoram mountain range (see Chapters Four and Five). I spent two field seasons totalling seven months in the community (see Chapter Three). My investigations during that time provide the empirical material for my interpretations about community sustainability (see Chapters Seven through Ten). Appendix 10 provides a geo-physical description of the Karakoram region.

a recognisable form.⁴ Thus, I argue that community development programmes should strive to facilitate community sustainability.

Identification of community sustainability as a universally-valid goal for community development leads to the second question addressed in Chapter 2.2: "what abstract criteria contribute to make a community sustainable?". The answer to that question comes from three sources. First, I return to Habermas' theories of instrumental and communicative rationality to say that a sustainable community is a modern one, where symbolic and technical meanings and decisions are negotiated intersubjectively. Second, I borrow from sociologist Ralph Matthews (1983) to identify three spheres of social organisation -social, political, economic- around which decisions and meanings are negotiated. Third, I return to writings in sustainable development, and argue that a fourth organisational sphere, the ecological, is also important, at least in small rural communities. By the end of Chapter Two I have defined my concept of community sustainability, and have enumerated and described the categories within which it can be interpreted: social vitality, political validity, economic viability, and ecological volition.

The conceptual discussions of Chapter 2.2 are applied in the four empirical chapters of Part III. Each of Chapters Seven, Eight, Nine, and Ten tackles one of the organisational spheres. The empirical chapters share a similar structure. I begin by expanding on the notion of community sustainability in terms specific to the appropriate organisational sphere, and then discuss how I conceive that sphere to be manifest in Shimshal (its salient categories and so on). After that I provide several small case studies which illustrate important aspects of Shimshal's social vitality (or whatever). These case studies typically describe some change in the decision making process, this being influenced by creation of Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) village

⁴ This is, of course, an assumption, but one that applies in almost all cases. Certain communities such as those found in jails and concentration camps may have no greater generalisable interest than to dismantle themselves both materially and symbolically. Still, extreme exceptions notwithstanding it is valid to assume that humans typically desire the persistence of their social milieu. T.S. Eliot makes a similar point in Notes Toward a Definition of Culture (1949:54) "...any vigorous small people wants to preserve its individuality".

organisations (VOs) in the community. The case studies allow me to show how a particular development initiative has affected decision making in Shimshal, and then to evaluate changes as conducive or destructive to communicative rationality, social vitality (or whatever), and ultimately community sustainability. The final section of each chapter summarises the interpretations afforded by the examples, and relates that organisational sphere to the others. It is worth noting at the outset that, against my initial expectations, AKRSP initiatives have had a primarily positive influence on Shimshal's ability to sustain itself symbolically and materially.

The decision to use detailed examples as "data" or "information", rather than some other more comprehensive and seamless approach is both a cause and a result of the primarily ethnographic field methods I employed. Chapter Three is devoted to describing both the methods themselves itself, and the reasons for using them. An important part of the third chapter is an account of how field work actually happened; how I experienced it. I hope that account provides something of a context within which to interpret my interpretations throughout the thesis.

Part II includes three chapters whose primary function is to describe the study's empirical context. Chapter Four discusses how insider and outsider interpretations of Shimshal have differed over the past century. Chapter Five is a more detailed history of Hunza, the social, political and cultural region of which Shimshal is a part. In particular, the chapter examines three *levels* (as opposed to spheres) of organisation within Hunza -kingship, kinship and household- and describes how Shimshal and Hunza have variously rationalised and modernised in response to structural changes at these levels. The information in Chapter Five provides a cultural, political, social and historical context for much of what comes later in specific examples. In Chapter Six I describe the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Northern Pakistan. I summarise its origins, describe how it conceptualises rural development, outline its principles, and enumerate its various strategies. My objective in Chapter Six is not to judge the programme, although some critical comparisons to the approach I propose in Chapter 2.2 are made. Rather I am interested in providing, once again, a context within which empirical examples can be understood.

Part IV, comprised of one chapter -Chapter Eleven-, provides an answer to the last conceptual question: "how can an appreciation of community sustainability inform development practice?" and to the final empirical question "how have Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) village organisations influenced community sustainability in Shimshal?". These two questions are addressed throughout the thesis, mainly in section or chapter summaries. The final chapter provides more comprehensive statements (a) as to the utility of the concept of community sustainability as a framework within which to evaluate rural development, and (b) as to AKRSP's success in Shimshal according to the evaluative framework encompassed by my conception of community sustainability.⁵

⁵ Readers who are familiar with the language of critical social theory may find a brief summary of my central argument, expressed in that language, useful at this stage:

Conventional theories of development are inadequate because they undervalue local contexts within which development initiatives occur, and fill the holes by assuming that western urban/industrial contexts apply universally. A more sound approach to community development would justify some minimally universal claims about the process of acceptable, or just, social and material change while remaining sensitive to contextuality inherent in that change. An adequate minimally universal goal for development is to facilitate communicative rationality at the community level, and to help communities achieve generalisable interests identified in communicative discourse. Some notion of community sustainability can be taken as a manifestation of a cross-contextual generalisable interest, and thus as a technical goal for development. Community sustainability can be defined in terms of the theory of communicative action, and its evaluation can be methodologised according to a framework which includes social vitality, political validity, economic viability and ecological volition as salient spheres of social organisation. Habermas' theories of modernity and modernisation provide the setting within which communities strive to become more sustainable. Shimshal community, in northern Pakistan, has become more sustainable in the past half decade because village organisations created by AKRSP have facilitated an increasingly communicative form of decision making within an increasingly rationalised culture and society. The community is experiencing a period of modernity. That AKRSP village organisations facilitated this change is due to the particular social and cultural context of Shimshal, particularly a "latent" tendency toward collective decision making.

Chapter Two: Modernisation, Modernity and Community Sustainability

2.1 Why International Development Neglects Indigenous Social Reality

2.1.1: Introduction

Failures in planned development programmes are well documented. Many authors offer information on projects that were unsuccessful from the start, or that faltered after an initial period of apparent success (see Goulet, 1977; Iliffe, 1979; Carty and Smith, 1981; Thompson, Warburton and Hatley, 1986). Recently, development agencies themselves have admitted that initiatives have often not achieved intended long-term benefits (IUCN, 1980; CIDA, 1987).

Development failures are often documented numerically in economic, agronomic or demographic terms. While this reflects the orientation of western development agencies, it tends also to depersonalise the problem, its causes and its solutions. The effect is to anaesthetise the reader to the reality of failed development at the local level; the reality that unsuccessful development initiatives are not just failed attempts at improving conditions, but may also be concrete steps toward the degradation and destruction of community. In order to lessen the negative consequences of development initiatives, it is necessary to augment numerical descriptions of material losses with qualitative understanding of social losses and to provide explanations which identify the causes of those failures in terms of both socio-cultural and material degradation.

Two causes of development failures **at the community level** are discussed in this section: (a) invalid or inadequate perceptions of indigenous priorities, and (b) poor understanding of the relationships among social, economic, political and ecological components of many traditional rural

communities.¹ Both of these causes stem, at least in part, from the nature of the theories which inform the policy decisions and practices of contemporary international development agencies. The accepted development theories concentrate mainly on economic factors and relegate local social and cultural circumstances to a secondary status. As if by default, they attribute contemporary western characteristics and motives to populations in developing areas. In the discussion that follows I address (a) the failures of development programmes to incorporate indigenous social reality into proposed initiatives (a and b above), and (b) the source of that failure in development theories.

2.1.2: Social Reality and Development

First, development initiatives fail to identify with the **consciousness** of community members (see Schumacher, 1973; Bodley, 1975; Thompson, Warburton and Hatley, 1986). Development agencies set their goals according to western technocratic and bureaucratic priorities (see Stanford, 1980; Bryant and White, 1982; Whiteman, 1985). These goals commonly include increased quantity of health (eg. reduced infant mortality), increased material wealth, improved formal education and increased *agricultural productivity, expressed in dollar value* (see Aga Khan Rural Support Programme, 1986). Rural communities do not always share these goals, or goals may be shared by both agency personnel and their beneficiaries, but less tangible aspirations are down played. Agency decision makers tend not to consider the importance of trade offs among different types of wants and needs (Goulet, 1977). As a result, many initiatives conflict with local

¹ For my purposes **community** is defined as a "spatially delimited set of interacting face-to-face groups" whose "everyday life in a locality is underpinned by shared values" concerning social, economic, political and ecological well being (Eyles, 1986, p.61; see also Matthews, 1983, p.154-155). In an **Indigenous community** these shared values are likely to stem from a common inherited lifeworld (see Habermas, 1981, p.335-337).

conceptions of improvement (see Bodley, 1975; Thompson, Warburton and Hatley, 1986). Such initiatives are rejected or ignored by villagers, or they are accepted unwillingly. If agency representatives are persuasive, villagers may accept an innovation willingly, but without understanding its impact on the community (Bodley, 1975; Berman, 1982). A situation can arise where no one can predict or control the outcomes of initiatives. Villagers may not understand the western innovation or initiative; nor do agency representatives often understand the desires and culturally defined needs of villagers. Development policy must develop a conception of improvement that is more attuned to local circumstances.²

Failure to recognise and identify with community consciousness is only one aspect of failed development attempts. A related problem stems from agency decision makers' lack of appreciation of the **holistic** nature of many traditional rural communities. Decision makers are trained to confront problems from a particular disciplinary perspective, usually economic, demographic, or agronomic. Thus, they tend to perceive communities according to what Porter (1987:6) describes as the "western experience of contemporary life which separates everything from everything." This perception contrasts with the picture Porter paints of traditional kin-based societies, where individuals live "a life of wholeness and connectedness - people produce what they consume, live and deal with risk and hardship within a reinforcing system of mutual aid, and have a common set of values, life chances and life expectations" (1987:1).

Porter's descriptions of both types of society are simplistic, and his conception of kin-based societies is Utopian. *Very few self-sufficient or truly subsistence economies remain. Nevertheless, anthropological and cultural-ecological case studies describe traditional rural communities in similar terms of wholeness, connectedness and integration among cultural, social, economic and*

² Some constructive measures have been taken in this direction. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has recently adopted an initiative to place more workers in the field, and to increase the organisation's commitment to "human resources development," both of workers and development recipients (Beemans, 1988). This is a beginning toward greater understanding between agency personnel and development beneficiaries.

ecological circumstances (Turnbull, 1962; Cole and Wolf, 1974; Ott, 1981; Staley, 1982; Hewitt, 1986). This does not mean that community integration is necessarily perfect or total. Nor does it mean that connections and integrations must be positive or reinforcing; community inter-relationships are often characterised by conflict. However, these studies do suggest that to understand the group it is necessary to understand how community components connect to one another. As long as development agency decision makers treat problems in isolation without considering their relationships with other variables and components of community existence, they are likely to produce unexpected and undesirable long term consequences.

Deficiencies in the development process relate to the ways in which development research is conceived and accomplished (ie. development theory). In general, international development is both "expert-driven" and positivistic. Theories of development tend to reify traditional communities in terms appropriate to western disciplinary categories, and then assess them according to quantitative, technical criteria (see Said, 1978). What is needed is an increased acceptance of the legitimacy of indigenous knowledge at the theoretical level, and a search for development research methodologies which successfully probe the phenomenological realities of people dwelling in potential recipient communities.

I am conceptualising a close relationship between development theory and what occurs at the level of policy formulation, and implementation of projects, and initiatives. It is quite possible to argue that what occurs in the field is far removed from the dominant meta-theories of development. Certainly, the struggles of field workers have as much to do with context, expediency and contingency as they do with abstract conceptualisations from above. Initiatives with apparent theoretical rigour have often failed at the level of practice, for some contextual reason. Conversely, theoretically dubious initiatives are frequently successful for some contextual reason (astute or incompetent field workers are, of course, part of the context). But, each of these sets of circumstances (success or failure despite theory) suggests, not that theory and practice are unrelated, but rather that the theoretical concepts that predominate either do not interpret context

appropriately, or do not guide project development adequately. Who can deny that modernisation theory, for instance, has an impact from the level of national policy to village level initiatives? But its impact cannot be predicted, because the theory is not adequate to many of the contexts to which it is applied.

A third possibility also exists, apart from the possibility of success despite theory and the possibility of failure despite theory: that the theorisation of development never percolates down to the level of practice. That argument is made by Jorge Nef in an insightful article entitled "Development Processes: Contradictions between Theory and Practice" (1989). Nef argues that the conceptual questions of development theory have become separated from the operational questions of development practice, to the detriment of the development process. He explains the present situation as follows:

...the very term "development process" is used with two completely different meanings. One involves a **technical** question: the application and transfer of capital and "know how" to improve upon specific conditions of backwardness. The other notion of development entails a long range **historical** process dealing with socio-cultural systems and their transformation. (Nef, 1989:7; emphasis in original)

Nef goes on to say that

[d]evelopment agencies and professional "developers" emphasise the deployment of tools and techniques to produce specific and practical results. These are concrete, immediate and often narrow-gauge interventions geared to solving specific problems... Conversely, most academics and development thinkers emphasise precisely the opposite: the context at the expense of the instrumentalities... Thus, we see applied social scientists and applied natural scientists working in development, but with little ability to communicate their concerns, languages and experiences beyond their disciplinary boundaries. Worse, we also witness the proliferation of development studies where the pursuit of sophisticated macro-analytical models to explain the real world precludes the understanding of more down to earth techniques and micro processes. (Nef, 1989:7)

According to Nef, this separation of theory and practice is neither beneficial nor necessary. The very idea of **development** has specifically western ideological and cultural connotations, associated with notions of evolution and progress. Early techniques for developing certain portions

of the population, or populations as a whole, related closely to those theoretical, and lifeworld embedded, notions. Nef suggests that the first "contradictions and inconsistencies in development doctrine" emerged during the UN First Development Decade (1961-1971), as a result of unsuccessful attempts to "apply western molds to the 'emerging' and underdeveloped nations of the Third World" (Nef, 1989:8). Developers discovered that conventional conceptions were largely inapplicable. The UN Second Development Decade (1971-1981), suggests Nef, saw the development of *critical and radical analyses which questioned the assumptions of development orthodoxy: "the ECLA (Economic Commission for Latin America) doctrine, dependency and world systems theories increasingly substituted for modernisation, Rostowian stages-of-growth and diffusionist thinking"* (Nef, 1989:8). Significantly, the same conventional development practices continued to be applied in the guise of western aid. Aid donors emphasised the need to separate emerging "*critical*" theories from the practice of providing development assistance. Theory and practice became separated; in fact, new theories of development were removed from the practice of international development, and

the development process becomes largely an objectivised series of stages determined by specific technological innovations and the requirements of scientific management. More specifically **the managerial and bureaucratic modalities of development end up substituting for development theory**. They also provide *the conceptual framework and rationale for development practice...* By some twisted logic, **the development process becomes synonymous with the administrative process**; the development agency assumes the role of a surrogate development paradigm. Needless to say, this very technical and instrumentalist view of the development process rests on an implicit set of value assumptions: **modernisation theory and structural-functionalism with their inherent pro status quo biases** (Nef, 1989:8; first and fourth emphases added, second and third emphases in original)

Nef concludes by suggesting that an explanation of the relationship between the two modalities of development theory and development practice requires the identification of a third modality: the bureaucratic modality. The contradiction between theory and practice is not a natural process. It *"is rather the consequence of the bureaucratisation of conventional development theory and practice into institutional mechanisms whose logic has little to do with theory (explaining) or practice*

(changing the world) per se", rather it deals with "the procedural routinisation of development" (Nef, 1989:8).

Nef's argument is a cogent one, but not one that convinces that development theory is divorced from practice. Rather, it suggests that those theories (or portions of theories) we would like to see applied are not the ones that are applied. According to his own argument the process of development has been bureaucratised. It has been bureaucratised in the interests of a particular group (western donors), and according to a theoretical perspective that satisfies the requirements of that group (modernisation theory). Dependency theory, intermediate technology, sustainable development theory, are all applied according to a bureaucratic framework that practices them as modernisation (see Chapter 2.1.3). But bureaucracy does not occur in a vacuum. It mediates between a technical interest (practice, getting things done, system) and a practical interest (theory, explanation, lifeworld), and it is up to those responsible for reproducing practical interests to control the medium (bureaucracy).³ We cannot blame the inadequacy of development theory (lifeworld) on practice (system), because theory (lifeworld) incorporates practice (system): we have to structure our technical activities (system) according to our explanations of reality (lifeworld). We must blame the inadequacy of practice (system) on theoretical (lifeworld) inadequacy or impotence, for not conceptualising the contexts of technical agency. In the end a sustained failure in practice relates to a conceptual failure. If bureaucracy is inhibiting effective development it is because bureaucracies have been created in the service of one or another theoretical perspective on development.

³ This paragraph relates closely to discussions which occur later in the chapter, regarding Habermas' identification of three knowledge constitutive interests, and his explanation of the inner colonisation of the lifeworld by economic and bureaucratic media.

2.1.3: Social Reality and Development Theories

Four prominent approaches to theories of development inform how development scholars and practitioners think about development today. They are modernisation theories, dependency theories, theories of intermediate technology, and theories of sustainable development. Certainly, numerous other approaches exist, but those that have attained a degree of credence all derive from one, or several, of these four.

My task here is not to review or critique these four meta-theories in great detail, but rather to summarise them briefly, and identify characteristics of each that make them inappropriate as conceptual bases for development policy and practice.⁴ This can be done effectively in tabular form (see Table 2.1). That I am concentrating on these theories' inadequacies here is not to suggest that the theories have no utility. Indeed, readers will recognise aspects of all these meta-theories -especially dependency, intermediate technology and sustainable development- in the community sustainability approach I develop below.

The four prominent approaches to theories of development summarised in Table 2.1 share a lack of understanding and concern for indigenous community consciousness, and a lack of appreciation for the integration among social, political, economic and ecological aspects of community existence. They also neglect the need to assess and integrate development at a number of levels, from household to global political economic system. The conception of sustainable development comes close to the sort of integrated approach that is needed. But the

⁴ Readers who require a more detailed summary and critique of the four major approaches are directed to Butz (1991:146-154).

Table 2.1: Prominent Theories of Development

Modernisation	Dependency
<p>Thesis</p> <p>Underdevelopment is a consequence of some failure, deficiency or lack (educational, social, economic, cultural or environmental) in the underdeveloped area. The deficiency can be overcome through processes of capitalisation and industrialisation, similar to those which occurred in Europe, North America and Japan. Planned development should use western economic and technological expertise to facilitate a "take-off" period of rapid economic and social change. This "take-off" is usually stimulated by radical changes in methods of production.</p>	<p>Thesis</p> <p>Modernisation fosters the dependency of poor nations, and leads to a regressive path of underdevelopment, particularly among the poorest sectors of poor nations. Underdevelopment is not an initial condition. Rather, it is the process whereby a region is made dependent. Dependency theory borrows from Lenin's theory of imperialism in arguing that capitalist structures must constantly exploit new populations and regions to maintain a continual source of new capital. These new regions and populations become dependent on capitalism without reaping benefits. The solution is an internally-driven process of industrialisation and reform.</p>
<p>Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - macro orientation - assumes a beginning state of underdevelopment and an end point of development - substitutes western historical experiences for non-western ones - postulates the inadequacy of the east versus the adequacy of the west - economically deterministic - assumes western industrial priorities 	<p>Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - macro level theory - recognises a truly pre-capitalist, pre-industrial state of non-development - delineates the historical process toward underdevelopment - integrates social, political and economic issues - assumes western urban/industrial priorities - subsumes indigenous and local consciousness to national goals - ignores ecology
Intermediate Technology	Sustainable Development
<p>Thesis</p> <p>The dependency critique of modernisation is applicable at the local scale, where the faults of western materialism, industrialisation, and the fallacy of continual growth are apparent. The solution is to adopt a middle path between indigenous technology and industrial technology. Communities should be assisted in developing small-scale industrial technology that requires low capital, high labour and local resources, and which caters to local consumption. This will reduce unemployment and avoid dependency.</p>	<p>Thesis</p> <p>This approach is difficult to summarise because its contribution has been mainly rhetorical. Development must integrate economic development with ecological sustainability, so that economic growth can be sustained within an ecological context (defined at a variety of scales). This requires an integration of modernisation, dependency and intermediate technology, and a concern for the role of social and political structures. In addition, local ways utilising the environment are emphasised.</p>
<p>Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aligned with dependency, but still postulates modernisation, but at local scale - assumes the universality of western urban/industrial priorities, but at local scale - ignores social and political ramifications of economic restructuring - ignores indigenous consciousness - relatively sensitive to ecological concerns - economistic 	<p>Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - aligned with modernisation - theoretically weak: a bureaucratically expedient invention - contradictory: postulates sustainable growth within a dominant capitalist world view - examines indigenous ecological practices while ignoring phenomenological context - economistic

contribution of sustainable development is largely rhetorical.⁵

⁵ A result of development practice's uncertain success rate has been disillusionment with development itself. Specific reasons for this disillusionment with the current state of international development may be summarized under three headings: right wing cynicism, liberal aid reform, and radical criticism. In their book Perpetuating Poverty: The Political Economy of Canadian Foreign Aid (1981), Carty and Smith describe the adherents to each position.

The group which Carty and Smith term "cynical and often right-wing critics who maintain that most aid is wasted and should be cut back" is composed of "a vocal handful of right-wing journalists, politicians, civil servants and businessmen [sic]" within the industrialized north (1981:5-6). The downward trend in developing spending suggests that this group's numbers are increasing among decision-makers. The authors suggest that these individuals perceive foreign aid as a tale of incompetent and irresponsible bureaucrats squandering money on unworthy recipient governments (1981:6). Canadian proponents of this position maintain that Canada should give aid only to potential or actual political allies devoted to the spirit of free enterprise, and only when it directly benefits the domestic economy (1981:6-7). This 'tied aid' is not a new idea among nations of the industrialized North. Indeed, the commercial and political interests of the donor nations played an important role in the development of modernization theory. The first modernization theorists maintained that development could and should benefit the economies of donor and recipient nations, and that the natural way to achieve this mutual benefit was through creating industrialized capitalist economies in the recipient nations (see Schumpeter, Rostow). Failure to create thriving industrial economies in the developing world has prompted some critics to advocate cutbacks in development spending. Others propose greater 'tied aid' in the knowledge that this type of development benefits the Canadian economy, often to the detriment of recipient populations.

Aid reformers, those who "argue that aid should be increased in volume, improved in quality, and supplemented by new aid-giving mechanisms" comprise the second group (Carty and Smith, 1981:5). Its members include liberal civil servants and politicians, many professional aid-givers and academics, and members of some religious groups and non-governmental organizations, both in the industrialized north, and in developing countries (1981:7). It is the dominant, if least vocal, position in Canada, and most other developed nations. Aid reformers would like to see an increase in the proportion of gross national product devoted to aid, and advocate a reduction in 'tied aid'. As expressed by Carty and Smith:

...reformism is based on a vision of the south not as a dangerous 'other' sphere shrouded in the heart of darkness, but as a world of unfortunate people who need more of what the industrialized nations have to offer with fewer strings attached. Its advocates are distressed that donor nations have erred in not committing enough capital, enough goods, enough services to the Third World. More inputs, and better quality inputs, will permit the poor to build prosperous societies, they maintain. (1981:8)

In searching for 'better quality inputs' this group has developed a number of interesting alternative approaches to international development, including intermediate technology and sustainable development. While these approaches attempt at least to consider the material reality of developing communities, they continue to perceive the situation mainly economically, and from an industrial capitalist perspective, even when ostensibly addressing social or ecological issues. Such a perspective ignores the social reality of recipient communities. In the end, aid reformers "do nothing to disturb existing power structures, and preserve the traditional aid-giving perspective which divides the world into two categories of nations and peoples -givers and receivers" (1981:10).

The third attitude of disillusionment toward international development is expressed by "frankly more radical critics who, in analyzing aid in the context of all North-South relationships,

What is needed is an approach to development which considers the consciousness of community members, which incorporates the integrated pattern of material and non-material relations which comprise social existence **at the community level**, and which incorporates mechanisms to link the community level of social existence to lower levels (individual, household and kin groups) and higher levels (region, nation). This new approach to community development would come to terms theoretically with the how and why of individuals' actions (and not just in terms of their economy or ecology, but socially as well), and would suggest efficient methods for discovering the specific hows and whys of particular indigenous groups. It should also identify a goal for development efforts that is relevant and desirable to the range of indigenous consciousness (ie. universal in some sense). Finally, it should be able to suggest courses of action (or inaction) that effectively link peoples' hows and whys to a relevant development goal. To achieve all this, such an approach would probably be informed not only by conventional theories of development, but by empirical ethnographic and sociological work, and by theories of social change.

The sustainable development literature offers the foundation for an approach which could incorporate an emphasis on indigenous social reality; an approach which identifies **community sustainability**, the result, rather than sustainable development, the process, as the dominant

describe it as part of the problem, not the solution to poverty and underdevelopment" (1981:6). This group comprises politicians, civil servants and academics in many developing nations, as well as some academics, and members of religious groups and non-governmental organizations within the industrialized world (1981:10). Its position is firmly rooted in dependency theories of development; theories which suggest that the current international political economy perpetuates an imbalance in power between the north and south which can only be exacerbated by development programmes which operate within the constraints of that political economy. Radical critics advocate a new international economic and political order based on an equitable distribution of power (1981:10-11). Unfortunately, a very western conception of power is assumed, a conception expressed in terms of national governments and international politics, balances of trade and gross national products, manufacturing subsidies and export taxes. These concepts of international industrial socialism have little to offer members of indigenous communities who desperately want to modernize, but where modernization means more education, more food, more consumer items, and not a change in basic social and political and economic relations within the community. Nor do radical critics agree on whom is to initiate a new economic and political order.

theme (or universally accepted goal). The virtue of sustainability is gaining credence among development agencies. Members of indigenous communities in developing countries also strive for community sustainability, and individual sustainability within that community. Indeed, many ethnological and sociological studies describe strategies employed by indigenous groups to maintain the sustainability of their community in the face of internal and external stresses (see Turnbull, 1962; Cole and Wolf, 1974; Matthews, 1981, 1983; Rigby, 1985; Thompson, Warburton and Hatley, 1986). Strategies are often described as belonging to one (or several) of four inter-related spheres of activity and organisation: social, economic, political and ecological (see Matthews, 1983). The challenge, then, is to define community sustainability in terms of these four spheres, and to identify characteristics of social sustainability, economic sustainability, political sustainability, and ecological sustainability within potential recipient communities.

2.2 Community Sustainability: A Critical Approach to Evaluating Modernisation and Modernity

2.2.1 Introduction

Existing development meta-theories **assume** that the norms, the social structures, the ambitions and aspirations of the developing world are the same as (if somewhat less advanced than) those in the west. In other words, western circumstances of social and material change are applied throughout the world. In fact there is no justification of this claim for universality. On the contrary, development theories rely on an **assumption** of the global applicability of a particular set of western contexts, the application of which contexts to non-western contexts is increasingly contested. In other words, western social, cultural, economic and ecological contexts (the

ingredients of development theory) have been applied **uncritically** to developing communities.⁶

What is required, and what I attempt to provide (and, more difficult, justify) is an approach to evaluating development that offers a minimal underlying theme which may be practically accepted

⁶ Two brief examples, one relating to dependency theory and the other to modernisation theory, help clarify what I mean. Dependency theories are explicitly grounded in marxist social theory. Marxist theory argues convincingly that certain universal conditions of social labour apply to the development process, because the development process is necessarily tied to the expansion of the capitalist world system. But, dependency theories have been able to apply marxist theory only to **instrumental action during the period of development** (instrumental action is a term used by Habermas to describe action oriented to technical success. The concept is manifest in the conditions of social labour, in this case social labour **when** it becomes involved with the capitalist world system). They have done that convincingly, as their critique of modernization theories demonstrates, so that their explanations of dependency and underdevelopment must be accepted as an important contribution to development theory. However, marxist theory, as it has been utilized in the dependency critique, does not adequately describe social labour (instrumental action) in indigenous communities **prior** to the infiltration of capitalist relations. Nor does it explain **communicative** action within a community before or during the period of international development or modernization (Habermas uses the term communicative action to describe action oriented to reaching collective agreement among individuals. The concept expresses itself in the process of social interaction). The result is that western forms of reaching decisions are assumed to apply equally in developed and developing communities. The problem is exacerbated by a general lack of studies which investigate communicative action, even in the west.

Recent empirical work in more industrialized developing nations suggests that a marxist paradigm can be developed to critically explain much of social interaction, at least where the capitalist world system has become important (Vandergeest and Buttell, 1988; Mouzelis, 1988; Becker and Sklar, 1987; Duncan and Duncan, 1988). However, there is little indication that truly pre-capitalist forms of social interaction, or their residues in newly-capitalized communities, can be explained within the marxist paradigm of development.

A similar assumption of universality underlies modernization theory. That is the assumption of **strategic rationality** on the part of actors. Modernization theorists follow rational choice theorists in conceptualizing action as the "intentional, self-interested behaviour of individuals in an objectivated world, that is, one in which objects and other individuals are related to in terms of their possible manipulation...[for] the attainment of individual goals" (White, 1988:10). Economic optimization, or at least satisficing behaviour, is most often assumed by modernization theorists to be the primary goal of individuals. This argument is defensible if applied in the industrialized west to the realm of action geared to technical ends. The rise of capitalism in Europe and North America has often been related to increased individuality, and a corresponding ascendancy of 'economic (sic) man' (see Weber, 1958). However, certain aspects of communicative action in the west (voting, for example) are not adequately explained in terms of strategic rationality (White, 1988:12). It follows then that an assumption of universal strategic rationality should be applied cautiously, if at all, to describing action in developing communities, many of which lack the west's historical emphasis on individuality. Strategic rationality has become important in developing communities only recently, only in certain spheres of activity, and only to the extent that indigenous consciousness has been 'modernised'. In short, strategic rationality may be a consequence of development, but it is not a given upon which a theory of development should be based (numerous ethnographic and development related studies reinforce this observation. See in particular Turnbull, 1962; Goulet, 1977; Berman, 1982; Porter, 1987; Wambi, 1988).

as a universal goal for development, but which is flexible enough to absorb the instrumental and communicative contexts of individual communities.

My starting point toward such an approach to development is the critical theory of Jürgen Habermas, specifically his attempt to provide "a systematic answer to the problem of a **minimal universalism**" (White, 1988:23).⁷ From that starting point, in which I suggest that **communicative rationality** is an acceptable minimal universalism upon which to build an approach to development (Chapter 2.2.2), I move on to interpret the applicability to development theory of Habermas' theories of communicative ethics (Chapter 2.2.3), and of modernity (Chapter 2.2.4). This interpretation provides a foundation from which to build the concept of **community sustainability** as a desirable practical objective of development (Chapter 2.2.5). I conclude the chapter by linking my conception of community sustainability with a model of instrumental social organisation derived from the work of sociologist Ralph Matthews (Chapter 2.2.6).

The material I discuss in the following section is necessarily dense. The points I wish to emphasise are as follows. Development should be motivated by justice. Justice is manifested differently according to social contexts. However, it universally depends upon, and is constrained by, some intersubjective recognition of the equality of oneself and others. That equality is expressed communicatively in the right and ability of any individual to question the rationality (via validity claims) of his or her own, or another's utterances. Thus, just decisions are the outcome of agreement which is reached intersubjectively under conditions of **rational communication**. This leads the discussion into the realm of **communicative ethics**. In each sub-section I have included a table which outlines the central concepts and arguments addressed in the text.

⁷ White (1988:23) defines Habermas' minimal universalism as "a universalist position which makes strong claims and yet attempts to accommodate the insights of contextualist critics". White goes on to say that "although Habermas thinks that we can speak of universalist procedural criteria for assessing the justness of normative claims, he does not think it is possible to claim that these criteria unequivocally pick out one determinate principle or set of principles for acting justly or creating just institutions".

2.2.2 Communicative Rationality

It may seem hazardous to build an approach to development on the definition of a minimal universalism, at a time when the very concept of universalism is being criticised as an apologia for western ethnocentrism (Walzer, 1983). White (1988:22) maintains that in "many areas of morality, the abandonment of universality is entirely appropriate and a healthy sign of waning Western ethnocentrism". However he goes on to qualify that statement:

...in that one area of morality which is centrally related to politics -justice- such an adjustment is more unsettling, at least to some. This is because "claims of justice have always been the preferred examples of moral claims that are to be recognised by reason, as founded in the nature of things, as not essentially diverse, and as not contingent on any sort of social order".⁸ (White, 1988:22)

White, in his role as sympathetic commentator on Habermas, argues that justice is the one area of morality that must be conceived as universal. The notion of a universal justice is, like the defense of any universal, a thorny issue. If we agree that context is of central importance, that there are no privileged positions, then universalism of any kind is suspect. And the attempt to cling to a universal justice is yet another ethnocentrism. But justice, at least what we could term "social justice", is by definition **comparative**. An individual or group may be said to be treated justly only in comparison to the treatment of other individuals or groups. The larger the network of social relations, the greater the burden of comparison.

International development is a large scale, cross cultural enterprise which necessarily engages two significantly different contexts (donor and recipient; powerful and powerless; wealthy and poor). To suggest that different standards of justice could pertain to those two communities would defeat the ostensible point of development efforts. Some sort of universal basis for justice is practically necessary. We can accept the ontological statement that there are no privileged

⁸ Hampshire, 1982:148.

Table 2.2a: Communicative Rationality

1st Order Concerns	2nd Order Concerns	3rd Order Concerns	Discussion
minimal universalism			Development is cross-contextual : we need a guiding principle that applies to groups with different normative contexts.
justice	equality of discourse		Development is an issue of justice , so a guiding principle for development should be a minimally universal concept of justice. For Habermas that is equality of discourse . We cannot predict just decisions, merely describe the discourse which leads to them: equal discourse.
theory of communicative rationality			Habermas' theory which describes the characteristics of equality of discourse.
	theory of knowledge constitutive interests	types of interest: technical, practical, emancipatory	The first step toward understanding the characteristics of equality of discourse is to categorise the topics of discourse. We have three cognitive interests (that arise in discourse), technical control and manipulation, practical understanding and consensus, and emancipation or liberation from the constraints of history.
		instrumental action, communicative action	These three topics of discourse result in two kinds of activity that influence the process of social change: instrumental action satisfies the interest in technical control and manipulation; communicative action satisfies the interest in developing an understanding and consensus among individuals. Both instrumental and communicative action are discussed in discourse, but only communicative action is achieved in discourse.
	theory of communicative action	competent speech acts, ideal speech	Habermas' theory which explains how understanding and consensus (communicative action) is achieved in discussion. Competent speech acts and ideal speech are terms used to identify the rules within which communicative action occurs: they are more precise descriptions of equality of discourse.
		validity claims	People come to understand each other intersubjectively if they accept the validity of one another's statements. A statement or argument can be accepted as valid if it is objectively true (it works in a technical sense), if it is normatively valid (people accept its appropriateness), or if it is recognised as an authentic or sincere expression.
	communicative rationality		Discourse which leads to a consensus based on all participants freely accepting the validity of an argument is rational discourse. It is an instance of communicative rationality. Individual participants overcome their individual subjective views to assess their positions intersubjectively.
	instrumental rationality		When an intersubjective agreement is reached then communicative rationality has occurred. When an action is taken which leads to success, then instrumental rationality has occurred. But instrumental rationality relies on communicative action for its validation: the success of an instrumental action has to be accepted in equal discourse.
minimal universalism	equality of discourse		A minimally universal goal of development should be to facilitate communicative rationality, which then will necessarily lead to decisions, and instrumental actions, we can accept as just.

positions (no universals), but to avoid privilege in practice requires an epistemological acceptance of some universal basis for justice.

Even the most adamant contextualists have difficulty theorising about justice without appealing to some degree of universalism. For example, Walzer (1983:xii,314), in his book Spheres of Justice, assumes "our recognition of one another as human beings" as "one another's equals" and as "culture-producing creatures [who] make and inhabit meaningful worlds". To Walzer then, a contextual conception of justice still relies on recognition of universal equality among individuals.

As noted above international development is an issue of **justice**. Its rhetoric lauds a more equitable global distribution of well-being. Development projects reflect, although often imperfectly and sometimes cynically, that rhetoric. In addition, international development is **cross-contextual**. It unites parties which have different normative contexts. Both of these conditions necessitate the attempt to identify certain elements related to the distribution of wealth and decision making power, which elements can be accepted as universal to all contextual situations in which development occurs.

For Habermas the problem is similar to that which I have outlined above: to "offer a universalist position which makes strong claims and yet attempts to accommodate the insights of contextualist critics" (White, 1988:23). Habermas accommodates the contextualist perspective by denying that there can be a single determinate principle or set of principles for acting justly or creating just institutions. What are universal are "the procedural criteria for assessing the justness of normative claims" (White, 1988:23). It is the process of reaching a just decision which is universal, and not the decision itself. According to Habermas justice can be evaluated as a process, not a result: justice is a process based on the **equality of discourse**. An actual decision will depend on the context in which it is made. These universal procedural criteria are manifested as a process of rational communication; a process which is elucidated in Habermas' theory of communicative rationality. The conception of justice offered by Habermas parallels that developed by Rawls in A Theory of Justice (1971). Rawls takes the position that the universal basis of justice

is expressed in "justice as fairness", which notion stipulates that "the principles of justice are agreed to in an initial situation that is fair" (Rawls, 1971:12). Thus, for Rawls as for Habermas, the principles which result are not necessarily universal, but the process (a fair process for Rawls, a process of equal discourse for Habermas) of determining just principles is universal.

To understand what Habermas means by *communicative rationality*, and why he conceives it as the universal key to justice, we have to step back to earlier stages of his critical social theory: the stages upon which the theory of *communicative rationality* is founded. The theory of knowledge constitutive interests leads into the theory of *communicative action* and finally the theory of *communicative rationality*.

Habermas identifies three knowledge-constitutive, or cognitive, interests: the **technical**, the **practical**, and the **emancipatory**, and presents them as "fundamental orientations to knowledge and action which are rooted in the underlying conditions of the evolution of the human species" (Scott, 1978:2). As such they are *transcendental, irreducible and exhaustive*; they define the link between the origin, application and validity of knowledge. This link results from the fact that "knowledge, experience and action are necessarily integrated" (Scott, 1987:2).

Each cognitive interest employs a particular type of knowledge. The **technical** interest relates to those aspects of knowledge and action concerned with technical control and manipulation. It relies on **analytical-empirical** knowledge which yields information that is structured as explanation (Scott, 1978:2). Traditionally, science has treated this type of knowledge as the only valid knowledge. The **practical** interest is concerned with understanding and consensus, and relies on **historical-hermeneutic** knowledge. This type of knowledge operates in terms of interpretations which aid mutual understanding in the conduct of life (Scott, 1978:3). The **emancipatory** interest derives from the other two, and is concerned with liberating men and women from historically contingent restraints. Emancipation is achieved through **critical-dialectical** knowledge which, through a process of self-reflection, explores the philosophical connection between knowledge and interests, and the sociological concern for the changing structures of society throughout history

(Scott, 1978:4). These concepts, particularly Habermas' conception of historical-hermeneutic knowledge, ground the theory of communicative action.

According to Scott (1978:5) the context for Habermas' social theory derives from Hegel's notion of "the evolution of the human species as a process of formation, or education". This process of formation operates through a number of basic social mechanisms which form the foundation of social evolution as a process. Habermas identifies three basic, but abstract, mechanisms or media: **symbolic representation, instrumental action, and communicative action**. These abstract media translate into two concrete forms of social action which parallel the technical and practical interests, and their respective types of knowledge: instrumental action describes the conditions of social labour, and communicative action describes the conditions of social interaction. Instrumental and communicative action are interrelated through language (symbolic representation), because "the technical rules employed in social labour, and the norms of social interaction are formulated in language"(Scott, 1978:5). For example, the cooperation needed for social labour must be backed up by social norms, while at the same time effective social interaction relies on recognising rights of possession which arise from the labour process. Habermas argues that critical theory, in its goal of emancipation, must consider this interdependence between social labour and social interaction. Specifically, "a critical social theory, oriented by an emancipatory interest, involves the synthesis of the types of knowledge generated through the technical and practical interests"(Scott, 1978:5).

An action can be assessed and categorised as either instrumental or communicative in terms of three criteria: the orientation of the actor, the mechanism which coordinates the action, and the grounds for assessing the action (Thompson, 1983:281). Instrumental action is oriented to successful activity, that is to the realisation of the actor's own ends. In other words it stems from technical interests. It is coordinated through egocentric calculations, and it is assessed in terms of its efficacy in reaching instrumental objectives (Thompson, 1983:281). Habermas believes that Marx's critique of political science exemplifies the ability of critical social science to incorporate the

concept of instrumental action within the capitalist world system (Scott, 1978:7). In a later section I will discuss instrumental action in terms of Matthews' model of social organisation, and relate it to communicative action.

Communicative action, and the associated practical interest, is oriented to reaching understanding with other actors through a cooperative process of discussion. It is both coordinated by and assessed in terms of the goal of reaching collective agreement among individuals, and occurs through competent speech acts (Thompson, 1983:281).⁹ Habermas devotes his most strenuous efforts to understanding communicative action. Indeed, he contends that the concept of communicative action provides a framework for considering the ideas of reason and **rationality**. If we assume, as Habermas does, that there is a close connection between rationality and knowledge, then we can also assume that actions or symbolic expressions are rational to the

⁹ What constitutes 'competent speech acts' is described within Habermas' model of **communicative competence** (paraphrased from White, 1988:29-30):

1. 'Cognitive Competence': mastery of the rules of formal, logical operations.
2. 'Speech Competence': mastery of the linguistic rules for producing situations of possible understanding; (a) mastery of the rules for producing grammatically well-formed sentences, and (b) mastery of the rules for producing well-formed utterances.
3. 'Interactive Competence' or 'Role Competence': mastery of the rules for taking part in increasingly complex forms of interaction.

Item 2b, "mastery of the rules for producing well-formed utterances" is described as "rules which enable a sentence to take up one of the three formal or 'universal pragmatic functions of language' which correspond to the three validity claims: 'to represent something in the world, to express the speaker's intentions, and to establish legitimate interpersonal relations'" (White, 1988:29). Habermas believes that these rules are embodied in the use of performative verbs which relate to the three validity claims. He distinguishes constative verbs (to assert, to propose, etc) which raise the truth claim; regulative verbs (to promise, to prescribe, etc) which raise the claim of normative legitimacy; and expressive verbs (to wish, to intend, etc) which raise the claim of sincerity or truthfulness (White, 1988:30).

Item 3 "Interactive Competence" is encompassed in Kohlberg's stages of moral development:

1. Preconventional Level: (a) the punishment and obedience orientation; and (b) the instrumental relativist orientation.
2. Conventional Level: (a) the interpersonal concordance or 'good boy - nice girl' orientation; and (b) the 'law and order' orientation.
3. Postconventional, Autonomous or Principled Level: (a) the social-contract legalistic orientation; and (b) the universal ethical principle orientation.

These stages are summarized in White (1988:66-68) and discussed in detail in Kohlberg (1971).

extent that they are based on knowledge which can be criticised within a context of communicative competence. More precisely, an **action** is rational if it leads to the attainment of instrumental goals (success). By linking the term rational with the notion of action oriented to success, Habermas formulates the concept of **cognitive-instrumental rationality**. This rationality is uncomplicated and traditionally acceptable in the same way that empirical-analytical knowledge is.

A **symbolic expression** (statement) is rational if it can be intersubjectively assessed and accepted as valid (Thompson, 1983). By linking the term rational to the notion of communicative action Habermas offers the basis for **communicative rationality**, in which the various participants overcome their specific subjective views, to assess themselves intersubjectively (Thompson, 1983). Such an assessment may be based on any of three **validity claims**: a statement is rational if it is accepted as true in the objective sense, if it is accepted as socially correct (normatively appropriate), or if it is accepted as a sincere (authentic, truthful) expression of the speaker's subjective world. Any of these validity claims can satisfy the basic condition of communicative rationality; they can be criticised and grounded. An understanding of criticism and grounding relies on a theory of argumentation in which each type of validity claim relates to a specific form of argumentation.¹⁰

As mentioned above, communicative action is action oriented to reaching an understanding. We conceive of actors striving to understand some practical situation with which they are confronted, so that they can coordinate their actions consensually (White, 1988:39). They reach this understanding by relating to objective, social and subjective worlds, through the corresponding validity claims of truth/success, normative legitimacy, and truthfulness/sincerity/authenticity. Furthermore, they relate to these worlds reflectively, that is "they have the competence to differentiate the three types of relations and select one or the other as the most appropriate for interpreting a given situation and working out a common definition of it"

¹⁰ See footnote 9, item 2b.

(White, 1988:39).

Habermas describes the rationality basis of validity claims as follows:

In contexts of communicative action, we call someone rational not only if he [sic] is able to put forward an assertion and, when criticised, to provide grounds for it by pointing to appropriate evidence, but also if he is following an established norm and is able when criticised, to justify his action by explicating the given situation in the light of legitimate expectations. We even call someone rational if he makes known a desire or an intention, expresses a feeling or mood, shares a secret, confesses a deed, etc, and then is able to reassure critics in regard to the revealed experience by drawing practical consequences from it and behaving consistently thereafter. (Habermas, 1981:8,9,15)

Communicative rationality is the process of reaching a consensual agreement by testing statements on the basis of validity claims. A decision and the activity resulting from a decision cannot be described as rational **of itself**. A decision is rational only if it is reached rationally, by the intersubjective acceptance of validity claims in an ideal speech situation.¹¹ White summarises this relationship between form and process in communicative rationality:

When a speaker orients himself [sic] toward understanding -that is, engages in communicative action- his speech acts must raise, and he must be accountable for, three rationality or "validity claims"...Only if a speaker is able to convince his hearers that his claims are rational and thus worthy of recognition can there develop a "rationally motivated agreement" or consensus on how to coordinate future actions...From the perspective of communicative action, utterances can be assessed as rational or irrational because they raise criticisable validity claims, that is, ones which are fallible and open to objective judgement. (White, 1988:28)

¹¹ An ideal speech situation occurs when the following rules are acknowledged:

1. Each subject who is capable of speech and action is allowed to participate in discourses.
2. a) Each is allowed to call into question any proposal, (b) each is allowed to introduce any proposal into the discourse, and (c) each is allowed to express his [sic] attitudes, wishes and needs.
3. No speaker ought to be hindered by compulsion -whether arising from inside the discourse or outside of it- from making use of the rights secure under 1 and 2. (White, 1988:56)

Two additional points are worth making here. First, an ideal speech situation never occurs. It is an ideal which a speech community strives toward but never attains. That does not diminish its usefulness as a standard. Second, a situation approximating ideal speech is more likely to within a community than among them. By definition, members of a community share mutual interests and a certain amount of mutual knowledge, which makes each of the rules easier to follow.

While Habermas makes no attempt in this theory to predict the individual outcomes of attempts to reach communicative understanding, he does claim that all **rational** understanding or agreement results from this process of communicative rationality.¹²

The points I wish to emphasise from the preceding discussion may be reiterated as follows. Development should be motivated by justice. Justice is manifested differently according to social contexts. However, it universally depends upon, and is constrained by, some intersubjective recognition of the equality of oneself and others. That equality is expressed communicatively in the right and ability of any individual to question the rationality (via validity claims) of his or her own, or another's, utterance. Thus, just decisions are the outcome of agreement which is reached intersubjectively under conditions of **rational communication**. This leads the discussion into the realm of **communicative ethics**.

2.2.3 Communicative Ethics

The idea of justice, or what can be accepted as a valid norm, is worked out in terms of what Habermas calls a **communicative ethic**. He argues that a communicative ethic is derived from the notions of communicative action and the rationalisation of normative claims raised therein. Three steps elucidate this process. First, valid norms are those which have the "quality of fairness or impartiality" (White, 1988:48). Secondly, this quality of impartiality "can be expressed by some version of the principle of universalisation", and finally "this principle itself can be rationally justified" (White, 1988:48). The first of these steps is discussed above; the second and third are dealt with

¹² An example might clarify the discussion to this point. Rather than develop an example here I refer readers to Chapter 7.2.2: "Representing Shimshal to its members: who sets the agenda for portering opportunities". That section describes the struggle of Shimshalis to engage in a process of rational discourse toward revising the way that portering is regulated. The way that struggle is played out illuminates the issues discussed above.

Table 2.2b: Communicative Ethics

1st Order Concerns	2nd Order Concerns	Discussion
communicative ethics		The term Habermas uses to describe the conditions for what we can accept as a just, or valid, or communicative decision. A communicative ethic derives directly from the process of communicative action, but we can describe the characteristics of a <i>communicative ethic more precisely</i>
	quality of fairness or impartiality	Valid decisions those which are arrived at through fair and impartial discourse. This notion was addressed above in terms of equality of discourse, competent speech, and ideal speech situations.
	principle of universalisation	Valid decisions or understandings are those which satisfy all participants without those participants being subjected to compulsion. Justifiable decisions, then, will end up incorporating generalisable interests (lifeworld convictions and aspirations) which are common to all participants.
	rational justification for the principle of universalisation	Valid understandings, incorporating truly generalisable interests, will only occur if participants recognise an obligation to "argue things through", to continue discourse until all participants sincerely reach a consensus. Habermas claims that in participating in discourse all participants implicitly recognise the validity of this obligation to participate, and in so doing have validated the principle of universalisation.
modernity		A societal condition in which norms are ethical; ie. they are established through communicative action. Habermas' theory of modernity outlines the societal stages that may result in a society where normative decision making occurs through communicative action.

briefly below.

Habermas expresses the principle of universalisation by saying that a norm is valid only when "the consequences and side-effects for the satisfaction of the interests of **every** individual, which are expected to result from a **general** conformance to [that] norm, can be accepted **without compulsion** by all" (Habermas, 1981:257; emphasis in original). The test of a proposed norm occurs through its acceptance in actual argumentation. It must satisfy the interests of each participant in the argument. Justifiable norms, then, are those "which incorporate generalisable interests" (White, 1988:49). Habermas reconciles the apparent contradiction between the need for

impartiality with the notion of interests by emphasising that his communicative ethics can only provide universal procedural criteria for assessing the justness of norms. It cannot determine what those norms will be. That is a function of the generalisable interests of discussants. I intend to argue in a later section that *community sustainability* is a norm which serves a generalisable interest.

The third step in explaining communicative ethics, the assertion that the principle of universality can itself be rationally justified, relies on a demonstration that all communicatively competent actors who engage in normative argumentation necessarily "presuppose the validity of the principle of universalisation" (White, 1988:50). Habermas argues this in several of his works, most notably *Moralbewusstsein und kommunikatives Handeln* (1983).¹³ The crux of the argument is summarised by White:

Habermas's conception of communicative action... implies a structure of **intersubjectivity** from which one can derive a mutual "speech-act-immanent **obligation to provide justification**" for the different sorts of claims which are continually raised in understanding-oriented action [basically, an obligation to argue things through]. This obligation is one which every actor has "implicitly recognised", simply by virtue of having engaged in communicative action [ie. has accepted through the act of participation]. (White, 1988:51; emphasis in original)

So far I have attempted to direct the reader from a critique of existing development theories as unable to transcend unjustified assumptions of universality, to an understanding of a critical theory which attempts to justify the universality of criteria for assessing justice and rationality, while at the same time showing how groups of people in specific contexts develop just and rational norms which we cannot predict on the basis of some meta-theoretical structure, or without an appreciation of context. In so doing I have identified some of the parameters (relating to communicative action) within which I define *community sustainability* as an appropriate tool for evaluating development.

¹³ See White (1988:48-55) for a summary of this argument.

However, to discard Habermas at this point would be to neglect one aspect of his social theory which is most relevant to international development, that of **modernity**. In addition, it is important to recognise Habermas' ideas about modernity as a necessary outcome of his communicative ethics. Communicative ethics recognise communicative rationality as the only just way of evaluating questions of morality (norms). Norms whose legitimacy has not been accepted through a process of communicative action cannot be accepted as just, or modern.¹⁴ Thus, for Habermas, the achievement of modernity is a desirable (but not necessary) progression for societies. This is not to say that traditional or indigenous norms are necessarily unjust. The test of their legitimacy is discourse among community members in which claims about norms are equally open to criticism by all members, and equally understood by all members. Only if an understanding among participants yields a 'generalisable interest' is a resulting norm legitimate. Otherwise it is the product of coercion and domination. This becomes complicated with regard to traditional ethics which follow a dogmatised core of basic convictions (White, 1988:54). I would argue, as does White, that if all participants adhere sincerely to the dogma, then a generalisable interest can be claimed on the basis of authenticity and normative correctness. However, if one participant's dogmatic beliefs change, then communication must start anew, and a different basis for reaching intersubjective agreement needs to be determined. Habermas is inconsistent on this point: he tends toward a position that no dogmatically motivated norm is legitimate, which contradicts my reading of his theory of modernity.

¹⁴ Habermas defines modernity somewhat differently than most scholars. The specifics of his definition are drawn out in the next section. For now, suffice it to say that a modern community is one whose members reach decisions on the basis of communicative action. Thus, indigenous (or even traditional) societies can be modern.

2.2.4 Communicative Rationality and Modernity

What [Habermas] tries to accomplish... in his ambitious theory of modernity put forward in The Theory of Communicative Action... is a demonstration of why modernity, with its clear manifestations of structures of communicative rationality, should be seen as a **progressive** development; that is, a demonstration of why modernity represents a **universally significant** achievement in human learning, rather than a way of organising social and cultural life which is **simply different** from or incommensurable with pre-modernity...¹⁵

The real challenge, he maintains, lies in conceptualising modernity in a way which neither overplays its costs, nor uncritically celebrates it the way mainstream social science has done. The communicative model allows this challenge to be met, for it opens the phenomenon of modernity up to a more complex reading, one which locates both the universal, rational **potential** manifested in "modern structures of consciousness" and the "selective" or "one-sided" **use** of this potential in the societal processes of Western rationalisation or modernisation. (White, 1988:90,91; emphasis in original)

Habermas begins his discussion of modernity by reworking Weber's notion of **disenchantment**. Individual modernity begins with disenchantment, which comprises a breakdown in the unquestioning acceptance of an amorphous magical-mystical world, and the construction of a consciousness that separates the natural, social and subjective worlds.¹⁶ By recognising three formal world views, individuals also begin to recognise the three separate validity claims that correspond to these worlds.¹⁷ Disenchantment is a process of rationalisation because "it enhances the learning capacity of [hu]mankind" by providing actors with the ability to question the validity of utterances relating to the three world views (objective, social, subjective) in terms of truth, legitimacy and authenticity (White, 1988:95). This process is called the **rationalisation of world**

¹⁵ Pre-modernity, to Habermas, is the adherence to justifications for decisions that have not passed the test of intersubjective assessment and acceptance.

¹⁶ This idea is nothing new. Philosophers of science would describe "science" as a continual process of modernity.

¹⁷ The **natural** world is the world of **science**, and its conditions are validated through **objective** or **technical** truth claims. The **social** world is the domain of **morality**, and its conditions are validated in terms of **normative appropriateness**. The **subjective** world relates specifically to **art** and **aesthetics**, but also to any other **truthful expression** of meaning, and its conditions are validated through the recognition of **authentic experiences** (Habermas, 1981:174-178).

Table 2.2c: Modernity and Modernisation

1st Order Concerns	2nd Order Concerns	3rd Order Concerns	Discussion
modernity			A societal condition in which social and cultural life is guided by normative decisions arrived at through a process of communicative action. To the extent that communicative action is a rational process and produces ethical norms modernity is a rational and just societal condition, and therefore a universally desirable one. Habermas' theory of modernity outlines the process leading up to a condition of modernity.
disenchantment			Disenchantment is the process whereby individuals begin to question the previously unquestioned norms which guide their existence. It is the first stage, at the individual level, in the process toward modernity.
	cultural rationalisation (rationalisation of world views)		As individuals question what they had previously taken for granted they realise that their surroundings, which they had assumed was amorphous, can be categorised into natural, social and subjective worlds. And, as they realise that, they begin to validate their own and others' statements according to the three validity claims that correspond to these worlds. Different types of phenomena are fit into the three world views (natural, social and subjective), and individuals develop specialised ways of talking about and validating those types of phenomena (truth, legitimacy, authenticity). World views become rationalised through this process.
	rationalised lifeworld	lifeworld	A lifeworld is a set of background convictions and commonly held beliefs shared by members of a social group. As individuals come to share specialised ways of talking about, and validating, different types of phenomena changes begin to occur in their shared lifeworld. Specifically, accepted background norms and convictions become those which have been validated according to the appropriate validity claim. A rationalised lifeworld is one that is subject to communicative action.
		long-term trends	As this occurs, people become increasingly likely to revise traditions often, employ critique and innovation in revising them, and create formal procedures for justifying new and existing traditions (norms).
	societal rationalisation		The rationalisation of world views and the rationalisation of lifeworld lead to a more rational society in general: institutions, etc. are set up to respond to decisions taken in communicative action, to represent the three separate world views, and to facilitate communicative action.
modernity			Described above are the enabling aspects of a process toward modernity. In essence, disenchantment initiates a process that may lead to a society where actions are increasingly coordinated by consensual agreement achieved through communicative discourse, rather than by normative prescriptions.
modernisation			With changes in the way normative decisions are taken (intersubjective understanding rather than prescription) the potential for disagreement and instability within communities increases. When this potential is realised the process toward modernity becomes a process toward the negative social condition of modernisation.
	complexity of systems		Separate institutions and structures, each representing one world view, emerge, so that social systems become increasingly complex and the various parts of social systems become increasingly specialised.
	inner colonisation of lifeworld		This increasing complexity and specialisation of the social system can result in a situation where individual members of society feel that they no longer understand or influence social system: that they cannot validate the social system in terms of their lifeworld convictions. At this point social system becomes uncoupled from the norms of the lifeworld, and becomes self-perpetuating. Indeed, certain aspects of the social system (eg. money and bureaucratic power) begin to influence the norms and convictions of the lifeworld. Lifeworld responds to system, rather than influencing system through decisions taken in communicative action. This is the inner colonisation of lifeworld.
modernity			Modernisation has the effect of creating a lifeworld similar to the one that preceded disenchantment: norms are prescribed, not by tradition, but by an autonomous social system. The process of modernisation can be changed back to one of modernity only if individual members of a community, express their disenchantment anew, regroup and re-negotiate the lifeworld norms through communicative action.
community sustainability			The conditions for community sustainability are elucidated in Habermas' theory of communicative action. The process toward community sustainability is outlined in Habermas' theory of modernity. Dangers to community sustainability are outlined in Habermas' theory of modernisation

views or cultural rationalisation. In order for the enhanced learning potential implicit in the rationalisation of world views to be realised this learning potential must crystallise into "specialised forms of argumentation which are institutionalised in corresponding cultural spheres of action" (White, 1988:95). Habermas identifies three cultural spheres of action, the scientific, the artistic, and the intellectual.¹⁸ Their corresponding forms of argumentation relate back to the three types of validity claims.

Rationalisation of world views at the individual level leads to a corresponding **societal rationalisation**, in which the rationality potential made available in modern culture is fed into specific institutionalised action, and thus facilitates a rational conduct of life in general (White, 1988:97). Societal rationalisation must be understood against the horizon of a **lifeworld**. The term lifeworld refers to "collectively shared background convictions, to the diffuse, unproblematic horizon within which actors communicate with one another and seek to reach an understanding" (Thompson, 1983:285). In short, lifeworld comprises those commonly held beliefs that are taken for granted by members of a society.

A society's lifeworld sustains and reproduces the interpretations of preceding members of the society, and in so doing, also reproduces cultural traditions, social integration and personal identity (Thompson, 1983:285). As such, lifeworld serves to minimise (or suppress) disagreement during efforts to reach communicative understanding. Indeed, most communicative action is **not**

¹⁸ Habermas describes the three cultural spheres of action as follows:

(a) the establishment of a scientific enterprise in which empirical-scientific problems can be dealt with according to internal truth standards, independently of theological doctrines and separately from basic moral-practical questions; (b) the institutionalization of an artistic enterprise in which the production of art is gradually set loose from cultic-ecclesiastical and courtly-patronal bonds, and the reception of works of art by an art-enjoying public of readers, spectators, and listeners is mediated through professionalised aesthetic criticism; and finally (c) the professional intellectual treatment of questions of ethics, political theory, and jurisprudence in schools of law, in the legal system, and in the legal public sphere. (Habermas, 1981; paraphrased in White, 1988:96).

problematic because validity claims are shared within a mutual lifeworld. Only those utterances that fall outside common background convictions are likely to be challenged.

As world views become rationalised, so also does the lifeworld become rationalised: a conscious recognition of world views and their corresponding validity claims come to constitute general structures of the lifeworld which exist within different individual lifeworld contexts (White, 1988:98). This newly **rationalised lifeworld** provides individuals with the critical ability to accommodate new experiences to the stock of unproblematic convictions which comprise the bulk of their lifeworld. In other words, individuals can critically and intersubjectively contribute to a reproduction of their lifeworld which recognises their new experiences. In contributing rationally to the reproduction of their lifeworld, individuals also begin to rationalise social action. Habermas identifies three long-term trends, which have occurred in the west as lifeworlds have become rationalised, and which he takes to be more general conditions of lifeworld rationalisation. First, in terms of **culture**, there is a movement toward a continual revision of traditions. Secondly, in terms of **society**, there is a trend toward increasingly formal procedures for the justification of norms. Finally, in terms of **personality**, individuals increasingly employ critique and innovation in the renewal of traditions (Habermas, 1981:219-220).

So far, in this section, I have outlined the enabling aspects of modernity. Basically, the process of disenchantment "comes to fruition in the differentiated structures of a rationalised lifeworld, where actions are increasingly coordinated by consensual agreement rather than normative prescriptions" (White, 1988:106). With this progressive shift in the way actions are sociated comes an increasing potential for instability and disagreement. This destructive potential and the form it takes (the constraining aspect of modernity) is explained in terms of **social systems**, and their progressive uncoupling from lifeworld.

Society reproduces itself both symbolically and in terms of functional systems (Thompson, 1983). Lifeworld, which consists of, and is conceived as, sets of symbols, must be distinguished from social systemic processes which maintain and reproduce the material substrata of society. Not

only are actions imbedded in the symbolic space of the lifeworld; they are also organised into functional systems (Thompson, 1983). Hence, "societies must be conceived **simultaneously** as system and lifeworld... or as **systematically stabilised** action-contexts of **socially integrated** groups" (Thompson, 1983:285; emphasis added)¹⁹. Habermas follows Parsons in conceptualising systems as self-regulating action-contexts which coordinate activity around specific **media** or systemic mechanisms.

The social evolutionary process can be characterised in terms of increasing **rationalisation** of both the social system and lifeworld. The rationalisation of lifeworld is described above: preceding modes of thought are devalued as learning reaches new levels, and the convictions of lifeworld become more vulnerable to criticism. That is, it becomes increasingly possible, even inevitable, for individuals to criticise specific validity claims. With such criticism comes the potential for communicative rationality through communicative action.²⁰ The rationalisation of the lifeworld "increases the potential for linking symbolic reproduction to the validity basis of speech", however "at the same time it allows for further growth in the complexity of systems which react back on the lifeworld and threaten to stifle that potential" (Thompson, 1983:286). This occurs because there are no longer *a priori* constraints on legitimate forms of reproduction of the material substrata of society. Such growth in complexity of systems symptomises the rationalisation of social systems.

In early forms of society lifeworld and system are intimately coupled. Many actions, such as kinship ties, served systemic and symbolic purposes. With the transition from clan societies, to traditional, to modern forms of social organisation comes a "progressive uncoupling of system and lifeworld"(Thompson, 1983:286). For example, the extended family, a time-honoured lifeworld

¹⁹ "Must be" as in "are". This is a positive, not a normative, argument.

²⁰ Criticism is essential to Habermas' theoretical construction, because justice relies on equal access to the opportunity to criticise ones' own and others' statements. In other words, justice relies on the equality of discourse. Discourse is universal, therefore equality of discourse is a minimal universal criterion for justice.

institution, begins to lose its systemic relevance as indigenous communities become integrated into a national or international political economy. The family unit is superseded as a forum for social interaction by central bureaucracy, and as a basis for social labour by a capitalist mode of production. It retains its importance for indigenous symbolic interpretation, but is increasingly difficult to defend as relevant to new experiences.

The status of lifeworld continually diminishes as social system mechanisms appear which bear little direct relation to those structures responsible for symbolic interpretations. Habermas identifies the modern state apparatus, and the market economy as the most important of these mechanisms or media (Thompson, 1983:285).

New social system mechanisms are increasingly uncoupled from lifeworld. Still, they must be anchored in the lifeworld because they rely on institutional legitimisation.²¹ In other words, institutional complexes, which represent the lifeworld, define the constraints to system differentiation. Social evolution occurs as problems arise in the functional sub-system of society. Typically, these problems are those inherent in capitalism, associated with the continual need to increase the supply of labour, and demand for goods. Such problems can only be resolved through changes in institutional complexes which allow the legitimisation of new levels of system differentiation (Thompson, 1983:285). These new levels further relegate lifeworld to a sub-systemic role.

Habermas calls this the *Inner colonisation* of the lifeworld, and explains it in terms of a model of exchange relations between systems and lifeworld. Thompson (1983:288) summarises the model as follows: (a) the formation of economic and administrative subsystems with the rise in capitalism was accompanied by parallel developments in the lifeworld (eg. a normative difference between employee and consumer in response to economic subsystems, or between client and

²¹ The anchoring of systemic mechanisms within the lifeworld relates back to Habermas' comments about the necessary integration between the conditions of social labour and the conditions of social interaction.

citizen in response to administrative subsystems) (White, 1988:108-109); (b) two domains (the public/administrative and private/economic) appeared in the lifeworld, and began exchanging labour, goods, services etc.; (c) inner colonisation occurred as the monetarisation and bureaucratisation of economic and administrative subsystems expanded beyond their mediating roles, and began to penetrate those spheres of lifeworld responsible for cultural transmission, socialisation and formation of personal identity²²; and (d) these latter processes are internally connected to communicative action and any attempts to incorporate them into subsystems may be resisted in the same way that they are defended: by members of the lifeworld through validity claims.

The first three terms of Habermas' model of inner colonisation describe how the process of **modernisation** that is occurring in the capitalist world system has thwarted many of the enabling aspects of the process of **modernity**. The rational potential of communicative action is being undermined as "the media of money and power increasingly infiltrate spheres of social life in which traditions and knowledge are transferred, in which normative bonds are intersubjectively established, and in which responsible persons are formed" (White, 1988:112; see also Harvey, 1989). Specialised forms of argumentation, closely guarded by economic and bureaucratic 'expert cultures' and inaccessible to most individuals, become the most powerful forms of legitimisation. The result of this process is two-fold: a loss of freedom of most individuals to contribute to social change through communicative action; and a loss of meaning as experts become necessary for even the simplest forms of decision-making. White summarises this loss of meaning or 'cultural impoverishment' as follows:

²² A quotation from White helps to clarify this point:

The "communicative infrastructure" of a rationalised lifeworld is constituted by understanding-oriented action which creates a rational context for the "transference of validity" through these three processes. Such a transfer of rational motivation (in the communicative sense) is only possible, as we have seen, when actors take up a performative attitude toward other subjects and their validity claims. **Action which is coordinated by money or power, on the other hand, requires only an objectivating attitude and an orientation to success.** (White, 1988:110; emphasis added)

...as the insulation of expert cultures grows, so does the incapacity of average individuals to make effective use of the cognitive arsenal of cultural modernity. **Everyday consciousness** is robbed of its synthesising power; it becomes **fragmented**. The citizen of an advanced industrial society is indeed bombarded with greater quantities of information, but the knowledge which results from it remains diffuse and difficult to employ in critical ways. (White, 1988:117; emphasis in original)

The fourth term of Habermas' model of inner colonisation expresses the potential to reclaim the lifeworld, and thus restore meaning and power to social interaction, through continued communicative action. That occurs through challenging, via legitimacy claims, the norms which allow the ascendancy of bureaucratic and economic experts. Habermas believes that a number of 'new social movements' are succeeding in reintegrating system and lifeworld, at least on a local level (eg. feminist movements, gay movements, cults such as Rastafarianism).

2.2.5 Communicative Ethics and Community Sustainability

Habermas' critical social theory enables the conceptualisation of a model of **community sustainability**. In particular the theories associated with communicative action allow a definition of community sustainability, while those theories related to modernity and modernisation provide the setting within which the model operates.

A community is sustainable if its norms, and supporting institutions, are established consensually through a process of communicative action, and where those norms and institutions, and changes in them, are supported through time by the material (systemic) substrata of that community (eg. ecological and economic sustainability). In addition, a community is sustainable to the extent that participants avoid the inner colonisation of their lifeworld by subsystemic media, and retain the intrinsic connection between social system and lifeworld.

Several observations derive from the first clause of this brief definition.

1) I am assuming on the basis of the preceding arguments: (a) the universal desirability of freedom, intersubjective meaning and justice, (b) the necessity of communicative rationality for achieving freedom, intersubjective meaning and justice, and (c) the practical inevitability of the rationalisation of indigenous lifeworlds as traditional communities gain contact with global society. It follows that any concept of sustainability without justice is not a legitimate goal of development. It also follows that, in most cases, individuals with increasing access to communicative rationality will not support their own domination; therefore, eventually they will undermine the legitimacy of a system built on norms which they did not help to establish through communicative discourse. Similarly, participants will eventually reject forms of legitimisation provided by expert cultures, which they do not understand.

2) This is a procedural definition in that it establishes universal procedural criteria for achieving a state of sustainability: this is **how** to establish norms, and this is **how** to reinforce them systemically. It does not, nor can it, dictate the form that sustainability will take. That is contextually determined.

3) The state of community sustainability is an ideal which is unlikely to be achieved for two reasons: (a) communicative action requires an ideal speech situation, which cannot be expected; and (b) the material substrata of society tends not to be perfectly synchronised with normative requirements. Thus, we may assess a community in terms of its proximity to community sustainability, and the extent to which social change is increasing that proximity.

4) An assessment of a community's sustainability requires: (a) identification of important (systemic) spheres of social (instrumental) activity, (b) identification of the (lifeworld) norms and institutions attached to these, (c) evaluation of the degree to which these (lifeworld) norms are supported by consensually (communicatively) accepted validity claims, (d) an understanding of the extent to which these (communicatively) established norms are satisfied (systemically) through (instrumental) action, and (e) an appreciation of change in all these elements over time. Community

sustainability is achieved only through communicative action, but it is manifested in the results of instrumental action.

The first sentence in this definition of community sustainability links increasing sustainability to the enabling processes of modernity, specifically societal and cultural rationalisation. The second sentence recognises the threat of potential constraining aspects of modernity, implicit in modernisation as we are familiar with it. Several implications can be drawn from this second clause, as to the probable nature of a sustainable community.²³

1) The second clause is necessary because historically most indigenous lifeworlds have been colonised by internationally defined media of money and power as they have become modern. The loss of certain meanings and freedoms associated with inner colonisation is well documented in studies of indigenous cultures (for example, the loss of the ability to apply local lore to agricultural practices, or the loss of freedom to engage in indigenous decision making processes regarding important aspects of symbolic and material life).²⁴ The instrumental manifestations of this are elucidated in the critique of modernisation offered by marxist development theories, all of which agree that modernised (as opposed to modern) social systems are not sustainable.²⁵ A sustainable community may avoid the inner colonisation of the lifeworld through continued communicative action. This line of reasoning allows us to recapture much of the insight offered in marxist theories of development.

2) Community sustainability is likely to be an indigenous state, rather than an imported one. Certain meanings may be imported, but their integration depends on their acceptance as valid in terms of prior (albeit changing) lifeworld characteristics. If individuals are to avoid cultural

²³ By no means am I suggesting that this 'probable nature' has an essential or universal quality.

²⁴ See Turnbull, 1962, 1983; Vogeler, 1973; Goulet, 1977; Berman, 1982; Peet, 1986, for examples.

²⁵ Marxist critiques of development conceive of sustainability in a conventional sense: the ability to persist materially for an indefinite period of time. But, of course, modernised systems are not sustainable in a communicative sense either.

impoverishment (loss of meaning), their lifeworld must remain imbedded in mutually acceptable background convictions. These convictions will change with increasing rationalisation (and the acceptance of certain imported elements) but, if they are to remain imbedded, convictions will evolve from within the community and not appear as a result of imported culture.

3) It seems that **small** communities have the greatest chance to avoid becoming colonised by international media. Money and bureaucracy, as regulators of social interaction, are likely to be less appealing in communities where communication is immediate and familiar; strong primary associations undermine the necessity and effectiveness of secondary social groupings based on systemic media. In addition, the chances of reaching a communicative understanding become greater as the number of participants decreases.

4) The previous two points redeem much of what is implicit in intermediate technology; that is, the connection between sustainability and small-scale indigenous instrumental action.

5) This definition of sustainability reveals the vast potential influence of development agencies. Two common, and often immediate, development initiatives are (a) to integrate indigenous production and consumption into a national or international monetary economy, and (b) to create within a community a development-oriented 'sub-bureaucracy' which is then integrated into a centrally located development bureaucracy. These initiatives immediately expose the community to the media of money and power, and necessitate the involvement of economic and bureaucratic experts from outside the community. Of course the involvement of a development agency in itself complicates communicative action, because development personnel can expect (reasonably) to participate in reaching a consensual understanding of acceptable norms.

An additional comment should be made concerning the identification of community sustainability as what Habermas calls a 'generalisable interest'. Implicit in my definition of community sustainability is a requirement to perpetuate the material substrata of a community in a way that allows the community to retain its cohesiveness and integrity -that is its control or ownership of its own meanings, institutions, and material resources. This I take to be a

'generalisable interest' that can be assumed to apply universally. By this I mean that community members, whether or not they desire change, want the group of which they consider themselves a part to remain intact in a recognisable form (although they may challenge one another's claims regarding the specification of those norms). Many empirical studies offer quotations and synopses which affirm just that.²⁶ Examples from Matthews (1983) and my own work are provided in the

²⁶ See Turnbull, 1962; Anderson and Anderson, 1964; Goulet, 1977; Berman, 1982; Coles, 1986; de Villiers, 1987; Porter, 1987; Wambi, 1988. Several bodies of literature provide empirical evidence that the desire to perpetuate the material substrata of a community in a way that allows it to control its own meanings, institutions and material resources is an interest that is generalisable to most communities. Studies in **cultural anthropology** provide detailed examples of indigenous communities struggling to preserve continuity in maintaining a cohesive material and symbolic existence in the face of external change. Turnbull's The Lonely African (1962) is an excellent case in point. After interviewing dozens of Africans in a variety of situations Turnbull concludes that common threads were the desires to preserve continuity and cohesion within the community; to adapt to changing circumstances from within; to work for the future while maintaining the community's, or tribe's, present integrity (1962:250). Most other anthropological works offer less general conclusions, but more precise explanation of the often elaborate material and symbolic strategies indigenous communities use to preserve their distinctiveness (see Rigby, 1985; Evans Pritchard, 1940; Ridington, 1990).

Cultural ecological research emphasises the efforts of indigenous groups of people to retain economic, political and social autonomy and continuity through material resource use strategies that are symbolically significant beyond their economic efficacy. A section of Chapter Ten discusses on such set of strategies - *almwirtschaft* - that mountain communities have employed. The accompanying Appendix 9 reviews cultural ecology literature more generally.

If we move away from ethnographic literature to **historical work**, we discover studies that trace this desire to perpetuate and sustain community existence and cohesiveness through time. de Villiers' excellent study of Afrikaaner history convincingly accounts for apartheid in terms of such a sentiment, and external (and internal) threats to that sentiment (1987). V.S. Naipaul's India: a Million Mutinies Now (1990) provides a similar account of the many shades of community resistance to emerge in India since partition.

Naipaul's book has much in common with literature describing **urban social movements**, and more geographically, **urban territoriality**. These two sets of phenomena are united by their common origin, in many instances, in a concern among urban community members to protect both the material basis for their existing definition of their community (neighbourhood), and its symbolic basis (see Davis, 1991; Harvey, 1989; Knox, 1987; Soja 1989). **Attachment to place** literature explores similar themes, and often makes a similar point: that people want to sustain their community more or less as it is, according to their own definition of it, where it is (see, for example, Porteous, 1988).

The argument that a concern to sustain one's community in a recognisable form is a generalisable interest is supported by an interest within **literary criticism** to define and protect group cultures of one sort or another. T.S. Eliot's Notes Toward the Definition of Culture (1949) is an example of this sort of interest. The various works of Raymond Williams, especially Culture and Society (1982), explore the same theme, albeit more critically.

Finally, Quebec's efforts to gain official recognition as a distinct culture, and the ethnic fragmentation of Eastern Europe, each demonstrate people's commitment to perpetuate their

next section and Part III respectively. Community sustainability is justifiable as a goal for development because, on the basis of empirical work, it can be accepted as a generalisable interest. Again, the particular form that sustainability takes must be determined contextually.

2.2.6 Toward the Evaluation of a Community's Sustainability

In the previous section criteria for assessing the sustainability of a community were catalogued as (a) identification of important (systemic) spheres of social (instrumental) activity, (b) identification of the (lifeworld) norms and institutions attached to these, (c) evaluation of the degree to which these (lifeworld) norms are supported by consensually (communicatively) accepted validity claims, (d) an understanding of the extent to which these (communicatively) established norms are satisfied (systemically) through (instrumental) action, and (e) an appreciation of change in all these elements over time. I went on to say that community sustainability is achieved only through communicative action, but it is manifested in the results of instrumental action; that is in the material satisfaction of accepted norms. I want to begin exploring these criteria by shifting emphasis slightly from a concern for the demands of social theory to a focus on empirical enquiry into the forms of social organisation.

At this point the question shifts from "what are the pertinent universal mechanisms of social change?" to "what are the norms that inform agency of members of this society, how are they defended, and how are they sustained systemically?". For now I will concentrate on the mechanisms through which norms may be sustained systemically. The framework I have adopted is a variant of that used by Matthews in his book The Creation of Regional Dependency (1983), in which he describes three spheres of social activity: social vitality, economic viability and political

communities (which often have existed for long periods only symbolically) materially and symbolically, according to internal definitions.

validity. Matthews maintains that an assessment of change in a community is likely to be worthwhile if it "undertakes an analysis which not only focuses on each dimension of community life, but also attempts to discover how they are integrated and the meaning they have for the residents of the community" (Matthews, 1983:166), rather than merely ticking off indicators from a checklist. To use the language of Habermas these dimensions of community life are systemic components around which technical interests are oriented. However, they are guided by practical interests (*reaching communicative understanding*) in terms of their integration and the meaning they have for individuals.

Matthews' model of economic viability, social vitality and political validity stems from his understanding of local responses to government attempts to resettle residents of rural Newfoundland communities (Matthews, 1983:148). Government officials determined that certain Newfoundland communities were not **economically viable**. That is, they were not economically self sufficient. Therefore, from an economic perspective they had no legitimate reason for continued independent existence; their inhabitants should be moved to centres where they could be more productive (Matthews, 1983).

Matthews found, through speaking to outport Newfoundlanders, that they saw things differently. They recognised that the communities were not economically self sufficient in the government's sense, but that their existence as a whole was otherwise quite viable. The social conditions which locals felt offset economic dependency fall into Matthews' category of **social vitality**.

Several communities resisted resettlement in the hope of maintaining their social vitality intact. The success of their resistance depended on strong formal and/or informal leadership which truly represented community consciousness. Matthews called this leadership component **political validity**.

According to Matthews (1983:154), "these three relational structures of community life constitute the primary areas of social organisation within a community (the structural element) and

also provide the settings for interpersonal interaction". Therefore, "it is possible to analyse both the structure of a community and the processes of social interaction within it in these terms" (Matthews, 1983:154). It should also be possible to evaluate change in terms of its impact upon social vitality, economic viability and political validity. The key is to relate these subsystemic relational structures to sustainability as a 'generalisable interest'.²⁷ An attempt at this is made below.

The economic organisation of a community comprises all formal and informal activity involved in material production and exchange (Matthews, 1983:155). In many small communities, both in Canada and developing nations, it is hard to identify much formal economic organisation; that is organisation geared toward market production and exchange. It is crucial then, to discern informal organisational structures that facilitate indigenous production and internal exchange, despite difficulties in measurement. It is the combination of formal and informal structures which determine economic viability. Conventional economic evaluations have ignored the role of subsistence, informal exchange, transfer payments and remittances in local economics: they have overlooked the strategies that individuals have developed to "make do" in circumstance that are less than optimal economically (see, for example, World Bank, 1987, 1990; Khan, 1985). For this reason, overall economic viability has been underestimated (Matthews, 1983:156). Adopting an indigenous conception of economic relations is necessary in attempting to evaluate economic viability, and the impacts of change upon viability.

This conception of economic viability relates closely to the material, or instrumental, aspects of community sustainability. A community which maintains a satisfactory or viable level of material production and exchange through any combination of activities is economically

²⁷ Habermas identifies **generalisable interests** as the components that link lifeworld convictions to systemic mechanisms. If we can identify three sets of systemic mechanisms (economic, social, political), and we can identify certain lifeworld based objectives shared by community members (viability, vitality, validity), then we can claim to have identified generalisable interests that stem from the lifeworld, are manifest in the social system, and which can be evaluated in terms of the decision making processes relating to them.

sustainable. Provided these activities do not conflict with social vitality or political validity they will contribute to overall community sustainability. An economic structure which conflicts with social or political health is not likely to maintain its viability within a community in any case, because its viability, which is open to challenges, is unlikely to be accepted as normatively appropriate or authentic. Matthews describes a situation in Newfoundland where economic viability relied on labour migration, which in turn threatened formal structures of social vitality through declining school enrolment.

Any community must be able to socialise its members "according to its norms and values and the ways it provides to earn a livelihood" (Matthews, 1983:157). This may occur primarily through informal structures like the family unit, or formally through educational and religious structures and the like. A community's social vitality "can be measured in terms of all the formal and informal social structures not primarily concerned with either economic well being or social control" (Matthews, 1983:157). Socially vital communities have formal and informal structures which fulfil important community norms and values. When any important value remains unfulfilled social vitality is threatened. For instance, in Matthews' community of 'Small Harbour', one of the most immediate threats to the community was the potential loss of a single family, which in turn would result in the loss of a classroom and teacher. Residents expected a certain level of education; any threat to that societal norm was a threat to 'Small Harbour's' social vitality.

In short, the sustainability of a community relies on its ability to effectively socialise its members according to its norms. That process of socialisation must increasingly provide means to survive contact with the outside. Those means become evident to residents as their lifeworld becomes increasingly rationalised, and they become better acquainted with rational discourse.

Political validity relies on effective social representation. Social representation may be achieved by formal means, such as police, town council or village elders, or through informal structures such as gossip. In most small communities the force of law is less important than the quality and recognised authority of community leadership (Matthews, 1983:159). Political validity

requires that leaders represent residents in one of two ways (Matthews, 1983:157). First, their representation may be based on their reflection of the general values and attitudes of community members (indeed, in a communicatively sustainable community representation must be based on mutually acceptable attitudes). This representation is difficult to achieve, both formally and informally, because leaders are often wealthier and better educated than most residents. In addition, informal political leaders are commonly economic and social leaders as well, and represent rival community factions in those capacities.

A second way that leaders can represent their constituents is through their interaction with the outside world on behalf of the community. Precisely because leaders are usually the economic and social elite of the community, they may find themselves in the position of 'compradores' who identify with and represent metropolitan forces rather than local interests. Still, external ties serve to validate traditional leadership within the community (Matthews, 1983:159-60).

Political validity may be the most difficult component to achieve, because truly representative leadership is often undermined by conflicting social and economic interests (ie. consensual understanding is difficult to achieve). Nevertheless, it is clear that political validity is important to community sustainability, especially in the face of change. This point is illustrated by Matthews' experience with Newfoundland. Outport communities which seemed doomed to resettlement rallied around unexpectedly strong and representative political leadership. As a result they avoided community disintegration. Development which is able to improve formal or informal leadership, without threatening economic viability or social validity, is beneficial to sustainability.

In the context of sustainability, it is disappointing that Matthews' did not include an ecological or environmental component. In small resource and subsistence based communities (like 'Small Harbour') some sort of ecological maintenance seems to be essential to community persistence, although transfer payments, for example, may ameliorate the importance of this factor. Community interaction with the physical environment is a technical and practical organisational focus which cannot be expressed solely in economic, political or social terms. A community

(whether engaged in primary production or not) must possess a combination of formal and/or informal structures which ensure a sustainable utilisation of the resources. An innovation which enables a community to exploit the environment more productively or to increase the duration of that exploitation without harming the other variable, and without impeding the effectiveness of the other spheres, enhances overall community sustainability. For that reason I add a fourth organisational sphere, that of **ecological volition**, to Matthews' framework. This is the sphere upon which material production, and ultimately the survival of all aspects of community sustainability, depends.

Despite its foundation in the physical world, this sphere interacts very closely with the other components. Even the smallest changes in the use of an ecological system are likely to effect the distribution of wealth and power in a community, as well as the possibility and nature of norm-oriented consensus. For example, suppose an outpost community decides to increase its fishing productivity by cooperatively purchasing and operating a large trawler. This could be perceived as a decision primarily affecting the ecological sphere; it may stress fish populations etc. However, it is also possible to see a variety of economic, political and social ramifications, both at the communicative and instrumental levels of social action.

A rigorous literature on agricultural sustainability explores the relationship among social structure, politics and economics on one hand and ecological volition on the other (see Douglas, 1984; Smit, 1988). Many of the models developed in this literature describe a relationship between ecology and other spheres of social organisation that is similar to the relationship I describe here. In addition, much literature in cultural ecology models community/environment interaction throughout the range of ecological conditions (eg. Allan, 1985; Bjonnes, 1983; Guillet, 1983).

In conclusion, Matthews' model, extended to include ecological volition, allows us to expand the instrumental aspects of the model of community sustainability from a theoretical concept to something which can be studied empirically. Matthews does, however, make the point that it is insufficient to assess communities according to these organisational structures alone,

because in themselves they do not express the nature of community integration (Matthews, 1983:161). He maintains that community integration is affected by how much and how organisational spheres are tied to one another, and by the strength of commitment residents have to the community as defined by these spheres. In addition, identification **of** and identification **with** the community by community members is important. The technical or instrumental aspects of community sustainability are supported and reproduced by practical, lifeworld embedded identification and commitment. Matthews' model does not offer a well-developed theoretical framework for understanding or assessing these more complicated issues of integration, identification and commitment. They are practical or communicative problems, which require a consensual understanding by participants in a community. The elements of Habermas' theories which I have included in my conception of community sustainability, specifically communicative ethics and modernity, provide such a framework.

In particular, it is the process of communicative discourse -the process of challenging, validating and rejecting one another's convictions, norms and values intersubjectively- that leads to the development and reproduction of **generalisable Interests**. By actively participating in the rational creation of these generalisable interests participants come to identify with them and commit to them, and identify with and commit to the specific structures that enable their technical satisfaction. This process is discussed in detail in Part III, after I provide some contextual background. For now, a brief example from another community in the Karakoram illuminates how communicative ethics, and the process toward modernity, informs Matthews' model of instrumental social activity and my conception of community sustainability. The example shows the potential negative effects of a process of disenchantment and rationalisation: the inner colonisation of lifeworld and subsequent modernisation.

2.4.7 Example: Gendered Labour In Hopar²⁸

Habermas suggests that traditional societies are characterised by an intimate coupling of social system and lifeworld. Within my model of sustainability the four organisational spheres identified above are all systemic. Lifeworld refers to collectively shared background convictions which sustain and reproduce interpretations of preceding generations in terms of cultural traditions, social integration and personal identity. The convictions of lifeworld reinforce the conditions necessary for systemic sustainability in the social, political, economic and ecological sub-systems of traditional Karakoram villages. For example, institutions responsible for economic production and exchange are conscious manifestations of norms acceptable to a shared lifeworld. In Hopar settlement, for instance, gendered division of labour, which is an important social and economic institution (and relates closely to political and ecological sub-systems as well), has traditionally been interpreted in terms of the inherited conviction, and identity of and by women, that women are profane and suited only to profane occupations. For generations this was an accepted norm, the validity of which was taken-for-granted and not challenged.

Over time the system and lifeworld of Hopar became rationalised. Social systems are rationalised as they grow in complexity. In Hopar, the process of planned development has had an important role in increasing system complexity as the community adopted new technologies and new relationships with the outside. The same process has caused rationalisation of the lifeworld. Spheres of value are separated as they stop being integrated by common interpretations. In addition, levels of learning increased with the knowledge of technology and other social, economic,

²⁸ Hopar is an agro-pastoral community in the Karakoram mountains of northern Pakistan, some 100 kilometres from Shimshal. Like Shimshal it is situated at about 3000m, and relies on terraced meltwater-fed irrigation. It is a larger community than Shimshal: approximately 4500 people living in five distinct, but mutually dependent, villages. Unlike Shimshalis, the residents of Hopar belong to the Shi'ite moslem denomination, a fact which relates to gender relations. Also unlike Shimshal, Hopar has been serviced by a jeep road since the late 1970s, so its experience of non-indigenous forces has been more intense than has Shimshal's.

and political innovations from outside. These changes allowed community members to begin criticising specific validity claims which had always been accepted. Such criticisms are the bases for communicative action and potential communicative rationality. Because of these changes female profaneness is no longer an accepted norm which requires no validation. Rather, for a time it became an accepted norm that could be justified by validity claims relating to any of the objective, social, or subjective world views. An utterance that women were profane could be validated as true because women menstruated, as normatively correct because local interpretation of the Koran said so, and as sincere or authentic because all persons confirmed it in their activity of dividing labour by gender. At this point it could be said that the profaneness of women was a rational norm of Hopar based on a process of communicative action. But it was a tenuous rationality, for it relied on all participants recognising the dogmatic background of the three validity claims.

The rationalisation of the lifeworld "increases the potential for linking symbolic representation to the validity basis of speech", however, "at the same time it allows for further growth in the complexity of systems which react back on the lifeworld and threaten to stifle that potential"(Thompson,1983:286). Such a process of inner colonisation is easy to discern in the Karakoram. The formation of economic and administrative subsystems with development was accompanied, for a time, with parallel developments in the lifeworld. That is, lifeworld institutions shifted to accommodate these new formations. However, in a short time, monetarisation and bureaucratisation of economic and administrative media began to penetrate those areas of the lifeworld responsible for cultural transmission, socialisation and formation of personal identity. This is inner colonisation. In Hopar, mixed subsistence family farming, which is an important institution representing lifeworld, was quickly penetrated by (a) monetarisation in the form of initiatives to encourage cash cropping, sale of surplus produce, wage labour etc, and (b) bureaucratisation as development agency organisations were set up in villages, and agency personnel began to direct and regulate farming activities.

One consequence of those changes is that technology was introduced to men, in a way

that implied it could be used only by men. As a result men began to do jobs which would formerly have been done by women. A vague interpretation of women as profane, and certain jobs as profane persisted, but no longer applied to the material reproduction of the community. To the extent that traditional notions of sacred and profane no longer explained gender division of labour they ceased to be bases for acceptable validity claims. New validity claims emerged to justify changes in gender activity. But the new validity claims were not based on collectively shared background convictions and inherited interpretations that made up lifeworld. Rather, they were rooted in the systemic media of money and power as expressed in technological expertise. At this stage the lifeworld was successfully colonised.

In the foregoing example the gendered division of labour, an activity geared to technical success, was traditionally imbedded in a background conviction of the lifeworld that women are profane. As the lifeworld of Hoparis became increasingly rationalised it became ever more necessary, and hence ever harder, to justify the norm and its attendant institution. This process was leading toward an allocation of labour based on an alternate norm that was easier to accept consensually. Indeed in some other Karakoram communities the notion of women's profaneness has long been discarded. In Shimshal it has been replaced as a guide for labour allocation by the requirements of women's infant-nursing role, and men's and women's relative efficiency at certain tasks. In Hopar that process was interrupted by the rapid colonisation of the lifeworld. Familiarity with imported technology became the primary determinant of labour allocation, with men (technological experts) completing the technologically demanding chores. The cause of this was the reluctance of the development bureaucracy to educate both men and women. The current gendered division of labour in Hopar stems from an imported and bureaucratically mediated prejudice. Specifically, *purdah* (the cloistering of women for Islamic religious reasons) requires that women interact only with other women, except for within the household and lineage. This norm introduces an administrative problem for agency personnel: the need for male and female field workers. Agencies find it cheaper, and more convenient to support only male field workers, which

means that only males receive the benefit of interaction with agency personnel. Hopar's lifeworld-based influence on the gendered division of labour has been sacrificed to the expedients of the development bureaucracy. The indigenous institution of gendered labour has been mediated: separated from lifeworld, and colonised.

The original norm of female profaneness was clearly not sustainable in anything but a traditional and dogma-driven society. As soon as participants became disenchanted with the mystical elements of their lifeworld the norm had to change. Unfortunately, the norm which replaced the profaneness of women is equally unsustainable. In an instrumental sense it requires too many tasks of men, and too few of women. Thus, Hopar is currently overpopulated, but plagued by a labour shortage. In communicative terms the current norm (of male technological superiority) is not deeply embedded in the lifeworld, because it conflicts with other lifeworld-validated requirements. It can easily be displaced by another media-driven systemic shift. In Shimshal, where an increasingly rationalised lifeworld led to a rational, but indigenous, labour-guiding norm, the situation is much closer to sustainable. This is because the community retains a deeply imbedded and commonly accepted lifeworld, which lifeworld continues to provide the validity for systemic structure. The central point is that in Hopar systemic shifts developed separately from lifeworld, and then colonised lifeworld. As I discuss in Part III, systemic shifts to Shimshal's social structure complemented lifeworld-based shifts. The example from Hopar briefly illuminates how Habermas' ideas concerning communicative ethics and the process toward modernity (or modernisation) inform Matthews' model of instrumental social activity and my conception of community sustainability.

Chapter Three: Field Work in Shimshal

3.1 Introduction

My intention in this chapter is to link the theoretical agenda I develop in Chapter Two to the empirical material and interpretations I present in Chapters Four through Eleven. The links between theory and data are **methodology** and **method**.¹ It is through particular research methods that researchers collect information relevant to their theoretical constructs, and it is through research methodologies that the appropriate type of information is identified.²

My task is not to unravel the complexities of research design. That has been done effectively in recent publications by geographers and by other social scientists (see Burgess, 1984; Clifford, 1988; Eyles, 1988; Eyles and Smith, 1988; Ellen, 1984; Geertz, 1989; Gould, 1985; Hammersley, 1989; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Lofland and Lofland, 1984; Noblit and Hare, 1988; Sanjek, 1990; Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979). Nor, I hasten to add, do I have anything new to contribute to the variety of research methods available to social scientists. I have, perhaps, employed more types of field technique than is common among geographers, but they are all fairly standard ethnographic methods. If I can claim any methodological contribution, it is in demonstrating the utility of a three way linkage between rural development, the critical theories of Jürgen Habermas, and a range of methods broadly described as ethnographic. Ethnography has

¹ I attempt a precise use of these terms throughout the chapter. **Methodology** refers to conceptual frameworks according to which information is selected and organised into meaningful knowledge. **Methods** are the technical strategies researchers use to collect and analyse the information that methodologies identify as important. My main concern in this chapter is with research **methods**, although I touch upon methodological issues covered in more detail in Chapter Two.

² This relationship between theory and method is mediated by research questions: methods provide information to answer questions, and the answers to questions allow the acceptance, modification or rejection of theoretical constructs.

not been a standard methodological tool of either development research or critical theory. The reasons why I set ethnography to such a task are discussed below.

This chapter will allow readers to assess the validity of interpretations offered in subsequent chapters. In 3.2 I explain the rationale for the methods I used. In 3.3 I discuss the methods themselves, and in 3.4 I describe the experience of field work. Together, these sections tell the story of how I gleaned some information about community sustainability in Shimshal; a story which links my initial theoretical stance to the interpretations with which I ended.

3.2: Controls on Research Methods

3.2.1 Introduction

The research methods I used to study Shimshal's community sustainability and its relationship with Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) village organisations (VOs) emerged from four sets of inter-related constraints: the research questions I set, the theoretical framework I developed, the empirical context of the community I studied, and my affinity for certain types of research. Each of these four sets of constraining mechanisms influenced the range of research methods I eventually used. Thus, they are integral to an attempt to explain the "technical" rationale of my research project. Chapter 3.2.2 through 3.2.5 presents each of these constraints in turn. Chapter 3.3 discusses the methods I employed in terms of their utility in satisfying the requirements of these constraints.

3.2.2 Research Questions

Six sets of research questions define the content of my research. The first three sets are conceptual in nature -they guide the formulation of a conceptual framework for the research. The last three are empirical. The first questions respond to the development of a theoretical construct within which other, less abstract, questions can be asked. Table 3.2 provides an outline of the main research questions I address, and a guide to where in the thesis I attempt to answer them. These six sets of research questions, asked in a specific order, provide the link between concept and reality, a link that is technically manifest in method. The questions themselves do not suggest particular methods (as theory, for example, may). Rather, their impact is that answering them requires specific types of information that can be most effectively gleaned through certain techniques.

In terms of constraints on research **methods**, I am only interested in empirical questions, since conceptual ones, in this study, are in a sense pre-method: their initial answers, at least, do not stem from field work. Each of the empirical questions I ask (within the context of a conceptual framework) begs a certain type of information or "data", which can only be collected using a limited range of methods. Stated very briefly, these methods have, in the present case, to be able to obtain information that can be used to link meaning (commitment, identity, conviction, belief) with structure (instrumental organisation and activity) over a period of time (historically, currently, and in response to AKRSP intervention). These demands by the research questions immediately impose a broad set of controls on methodology, which controls become increasingly confining with the addition of specifically theoretical issues, empirical context, and personal predilection.

Table 3.2: Research Questions

I. Conceptual Questions: How shall I look at the issue?

- A. What is wrong with how development organisations conceive indigenous communities?
 - 1. How does development theory neglect indigenous social reality? (*Chapter 2*)
 - 2. How does development practice neglect indigenous social reality? (*Chapter 2*)
- B. How can development studies change to address current neglects?
 - 1. What theoretical shifts are necessary? (*Chapter 2*)
 - 2. What methodological shifts are necessary? (*Chapters 2 & 3*)
- C. What abstract criteria contribute to make an indigenous community sustainable?
 - 1. What are the systemic ingredients of a sustainable community? (*Chapter 2*)
 - a. What is social organisation? (*Chapters 2 & 7*)
 - b. What is political organisation? (*Chapters 2 & 8*)
 - c. What is economic organisation? (*Chapters 2 & 9*)
 - d. What is ecological organisation? (*Chapters 2 & 10*)
 - 2. How does lifeworld relate with social sub-systems? (*Chapter 2*)
 - a. How do validity claims interact with systemic spheres of activity in the process of communicative action? (*Chapter 2*)
 - 3. What is the outcome of communicative system/lifeworld interaction?
 - a. What is social vitality? (*Chapters 2 & 7*)
 - b. What is political validity? (*Chapters 2 & 8*)
 - c. What is economic viability? (*Chapters 2 & 9*)
 - d. What is ecological volition? (*Chapters 2 & 10*)

II. Empirical Questions: What shall I attempt to discover?

- A. What is wrong with how outsiders have conceived Shimshal, and what effect may that have on Shimshal's development? (*Chapter 4*)
- B. What are the characteristics of Shimshal's sustainability?
 - 1. What is Shimshal's historical record as a sustainable community? (*Chapters 4, 5 & 6*)
 - 2. How is community sustainability currently manifested in Shimshal?
 - a. What is the nature of Shimshal's social vitality? (*Chapter 7*)
 - b. What is the nature of Shimshal's political validity? (*Chapter 8*)
 - c. What is the nature of Shimshal's economic viability? (*Chapter 9*)
 - d. What is the nature of Shimshal's ecological volition? (*Chapter 10*)
- C. How have Aga Khan Rural Support Organisation (AKRSP) village organisations influenced community sustainability in Shimshal?
 - 1. What is AKRSP, and how does it work? (*Chapter 6*)
 - 2. What are village organisations, and what are their characteristics in Shimshal? (*Chapter 6 and Chapters 7-10*)
 - 3. In what ways have AKRSP village organisations affected sustainability in Shimshal?
 - a. How have they influenced social vitality? (*Chapter 7*)
 - b. How have they influenced political validity? (*Chapter 8*)
 - c. How have they influenced economic viability? (*Chapter 9*)
 - d. How have they influenced ecological volition? (*Chapter 10*)

3.2.3 Theory

The basis for my conception of community sustainability, for my assessments of the four sub-systemic spheres, for my argument against current trends in development theory and practice - in short, for my entire theoretical framework- is the concept of communicative action. In Chapter Two I commit myself to the theoretical (and methodological) position that the practical, intersubjective understanding reached in communicative discourse forms the basis for sustainability... and for modernity; both of which are just and desirable processes. This has important implications for method and methodology.

First, I must address more concrete research questions within an overall concern for the sources of, the fora for, and the impediments to communicative action. Much of the information I am obligated to seek is information on (a) how and where community members attempt to achieve intersubjective understanding, (b) how well they succeed in that, and (c) how communicative action relates to social system. Such an obligation to theory can only be met with methods that, once again, reveal the character of shared identity, commitment to, and validation of, shared communicative norms.

Second, and even more pervasive, is an obligation to "practice what I preach". To understand what is going on, especially what is going on in terms of shared feelings, I have to engage in practical discourse, in communicative understanding. It will not do to only count things, or do things, or even to ask questions: those procedures yield technical insight, not practical understanding.³ To the extent that it is possible I must also exchange information, to negotiate an intersubjective understanding between community members and myself that is based on the recognition of shared validity claims.⁴ I do not delude myself by imagining that I achieved any

³ As practical is defined by Habermas (see Chapter Two).

⁴ What I am talking about here is a theoretical obligation. It is also possible to argue a moral obligation. To the extent that I am representing this community to the outside world it is incumbent upon me to establish the validity of my understanding of them communicatively and

great degree of communicative understanding between me and community members. Communicative action is an ideal which cannot be completely achieved among community members, much less between members of totally different lifeworlds. Nevertheless the obligation to strive for such a union remains, with methodological implications.⁵

These methodological implications centre around the concept of an ideal speech situation (ie. that leads to communicative action; see Chapter Two). White (1988) paraphrases the rules of an ideal speech situation as follows:

1. Each subject who is capable of speech and action is allowed to participate in discourses.
2. a) Each is allowed to call into question any proposal.
 b) Each is allowed to introduce any proposal into the discourse.
 c) Each is allowed to express his [sic] attitudes, wishes and needs.
3. No speaker ought to be hindered by compulsion -whether arising from inside the discourse or outside of it- from making use of the rights secure under 1 and 2. (White, 1988:56)

Rules 1 and 2 for ideal speech do not constrain my research in any way, except to require that I validate my probing into the community to the satisfaction of community members: something which Shimshalis required of me. They do, however, disclose the logistical difficulty inherent in attempting to engage in communicative action toward gathering information. First, as a foreigner with no normative or technical grounding in the community, and one who spoke their language imperfectly, there is some doubt whether I am even capable of speech and action (Rule 1). Any capability I did attain derived from the community's indulgence in me as a guest, albeit a communicatively accepted guest. In my role as guest I was clearly not allowed to question any proposal, or introduce any proposal, although (as a guest) I was encouraged, within limits, to express my wishes and needs (not necessarily my attitudes) (Rules 2a-c). Rule 3 is a constraining influence. Compulsion (both informal rules of propriety and more rigid formal rules) hindered both me and my

intersubjectively.

⁵ Just as sustainability of a community relies upon a communicative striving for coexistence, so my effectiveness in the community relies on a similar effort to engage in communicative action.

subjects/fellow participants from making use of the rights secure under 1 and 2. Primarily, these centred around the guest/host relationship that is considered normatively appropriate in Shimshal. But they also related to myriad other subtleties of power, attitude and ideology. Despite these difficulties, my obligation was to attempt, to the best of my ability, to diminish the factors that would interfere with the rules of ideal speech. That meant, for example, that I attempt not to take advantage of the "compulsion" provided by strategic displays of my wealth, education, equipment, connections, vulnerability, privileges as guest, and other demonstrations of greater or lesser power.⁶

Associated with the constraints imposed by an obligation to avoid compulsion are constraints relating to Habermas' two rules defining pure communicative action:

The first prevents actors from taking up a discourse with hidden intentions or motives, or in a way in which the true attitudes, feelings and needs of some would be unlikely to find expression. It requires both a reciprocal openness of actors about their true intentions and motives and an equal chance to express their attitudes, feelings and needs... The second rule defining pure communicative action ensures that any theoretical or practical validity claim can be effectively called into question; in other words there will be free access to the test of argumentation. (White, 1988:56-57)

Again, these rules describe circumstances that exist only as ideals. Nevertheless, my theoretical position demands that I attempt to contribute my part to their attainment. The second rule is not methodologically problematic (although it is instrumentally so). Given the opportunity I would be glad to participate in such an exchange of challenges: it would provide valuable information. The first rule is problematic from a methodological point of view, because the process of clarifying alien, mystifying and occasionally inappropriate (to other participants) intentions and motives is difficult and disrupting, and impedes effective data collection. Attempting to explain my

⁶ Many techniques, even interpretive ones, emphasise those power imbalances and even benefit from them (see some of the strategies suggested in Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Burgess, 1984). Such simple strategies as implying that portering jobs or equipment can be traded for information, or the use of sophisticated and unfamiliar (to respondents) recording equipment (eg. tape recorders, cameras) during interviews, or strategic reference to close affiliation with some governing agency (eg. a development agency) create degrees of compulsion upon respondents to cooperate in certain ways.

essentially exploitative motives to the community of Shimshal, and then attempting to validate those motives in some approximation of communicative action proved a delicate (and embarrassing) experience. In the end it meant shifting my motives slightly: validating my exploitation of them by allowing their exploitation of me. The process of validating my motives was embarrassing because the contradictory nature of my position was apparent to all, and painfully apparent to me. I considered myself to be, and needed to portray myself as, a genuine "friend" to the community. But my intentions were ostensibly to take a great deal from the community without returning anything of tangible or certain benefit. It was also a delicate situation, because in the negotiations that followed I was required to provide some evidence of my sincerity: some commitment to returning something. And I was concerned that my promises and assurances (which was all I could offer at first) were appropriate (normatively valid) from community members' points of view, and were genuine (truthful) and practicable (technically valid) from my point of view (ie. would I allow the community to utilise their association with me in their dealings with AKRSP, and in their objections to various government programmes?). This ongoing process of establishing and re-establishing contract is discussed in detail in 3.4.2 and 3.4.3.

It should be clear that these are theoretical issues that exist quite apart from the theoretical issues that inform conceptual research questions that, in turn, influence empirical research questions. Issues surrounding my participation in communicative action with community members inform how I conceive my relationship with community members. That relationship constrains the methods I can use. These issues resurface in later sections of the chapter, where I discuss the methods I finally employed, and where I describe my experience of field work.

3.2.4 Empirical Context

This section enumerates one main logistical constraint on my research program (time) and three main constraints of Shimshal's empirical context (quantitative vagueness, accessibility, and language) that constrained my choice of methods. Myriad other constraints exist which affected the effectiveness and disposition of my research experience, but these are more fruitfully addressed in the account of "experiencing field work" I provide later. The four constraints I discuss here influenced the choice of methods themselves. Social science literature, especially ethnography, is replete with accounts of empirical or logistical constraints on research, which are often offered as excuses for inadequacies in the finished work. My finished work is similarly inadequate for some of the same reasons.

The first constraint is an obvious and common one. I allotted myself two field seasons of about three and a half months each to complete all research in Pakistan. That meant about seven months total in the field, partly by my own choice, and partly because a four year graduate programme essentially limits field work to two brief field seasons. Seven months is long enough for certain quantitative approaches to gathering information, and for some of the more structured and less interactive qualitative approaches. It is not long enough for a programme based solely on participant observation, or for detailed comparative studies among villages, or for collecting primary data that situates the community from the outside. Nor is it long enough for any strategy that would require me to travel in and out of Shimshal regularly. The round trip from Shimshal to another settlement is at least eight days. Six months is long enough to combine a number of ethnographic techniques to situations as they present themselves. And to rely on whatever secondary material is available, and the strength of a sound conceptual framework. It also proved to be long enough to establish a level of intersubjectivity between me and some of my hosts.

Certain characteristics of northern Pakistan, Shimshal and Shimshalis inhibit the viability of methods relying on quantitative or statistical material. First, only the crudest statistics exist about

the community of Shimshal. Indeed, it is safe to say that my crude estimate of population is the most accurate by far. Compiling such statistics as exist would require time and frustration that would add little to an understanding of community sustainability. Second, the inhabitants of Shimshal, despite a relatively high level of education and the introduction of a monetary economy, have little interest in matters quantitative. They simply do not know how much of anything they are, have, spend, import, export, etc. Not only were techniques for gathering quantitative information fruitless, but, given my research questions and the theoretical stance I follow, there would be little point in describing the community according to criteria its inhabitants consider unimportant.⁷

Much has been said about the role of mountains as barriers to communication, innovation and trade. The people of Shimshal have, since their occupation of Shimshal several centuries ago, managed to overcome the isolation facilitated by their remote location. Nevertheless, certain mechanisms of the global communications infrastructure are poorly developed in northern Pakistan, and especially in Shimshal. The only way to contact Shimshal from afar, without the intervention of some intermediary is by post; an uncertain service which takes at least two months each way. A message sent by FAX to AKRSP in Gilgit may reach Shimshal in two weeks, but the return message by post takes another two months. This means that, for all practical purposes, my opportunities to collect primary information about Shimshal ended the day I left Shimshal territory. Unlike researchers who work closer to home, or at least closer to a phone, I was hindered from

⁷ I can offer no satisfactory explanation of why accurate "amounts" seem to mean so little to Shimshalis. I can say that this characteristic is common among communities in northern Pakistan. I suspect that this numerical nonchalance is associated with the fact that Shimshal's social, economic and political systems emphasise various levels of communal ownership and belonging. Asking someone to count his or her sheep, for example, involves a long and somewhat abstract conversation about the various units (household, lineage, subclan) to whose sheep that individual has some claim of ownership. If that can be established, then the question of how many sheep exist, located in a dozen or more locations, are controlled by these various units, can be tackled. In the end it is more important that an individual can recognise his or her sheep at any location, than it is to know the total number. Similarly, the population of the community is unimportant. What is important is that every person can be identified as an appropriate part of a household, clan and lineage system. Those concerns for communal control, belonging, carefully defined relationships, and responsibility necessarily became my concerns as well, as I tried to understand the community. And concerns for sums and totals receded.

filling in empirical gaps after interpreting the main body of information. The methodological overlap between research and comprehensive interpretation that is common to many studies was curtailed in mine. I overcame that somewhat by engaging in two research seasons, but I spent my first summer mainly in gaining access to the community, and (as a tool for gaining access) conducting ecological investigations, so that I returned to Canada with a valuable overall conception of the social organisation of the community, but little specific information. I also benefitted from having spent two prior summers investigating irrigation agriculture in other Karakoram villages, but again that provided an impression of the dimensions of my topic, rather than interpretive material with which to work.

Just as my departure from Shimshal at the end of 1989 spelled the abrupt end of field research, so did my arrival there earlier that summer signal a painful separation from the literature that could aid my ongoing preparation for field work. My entire kit had to be carried four days by me and a couple of companions. There was little room for reference material to guide my investigations, so that once I travelled to Shimshal I was virtually without recourse to formal and external sources of methodological or theoretical guidance (ie. I could not visit a library, speak to my advisors and colleagues, etc). In few geographical studies are the (formal) proposal/conceptualisation stage and the (formal) field research stage so distinct from one another.⁸

The necessity to communicate in a language that was foreign to me, or to my informants, or to both of us, posed additional constraints on my use of specific methods. I arrived in Shimshal in 1988 with English and a limited grasp of Urdu. I also had several months experience in each of Balti and Burushaski, both of which are spoken in the Karakoram, but not in Shimshal. Throughout the summer of 1988 I learned as much Wakhi -Shimshal's native tongue- as I could manage. By the time I returned to Shimshal in 1989 I could manage slow conversations in both Urdu and

⁸ This is not to say that my theoretical and methodological understanding of the issue and its investigation did not develop during the course of field work. It did. But it developed without the interplay between my own thoughts and relevant literature.

Wakhi... if my informants were patient and indulgent of my handicap. All Shimshalis speak Wakhi, most men and a few women speak Urdu, and perhaps 50 men can manage a subtle, if laborious, conversation in English. In addition, a dozen or so men also have some rudimentary grasp of German, French, Spanish or Italian. My most productive conversations were those in English with other English speakers, or in a mixture of Wakhi, Urdu and English. I also had some very productive conversations solely in Urdu or Wakhi, but only under relaxed and familiar circumstances. For example, some of my most rewarding experiences (in terms of both personal satisfaction and "field work") were slow, lazy eight hour conversations in Wakhi, with my companions on the trail. These conversations were not efficient in terms of "information per hour", but they were productive and communicative in their own leisurely way.

It may seem that language complications of this sort inhibit the use of conversational methods, and indeed they do. But I found that these complications inhibit more structured verbal or written methods even more. Conversations, when they were actually conversations -slow, circuitous bilateral exchanges of information and understanding- were quite productive, not least because Shimshalis were willing to be indulgent in a conversational setting. Structured interviews or questionnaires baffled all of my informants, and in any case lost their structure as I (and anyone else within hearing distance) rephrased questions, and they rephrased answers, in the attempt to communicate. In the end we either succeeded in negotiating a true conversation, or abandoned the attempt at communication. What language barriers, such as they were, meant was that my field work relied largely on key informants: those people I could be close to long enough to establish a conversational rapport, and those people whose knowledge of Urdu and/or English allowed them to grasp my point quickly (and me to grasp theirs). Regrettably, only two Shimshali women of my acquaintance fit into those categories. Although women are not cloistered as in many Islamic communities it was impossible for me to spend hours on end with any Shimshali woman without the interference of other men. In addition, very few women speak Urdu or any English, and most speak Wakhi with an inflection that I found difficult to understand. To use a male interpreter would

have been to obtain a male (probably a male relative: husband, brother, father-in-law, son) interpretation of a female's perspective. The result, regrettably, is that I am obliged to present a primarily male interpretation of sustainability in Shimshal.

3.2.5 Personal Predilection

Central to the whole question of choosing methodology and methods is personal preference or predilection. Indeed, it seems to me that many researchers are as committed to particular methodologies, even methods, as they are to theoretical conceptualisations, research topics and study areas. Of course, the integration of theory and methodology is difficult to untangle, but there is little doubt that theoretical positions are influenced by methodological preferences, and attachment to certain methods.

Two attitudes (perhaps convictions is a better word) have influenced my choice of methods. The first is a distaste for quantification, which, as I have indicated, is largely inappropriate for my research aims. Second, I have a predilection toward non-intrusive research techniques (to the extent that any research technique can be non-intrusive). This stems from the perspective that I can never be entirely sure that I have any right at all to be poking about in a community like Shimshal. Given the obvious intrusion of my presence I have an obligation to let Shimshalis call the shots; to adapt myself to them; ideally to let them offer their lives to me, rather than to wrench their lives from them. The ethnographic methodologies I adopted satisfied that predilection, because they allowed me to learn important things without asking too many questions, without making too many rules, and without compelling (as in ideal speech) individuals to tell me things they wanted to keep to themselves. Other techniques -structured interviews, questionnaires, non-situated conversations, organised meetings- are explicitly aggressive and intrusive.

Neither of these attitudes results from a formal theoretical perspective, although they have

both been strengthened by (and have influenced) the theoretical position I have developed. Nor do they result from my experiences in the field, although, again, the reactions of Shimshalis to my various types of overtures verified them. They both stem from some ongoing socialisation, which has its roots in experiences prior to my interest in social organisation in rural communities. Still, they do both exert constraints on the methods practically available to me.

3.3 Field Methods

3.3.1 Introduction

A consideration of the constraints enumerated in the last section suggests that after satisfying requirements of the research questions, theoretical requirements, empirical requirements and personal requirements I left myself little room for choice. Some combination of ethnographic methods was required that was not too intrusive, not too quantitative, that emphasised communicative understanding, that could be managed in a short time frame without long intervening periods of introspection, that could adapt to an abrupt start and an abrupt finish, and that could occur within the context of pidgin conversation. The techniques that I employed in the field can be classified as participant observation, interviews as conversations, using documentary evidence, and scientific measurement.⁹ Each of these techniques is discussed below.

⁹ The first three terms are borrowed from chapter headings in Burgess (1984). The fourth technique contributes little to the interpretations of this thesis, except for appendices to the ecological chapter (Chapter Ten). However, it was important for obligations to AKRSP, and to gain access to the community (see Chapter 3.4).

3.3.2 Participant Observation

Since Malinowski published Argonauts of the Pacific in 1922, participant observation has been a standard method of social anthropology. Indeed, for many it has been the method of ethnographic field work. As such, participant observation has been lauded and condemned as a way to extract social and cultural information from subject groups. A great many recent publications evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of participant observation (see Geertz, 1973, 1983; Spradley, 1980; Burgess, 1982, 1984; Barley, 1983; Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983; Ellen, 1984; Hammersley, 1989; Sanjek, 1990).¹⁰ Its strengths are various; its weaknesses all seem to revolve around the question of whether it is actually possible.¹¹ My task, at this stage, is not to critique participant observation, but to describe its utility for my research. I should note at the outset that my objective has not been to create an ethnography of the Shimshalis, but rather to relate certain aspects of their social world "as it is" to a prior theoretical agenda.

Participant observation is perhaps best conceived as a range of activities situated on a continuum between complete participation and complete observation. Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:93) (and also Schwartz and Jacobs (1979)) follow Gold (1958) and Junker (1960) in identifying four types of participant observer: complete participant, participant as observer, observer as participant, and complete observer. The first two roles tend toward what the authors call "comparative involvement: subjectivity and sympathy", and the second two represent "comparative detachment: objectivity and sympathy" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:93). My own stance was

¹⁰ Schwartz and Jacobs (1979), in particular, enumerate the practical and conceptual problems surrounding participant observation as a field technique.

¹¹ If we conceive participant observation as a way to approach the task of gathering field information, and not as some sort of attainable state -the successful participant observer- then much of the problem vanishes. Of course complete participation and complete observation are mutually exclusive, and of course an outsider can never be a complete participant, but that does not prevent us from getting on with participating to the extent circumstances allow, and observing while we do so.

some mixture of participant as observer and observer as participant. A theoretical requirement to engage in some approximation of communicative discourse based on intersubjectively shared validity claims prevented any attempt at pure observation (as did the necessity to live among Shimshalis throughout my research seasons). Complete participation, I would argue, is simply impossible, and unnecessary (and I think unethical), even if an individual is able to conceal his or her identity as a researcher. There was no question in Shimshal, where every other inhabitant has four centuries of "belonging", of me being accepted as one of them, despite Shimshalis' compliments to the contrary. As Barley forcefully remarks:

Much nonsense has been written, by people who should know better, about the anthropologist "being accepted". It is sometimes suggested that an alien people will somehow come to view the visitor of distinct race and culture as in every way similar to locals. This is, alas, unlikely. The best one can hope for is to be viewed as a harmless idiot who brings certain advantages to his [sic] village. (Barley, 1983:56)

Barley's statement is, in my experience, no more than the truth; a truth which overcomes Hammersley and Atkinson's concern that the participant observer may suffer from "over-rapport" in which he or she too strongly identifies with, or is too strongly identified with, the subject community (and indigenous perspectives), to the detriment of detached perception. Over-rapport was the least of my worries, as I attempted to understand the shared lifeworld of Shimshalis. I had no opportunity but to cast myself at least partially in the role of the "stranger", and thus retain my "critical, analytic perspective" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:102).¹² Although I may have

¹² I am, perhaps, underestimating the danger of over-rapport by equating it solely to the field experience itself. The danger of over-rapport was small while I was in the field. Too many differences existed between my hosts and myself, too many alienating experiences and too many moments of loneliness and displacement intervened between Shimshalis and me, for intense "identification with" to occur. The danger of over-rapport increased when I left Shimshal (and left my alienating experiences behind), and came to realise that I love the community of Shimshalis, and that I want to identify with that community. I have had to be vigilant lest my interpretations be **tainted** by love and identification. I perceive over-rapport as a danger of tainted interpretation after the fact more than as a danger associated with experience in the field. But love and identification does not need to taint interpretation; rather, it can illuminate interpretation. I think I have escaped the risk of over-rapport (as a negative manifestation of love and identification) through a process akin to Wolff's notion of "surrender", through which a researcher "surrenders to" a community, and then interprets the community (still critically, but from a position of empathy) in light of the "yield"

wanted to immerse myself more completely in Shimshal's communicative project, this enforced separation from "Shimshalness" allowed me to engage in both of my obligations as participant observer:

...to see what the actor sees, know what he [sic] knows, and think as he thinks [and then]... to transcend this view, to see what the actor does **not** see -the formal features, process, patterns or common denominators that characterise the actor's view and situation. (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979:48; emphasis in original)

Participant observation was an appropriate technique for my research in Shimshal for six reasons. First, it provided a starting point from which to carry out research at all, to establish a credible position in the community, to engage in other techniques. As Ellen (1984:23) suggests "a certain amount of participation in the activities of the people studied enables the anthropologist not only to observe the actual behaviour of subjects but to apply effectively all other possible research techniques". More than that, the role of researcher was meaningless to Shimshalis (except geophysical researcher, which role I assumed during the initial period of access). Participation in their own way of life facilitated the development of an indigenously-defined role for me, while getting me started in collecting information:

...participation aims at having the role of "a friend", "harmless foreigner", "our European", or something similar, ascribed to the anthropologist, who is anyway forced into a certain amount of participation because... respondents or potential respondents are judging him [sic] by what he **is** and what he **does**, and not by what he says he is or says he will do. (Ellen, 1984:23; emphasis in original)

In attaining that role I also attained a degree of validity, which allowed me to intrude further into the affairs of the community by asking questions, and directing conversations. The concept that I would try to learn about them by participating in their affairs (rather than measuring, prodding and probing them) was a common-sense one which Shimshalis accepted easily (and as a compliment).

or "catch" (the discoveries) of that process of surrender (Wolff, 1964). Surrender is characterised by total involvement, suspension of received notions, pertinence of everything, identification, and risk of being hurt: all of which facilitate a catch otherwise inaccessible (Wolff, 1964:238-240). The catch or yield of surrender is a level of interpretation, Wolff's description of which approximates successful intersubjective and communicative understanding between researcher and researched community.

Second, by participating and observing passively, if you like, I was able to collect information on social interaction in a relatively natural and unforced context. I was privy to information that could not, or simply was not, **talked** about. For example, the change in villagers' demeanour when they enter the high pastures is not revealed by other techniques. Similarly, certain rituals are enacted but not discussed. This sort of insight is essential to an interpretation of lifeworld. In addition, I was able to develop a sense of the context of indigenous interaction through my own interaction with and observation of other participants. What I mean by that is that my appreciation for the meanings and connotations of their words and gestures developed through observing them spoken and enacted in their natural setting. Any set of techniques which excluded participant observation would have curtailed this type of contextualisation (see Becker and Geer, 1957:111). In short, participant observation allowed me to gain a fuller and more situated impression of social interaction in Shimshal.

Third, the use of participant observation enabled me to partly validate my findings and others' offerings while I was still in the field. It did this, as a technique, in two ways. Participant observation allowed me to continually compare what people told me with what they did. It provided a check that enabled me to corroborate hearsay or attempt to validate it, as the circumstance warranted. Information received through participant observation is closer to the "horse's mouth", so to speak, than that obtained by other methods, and thus helps to situate information received through other methods. According to Becker and Geer (1957:116) "participant observation makes it possible to check description against fact and, noting discrepancies, become aware of systematic distortion made by the person under study; such distortions are less likely to be discovered by interviewing alone". More subtly, the act of participating **successfully** in subjects' lives provided an indigenous subject-determined validation that I was interpreting those lives appropriately. What I mean is best expressed by Ellen:

...the crucial importance of the researcher's active participation in the lives of subjects derives from making it possible to learn the meaning of actions: through living with the people being studied, and through the necessity of behaving toward

them and communicating with them, s/he comes to share the same meanings with them in the process of active participation in their social life... It is a methodology where the notion of success replaces truth as criterion of validity and where the participation of the researcher becomes the main means of verifying his [sic] account. If able to interact successfully with and towards subjects... the anthropologist's understanding of their culture is right. And it is, of course, the group which defines the terms of acceptance and rejection of new members. (Ellen, 1984:29-30)

In research, such as mine, where meanings (lifeworld) are as important as actions, and where intersubjective understanding is conceptualised as central to relationships between meaning, structure and action, this type of validation is crucial. To the extent that Shimshalis and I reach an understanding of one another through communicative action, my interpretation of their lives is validated.

Fourth, I needed a technique that would allow me to work within a particular theoretical framework, but that would also remain flexible to shifts in perspective after I was in the field. Any sort of structured sampling according to pre-designed questions would have inhibited that flexibility. One of the advantages (indeed an objective) of a passive research strategy is the possibility of utilising serendipitous opportunities to gain understanding. Becker and Geer maintain that "the fact that the participant observer constantly redesigns his [sic] study as he uncovers new data deserves to be taken seriously... it means that he engages in analytic activity most of the time that he is in the field" (Becker and Geer, 1982:240). It also means that everything can be data, including contradictory evidence. For example, one household in Shimshal decreased their yak herd, despite an apparent veneration for yaks, and a commitment to their husbandry. When I probed closer, I found that this particular household lost considerable status because of its attitude toward yaks: a circumstance indicating that the exception proved the rule. Participant observation is well suited to this type of two way interaction between question and answer.

Fifth, participant observation was possible for me within existing logistical circumstances. It required little equipment, it assumed no degree of literacy among subjects, it could be practised without a formal interpreter, and it demanded no interaction with a sophisticated communications

infrastructure. Because participant observation is in a sense self-contained, in that conceptualisation and field work can occur simultaneously, it is well suited to field work with an abrupt beginning and ending. Other methods would have meant trying to redesign questionnaires, reformulate sampling techniques etc, in the field, or simply making do with a strategy based on inappropriate conceptions of certain aspects of the community.

Finally, participation offers something which may not be essential for competent field work, but which adds considerably to the value of field research from the researcher's perspective. That is, it provides "socially meaningful involvement in [community members'] affairs" (Ellen, 1984:23). The attempt to participate in a way of life totally different from my own, and the success I think I achieved in that endeavour (witnessed by the friendships I developed, the empathy I achieved, the access I gained, and the perspective I derived) have offered personal rewards quite apart from (and quite as strong as) potential scholastic rewards. I doubt that another method could have offered the same degree of "socially meaningful involvement" in Shimshalis' lives.

3.3.3 Interviews as Conversations

Two broad categories of interview are available to researchers of social situations: structured and unstructured. Structured interviews require no long-term or close relationship between the researcher and the researched. Rather:

It is assumed that the interviewer can manipulate the situation and has control over a set list of questions that have been formulated **before** the interview and which are to be **answered** rather than considered, rephrased, re-ordered, discussed and analysed. In short, the researcher is assumed to have power over the respondent who is given a subordinate role in this context... The structured interview is, therefore, presented as a data collection device involving situations where the interviewer merely poses questions and records answers in a set pattern. (Burgess, 1984:101; emphasis in original)

It should be clear that my personal and theoretical positions, as well as the empirical context of

Shimshal and the research questions I posed, do not lend themselves to structured interviewing. Successful unstructured interviews, on the other hand, may be described as "conversations with a purpose" (Burgess, 1984:102). It is this type of interview that I found useful in the context of my objectives in Shimshal.

The interviews I conducted, or which in some cases were conducted on me, were informal conversations between me and another person, or among several companions of which I was one. Very rarely did I actively select a topic of conversation. Occasionally one of the other participants chose a specific issue to discuss. Most often, however, issues, topics and questions arose out of the exchange of pleasantries or views about a task at hand. For example, conversation about any of the problems involved in moving my entourage from one pasture to another could easily (and almost always did) lead into topics which were more relevant to my research: attitudes toward portering, conflicts between portering and farming, significance of places along the trail. Usually, I attempted to exercise a vague sort of control over the direction of conversation, but in most cases any formality or rigidity was introduced by informants themselves, with remarks like "what do you want to know about this?" or "you should really ask us about that".¹³ That is not to say that I did not ask questions. I did. But I tried to ask questions that clarified or enlarged upon a "natural" line of discussion. I found this easy to do because Shimshalis were eager to talk with me and explain themselves to me.

One reason I took such a passive attitude toward interviewing is that I conceived it as a supplement to participant observation. Schwartz and Jacobs (1979:38) suggest that "interviewing is best undertaken in conjunction with a strategy like participant observation, which can indicate

¹³ Those sorts of leading comments did not occur frequently -perhaps three or four times a week- and they were offered by only a few of my companions (usually those that considered themselves "expert" in some facet of Shimshali culture). The conversations spawned by these remarks were no more informative than others, although they often had a more obvious purpose. However, the questions or comments themselves were revealing: they indicated some aspect of the community that some resident thought was important, or at least important for me to understand. Occasionally the outcome was a discussion of how that person perceived me, or how they wanted me to perceive their community.

whom to interview, when, and about what and can act as an independent check on the information obtained". Unstructured interviewing helped to fill in the spaces between what I saw and participated in. However, I did not want the interview process to interfere with my ability to participate and to observe. Indeed, to the extent that I wanted to participate in communicative discourse, my "conversations with a purpose" were manifestations of participant observation. They provided an opportunity to gain intersubjective understanding through discourse. In the paragraphs that follow I discuss the utility of unstructured interviewing for my research, in its role as a supplement to participant observation.

To begin, unstructured interviewing retained many of the advantages of participant observation, while allowing me to glean additional information on specific aspects of my research problem. It built on the knowledge (and access) provided by participant observation, and then contributed to it. In particular, interview information provided the lifeworld context of many activities and structures I could only observe in their systemic manifestation. It was through interviews that I learned the symbolic meaning of many structures, places and activities. I could then apply that new found lifeworld-oriented insight to subsequent participation and observation: "so **that is why singing my way into Pamir is important!**". It was as an interviewer that I could realise my role as "the stranger" (indulge a critical analytical perspective), and could elaborate participant observations into "thick descriptions" (the indigenous meaning behind the activity) (see Geertz, 1973:3-30).

Second, and related to the point above, unstructured interviewing allows subjects to explain, conceptualise, theorise their own lives. As Schwartz and Jacobs (1979:38) point out about interviewing "individual respondents are treated as sources of "general" information... they are asked to speak on behalf of people other than themselves and to give information about social processes and cultural conventions that transcend their own personal lives". The attempt to situate their lives in a larger, less immediate, context and of speaking "on behalf" of others allows individuals to describe their own agency in the context of a more general structure, and to relate their individual meanings to a shared lifeworld. While I got glimpses of those connections while

observing the instrumental patterns of Shimshalis lives (and could easily draw my own conclusions), participant observation did not provide much direct information on relations between structure, activity and meaning.

Third, I found that sincere and sympathetic participation in "heart to heart" conversations about individual's problems and concerns (after I had some awareness of context) contributed not only to my insight but also to my validity and credibility in the community. Burgess' suggestion that a researcher can become "a friend and a confidant who shows interest, understanding and sympathy in the life of the person with whom a conversation occurs" describes my interpretation of my own experience with several (but not most) of my informants. This role, when it occurred, contributed to my efficacy as a participant observer, by increasing my credibility. In addition, the attitude of sincerity and sympathy I attempted to adopt in interviewing was reciprocated, so that interviews became exchanges of information and understanding; in short, communicative discourse (see Ellen, 1984:232; Burgess, 1984:105). The resulting process of offering, challenging, validating, accepting, rejecting would be contrived and impolite in (informal) circumstances other than that among "friends and confidants". At that point topics, arguments, everything became negotiable, so that interviewing **became** participant observation, especially when several individuals were involved and I could recede into the background and merely observe discourse about a topic I had previously directed. A valuable by-product of this type of rapport was for me the receipt of confidential and/or personal information that would not normally arise in conversation, even among villagers (see Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:120).

Fourth, unstructured interviews are flexible enough to permit an initially passive approach to conversation, which can then become more aggressive as contexts and circumstances become more clear. As my own validity increased throughout the season, and as Shimshalis warmed to their topic in the course of an interview, I could safely and legitimately (to them) increase the extent to which I directed conversations. As Ellen states:

Even where one is going to be using essentially the same pool of informants

throughout fieldwork, resort to a less focused or "passive" approach is advantageous to start with. The knowledge sought by anthropologists is frequently a resource not to be dissipated indiscriminately or to individuals who are strangers and clearly cannot understand its value and appreciate its significance. Prematurely detailed, but poorly formulated probing of a particular area are thus likely to generate poor responses. Once some familiarity has been achieved, at least one set of barriers tends to come down. There then exists the possibility of more detailed probing and, here again, by leaving things for a while the ethnographer will have gained the opportunity to learn the appropriate techniques for cajoling or provoking answers and even unsolicited information. (Ellen, 1984:232)

Schwartz and Jacobs make a similar point about the ability of the practitioner of unstructured interviewing to "feel" his or her way into the process, both conceptually and contextually:

Those who utilise unstructured interviewing techniques... assume that the interviewer does not know in advance which questions are appropriate to ask, how they should be worded so as to be non-threatening or ambiguous, which questions to include or exclude to best learn about the topic under study, or what constitutes an answer (what the range of answers to any question might be). The answers to these problems are seen to emerge from the interviews themselves, the social context in which they occurred, and the degree of rapport the interviewer was able to establish during the interview. In short, **appropriate or relevant questions are seen to emerge from the process of interaction that occurs between the interviewer and interviewees...** Not only does a range of meaningful questions emerge in this way, but also, from the respondent's perspective, a range of meaningful answers. (Schwartz and Jacobs, 1979:40; emphasis added)

This flexibility and reflexivity was useful for my purposes in the context of Shimshal.

3.3.4: Using Documentary Evidence

My main tools for gathering information that related to community sustainability in Shimshal, and the influence of AKRSP village organisations on that sustainability, were participant observation and unstructured interviewing. However, in the course of my research I also found it useful to utilise documentary information. Burgess suggests that documentary material can be classified according to three sets of distinctions: primary and secondary documentary evidence, private and public documents, and solicited and unsolicited documents (Burgess, 1984:123-124). The five types of

documentary evidence I used encompass most of those categories: the Tale of Mamu Shah (primary, semi-public, unsolicited), Distegil Tourist Log (primary, semi-public, unsolicited), published explorer's accounts (primary, secondary, public, unsolicited), AKRSP literature (primary, secondary, public, unsolicited), and scholarly reports (primary, secondary, public, unsolicited). These types differ widely both in style and content. For example, the tale of Mamu Shah had not been written in its entirety until I transcribed it: it is a verbal document which is public to all Shimshalis, but not to others simply because it had never before been transcribed. It is valuable as a tool to interpret certain shared elements of Shimshalis' lifeworlds. AKRSP literature, on the other hand, is primarily policy oriented. It reveals the attitude of agency personnel toward Karakoram mountain farmers, and outlines the specific conceptual approach and policy objectives of the agency.

The nature of each of those documentary sources, and the use to which I put them, becomes clear throughout the thesis, so I will not dwell on those issues here.¹⁴ Suffice it to say that documentary evidence allowed me to probe into areas that were inaccessible to me through participant observation and interviewing. Shimshal's verbal but formal tale of their history and founder (Mamu Shah), published explorers' accounts, and the scholarly anthropological publication of Tahir Ali (1983) provided **historical** information about the community from the inside and the outside. Historical information was important if I hoped to interpret community sustainability over time. Explorers' accounts, Distegil Cottage Book entries, AKRSP publications, and scholarly publications gave me a variety of perspectives on how **outsiders** perceive and relate to the community. In interpreting these outsiders' accounts I was less interested in what they told me about Shimshal (secondary information) than I was with what they revealed about outsiders' impressions of the community (primary information). Nevertheless, I did obtain some useful information about the community. In addition, AKRSP reports were important as evidence of that

¹⁴ The approach I used to interpret documentary material is that coined by Denzin as **Interpretive biography**, in which texts (written or otherwise) are interpreted as "true fictions" consisting of combinations of "facts" and "facticities" (Denzin, 1989). The first sections of Chapter Four discuss the characteristics of that approach.

organisation's motives in initiating a programme in Shimshal.

In short, documentary information allowed me to broaden the scope of my investigations from the **inside at this time**, to include the **outside and another time**.

3.3.5 Scientific Measurements

In addition to the interpretive techniques of participant observation, unstructured interviewing and analysing documents, I also employed what may be described somewhat loosely as scientific measurement. These measurements were limited exclusively to ecological and geophysical phenomena. I collected soil and vegetation samples, estimated stream flows, calculated slopes and aspects, recorded temperature, humidity and precipitation, evaluated grazing capacity and enumerated cropping patterns. Their value to this study is simply that the activity of visiting various pastures and settlement areas, and recording geophysical information about each setting, provided an initial locally-acceptable rationale for my presence in Shimshal, showed the Shimshalis that I was interested in helping them address certain ecological concerns they had conveyed to AKRSP, and gave us time to get accustomed to one another and build a more personal rapport. In short, conducting scientific measurements was an important element of access and entry, a topic dealt with in the following section. In addition, some of the data I collected in this way appears as supplementary material to Chapter Ten on ecological volition.

3.3.6 Summary

The information I present in the empirical chapters that follow is the product of three main research strategies: participant observation, unstructured interviewing and the interpretation of

unsolicited documentary evidence. I consider participant observation my primary technique. The other two were supplementary: ways to clarify and enlarge on areas of interest hinted at through participation and observation. Indeed, I considered my interviews, and to a lesser extent documentary evidence, to be most valuable when they merged with participation. The tale of Mamu Shah, for example, is a prepared and formalised text, and I interpreted it as such. However, it was related to me in an indigenous context. I was not only the transcriber of a text. I was also a member of the audience for a textual performance; I was a participant in an indigenous, meaningful event, and I could observe the context and manner within which community members enjoyed the performance.

In some instances interviewing individuals and interpreting documents provided material that was not available through participant observation. In particular, the lifeworld embedded meanings of activities were not often illuminated by observing or even participating in the activities themselves. I had to engage community members in directed discourse: interviews. Similarly, participant observation, for the most part, provided information only about the here and now. I depended on textual material (often verbal, sometimes written) to incorporate the attitudes of outsiders, and a longer time scale, into my interpretive framework.

Apart from simply providing more information, the use of "multiple strategies" allows a degree of cross-validation or "data triangulation" (Burgess, 1984:143-145).¹⁵ To the extent that they overlapped, I was able to compare the information obtained from one method with information obtained in another: does the veneration they profess for yaks in their folk stories manifest itself in practice? (see Chapters Nine and Ten) or does the professed ideal of equity influence systemic

¹⁵ Wax defends multiple strategies as follows:

Strict and rigid adherence to any method, technique or doctrinaire position may, for the field worker, become like confinement in a cage. If he [sic] is lucky or very cautious, a field worker may formulate research so that he will find all the answers he needs within his cage. But if he finds himself in a field situation where he is limited by a particular method, theory, or technique he will do well to slip through the bars and try to find out what is really going on. (Wax, 1971:10)

relations among households? (see Chapters Five, Seven and Eight) or does what AKRSP publications state as the process of village organisation correspond to the events described by community members? (see Chapters Five, Six and Eight). Continual cross-referencing among methods provided a way to check the validity of information obtained by each method, and to provide a hint as to the utility of methods themselves¹⁶.

3.4 Experiencing Fieldwork

3.4.1 Introduction

So far in this chapter I have discussed constraints on fieldwork and the techniques that resulted from those constraints. Neither of those issues say much about actually doing fieldwork: the process of simultaneously surviving mentally and physically and collecting useful information. This complicated process is encompassed in a single ominous phrase: **experiencing fieldwork**. Most ethnographic monographs contain some information on experiencing fieldwork, and some of the most enlightening, interesting and entertaining (not to say humorous) ethnographic texts are devoted to describing and interpreting it. Nigel Barley's The Innocent Anthropologist: Notes from a Mud Hut (1983), is a fine (and hilarious) example.

Perhaps surprisingly, given the variety of locations and contexts within which ethnography is undertaken, most accounts of fieldwork (and not just ethnographic fieldwork) enumerate a similar set of practical problems. Almost all concur that ethnographic fieldwork in unfamiliar locations is lonely, frustrating, alienating, depressing, humbling, destructive of self-esteem and feelings of competence, and occasionally intensely rewarding and satisfying as it is experienced... and all of

¹⁶ Appendix One provides examples of fieldnotes, and summarises the methodological process of relating information gained from methods to my theoretical interests.

those things with a larger dose of satisfaction, humour and nostalgia, in retrospect. Although researchers tend to speak fondly of their past field experiences, the ambivalence many hold toward field notes for years after fieldwork has stopped speaks volumes about the depression, loneliness and insecurities involved in fieldwork (see Jackson, 1990; Sanjek, 1990). My experience of fieldwork is no different. Like many researchers I was reluctant to confront my field notes for fear of conjuring up the negative aspects of my time in Shimshal.¹⁷

The practical issues I dealt with also resemble those described by others. They include well-worn issues of access and entry, establishing a contract and maintaining relations over time, day to day life in the field, and partial exit with lingering expectations. These four issues provide the structure for discussion in the following sections.

3.4.2 Access/Entry

Field research in Shimshal began only with entry into the community and access to information that could be provided by observing and interacting with community members. Both of these criteria were problematic: entry for the first week or so of my stay in Shimshal, access until the day I left.

Entry into the community of Shimshal, more than for many situations where social scientists conduct research, could have been a campaign in itself. Shimshal is a subsistence based agricultural community located above 3000m, three days arduous walk from any other inhabited place (see Plate One). No more than 150 westerners have ever visited the community, and since partition in 1947, none have stayed more than two weeks. I had no opportunity to wander into the community discreetly and unobtrusively, and without any overt purpose. The moment I expressed

¹⁷ Perhaps the only thing worse is rereading letters sent to and from the field.

Plate One: Shimshal Villages from the West.

(Shimshal River floodplain is in the foreground, and the villages are on the alluvial fans above the cliffs cut by the river. This view greets travellers arriving from Pasu.)

a desire to visit Shimshal to the Shimshali men lazing about the Batura Inn in Pasu (the village at the junction of the path to Shimshal and the Karakoram Highway) it was clear that I was up to something. The most acceptable something would have been tourist trekking in Shimshal territory. That would have ensured me entry into the community, but would have complicated subsequent access. In any case I wanted to begin honestly, without jeopardising my chances to engage in research. I told the men (who turned out to be initial gatekeepers and my initial sponsors) two things that provided me with some credibility. First, I mentioned that I was a friend of a Canadian scientist who had trekked through their community with two Shimshali high altitude porters some years before. This man, who had pioneered a new route through part of the territory and was therefore highly esteemed in Shimshal, had recommended that I visit Shimshal. Second, I told them that I had spent two previous summers in other Karakoram communities, and wanted to spend another in Shimshal collecting material about their pastures. I emphasised that the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme was interested to know what I learned about how they (AKRSP) could help improve Shimshal's pastoral economy. This assertion was validated by the fact that I had contrived to arrive in an AKRSP jeep. As it turned out, these credentials convinced two men to offer to guide me to Shimshal. Without that offer I would have effectively been barred from entering the community: I needed a guide and porters to get me to Shimshal, but more than that, I needed their **permission**, without which I would have been received poorly in the community.¹⁸

Throughout the walk into Shimshal I was interviewed by my two porters (these interviews to establish my credentials were by far the most structured and formal that I participated in Shimshal). I disclosed that my main project for now was to visit and evaluate all Shimshal pastures, but that I also had an interest in how the community was changing as a result of increasing interaction with the outside, and particularly with development agencies. Ali Rahman and Laili Shah

¹⁸ Occasionally a trekker will find his or her own way into Shimshal. These individuals are invariably greeted ambivalently. Shimshalis feel they have the right to decide who comes into their village. And they consider porter wages a sort of toll which visitors should pay for the privilege of entering the community.

(my porters) quickly grasped and accepted the first objective, but were uncertain about how I would go about the second, and what I wanted to learn. They were particularly concerned that I would intrude upon villagers' lives, and in so doing, dishonour Shimshali women. I replied with what eloquence I could muster (eloquence is expected in Shimshal) that I was as clay in their hands: I could only intrude to the extent I was permitted.

By the time we arrived in Shimshal I had passed an initial test. Ali and Laili had agreed to be my porters throughout the summer (something of a *coup* for them), and were already becoming my companions. It was assumed that my "scientific" project, at least, would proceed. In the space of a three day trek these men had transformed from gatekeepers into sponsors.

For the first few days of my stay at Ali's guest house in Shimshal I was visited and interviewed by a host of men, singly and in groups.¹⁹ I had no idea who they were at the time, but later I learned that virtually every important household head in the village visited me (*Jumbardar* (headman), headmaster, VO leaders, etc). This series of interviews established that I was free to pursue my investigations of Shimshal's pastures, but that my social investigations should remain in the background for the present. That meant that I could observe and participate as I liked, but that I should maintain at a discreet distance from private life (households, religious expression, women and children) for the time being. I realise now that Shimshali elders were less concerned about my research as such (indeed, they were flattered by my interest) than they were about the sympathy, understanding and respect with which I carried it out. I think this stemmed from two concerns. First, although their lives were not considered a secret as such, they were something that should only be offered to someone sufficiently "Shimshali".²⁰ Second, I could only be really

¹⁹ One of the obligations of a porter to someone who has established himself or herself as more than an "insensitive" tourist, is to feed and house that person while they stay in the village. Conversely, the visitor pays for porters' food on the trail. ("Insensitive" is the Shimshalis' word, not mine)

²⁰ Their use of the term "Shimshali" is neither literal nor merely oratorical. Later, when I was complemented as being "Shimshali" there was no implication that I was one of them or ever would be, but rather that I had shown myself to understand and share parts of their life.

accepted by explicit or implicit consensus of the whole community. These men had authority to sponsor my presence, but not to speak for the cooperation of people outside of their own households.

That I was granted entry and a degree of access is largely attributable to the efforts of Ali and Laili who, for reasons of their own, argued my case. They waxed eloquent about my trekking abilities, my friendship with Cam Wake (the other Canadian scientist), the merits of my pasture project, my ties with AKRSP, and so on. As I had hoped, that I had even a loose affiliation with AKRSP helped my cause, as VO leaders were delighted that anyone with AKRSP connections would visit their village.²¹ In addition, it was lucky that I am Canadian. Several years earlier a "Dr. Michael" from Toronto had visited their community on a holiday, and had later donated a sum of money to construct a bridge across the Shimshal River. A painted board beside the "Michael Bridge" reminds Shimshalis of the good-will of Canadians.

For most of the first field season I travelled from pasture to pasture with Ali and Laili. My contact with the day to day life of other Shimshalis was limited. At pastures that were occupied I stayed with households, so I could indulge in observation quite easily. But we never stayed in one place for long, and my companions were careful to subtly enforce a distance between me and household activity.²² I often met fairly formally with the important men in the village or at pastures (at their instigation, or the instigation of my companions), and we talked about AKRSP initiatives, or their pastoral circumstances. These meetings were valuable, if somewhat repetitive, but not as valuable as the long rambling conversations I had on the trail with Ali and Laili, and also with whatever other young men were along for the ride. I felt that these conversations were the first relatively non-constrained exchanges that I experienced in Shimshal. We talked about a variety of topics, many of them ostensibly trivial, and I got the impression that to my porters, at least, I had

²¹ The three day walk is a great barrier to visits from development agency personnel.

²² For example, I was invited to enter private household space only after household members (including female members) had been warned of my approach. That allowed individuals to prepare themselves mentally, and their space physically, in anticipation of my visit.

become more than a walking representative of AKRSP policy.

Ali, who had spent many years in the army as a boxer, paratrooper and narcotics investigator was something of a cosmopolite. He had some scepticism about AKRSP, which allowed me to express my own reservations. Slowly, and without undue risk to me, the information circulated that my affiliation with AKRSP was not necessarily ideological. As it became clear that my affiliation with Shimshal was greater than my affiliation with AKRSP, I began to get a slightly different perspective on development in Shimshal, even in formal meetings. This was a breakthrough which made the workings of Shimshal somewhat more accessible to me.

Another important breakthrough was an invitation, part way through the summer, to visit Laili's household at their hearth, for no reason other than to visit (and, I suspect, to show me to the relatives). I was surprised that this invitation came from Laili, who is one of the most traditional and least urbane Shimshalis I know. Although I had been eating more or less Shimshali food throughout the summer, this visit proved I could eat as they did, sit as they did, act decorously toward the women, keep my fingers out of my nose, and treat children with indulgence. Had this invitation come earlier in the season I probably would not have had the *savoir faire* to manage as well as I did, and my attempts to gain access and acceptance would have come to nought. The afternoon at Laili's gave me a short, but intimate, look at private life in the community, and the various activities, roles and attitudes involved. More than that, it set a precedent. After that I spent more time visiting men in their homes rather than their guest houses, but without the familiarity, intimacy, and sense of life-as-it-is that was offered by Laili. Other householders followed Laili's example in the technical sense of inviting me into their homes, but they did not feel the practical bond expressed in the informality of my visits to Laili's hearth. While my visits with Laili's household raised the level of my participant observation, they did little to facilitate discourse. Laili is one of the least contemplative and least loquacious Shimshalis I met. In addition, he has almost no English, and his Urdu is below average. My attempts to make him understand my mixture of English, Urdu and Wakhi, while he translated for the rest of his household who speak only Wakhi,

were only partially successful. We smiled a lot, drank a lot of tea, and I felt wonderfully at home.

These major breakthroughs, and a variety of smaller ones, increased my access within the community. At the time I regarded these as a series of tests, and I still think the metaphor applies. I was being tested to see if I was an appropriate person to allow "into" their community. Physical strength and endurance meant a lot to my companions. I could never hope to match their abilities, but my small accomplishments earned respect out of all proportion. That I carried a pack almost as heavy as their own was important to Shimshalis. That I was not afraid of their yaks impressed them (I grew up on a dairy farm). That I hauled myself across the Shimshal River on a bridge consisting of a single steel cable amazed them. Similarly, they appreciated my efforts to learn their language, eat their food, and sing and dance with them. I am sure my failures were as numerous as my successes, and if they were excused it is because the Shimshalis were generous and indulgent. For example, I was unable to shoot a rifle properly, or cross a glacier without falling, or ride a yak all day without a saddle, or distinguish among a dozen identical goats. Worst of all, I could never become accustomed to my companions' blatant disregard for time.

By the time I left Shimshal in August 1988 I had achieved a degree of acceptance in the community. Occasionally one of my acquaintances would tell me "you are not tourist, you are not scientist, you are Shimshali". When I departed it seemed that Shimshalis were sad to see me go. If nothing else I was a source of interest and money; as Barley (1983:56) says "a harmless idiot who brings certain advantages to his village". When I left Shimshal I invited my two closest friends, Ali and Laili, to come trekking and travelling with me and a friend (the esteemed Cam Wake, who had visited Shimshal before) in other parts of northern Pakistan. I would pay their expenses. True to form, Ali Rahman accepted gladly, but Laili Shah told me he had no interest in leaving his family and flocks, even for a couple of weeks. The events of this vacation are not important. But, quite unexpectedly, my willingness to identify myself with Shimshal to the outside world endeared me to the Shimshalis. I realise in retrospect that I spent most of the summer trying to overcome the reputation that Shimshalis have attributed to outsiders.

Without a doubt, my most important accomplishment for Shimshalis is that I returned to the community in 1989. Throughout the winter I exchanged two letters with Daulat Amin, the headmaster and VO president, in which he invited me back to the community and I expressed my intention to return. Despite these letters, I think that few Shimshalis expected me to come back to the community. When I actually did appear at Pasu, and with my partner Nancy, everything had changed. Suddenly, all doors were open to me. From the moment we arrived in Shimshal my access to information was much greater than it had been the previous summer, despite the absence of both Ali and Laili.²³ Several households offered to accommodate us in their guest houses. And we received a steady stream of visitors for the first few days. Community members were complimented that I had returned to continue my research, and especially flattered that I had brought my spouse. These two indications of confidence and commitment to Shimshal (as they saw it) confirmed me as "Shimshali". In addition, I was no longer a single, un-situated man. Together, Nancy and I constituted a family, which deserved a different level of care.

After an initial awkward period of about a week during which our hosts brought food to our guest rooms, we were invited to the hearth for meals. I was certainly relieved by this development, and so were my hosts. From then on Nancy and I had complete run of the household, to the extent that the household head and woman-in-charge entrusted their keys to me, rather than to any of their other dependents. For the duration of my second field season, when I was in Shimshal village I was treated as part of Daulat Amin's household. I was granted the same privileges (food, shelter, support, protection) as other dependent members, and shared some of the same obligations (sharing possessions, occasional labour, verbal support).

Apart from providing intimate access to one household, and through its connections, to other households, this development was formative for my research. It is important that my host was Daulat Amin -VO president, school headmaster, clan elder, Ismaili teacher, scholar and linguist.

²³ Ali had migrated to Karachi for a time, where he was a guard at the American consulate. Laili was tending yaks at the high pastures. Part way through the summer Laili re-joined my small group of porters/companions.

He became my most important informant. He was eager to talk of all manner of things, technical and conceptual. He had well formed opinions about what it meant to be Shimshali, and how that was changing. We established a rapport quickly, after which we engaged in nothing less than intersubjective discourse. I became his confidant on many things, and his advisor on some (what the outside was up to). He seemed to display complete trust in me: with his wife, his children, his property, his aspirations and opinions. In short he provided access to crucial information, and important participatory experiences, especially as they related to the process of change in Shimshal and how Shimshalis were struggling with that change technically and in terms of their lifeworld. At the same time, Daulat Amin is a powerful and charismatic man with a persuasive and well-developed vision of his Shimshal. Moreover, he is the leading personality of one group of opinion concerning change and development. I had always to be aware that my intimacy with Daulat Amin provided a slant to my interpretation of Shimshal and its sustainability.²⁴ To counter that slant I attempted to cultivate relationships with members of the other faction, and with people of different status and inclination whose vision of Shimshal might be different, or at least less clear. One way I could do that was by hiring porters from among Daulat Amin's opponents (both terms -faction and opponent- are too strong). Conversations with them, along the trail, provided a somewhat different perspective, both on issues regarding social existence and change in Shimshal, and on Daulat Amin himself. By the same token, Daulat Amin was quick to provide synopses of my porters' strengths and weaknesses from his perspective. The outcome for me was a valuable exercise in "comparative shopping".²⁵

²⁴ Hammersley and Atkinson talk of this problem more conceptually, in terms of "identifying with", and being "identified as" (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1983:98).

²⁵ I am sure that I was only partly able to get beyond my relationship with Daulat Amin. He was my most important sponsor for the second field season, although I had many others including at least fifteen close (almost daily) companions. If during the first season I was something of a waif to Shimshalis, floating around without a context, during the second season I was densely contextualised as a protege of Daulat Amin. Individuals responded differently to that context, but I am sure they all were influenced in some way by it. Some of his detractors made a point of "setting me straight" about the man. Others, I am sure, spoke more favourably of him and his

As an honorary member of Daulat Amin's household I had legitimate and unquestioned access to much that was previously closed to me. I could claim a rightful place at festivals and ceremonies, I could dance in his retinue, and that of the *lumbardar*, I could visit without invitation any households within his extended lineage, and I could expect food and lodging at any of his household's dwellings in the village or the pastures. These privileges gave me considerable freedom to come and go as I pleased and to engage a multitude of people in conversation. Moreover, it was an indigenously-validated freedom.

My strong association with Daulat Amin's household seemed not to distance me from other households. Indeed, I found that I was (less formally and less completely) adopted by several other households after Daulat Amin set the precedent. Laili, who had made the first overture of acceptance the summer before, continued to include me in his household's affairs. All fifteen of my other porters followed Laili's lead, so that I seldom passed a day in the village without visiting three or four households. In addition, the *lumbardar* (headman) invited me for a "holiday" at his dwelling, even though he dwelt only a ten minute walk from Daulat Amin. Conversations of an hour or so which occurred during these social visits, together with long and intense discourse with Daulat Amin (sometimes three or four hours at a time), and rambling all day talks with companions on the trail provided most of my interview data. Except perhaps for some of my conversations with Daulat Amin, all of these occurred within a relatively non-contrived context, with a variety of indigenous visual and social stimuli. Thus, they were also instances of participant observation.

I had some concern that Daulat Amin might attempt to control my access to other informants. Before long I realised that the opposite was true. He encouraged me to interact with his detractors, or any people whose views were different ("see for yourself"). Moreover, I became convinced that he had no interest in deceiving or misleading me. In any case, there were two checks on any censorship he may have attempted to enforce. First, I attended *kuyotch* (council of household heads) and village organisation (VO) meetings where these conflicts were openly

opinions than they would have otherwise.

expressed. Second, I spent much of my time in high pastures among people with whom he had no immediate communication.

By the time I left Shimshal in August 1989 I had attained and utilised access to all identifiable groups within Shimshal's population, as categorised by age, education, wealth, experience, political tendency, and status. This is important because it gives me confidence that my interpretation does not overlook the experience of any social group within the community. That is not to say that my sample was statistically representative. I acknowledge a slight bias toward young men, and well-to-do men from high status families. Unfortunately, my interaction with women was considerably less than with men, because I was with them less, and also because they spoke little in the presence of men. I observed women a lot, but I seldom conversed with them. One exception was "Granny" Amin, Daulat Amin's aged mother, who was accessible and vocal because of her age and status. The other was Nusrat Peri, an iconoclastic bride of seventeen (always in a black leather-look vinyl jacket), who "hung around" with Nancy and me because no one could convince her not to. It was not until my imminent departure that I gained intimate access to children. In the last days before I left several of the children, who had been indifferent to me most of the summer, began to sit on my knee, show me their hide-outs and tell me their stories. When I finally departed, they and the women seemed most visibly distraught.

3.4.3 Establishing and Maintaining Contract

The previous section provides a lengthy description of entry into Shimshal and access to information that ends with my departure from the community. Such a description is necessary, because access issues pertain to the entire empirical research process, and relate to issues of contract, maintaining relations, life in the field, and even exit. However, having provided the general outlines of the story of my research in terms of access/entry, I can limit this section and the ones

that follow to brief descriptions of how the other aspects of experiencing fieldwork fit into that outline.

The term **contract** refers to the set of explicit or implicit expectations or rules which are established to govern the relationship between a researcher and his or her subject community. Contract encompasses all that is meant in the phrase "I will behave as you demand, and in return, you agree to assist in the following ways...". The conditions of each side of that agreement are likely to be complex, and manifest at several levels of explicitness and formality. In my case the conditions of contract shifted throughout my stay, and varied somewhat among Shimshalis.

Some important hazards of field research relate to establishing contract. It is easy to strike too generous a bargain, which demands much from the researcher for little in return. It is also easy to agree to conditions outside one's power to fulfil. In addition, the two parties in a contract may easily walk away from negotiations (which are not always obvious, in any case) with completely different impressions of the obligations of either party. This last danger is particularly present where formal and explicit negotiation is considered impolite. These three hazards were in my mind as I established a contract in Shimshal.

The first few days of my stay in Shimshal territory, during which I was interviewed by my porters and then by community elders, was the formative period for establishing my contract with the Shimshalis. During that period several formal and other informal conditions were established on both sides. To begin with, I was expected above all to leave a considerable amount of porter money in the community (we negotiated a rate about ten percent higher than the normal porter wage, plus food and equipment). In addition, I was expected to share my findings about high pastures with community members, express my concerns (about pastures) and those of villagers (about development in general) to AKRSP administrators, and maintain a respectful distance from all but my closest companions (my porters) until invited to participate in community affairs more fully. These were Shimshalis' formal expectations. I was prepared to share my relative wealth through porter wages and equipment, and share whatever pasture-oriented information I gathered.

I was also pleased to speak to AKRSP on behalf of Shimshal, but I had to emphasise that, contrary to Shimshalis' assumptions, I did not enjoy intimate relationships with the agency's upper administration. Otherwise, the issue of my involvement with AKRSP could have led to commitments I could not honour. Finally, although I would have liked more immediate access to Shimshali social life, I achieved as much latitude as I could expect, considering that five days earlier I was unknown to the community.

In return, the Shimshalis agreed (even insisted) that I would be fed and lodged in the community and pastures at no expense to me. They also promised to provide any technical information I requested about the high pastures. My porters swore to protect my safety, my possessions and my honour with their lives. Finally, Shimshali elders agreed **in principle** to allow me to write a book about change in their community and the role of development in that change. Agreement **in fact** depended on how I behaved. These were Shimshal's formal commitments, given by village elders and my porters.

Their informal expectations focused on the assumption that I had committed myself to a sympathetic understanding of the community. As Daulat Amin expressed it much later, that I would "be **for** Shimshal, and a friend". Implicit in their show of confidence was my commitment to representing Shimshal's best interests to the outside world: in my book, to AKRSP, to foreigners met along the trail, to my friends and family. Although this expectation was never expressed explicitly I perceived it immediately, with the knowledge that my success in Shimshal depended on how well I managed to portray myself to be "a friend to Shimshal". At first I was disturbed by this expectation. Later I realised that their definition of sympathy was a broad one: I was welcome to criticise the community and its members, but only sympathetically and as a friend. I also discovered that my own ambition to be a friend to Shimshal was at least as great as any others I had for my field seasons. The informal conditions of my initial contract related to an expectation that community members would allow me to participate more fully in their lives as I demonstrated respect and commitment to their way of life.

The main formal elements of our initial contract continued throughout my stay in Shimshal. As time progressed Shimshal as a community came to expect more in the way of technical and material assistance from me, and were prepared to gradually shift approval of my research aims from the realm of "in principle" to the domain of "in fact".²⁶ As I became more familiar to Shimshalis, they began to ask for medical treatment (which I could not provide beyond very basic first aid), clothes, equipment, and so on. They, in turn, allowed me greater access to their lives.

The rate of change in contract over time varied among individuals. The expectations and perceived obligations of many Shimshalis were the same the day I left as the day I arrived. For others, such as Laili, I was a trusted friend of Shimshal within a few weeks of my arrival. After my initial visit to his hearth, my contract with Laili involved considerable spiritual and material mutual obligation. He effectively assigned junior members of his household to supply my needs: offerings of my favourite food, warm water, transport of my note books or camera when I travelled in the village, and at least one short visit to my dwelling every day.

The contract I established with Shimshal for my second field season differed considerably from that of the first year. First, no formal conditions were discussed on either side, although certain of the previous year's conditions were assumed. Second, I immediately had informal permission to participate in Shimshali life to the extent my own attributes would allow. I had demonstrated my sympathy for Shimshal to the community's satisfaction. I had written a report to AKRSP and Shimshal on the state of Shimshali pastures; I had returned; I had brought presents and (rare compliment to Shimshal) my spouse; and I had maintained contact with the community throughout the winter. I had fulfilled the most important part of my obligation, and Shimshal reciprocated by allowing me access to a greater part of their lives **in fact** and not just in principle.

My honorary status as a member of Daulat Amin's household meant establishing a contract at another scale. Members of the Amin household became partners in my research;

²⁶ I did not receive the impression that this give and take was closely related.

individuals whose obligation it was to shout my validity throughout the community. In return, Daulat Amin expected that I would share and support his vision of Shimshal. This was problematic, for while I did share many of his views, I wanted to keep the autonomy to express myself as I chose, and as circumstances required, without deceiving my host and friend. I attempted to get around the dilemma by disagreeing with Daulat Amin more in his company than out of it. That way I could be sure that I never criticised his views to others without him expecting me to. I was also expected to lend whatever material support to the Amin household that I could. For example when I travelled to and from Gilgit in the middle of my season, I was given a list of supplies I should purchase and transport to Shimshal. It was assumed I would pay. Similarly, Daulat Amin claimed some of my possessions when I left Shimshal. My porters claimed the rest. I was also frequently sent on errands, or asked to represent the Amin household at ritual occasions. Indeed, I suspect that Daulat Amin arranged some of these "errands" as avenues of access for me.

Occasionally I inadvertently violated the contract, and occasionally Shimshalis did. A few brief examples may be informative. Part way through the second season some friends from Canada visited me in Shimshal, and I gave them the task of mapping Pamir, one of the high pasture areas. We all travelled to Pamir, and they set about mapping while I carried on with my round of visiting and interviewing. Two days later I was summoned to the *Lumbardar's* house at Pamir, and interviewed by his son Shambi Khan. Shambi was upset because I had brought my friends to Pamir without official *kuyotch* permission, I had instructed them to map Pamir, a sensitive area near the Chinese border, and I had hired porters without consulting the men in charge of portering. He had come across my friends on the pasture, and was about to lock them up, when they said they were with me. I had failed to distinguish between the privileges I had been granted and those of other outsiders, and had therefore broken my contract. Shambi had every right to be offended: "you, David, are Shimshali... they are no one". I had received permission, over time, to go where I pleased, and do what I wished. I was free to hire porters as I saw fit, map or travel as I wished. My spouse shared my privileges. But these two, who had no connection to Shimshal, had

no rights at all until such rights were provided by *kuyotch*. In Shambi's view I had smuggled them into Shimshal, and bypassed proper authority. And so, unwittingly, I had. The problem was settled by soliciting permission from the *lumbardar*, after the fact, to manage my friends affairs, and to sponsor their activities in Shimshal.

On another occasion, Daulat Amin was glancing through my field notes (which I always wrote up **after** an event or conversation). He was amused to see many of our conversations summarised in print, until he saw that I had recorded information about an expatriate Shimshali who was involved in dubious political activities. I was informed that such information should not have been written down, and must not leave the community. Suddenly an informal contract became formal: information that might harm the community's relationships with government agencies was not mine to publish. I agreed to Daulat Amin's constraint on my autonomy, and he obviously trusted my acceptance, because he told me other politically sensitive information. Had I perceived any of this information as essential to my interpretation my efforts to simultaneously honour our contract and satisfy my research objectives would have been more problematic.

Toward the end of my second season Daulat Amin, who was something of a musician, tape recorded himself playing the *rubab* (lute) and singing Ismaili religious songs. After a period of hinting, I finally asked if I could take a copy to Canada. With some difficulty he told me that he could not refuse me, but that these were sacred songs that he, as an Ismaili religious leader, did not want to relinquish control of. As he put it "who knows the hearts of people who will hear these songs in Canada. They may be drinking spirits, and ridicule our sacred songs". At the time, I thought our contract had been violated, but was obliged to recognise the normative (and perhaps technical) validity of his claim.

Several times I felt that one or another of my porters/companions were violating the contract we had established. These circumstances all related to my inability to distinguish, as they did, between indigenous hospitality and friendship on the one hand, and the business of portering on the other. I was treated very generously in the village, but on the trail they sought to extract

every rupee, every article of food and clothing, and every extra minute I had. Our frequent disagreements, made worse by language problems (it is hard to argue slowly and deliberately), indicated that our conceptions of the conditions of contract differed.

My departure from Shimshal did little to diminish the terms of the contract I had negotiated with Shimshal community over two summers. Almost every letter I receive asks me for some sort of assistance falling within the purview of my obligations. I have been asked to send portering equipment, send school books, send vegetable seeds, sponsor a Shimshali's visa application, write more often and send photos, produce a child that could be adopted as Shimshali, and most of all convince AKRSP and other agencies that certain initiatives are or are not helpful to Shimshal. They also urge me to return to the community for a longer time "and with my household", so that Shimshal can fulfil the obligations it continues to owe me. This aspect of my field season is described more fully in the section on lingering expectations. Suffice it to say here that no request has been technically beyond my ability, normatively inappropriate to my interpretation of our contract, or (I think) motivated by unauthentic (cynical) intentions.

3.4.4 Life In the Field

The problems of establishing and maintaining access to the subjects of my research, and of continually negotiating and re-negotiating contract with those same subjects was addressed in day to day and moment to moment interaction with them: life in the field. The routine of fieldwork is the most immediate, obvious and technical manifestation of method. As such, it deserves to be discussed, at least briefly.

Two routines governed my experience of fieldwork, and influenced the type of information I was able to gather: life in the pastures, and life in the village. My time over the two summers was split about evenly between them. In 1988 I spent much more time in the pastures, and in 1989 in

the village.

My time in the pastures was essentially a life on the trail: a traveller's lifestyle. While we were actually walking from place to place I interacted almost exclusively with the porters who were travelling companions. We interacted intimately, walking, eating and sleeping within a few metres of each other. However, apart from our positions relative to one another, my spatial and social context was continuously changing. We always seemed to be in a hurry: early starts, late suppers, frequent short breaks for rest and food, so we never stayed in one place for long.²⁷ Fortunately, we almost always prepared fresh *chapatti* for all three main meals, which meant stopping, gathering firewood, baking and eating the bread. That gave me some rest, and a chance to arrange my notes. A day on the trail typically progressed as follows. Breakfast was a time for arranging the day's travelling schedule. We usually prepared the meal, packed our kit and ate quickly, as we had slept later than was the plan.²⁸ The first few hours of walking yielded the most natural conversation. That was when my companions sang indigenous songs, and told stories, and related information about the places we passed. In the mornings we talked a lot about farming, development, money, livestock: all the ingredients of every day life. These were the hours when I gathered much of what might be called "factual" information: when, how much, how, and so on. We seldom stopped for long during the morning, so I had to scramble to jot down *aides memoir*, whenever we paused for a drink or short rest. These consisted of a phrase, or less commonly a couple of sentences, jotted at the top of a blank page in my field notebook. Our lunch break, during which we baked *chapatti*, lasted for about an hour and a half. Baking and eating took about an hour, after which we usually stretched out for a half hour rest.²⁹ I seldom participated in preparing the noon meal. Instead, I attempted to flesh out the brief notes I had jotted down in the morning.

²⁷ This feeling of being rushed was compounded by the fact that my companions were much better trekkers than me, so that I felt I had to hurry to keep up.

²⁸ Still, we were almost always on the trail before 6:00 AM.

²⁹ These durations are, of course, approximate. My companions seldom had watches that worked.

This involved describing what was said or done by whom, and in what context.

We continued walking and talking in the afternoon, but conversation was usually quite different than in the morning. I often attempted to probe into topics that we had discussed only superficially in the morning, so that conversations in the afternoon tended to be more directed. More important, however, was the fact that we were beginning to get tired and hot and fed up with walking. In short, we all got irritable as the afternoon progressed. This made our conversations more adversarial and argumentative. Porters often disagreed with one another, and more often seemed frustrated at my lack of comprehension. By the same token, I felt the fatigue of hiking more keenly than did they, and was frequently annoyed that we had to walk longer hours and covered less distance than my porters had predicted. Every porter with whom I travelled over-estimated the distance we could travel in a day. I considered my best porters (not necessarily my best companions) to be those who were wrong by only an hour or two. As a result of mis-estimates we frequently trekked after dusk and camped in the dark. I never ceased to be annoyed and frustrated by these inaccurate predictions, although I should have become accustomed to them. Indeed, it bothered me to the extent that our late afternoon conversations often erupted into bickering about times, distances, predictions and porter responsibilities.³⁰ In any case, our conversations in the afternoon tended to emphasise the divisiveness, unrest and dissatisfaction that existed in the minds of my porters, in contrast to an emphasis on harmony and solidarity that permeated discussions in the morning.

When we finally stopped for the evening (sometimes as early as 4:00 or as late as 9:00, but usually around 5:30) I helped prepare the meal, and then attempted to enlarge on my brief scribblings of the afternoon. If I had time before dark (about 8:00) I began the third stage of

³⁰ I am afraid that I often seemed unreasonable and petty to my companions, who had the attitude that "we'll all reach tomorrow at the same time". In retrospect, I blush to think of my frequent pettiness and find it hard to understand. I recently received a letter from one of my closest companions and porters, Hasil Shah, which started "How are you? I hope this letter finds you in a good mood". That one casual comment speaks volumes about my state of mind for much of my stay in Pakistan.

preparing field notes. This involved attempting preliminary interpretations of the events or conversations I had described: what they inferred about the research problems I had to address. Most days I had to postpone interpretive comments until we reached the village or a pasture. We usually ate supper after dark, during which meal the tensions of the afternoon dissipated, and we sang and joked and played cards. And, optimistically, prepared a schedule for the next day, which was revised in the morning because we inevitably got too late a start. I felt that a great deal depended on our ability to bridge the gap between "me and them" that often developed in the late afternoon.³¹

The preparation of field notes involved three stages. First, the quick scribbling of a few key words to remind me of a conversation, or circumstance or event. Second, a somewhat fuller account of the pertinent phenomenon, usually consisting of a half page of description of who said or did what in what context. Third, a longer interpretation of what I perceived to be the immediate significance of what I described: how it relates to the problems of development or sustainability, what it says about interpersonal relations or social organisation, how it relates to other events or circumstances, etc.³²

When I was actually in pastures my schedule was considerably more leisurely. Geophysical measurements took about a day. We usually remained at a pasture for two or three additional days, during which time I had the period between breakfast and lunch to catch up on my field notes, write longer interpretations of events, re-read previous interpretations, and wander about on my own. Breakfast, lunch and supper were times for conversational interaction with whomever I was invited to visit for a meal. At the smaller pastures this included at least one meal at every

³¹ While the diurnal "conversation and communication cycle" I describe here applies generally for the duration of my field research, there were frequent daily variations, and it became less marked as time passed. Both me and my companions adapted to one another's whims and personalities as research progressed. I gradually adopted an (external) attitude of nonchalance toward time and distance (and fatigue) that helped to convince my companions that I was becoming more Shimshali, and thus more worthy of participation in Shimshali life.

³² Appendix 1 reproduces a couple of pages from my field notebook.

household dwelling. At larger pastures like Shujerab or Shuwart, a four day stay would entail invitations and visits to at least thirty of the forty or so dwellings, for a meal or for tea. I always brought a small gift of candy or tea or sugar: not enough to induce an invitation, but enough to demonstrate my goodwill and appreciation. A couple of my companions accompanied me on each of these visits. Depending on my familiarity with my hosts, and to a lesser extent, their connection with my porters, I was able to participate more or less passively. If I did not know my hosts well I drank my tea quietly, and listened to the conversation between other Shimshalis who were present. I asked polite questions about the age and health of children, the state of the pasture, the whereabouts of menfolk, and so on. This exchange of polite question and answer comprised the extent of my active participation. When my hosts were familiar, or came from households with whom I was familiar, my participation was more active. I participated in the general conversation, asked questions relating to the topic under discussion, and occasionally asked permission to photograph or write in my notebook. As my position in the community became more secure and as my acquaintances became more numerous, this more active participation increased. During the afternoons at pastures I participated, to the extent possible, in whatever was going on. I helped herd, shear, milk, and make cheese. I sat in on informal meetings, or accompanied whoever invited me on excursions to complete some task or other. After the evening meal I retired to my tent. On the trail and in pastures I always slept alone in my tent. This was the only time that my porters were relieved of their responsibility to care for me, and the only time I could enjoy a modicum of privacy.

My routine in the village revolved around participation in the affairs of the household whose guest I was. During 1988 I spent only a few days and nights in Shimshal, on my way to and from pastures. I was housed and fed in Ali Rahman's guest rooms, and interacted with other Shimshalis there, or in the fields, or at formal feasts in the guest house of some other important villager.³³ This rather formal and stiff participation was by the design of my hosts. They wanted to control my

³³ Exceptions were the increasingly informal visits to Laili's hearth.

participation in community affairs, and did so by effectively constraining me to interaction in staged events.³⁴ Although I received many visits, the time I spent in Shimshal was lonely and alienating, because when I was not being formally entertained I was unable to interact with Shimshalis.

In 1989 I spent more time in the village, and established a more satisfactory routine as a member of Daulat Amin's household. After the first week or so I was expected to "live" in the household's traditional dwelling. I continued to sleep in a guest house, so that I would retain some privacy, but all my other activities -eating, resting, note-making, entertaining guests- occurred at the household hearth, or in the traditional courtyard (see Plate Two). Typically, I rose later than the rest of the household, and caught the tail end of breakfast. This allowed me to sit for fifteen minutes or so with the entire household, and then remain after the children and various other members left for school or whatever other activities they were involved with. Sometimes Daulat Amin drank a few more cups of tea with me. More frequently I spent an hour or so alone with Granny Amin and the other two adult women of the household, who nursed the baby, made more tea, ate their own breakfast, and attended to other household chores.³⁵ After breakfast I worked on field notes for most of the morning, either in the courtyard or at the hearth. During this time I was able to observe and interact with the comings and goings of the household, talk to casual visitors, help with chores, tend the children, and otherwise participate in the private sphere of household existence. After lunch I divided my time between honouring invitations to tea at acquaintances' hearths, helping with public household activities (irrigation, *kuyotch* meetings,

³⁴ To be fair, this type of interaction also conformed to their idea of how a westerner preferred to be entertained.

³⁵ Daulat Amin's resident household, during the time I stayed with them, consisted of Daulat Amin (household head), his mother (who was visiting from Gilgit, where she lived with a younger brother of Daulat Amin), his wife Thai Bibi (woman in charge, although she abdicated to Granny Amin when the latter was present), his sister-in-law Asman Peri (the wife of a brother who was employed in the army), his four sons Ashraf Karim (fourteen, and a student in Gilgit), Assad Karim (eleven), Bai Daulat (three) Pervais (eight months), a daughter Bibi Asna (five), a niece Neghat Peri (ten), and a nephew Moussa (eight). The parents of his niece and nephew are his brother Khalifa, who resided with his daughter's husband's household during my stay, and his sister-in-law who was at Shuwart tending the household's animals. In winter Khalifa, his wife and their children occupy their own dwelling.

Plate Two: The House of Amin in Shimshal Centre

(Like many wealthy households in Shimshal Daulat Amin's resides in a traditional dwelling (top), but keeps a more modern dwelling for guests (bottom). I slept in the guest cottage. Daulat Amin, my host, and his infant son Pervais are seated on the stoop.)

construction, gathering firewood), or engaging in other activities that would allow me to leave the private realm and get out into the village. Daulat Amin's household expected remarkably little of me, in terms of household duties. My primary obligation was to increase the status of the household, an obligation I could satisfy by establishing a high public profile. To that end, members of my adopted household often helped me "invent" reasons for leaving the household's private space, and entering the public realm. As the season progressed these ventures became more common, and relied less on invitations from Shimshalis. Often, if I had no activities planned for the afternoon, I would wander through the village and accept invitations to tea or to other interaction as they arose.³⁶ As these had to be reciprocated at some time or another, I began to invite villagers back to my hearth, and made a point of keeping separate stores of flour, tea and sugar that would allow me to do that. My development as a host in my own right increased the labour of the Amin women, because guests are always tended by household women under the direction of the host. My job was to ensure that guests were comfortable and well fed. Daulat Amin was not involved in these visits except as a "junior" member of the household, a role which I took when he entertained on his own behalf. Toward the end of the season my friends began to drop in unannounced (and without an obvious indication as to who they came to visit). Then Daulat Amin and I shared the duties of host. Often I would visit three or four households for tea in a single afternoon, and receive one or two parties at my own hearth.

Unless the day's socialising was particularly hectic, I had the hour or so before supper to myself, to make a start at recording the day's observations. Supper I shared with Daulat Amin's household (even when I had accepted another supper invitation before or after the household meal).³⁷ This was my favourite time of day. I played and joked with the children, talked with adult

³⁶ This strategy is a common one among Shimshalis. Several of my friends often took strolls through the fields in the certainty of numerous invitations to visit.

³⁷ To avoid offending my various hosts I frequently ate seven or eight meals a day, and drank more than twenty cups of tea. I was constantly stuffed to the point of discomfort. This contrasted with life on the trail, where food and drink were scarce.

members, and eventually drifted into conversation with Daulat Amin. Our evening conversations often lasted (with interruptions) for several hours, so that the household would settle down to sleep around us as we talked. Eventually, I would stumble to my guest room, read for a while, and sleep.³⁸

The routines I have described here are, of course, overly generalised. During harvest, or festivals, or days when I was preparing for a trip (or had just returned), the routine varied. However, it was only by establishing a routine (and occasionally breaking it) that I was able to become situated in the minds of Shimshalis. I took on a role similar to that of a wealthy household head who was able to allow other junior members to do most of the technical labour, while he fulfilled social obligations. It was a role that served my purposes, and the expectations of Shimshalis, well. I was able, in the village at least, to interact with many villagers in their context as well as in one that was partly my own. I could visit and/or entertain those who were most valuable to me more frequently than others, and I could develop very strong relations with a small group of friends and household members. On the other hand, villagers were content that I was situated within a (relatively) indigenous role, retained the dignity and generosity befitting a foreigner and guest to their community, and accepted their own hospitality in a sufficiently appropriate manner. Through developing my competence as a household member living within the context of a community I established more and more validity as time passed. I was lucky to attract a sponsor whose own validity accrued to me, and whose trust in me alleviated the fears of other villagers.

³⁸ Nancy, when she was in Shimshal, ate meals with me, but spent most of the rest of her time with female companions, participating in their activities.

3.4.5 Partial Exit/Lingering Expectations

One of the problems associated with intensive fieldwork is that of terminating relationships and contracts which have been painstakingly and deliberately cultivated since arrival in the field. I found that just as my return to Shimshal established my status as someone who was "for the community", my eventual departure betrayed that status. I have no doubt that I am now considered less worthy of the indulgence I received than I was before I left the community. I take this as both a compliment and as an unfortunate burden of the access I developed. Only by returning to the community can I reestablish my validity. Indeed, I (and I think my Shimshali friends) take some comfort from my firm intentions to return to the community. Meanwhile, I can make some amends by partially fulfilling certain other expectations.

First, I am expected to share some of my material wealth and perceived influence with the community of Shimshal. When I left Shimshal I donated a sum of several thousand rupees to the village organisation, distributed most of my equipment to porters and companions, and sent gifts back to the community from Gilgit. Since my return to Canada in August 1989 I have sent a fairly steady stream of photographs, books and magazines, small donations of money, articles of clothing and equipment back to Shimshal. Frequently I receive requests for inexpensive things that Shimshalis feel I can provide (books, rope, vegetable seeds, photos), or for services (intervention in the Khunjerab National Park issue, visa sponsorship, representation to AKRSP). Clearly, I now exist as a resource which Shimshalis feel they can utilise for certain ends. I attempt to satisfy these requests. No material request has been extreme, so they have been easy to fulfil. Requests for services are problematic. Despite my explanations, Shimshalis feel that my power to intervene is far greater than it is. I am sure they are disappointed when my letters to various officials in Pakistan have no apparent effect. I comply with Shimshali requests not because I think they will facilitate any technical goals of mine, but because I consider them the remnants of a contract I established with the community. I want community members to be confident of my continuing

interest and concern.

Second, I am expected to retain and display an attitude of sympathy and good will toward the community. This means acting for the good of Shimshal when I have the chance. In particular, I am expected to portray Shimshal as a hospitable, equitable, beautiful and prosperous community with an emphasis on solidarity: in short, a community **deserving** of respect and development assistance. That some of these may be contradictory is my problem, not theirs. I find this expectation problematic. On the whole, I think that Shimshal **is** a very hospitable and beautiful, relatively equitable and prosperous community. Its inhabitants emphasise solidarity more than members most communities I have experienced, and they deserve respect and assistance as much as any. In development-related reports to AKRSP I am content to present Shimshal in those terms: they are truthful in the context of the information AKRSP wants. But my task here is to present the nature of the community's sustainability, and that requires an interpretation of the divisions, and inequalities -the faults- as well as what Shimshalis consider virtues. I have explained this to Shimshalis, and they have seemed to accept it, but I am sure that when they read the document they will feel betrayed by some of its contents, despite the generally sympathetic and positive view I think I am justified to present.

For my part, I expect Shimshalis to welcome me back to the community and allow me to continue to develop my level of interaction (and my research) when I return. I also expect occasional letters from my acquaintances there, filling me in on community affairs. Finally, I expect that Shimshalis will not exploit my commitment to the contract I established with them. So far my expectations have been satisfied.

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter I have been concerned with justifying and describing how I went about conducting field research in Shimshal. I spent my time in Pakistan engaged in participant observation, unstructured interviewing, interpreting documentary evidence, and, peripherally, conducting scientific measurements. My strategy was, in the first instance, to engage in participant observation and to supplement and validate information gained in that way with lengthy and frequent conversational interviews. It should be clear that in practice the two became integrated, so that conversations (and collecting scientific data and documentary evidence) ended up being a specific type of participant observation.

The development of this primarily ethnographic strategy resulted in response to several controls -research questions, theory, the empirical context of Shimshal, and personal predilection- which constrained the choice of available methods.

Apart from a brief discussion of how theory influenced the particular strategies I employed, my description has avoided the quasi-theoretical and quasi-methodological issue which lies between my theoretical conception of community sustainability and my attempt to understand it as it exists in Shimshal. That issue is: what, other than some vague sort of focus, am I looking for when I try to understand community sustainability?

The short answer to that question is that we cannot predict. According to Habermas, and according to my conception of community sustainability, we can only stipulate a process in advance. The outcome is contextually determined. However, despite that, research has to be guided by some guidelines or criteria. My guidelines are provided by Matthews' three systemic spheres -social vitality, political validity, economic viability- with the addition of ecological volition. The issue then becomes: what are the criteria which allow me to recognise a social situation (and its vitality) when I experienced one, distinguish it from an economic situation (and its viability), and identify the links between them? These criteria are discussed briefly toward the end of Chapter

Two, in relation to Matthews' model of social organisation, and in more detail at the beginning of the four empirical chapters to which they relate. I have treated them as extensions to my theoretical arguments in Chapter Two, and as preambles to understanding vitality, viability, validity and volition as those attributes are manifest in Shimshal (in Chapters Seven to Ten). I see no reason to discuss them again, in terms of methods.

PART II:

Context

Chapter Four: True Stories, Partial Stories: Interpreting Shimshal's Lifeworld

4.1 Interpreting Existing Interpretations of Shimshal

4.1.1 Introduction

In Chapter One I argue that dominant current theories of development are inadequate, because they undervalue the significance of indigenous social reality. Specifically, they overlook the internal **practical** context within which technical strategies for material improvement exist, and assume the relevance of western urban/industrial practical contexts. This inattention by development agency personnel to indigenous practical (lifeworld-based) circumstances undermines efforts to generate programmes and initiatives that are beneficial to recipients. This process of neglect and substitution may be expressed another way, as the **reification** of indigenous communities into objects whose main significance is an assumed one which is ascribed from the outside, by an alien, western, technocratic world view.

Certainly, the reification of indigenous lifeworlds is characteristic of much development theory and practice. But the tendency to reify arises from an older tradition. It has its roots in a style of interpretation which developed during European exploration, "discovery" and colonisation of the "Orient", and which became codified into a world view during the Victorian imperial era (Clifford, 1988:257). Said describes this world view as **orientalism** (Said, 1978)¹.

In this chapter I describe how Shimshal has been interpreted by outsiders (explorers, colonisers, trekkers, tourists, scientists) from the time of the community's "discovery" in 1889 to the

¹ Two phrases coined by Stuart Hall capture part of what I mean by an inherited orientalist world view. He talks of a "reservoir of racist imagery" and "a pre-formed [racist] vocabulary" as attributes of western, specifically British, society, which attributes influence members' interpretations of outsiders (Hall, 1980; Jackson, 1989:133).

present. Specifically, I present textual information that documents how outsider accounts have consistently reified the community -stripped it of its internal meaning- according to an orientalist perspective. A translation and brief discussion of Shimshalis' own formalised account of their history emphasises the contrast between the symbolically rich indigenous interpretation of the community and the stark orientalist interpretations of outsiders. As elucidated in Chapter Two, it is this sort of information that provides the basis for more appropriate and powerful development efforts. The chapter, like the others in Part II, also has a more general purpose to contextualise the material presented in Part III.

I begin with an introduction to Said's notion of orientalism, and a brief discussion of the necessarily partial quality of "truth", and its relation to "fiction" (Sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3).² Then, after a brief scene-setting section entitled "Shimshal: an Outsider's Introduction", I present a folk history of Shimshal, as narrated by a Shimshali elder in 1989. The folk history is followed by sections that show how this internal interpretation contrasts with that offered by "*Angrezi* explorers" of Shimshal.^{3,4} In 1975 Shimshal was the subject of a National Geographic article. Since that time the community has been visited by numerous outsiders. Tourists comprise the majority of guests, although the occasional social scientist or development agency employee also finds his or her way to Shimshal. Modern tourists, unlike their forbears, tend not to write books. Travel has become a personal experience, an amateur experience, and so records of travel have become less formal, and less public.⁵ Most recent travellers to Shimshal have limited their written comments to brief

² I include this brief epistemological discussion of truth and fiction to emphasise that how we interpret other peoples' interpretations depends on how we perceive truth. The terms offered in this discussion provide a vocabulary with which to attempt the interpretation of orientalist texts about Shimshal.

³ The term *Angrezi* means "English", but is used by Shimshalis to denote all foreigners.

⁴ Tables 4.3c and 4.3d provide lists of publications which refer to Shimshal.

⁵ Travellers in the late 1800s and early 1900s were often "professional tourists"; men and women whose interests and positions in life allowed them devote their careers to visiting unfamiliar places and later publishing accounts of their experiences. This type of traveller still exists (see, for example, Danziger, 1987; Murphy, 1977; Naipaul 1981), but the large majority of current visitors

entries in visitors' books at Shimshal or Pasu. Section 4.3.3 shows how comments in the visitors' books (wittingly or unwittingly) perpetuate the orientalist interpretations (style) of earlier travellers.⁶ Little has changed in a century. Even the ambiguous mixture of disgust and admiration for the community's supposed primitiveness, isolation, and simplicity that is found in some early accounts is perpetuated by modern visitors. Many visitors reveal a resistance to the very aspects of modernisation that Shimshalis welcome, as if they are afraid lest their time-worn interpretations become obsolete.⁷ A very few visitors break away from traditional orientalist interpretations of the community and attempt to understand its meanings, and the meanings of changes to it, from the inside. These are, perhaps, the visitors whose interest in the community has been piqued to the extent that they are not content to contribute formulaic entries.

4.1.2 Orientalism

Orientalism is a term coined by Edward Said to describe the discourse used by the "West" to legitimize its dominance and authority over the "Orient" (Said, 1978; Jackson, 1990:150). It is

to places like Shimshal are amateurs; individuals who travel for vacation, not vocation.

⁶ I realise I should take care not to attribute too much meaning to what are often hastily written and carelessly thought-out comments. But a striking similarity among comments appears when they are read together, and that pattern is the more remarkable if individuals wrote them unthinkingly, only half-consciously, or according to what they perceived to be an appropriate "style". Either way, the comments reify the community... intentionally or unconsciously. I also realise that guest book entries elsewhere (eg. St. Jacobs, Ontario, or Niagara Falls) may also follow certain styles or formulae. Certainly, guest book writing has its own style. However, I doubt that in these places the entries of current visitors echo the sentiments of colonial writers to the same extent. I also doubt that visitors' brief comments in guest books in contemporary western settings are important as serious sources of information about the places, as they are in Shimshal. What the world knows about Shimshal comes from guest books, the longer oral versions of guest book entries that tourists take home with them, and the published works that many guest book entries echo.

⁷ Whether this resistance is sincere, or merely a reflection of what is perceived the appropriate "style" to interpret experiences of indigenous groups, is difficult to determine. Either way, an orientalist fiction is perpetuated in print.

a body of theory and practice, manifest in language, which portrays a vast portion of the globe, and its inhabitants, as alien and exotic, in terms favourable to a dominant "West". Thus:

we need not look for correspondence between the language used to depict the Orient, and the Orient itself, not so much because the language is inaccurate, but because it is not even trying to be accurate. What it is trying to do... is at one and the same time to characterise the Orient as alien and to incorporate it schematically on a theatrical stage whose audience, manager, and actors are *for* Europe, and only for Europe... Rather than listing all the figures of speech associated with the Orient- its strangeness, its difference, its exotic sensuousness, and so forth- we can generalise them as they were handed down through the Renaissance. They are all declarative and self-evident; the tense they employ is the timeless eternal; they convey the impression of repetition and strength; they are always symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a European equivalent, which is sometimes specified, sometimes not. For all these functions it is frequently enough to use the simple copula **is**. Thus, Mohammad **is** an imposter...(Said, 1978:71-72; emphasis in original)

So, we discover that Shimshal **is** isolated and inaccessible; the people **are** simple and untainted. In terms of this chapter, the concept of orientalism characterises those pertinent and shared aspects of visitors' world views which lead them to understand Shimshal a certain way. Orientalism as a position from which to perceive the "Orient" is continuously evolving. Communities in the "Orient" are no longer consistently perceived in uniformly negative terms. Indeed, certain orientalist writers "have characteristically presented themselves as spokesmen [sic] for oriental or primitive 'wisdom' and also as democratic reformers and humanist critics of imperialism" (Clifford, 1988:261). In this variant of orientalism the use of adjectives has shifted: "isolated" has become "self-sufficient", "backward" has become "quaint", "savage" has become "untainted", etc. In the present chapter a sympathetic orientalist reification of indigenous societies is called "neo-orientalism" (Clifford calls it "'good' Orientalism" (1988:261)).

4.1.3 Truth and Fiction: A Vocabulary for Interpreting Insider and Outsider Texts of Shimshal

There is no question here of representing one interpretation of Shimshal as true, or proving

that another interpretation is false. Different criteria for truth exist, and, while a text may disregard some, its adherence to others is sometimes difficult to determine. For example, a statement that is sincere satisfies a certain criterion for truth, and a statement that is socially appropriate satisfies another (see Denzin, 1989:23; Habermas, 1968). Even an historically truthful statement, "one that accords with existing empirical data on an event or experience" may be difficult to validate or invalidate (Denzin, 1989:23).

What this means, of course, is that there are different truths. The nature of these differences can be discussed in terms of facts, facticities, and fictions (see Table 4.1 for a synopsis of the argument presented in this paragraph). **Facts** refer to "events that are believed to have occurred or will occur" (Denzin, 1989:23). As described below, the arrival of Mamu Shah at Shimshal some three hundred years ago is a fact to Shimshalis, although certain non-Shimshalis may not accept it as such. Also, the loss of Cockerill's bottle of whisky at Ziarat is a fact. **Facticities** "describe how those facts were lived and experienced by interacting individuals" (Denzin, 1989:23). What did the discovery of Shimshal mean to Mamu Shah? What did the loss of his whisky mean to Cockerill? A **fiction** "is a narrative (story, account) which deals with real or imagined facts and facticities" (Denzin, 1989:23). The folk history of Shimshal is a fiction, as is Cockerill's account of his journey to the community. Finally, **truth** refers to "statements that are in agreement with facts and facticities as they are known and commonly understood within a community of minds" (Denzin, 1989:23). There is no possibility of absolute truth. Truth refers to true fictions (those which accord with facts and facticities as they are known), in contrast to false fictions (those which do not).

Two main "true fictions" are represented in this chapter: outsiders' and insiders'. The outsiders, from 1889 to the present, belong to a community of minds whose most important characteristic in terms of this topic is well-described as a shared orientalism. Their audience, then and now, are also members of an orientalist community of minds. The insiders belong to a much smaller, more homogenous, and less powerful community of minds. They are the Shimshalis. Both

communities have fictions, and both fictions can be accepted as true: they accord with the facts and facticities as experienced by their narrators. These fictions are also inevitably incomplete, or partial.

Partiality is no cause for blame. It is the nature of experience. Visitors to Shimshal recognised the partiality of their accounts. They acknowledged the limitations of their objectives in travelling to Shimshal, and in writing their experiences. A problem arises when others do not recognise these limitations; when partial fictions are accepted as the complete truth, or the only truth that matters, as has occurred with outsiders' accounts of Shimshal. The orientalist fiction has become so pervasive that it recreates itself in the accounts of current travellers, and in the interpretations manifest in development policy and initiatives which are meant to benefit communities for their own sake. This latter consequence may lead to unintended or detrimental changes to indigenous communities.

4.1.4 Shimshal: An Outsider's Introduction

This section attempts briefly to locate the remainder of the material into a comprehensive and spatially situated background. But, of course, it does no such thing. It merely provides my incomplete (but at least carefully researched) "historical truth" about the community in question; one which attempts not to attribute meanings to facts. As such it is useful mainly in terms of comparison with other truths presented below.

Shimshal is an agro-pastoral community of some 1200 inhabitants, situated at the north eastern extreme of both the former principality of Hunza (now part of Gilgit Administrative District), and the modern state of Pakistan. Shimshal settlement occupies the upper portion of a valley of the same name, which descends west into the Hunza River valley at Pasu, and which separates the Ghujerab and Hispar Mustagh ranges of the Karakoram mountain system (see Figures 4.1a

Table 4.1: Truth and Fiction⁸

FACTS	FACTICITIES
- refer to events that are believed to have occurred, or will occur.	- describe how facts , or specific events, are lived and experienced by interacting individuals.
- facts are descriptions of believed events.	- facticities are symbolic interpretations of those facts.
- a fact relates what happened .	- a facticity interprets what it meant to participants.
FICTION	
- a narrative, story or account which strings together real or imagined facts and facticities .	
TRUTH	
- refers to statements that agree with facts and facticities as they are known and commonly understood by a group of people.	
- facts and facticities are not absolute , but rather determined by their context . Therefore, there is no possibility of absolute truth , only true fictions and false fictions.	
True Fictions	False Fictions
- those stories which accord with accepted facts and facticities.	- those stories which do not accord with accepted facts and facticities.

and 4.1.b). The three villages that comprise Shimshal community are situated on a series of alluvial fans that form a broad strip between the river's floodplain and steep mountain slopes to the south. These fans have been terraced for several hundred years. They are irrigated by the meltwater *nalas* which formed them, and which currently dissect them. In addition, the lowest terraces are irrigated from the river itself. The cultivated area lies between 3000 and 3300 metres above sea level, at the upper limits of single crop cultivation. Crops include hardy cereals (wheat and barley), potatoes, peas and beans, legumes, apricots and apples. Small quantities of garden vegetables are grown by some households. (see Plate Three)

⁸ Adapted from discussion in Norman K. Denzin (1989) Interpretive Biography.

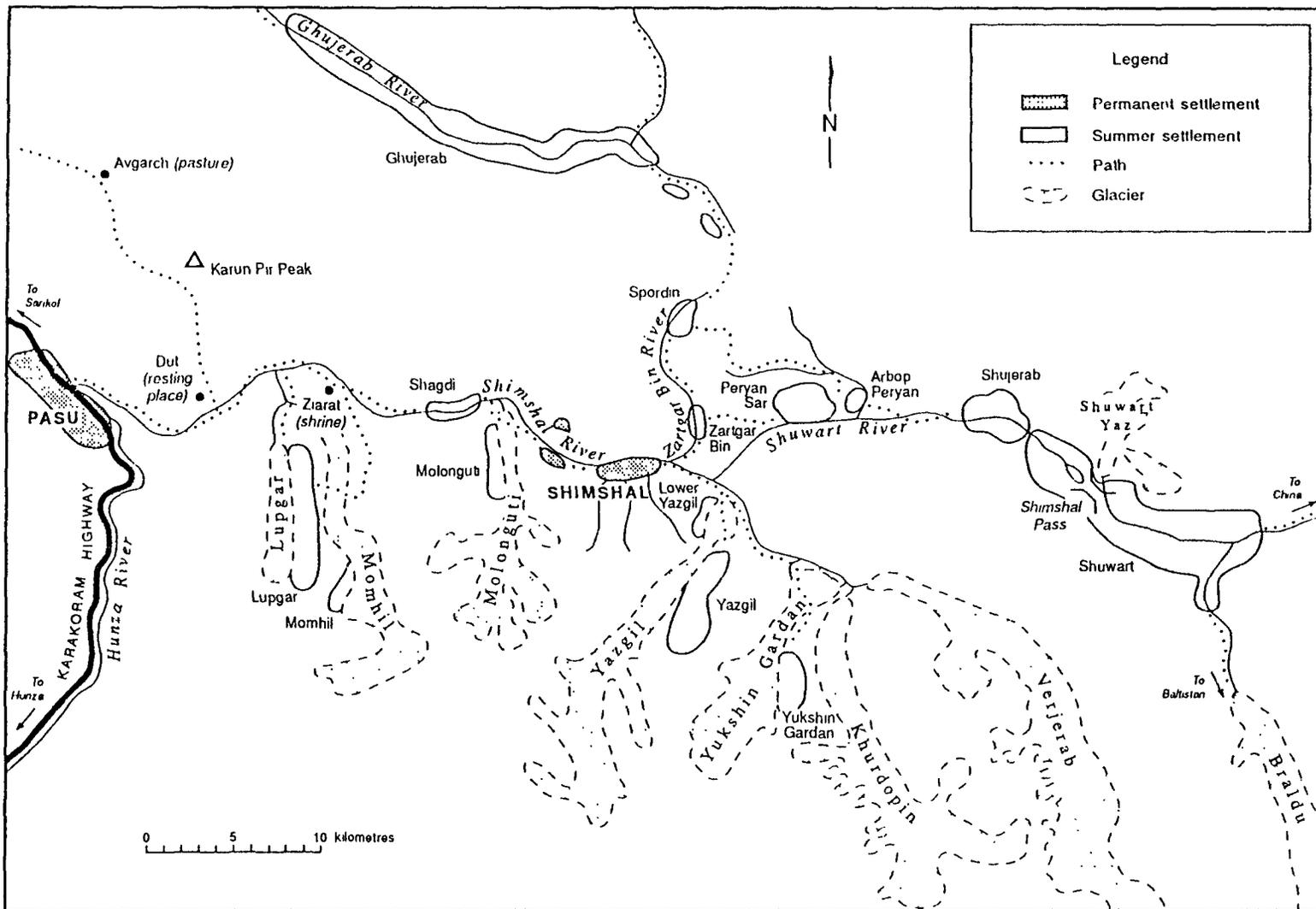
Plate Three: Shimshal

(The original cluster of dwellings, and the original cultivated fields, are located in the near middleground. The picture is taken from a 19th century extension to the cultivated area. In the distance is another 19th century extension. The three physically discrete settled areas comprise a single community.)



Figure 4. 1a: Gilgit Administrative District, Pakistan

Figure 4.1b: Shimshal Territory



The inhabitants of Shimshal complement irrigated agriculture with extensive herding of sheep, goats, cattle and yaks. Indeed, Shimshalis tend more livestock per capita than any other Hunza community. This is due, in part, to the community's exclusive control of vast areas of high altitude land. Shimshal pastures cover about 2700 square kilometres of the Central Karakoram. Within that area villagers maintain over three dozen individual pastures, including three large and highly productive alpine areas.

The community's only communication with Hunza and the rest of Pakistan is by path along the Shimshal River to Pasu and the Karakoram Highway. Despite its location 40 kilometres and three days walk from the nearest road the community of Shimshal interacts extensively with the outside world. Since 1985 all households have belonged to one of three Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) Village Organisations (VOs) that have formed in the community. The three VO's are undertaking an ambitious project to construct a road from Pasu to Shimshal settlement. In addition, most households have members working and/or studying in lowland Pakistan, or in the Middle East. It seems that most migrants return to live and work in the community, so that school teachers, animal and crop specialists, a dispenser and V.O. leaders, are all Shimshalis who have been trained outside.

4.2 The Tale of Mamu Shah: An Insider's Introduction to Shimshal

The narrative that appears in this section was told to me in 1988 by a Shimshali porter and companion, and again in 1989 by an elder of the community. It represents a significant part of the lifeworld shared by Shimshalis (see Habermas, 1981:335-337). In particular, the story of Mamu Shah and the founding of Shimshal gives symbolic, taken-for-granted, meaning to the "places" which Shimshalis encounter in their everyday lives. As such, this narrative is a part of the "geobiography" of Shimshal; that is, "an autobiography with a strong sense of place" (Porteous,

1989:235). It is included here because of its contrast to the interpretations of visitors to Shimshal, who attribute meaning to Shimshal as a collection of spaces (and sometimes places), but in very different terms, and with different implications.

We Shimshalis are not descended from prisoners, although prisoners from Hunza, mainly political prisoners, were banished here early this century.

About 1,000 years ago, in the 10th Century, there was a man who lived in Baltit, the capital of Hunza. That was before Hunza and Nagyr split into two kingdoms. During the unrest that accompanied the separation of Nagyr from Hunza this man left Baltit, and travelled north. After a difficult journey, he reached Gulmit, and settled in a pasture area called Kamaris. It was up a mountain slope to the west of the village of Gulmit. He survived by tending sheep and goats in Kamaris. (see Plate Four)

He was not a young man, but his wife was dead, so he searched for a new wife among the inhabitants of Gulmit. None of the Gulmit women pleased him, so he made his way north, up the Hunza River, searching for a partner. His search led him far away to Sarikol, in Afghanistan [now China, but in the past under the control of Afghanistan, Russia, and Sinkiang]. There, from among the Wakhi people at Sarikol, he found a wife. Her name was Khodija. They settled in Sarikol, where their flocks of sheep and goats flourished and he became known as Mamu Shah, which translates into English as Milk-King.

One day Khodija overheard some Sarikol people plotting to kill Mamu Shah, perhaps because they were jealous of his large flocks. She immediately warned her husband, and the two of them agreed to escape from the village that night. Mamu Shah reshod the horse for the dangerous journey ahead, and they set off, back toward the peaks of Hunza. Most of the sheep and goats were left along the way. After some time they escaped as far as Gircha, a small village a few kilometres south of Sost [and some 30 kilometres north of Gulmit, where Mamu Shah started his search for a wife]. Mamu Shah decided to stop and settle at Gircha. However, before long he arrived at the conclusion that this village, situated as it was on the Hunza River, was still too accessible to their enemies in Sarikol. So they laboured their way up slope, and made their home at Avgarch Pasture on the slopes of a beautiful mountain called Karun Pir. Here Mamu Shah carefully tended his depleted flocks, until they multiplied to even greater numbers than before, and he re-established the right to be called Milk-King.

The land east of Avgarch was unknown and unexplored. Every day Mamu Shah came upon unknown valleys and slopes along which he hunted for ibex and blue sheep and Marco Polo sheep. One day, while hunting, he wandered to the place called Ziarat, which appeared very beautiful and inviting. He went home to his wife, and said to her "Today I have seen a beautiful valley. We must go there". And so they moved their flocks and belongings to Ziarat, and settled there for about a year.

After a year at Ziarat Mamu Shah was on another hunting trip. This time he followed the valley in which Ziarat is situated upstream to the east. Suddenly he rounded on Molonguti, a broad open place that was exceedingly green, with cool breezes fanning glades of shady trees. Again he returned to his wife and said to her "Today I have seen a beautiful valley. We must go there". So off to Molonguti moved Mamu Shah and Khodija.

Now just south and east of Molonguti is an enormous glacier which at that time blocked the entire valley. For a year Mamu Shah was content to stay west

of this glacier, but eventually he followed some game across the ice and up a steep and treacherous slope on the other side. From the ridge at the top he looked east, and saw the most inviting valley of all. It spread broad and flat beside a large river. Nalas gushed down the slopes to the south, and meandered across the valley floor. There was much water. Mamu Shah exclaimed to himself "Here will I build a village". Having decided, he went back across the Molonguti Glacier, gathered his wife, flocks and belongings, and led them across the glacier to the closest end of the valley. Then Mamu Shah explored the valley. (see Plate Five)

First, he investigated the stream at Dasht, some fifteen kilometres east of where he and Khojida were camped. It carried plenty of water which flowed through a large fan of almost flat land. After trying again and again to extend channels from the nala, Mamu Shah gave up. Dasht Nala itself was turbulent and had cut a deep gully through the alluvium, so that all channels he started to build were destroyed by land slides. After his initial failure at Dasht, Mamu Shah searched back toward the west end of the valley. Where Shimshal Village meets with the 19th century annex of Chokort he came upon a hole, whose mouth was covered with a great piece of slate. When he succeeded in removing the stone, water gushed from the hole and flowed along the remains of a channel. The channel must have been built by earlier travellers, probably Kirghis, who had passed that way on their way over Pamir to Chinese Turkestan. In any case here, in disrepair but already constructed, was a channel from which Mamu Shah could build his village. But he needed children.

At this time Mamu Shah was in his middle fifties, but because of his long period of celibacy and subsequent wanderings, he had no children. Moreover, Khodija did not get along with him, because of the troubles he had caused, constantly settling and resettling in fearsome and uninhabited places. Indeed, she did not allow Mamu Shah anywhere close to her, so the prospect of bearing children was dim. Every day Khodija called her husband home from the fields in a disdainful manner, saying "Mamu-Sing come home quickly". Mamu-Sing means Naughty-Mamu, or more literally Bad-Milk. She was very rude.

One day Mamu Shah was toiling in the fields, when to his surprise he heard Khodija call him sweetly by his proper title: "Mamu Shah come home quickly". He was astounded that she addressed him so respectfully. He hurried home to see what the matter was. At the hearth sat Khodija. Beside her rested a stone bowl filled with milk. When he questioned her she told this story.

While Mamu Shah was in the fields she was visited by a gentle old man with a long white beard. He appeared out of the air, and announced that his name was Shams. Shams declared that he had roamed over the mountains behind Ziarat, and had travelled up the valley to meet her. The stone bowl and the milk were gifts; a gesture of his desire to help Khodija. After years alone with Mamu Shah, Khodija was eager to tell someone of her troubles, her many hardships, and her unsatisfactory husband. Shams listened sympathetically, and then advised her that she must endeavour to get along with her husband, and especially to allow him into her bed. If she did this she would bear a strong baby boy within the year. Shams went on to predict that the three of them, Mamu Shah, Khodija and their son, would found a great village. If ever they encountered times of hardship and want Shams would return to them and help them to overcome their problems. After telling Khodija all this, the old man vanished. (see Plate Six)

Mamu Shah and his wife marvelled at the presence of someone in their midst who was obviously a saint. They immediately reconciled their differences, and resolved to name their village Shimshal, or Place-of-Shams.

Nine months after the visit from Shams an infant boy was born to Khodija,

whom they named Sher, meaning strong. Sher grew quickly to be big and strong, and an especially fine hunter. He was a great help to his parents while they laboured on building the terraces and channels of their village. When the time came Sher's parents once again set off for Sarikol, this time to find a suitable wife for their son. After an arduous journey they returned with a young Wakhi woman whom Sher married. No sooner had they wed, than off the groom went on another of his many hunting explorations. This time Sher headed north up a side valley to the place called Zartgarban [now a summer pasture for cattle, and a stopping place for the many flocks of sheep and goats that migrate to Pamir each summer]. From Zartgarban he continued east, traversed two treacherous passes and eventually arrived at Shewjerab [black river], the gate to Pamir. As he wandered onto the Pamir near Shewjerab he thought "If I meet anyone I will take them back to Shimshal, to help build the village". As he thought that his feet took him to Shuwart [black rock], just beyond Shimshal Pass. There, in the distance, he could see a group of Chinese people, possibly Kirghis. They had with them a number of horses and one small yak. (see Plate Seven)

Sher approached these strangers and challenged them "What are you doing on my land? Come, join our great village". To his amazement they replied that the land was theirs, and that he, Sher, must leave. Sher was brave, and he argued with them for many hours, until one stranger suggested the argument be resolved by a polo game, using all Pamir as the playing field. If Sher drove the ball over Shimshal Pass toward Shuwart, he would win title to all territory from Shimshal to Raskam. If the Chinese succeeded in carrying the ball to Shewjerab, Sher must relinquish all lands from Pamir to the Hunza River. Sher agreed to this arrangement, but said "You have these fine horses, but I am on foot. How shall I play polo?" The strangers replied that they would ride the horses, and Sher could have the yak. They were thinking that one small slow yak could not prevail against their strong horses. Still, Sher agreed because he knew that Pamir was very lofty, and that small slow yaks are stronger than fine horses in the high Pamirs. His choice was good. By the grace of Allah and the prayers of Shams he succeeded in driving the ball over Shimshal Pass and beyond Shuwart. Having won the territory Sher began at once to explore it as far as Raskam. Half a year later, when his family had finally given him up for lost, Sher returned to Shimshal and related the tale of his conquest of Pamir.

Sher and his wife bore six sons. Their names were Ghrazi, Bacthi, Baqui, Hawaz, Whallai, and Sollai. Three of these sons died childless. The other three, Ghrazi, Bacthi and Baqui, married women from Sarikol and raised many children. They are the patriarchs of the three tribes of Shimshal that exist to this day. The names of these tribes are Bachtikator, Graziktor, and Baquiktor. From Sher to the present generation is fifteen generations, at least in the Graziktor genealogy.

For eleven of these generations the Shimshalis were Shia Moslems. Sometime in the last century a saint from Sarikol ventured into Hunza, and preached the Ismaili gospel to the *tham* of Hunza, who accepted the faith and endeavoured to convert his subjects. As part of this effort the *tham* summoned two men from Shimshal to his palace at Baltit. These two were my grandfather and Fermanullah's grandfather, the leaders of the Graziktor and Baquiktor clans respectively. At Baltit they learned the gospel of the Aga Khan, and then returned home to preach and teach to the people of Shimshal. Since that time my family has been responsible for Ismaili religious education. Fermanullah, the leader of Baquiktor clan, is medical dispenser in Shimshal, and manager of the Shimshal Centre village organisation. Mohammed Khan who leads the Bachtikator clan is

arbop [same as *lumbardar*], the traditional village headman.⁹

The folk fiction quoted above captures some of the symbolic meaning that Shimshal holds for inhabitants. It is a true fiction that represents a sort of collective memory; a segment of inhabitants' lifeworld concerning their shared past. It is included here as an example that another interpretation of the community does exist, apart from that created by visitors. The tale of Mamu Shah presents facts about Shimshal's landscape, ecology, and social development, and ties them together into facticities, and finally into a grounded and meaningful fiction (see Table 4.2). In this fiction we discover that Shimshal is a special community, with symbolically significant and definable relations with its landscape, with Hunza, with Wakhan and Sarikol, with China, and with Islam. Shimshal is presented as a place of safety, abundance, and religious significance. The founders of Shimshal are represented as self-conscious individuals who interacted, in a unique and significant way, with their physical, social and spiritual surroundings. The Shimshal community is contextualised in this insiders' fiction.

⁹ This story was told to me twice. In 1988, a Shimshali companion by the name of Ali Rachman (see Chapter Seven) related the story to me in English, as we walked along the trail to one of Shimshal's alpine pastures. In 1989, Daulat Amin, the school headmaster and my host (see Chapters Seven through Ten), performed the story in Wakhi for me and a few Shimshalis. We later translated it into English, and I wrote it down. A much abbreviated version appears in D.L.R. Lorimer's (1934) Folk Tales of Hunza. Certain scenes from the story were enacted by some of Shimshal's youths at the Salgarah Festival, July 11th, 1989 (see Chapter Seven). In addition, my Shimshali acquaintances often referred to events of the tale in conversation.

Plate Four: Hunza and Nagyr from the Fort at Baltit

(Much of the original kingdom of Hunza is visible in the foreground. The settled area across the Hunza River comprises part of Nagyr Proper. Mamu Shah left this area at the time it split into two kingdoms.)

Plate Five: Molonguti Glacier

(Mamu Shah and Khodija camped and pastured their livestock beside the Molonguti Glacier. This picture looks southwest across the glacier, from the Shimshal side. The pasture Mamu Shah discovered was in a moraine valley similar to the one shown here, except on the other side of the glacier. The path from Pasu to Shimshal crosses Molonguti Glacier.)

Plate Six: The Shrine at Ziarat

(These flags honour the spot where Shah Shams first appeared in the Shimshal Valley. In front of the shrine is a small dwelling used by travellers along the path from Pasu to Shimshal.)

Plate Seven: Shimshal's Pamir
(A small part of the vast alpine area Sher won in a polo game.)

Table 4.2: The True Fictional Tale of Mamu Shah: Shimshali Facts and Facticities

Facts	Facticles (Interpretations)
1. an account of the origin of Shimshal's founding couple, and their discovery of Shimshal Valley.	<p>a) of historical and socio-political connection with Hunza and Sarikol (China).</p> <p>b) of interpretation of Shimshal's social isolation and uniqueness.</p> <p>c) of "sense of place" attached to various spaces in Shimshal.</p>
2. a description of how they built Shimshal Village with magical help.	<p>a) of ritual significance of Shimshal village, and its site.</p> <p>b) of supernatural significance of irrigated agriculture.</p> <p>c) of supernatural ancestry of Shimshalis, and their link with Islam.</p>
3. a description of how Mamu Shah's son conquered the high pastures for the village, with supernatural assistance.	<p>a) of "sense of place" attached to high pastures.</p> <p>b) of source of Shimshal's emphasis on yak herding.</p> <p>c) of community's link to supernatural as a source of uniqueness and identity.</p>
4. a summary of the subsequent growth and religious development of Shimshal.	<p>a) of interpretation of lineage.</p> <p>b) of rationale for socio-economic hierarchy.</p>

4.3 Outsider Interpretations of Shimshal

4.3.1: The Context for *Angrezi* Visits to Shimshal

Outsider fictions about the Orient have tended not to interpret communities in terms of these communities' socio-historical context. Rather, they have imposed their own context upon oriental communities, and in so doing have reified them. The meanings that outsiders have given to their experiences of places like Shimshal have resulted in facticities that recreate those places as products or objects of the outside, without internal significance. This section introduces the historical context within which outsiders have developed orientalist fictions of Shimshal.

The small mountain kingdom of Hunza, in which Shimshal is situated, was not visited by European travellers until Biddulph "the first official (British) secret agent to set foot in Dardistan" started north from Gilgit into the Hunza gorge on August 13th 1876 (Keay, 1979:90-91). Before that time three factors had conspired to keep Europeans out of the territory.

First, the rulers of Hunza had gained a reputation for unfriendliness and fierceness as a result of their occasional attacks (often successful) on the Dogra garrison at Gilgit, and by launching raids on Indian caravans travelling to Central Asia. Second, the route north into Hunza from Gilgit was poor, and was deliberately kept that way by the rulers of Hunza. Indeed, Biddulph described the early stages as "a more difficult and dangerous piece of ground than I had ever traversed in a tolerably large experience of Himalayan sport" (Biddulph, 1880:22). He goes on to describe sections of path less than six inches wide which traverse sheer cliffs at a height of 300 to 400 feet above the river. Other routes to Central Asia, both to the east and to the west, were considered much easier to traverse. Third, the British (and the Russians) had relatively little interest in Hunza itself. In the early and mid 1800s they wanted access to the resources and markets of Central Asia: Yarkand, Khotan, Kashgar, etc. Later, when China and Russia were perceived as threats to British India, they sought a degree of political control. Until the 1870s Hunza was not important for either of these ambitions. The route was difficult and the rulers of Hunza were unfriendly, even hostile, so Hunza was bypassed in favour of better-known routes to Central Asia, including the Karakoram Pass caravan route to the east, and several passes over the Hindu Kush in Yasin and Chitral to the west.

By the mid 1870s circumstances had changed. George Hayward, an Englishman travelling "unofficially" beyond Gilgit, had been assassinated in Yasin by the ruling family. Russia's interest in parts of British India was perceived to be increasing. Reports from earlier travels in lands adjacent to Hunza (including Hayward's) suggested that more passes, and easier passes, from Kashmir into Central Asia existed than was previously imagined. These circumstances created a "forward policy" among the British Indian and Kashmiri governments concerning the maintenance

of their northern frontiers (Keay, 1979). That policy required more information, and if possible, direct military control of frontier passes. Biddulph's mission was the first step toward achieving those ends.

Early interest in Hunza, then, was primarily political; the economic, social and exploratory curiosity of earlier visits to adjacent territories was missing. That interest resulted in a specific type of report by travellers, and specific conceptions of the country and its inhabitants. We see that the context of exploratory missions relates positively with the Victorian orientalist world view in which the British-Indian agenda was set.

First, gathering information about political affiliations was the primary target of what we might call human-oriented research. Ethnographic description was limited to the characteristics of ruling elites and their relations with ruling elites of other territories. Very little is documented about the majority of the population until decades later. Indeed, it seems that condescension toward and dismissal of indigenous populations is much more prevalent in publications from the four decades surrounding the turn of the century than in the early 1800s.¹⁰ This heightened attitude of condescension is an indication of the overt orientalism of the Victorian period.

Second, topographical research was limited to main routes and passes. Side valleys that did not lead to where Europeans wanted to go were ignored, as were glaciers and peaks.

Third, Biddulph and his immediate successors were travelling in hostile territory, so that cultural traits of the indigenous population tended to be perceived, and expressed, negatively. We see this in publications that speak of the shifty, sulky, rude, weak and childish *tham* (chief, king); traits that were often assumed to apply equally to all inhabitants (eg. Durand, 1900). Particular emphases were placed on the indigenous practice of raiding caravans and villages of adjacent territories, and subsequent slave dealings, and on a tradition of tribute exchange between Hunza and Chinese Turkestan. This was a period of Victorian orientalism, when civilising the savages of

¹⁰ Moorcroft and Trebeck (1841), for example, display a much more tolerant attitude toward indigenous society than do later explorers and travellers.

India was the white man's burden, when finding reasons to subdue them was the white man's purpose, and when disliking them amounted to little less than a moral obligation.¹¹

Exploration, and the type of perceptions it engendered, began to change after the Hunza-Nagyr campaign in 1891, when the British and Kashmiri forces finally subdued Hunza and Nagyr. Gradually, the "degenerate" ruling elite began to be considered separately from the ordinary Hunzakut, who was perceived to be at heart honest, hard working, stalwart, good-humoured, and brave (eg. Conway, 1894; Younghusband, 1904; Etherton, 1911). The Hunza people were found to be "good losers", and even better porters.

What followed was a gradual shift toward a gentler, more romantic orientalism; a "neo-orientalism" (see Tables 4.3a and 4.3b). Over the early 20th century visitors began to see some nobility in the lives of natives. Primitiveness became "simplicity", and isolation became "untaintedness". Often the **denotation** of adjectives used to describe landscape and inhabitants remained the same, but **connotation** shifted drastically (see Table 4.3a). This evolving perception eventually blossomed into the myth of "healthy, happy Hunza" where everyone has "just enough" (see Tobe, 1960; Rodale, 1949). This period began in earnest with E.O. Lorimer's book, Language Hunting in the Karakoram (1939), in which the author narrates her experiences as a resident of Aliabad for several months in 1936.¹² While Lorimer's book is relatively cautious, several others, written later by individuals who had never visited Hunza or who were transported in to interview the *tham*, advertised Hunza as a utopian gerontocracy of contentment and good health. This impression was sustained by the region's relative inaccessibility (political more than topographical) from the south. Recently, of course, Hunza has become more accessible and more fully integrated into a modern nation state. It is difficult to maintain an overtly romantic vision of the region. Still,

¹¹ See Chapter 4.2.1 for a more detailed interpretation of the historical political context for orientalism.

¹² Her husband, a former political agent in Gilgit, was compiling a Burushaski dictionary, hence the title of her book.

the expectations and interpretations of modern visitors (both Pakistani and western) incorporate the received wisdom provided by previous travellers.

Table 4.3a: Victorian Orientalism Versus Neo-Orientalism

VICTORIAN ORIENTALISM	NEO-ORIENTALISM
- interprets facts about Shimshal and its inhabitants in uniformly negative terms, to produce negative facticities .	- interprets facts about Shimshal and Shimshalis in positive terms, to produce positive facticities .
- uses adjectives like gloomy, hostile, desolate, shifty, miserable, impoverished, dirty, greedy, dishonest, desperate, lazy .	- uses adjectives like magnificent, grand, humbling, egalitarian, simple, independent, intelligent, pure, solid, humorous .
CHANGING CONNOTATION inaccessible ↔ untainted dangerous ↔ adventurous uninhabitable ↔ challenging greedy ↔ thrifty	

Table 4.3b: Contexts for Orientalist Fictions

Victorian Orientalism	Neo-Orientalism
- Explorers were travelling through hostile or at least unfriendly territory.	- Visitors were travelling through a well-established principality of British India.
- Explorers were army officers and soldiers travelling as a military unit.	- Visitors were civilians: geographers, scientists, mountaineers and "gentleman" travellers.
- Motives for exploration were to gather political and military intelligence concerning topography and political stability.	- Visitors were motivated by adventure, ethnography and scholastic curiosity, and much less by military and political strategy.
- Most explorers were newcomers to the frontier areas.	- Most visitors were familiar with northern India, knew some local languages, were accustomed to the food and dress, etc.
- Explorers relied on commandeered supplies and transport while in Shimshal.	- Civilian visitors were not able to commandeer supplies. They had to pay for food and transport.
- European economy relied on colonialism, which was justified by an overt racist mandate, and an obligation to "improve" "inferior" races.	- England was moving away from overt colonialism, with a corresponding shift away from explicit racist justifications for political activity.

4.3.2 The *Angrezi* Discover Shimshal

4.3.2.1 Introduction

This section chronicles the development of outsider knowledge about Shimshal from 1889, when Younghusband first wandered into Shimshal territory, to 1975, when a French couple, the Michauds, became the first western visitors to Shimshal after partition. As illustrated in Table 4.3c reasons for visiting Shimshal change over time, as does the type of information published. Like visitors to Hunza in general, early visitors to Shimshal were motivated to gather political and topographic information. Gradually an interest in physical geography, including geology, detailed topography and glaciology develops. Ethnographic comments become more important as time goes on. Table 4.3d lists English language publications which mention Shimshal, but which are not primarily concerned with the community. Most of these pieces devote only a sentence or two to Shimshal.¹³

Again, a pattern of comments emerges. Initially, authors are concerned about the raiding groups that originate in Hunza, journey up the Shimshal valley, through Shimshal, and over Shimshal Pass into Chinese Turkestan. Such concern is understandable. The raids are dangerous in their own right, but they also prove that a fairly accessible (but unknown to Europeans) route to Central Asia exists. It is remarkable that Shimshal is known primarily for its raiding involvement long after 1891, when the British victory over Hunza permanently stopped all raids. Publications after 1930 do not mention raids at all. Instead they are preoccupied with Shimshal as a place of banishment for Hunza's criminals. Here we can see the increasing interest in customs and social organisation, and the tendency to portray Hunza proper as a utopian society; one in which criminals are not jailed or physically harmed. Rather, they are sent for a time to Shimshal whose inaccessibility to Hunza is punishment enough.

Comments about Shimshal's isolation and inaccessibility abound. But the tone of these

¹³ I think the list in Table 4.3c is complete. That in Table 4.3d is almost certainly not complete.

Table 4.3c: Visits to Shimshal by Europeans, 1889-1975

Expedition Leader	Visit Date	Author	Publ. Date	Type of Description	Type of Publication
Younghusband, F.	1889	Younghusband	1892	topography politics	Royal Geographical Society, Proceedings: "Journeys in the Pamirs and Adjacent Countries"
			1904	topography politics ethnography	Book: <u>The Heart of a Continent</u>
Cockerill, G.K.	1892	Cockerill	1922	topography politics ethnography	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "Byways of Hunza and Nagyr"
			1939	topography	<u>Himalayan Journal</u> : "Pioneer Exploration in Hunza and Chitral"
Bridges, F.H.	1908	Bridges	1908	glaciology	Unpublished: <u>Report on the Shimshal Glaciers</u>
Turner, J.F.	1913				
Visser, P.C.	1925	Visser	1926	topography glaciology	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "Explorations in the Karakoram"
		Visser-Hooft	1926	topography ethnography	Book: <u>Among the Kara-Koram Glaciers in 1925</u>
Morris, C.J. & H.F. Montagnier	1927	Morris	1928	topography glaciology ethnography	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "Some Valleys and Glaciers in Hunza"
Schomberg, R.C.	1934	Schomberg	1936	topography glaciology politics ethnography	Book: <u>Unknown Karakoram</u>
			1936	topography	<u>Alpine Journal</u> : "Lutkuh and Hunza"
Shipton, E.	1937	Shipton	1938	topography glaciology ethnography	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "The Shaksgam Expedition, 1937"
			1938	topography ethnography	Book: <u>Blank on the Map</u>
			1969	topography ethnography	Book: <u>That Untravelled World</u>
		Auden	1938	geology	Book: "Resume of Geological Results" in <u>Blank on the Map</u>
		Spender	1938	topography	<u>Himalayan Journal</u> : "The Shaksgam Expedition, 1937"
		Tilman	1948	topography	<u>Royal Central Asian Society, Journal</u> : "Wakhan -or How to Vary a Route"
Schomberg, R.C.	1945	Schomberg	1946	topography ethnography	<u>Himalayan Journal</u> : "The Afdigar Pass in Hunza"
			1947	topography	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "North Karakoram: A Journey in the Mustagh-Shaksgam Area"
Michaud, S. & R. Michaud	1975	Michaud & Michaud	1975	ethnography	<u>National Geographic Magazine</u> : "Trek to Lofty Hunza... and Beyond"

Table 4.3d: Other Published References to Shimshal, 1875-1975

Author	Date	Publication	Nature of Reference to Shimshal
Drew, F.	1875	Book: <u>The Jummoo and Kashmir Territories</u>	Glacier dam-burst floods
Biddulph, J	1880	Book: <u>The Tribes of the Hindoo Hush</u>	As a route for raids by Hunza people on caravans travelling from Leh to Yarkand
Lockhart, W.S. & R. Woodthorpe	1889	Book: <u>The Gilgit Mission, 1885-6</u>	As a route for Hunza raiders
Conway, W.M.	1894	Book: <u>Climbing and Exploration in the Karakoram Himalayas</u>	Brief mention of explorations by Younghusband and Cockerill
Curzon, G.N.	1896	Book: <u>The Pamirs and the Source of the Oxus</u>	Notes existence of Shimshal Pamir. Mentions raids
Durand, A.	1900	Book: <u>The Making of a Frontier</u>	As a route for Hunza raids on caravans and people of Central Asia
Burrard, S.G. & H.H. Hayden	1907	Book: <u>A Sketch of the Geography of the Himalaya Mountains and Tibet</u>	Shimshal Pass recognised as part of divide between Indian subcontinent and Central Asia
Etherton, P.T.	1911	Book: <u>Across the roof of the World</u>	As a route for Hunza raiders
Hedin, S.	1922	Book: <u>History and Exploration in the Karakoram Mountains, Vol 7 of Southe Tibet</u>	Brief mention of Shimshal in discussion of routes of exploration and trade
Skrine, C.P.	1926	Book: <u>Chinese Central Asia</u>	As a route for Hunza raiders
Younghusband, F.	1926	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "The Problem of the Shaksgam Valley"	Narrative of exploration mentions danger of attack by Hunza raiders
Mason, K.	1927	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "The Shaksgam Valley and Aghil Range"	Mentions Shimshal Pass
Desio, A.	1930	<u>Geographical Journal</u> : "Geological Work of the Italian Expedition to the Karakoram"	Geology of Hunza with brief mention of Shimshal
De Filippi, F.	1932	Book: <u>The Italian Expedition to the Himalaya, Karakoram and Eastern Turkestan, 1913-14</u>	Shimshal Pass as a route from India to Central Asia
Lorimer, D.L.	1938	<u>Himalayan Journal</u> : "A Note on Various Hunza and Shimshali Names"	Nomenclature of places in Shimshal area
Lonmer, E.O.	1939	Book: <u>Language Hunting in the Karakoram</u>	As a place for the banishment of criminals
Lorimer D.L.		Book: <u>The Wakhi Language</u>	Notes how Shimshal Wakhi language differs from Hunza Valley Wakhi
Mott, P.	1946	<u>Himalayan Journal</u> : "1939, Karakoram Expedition"	Topography of Shimshal territory
Anonymous	1951	<u>Royal Central Asian Society, Journal</u> : "The Sinkiang-Hunza Frontier"	As a place of banishment. Comment on character of Shimshalis
Douglas, W.O.	1952	Book: <u>Beyond the High Himalaya</u>	As a place of banishment
Mason, K.	1955	Book: <u>Abode of Snow: A History of Himalayan Exploration and Mountaineering</u>	Summary of visits to Shimshal
Clark, J.	1957	Book: <u>Hunza: Lost Kingdom of the Himalayas</u>	As a place of banishment
Tobe, J.H.	1960	Book: <u>Hunza: Adventures in a Land of Paradise</u>	As a place of banishment
Alder, G.J.	1963	Book: <u>British India's Northern Frontier, 1865-1895</u>	As a route for Hunza raiders
Wazir Mohammad Ashraf Khan	1969	<u>Pakistan Quarterly</u> : "Heavenly Hunza"	As a source of gold
Woodman, D.	1969	Book: <u>Himalayan Frontiers</u>	Land claims near Shimshal Pass
Braham, T.	1974	Book: <u>Himalayan Odyssey</u>	Comments on previous visits to Shimshal

comments shifts over time. Initially, authors are pleased that the route to Shimshal is difficult, because that calms their fears of a possible invasion route. At the same time they are perplexed that Hunzakuts find it possible to launch raids over such difficult terrain. Later, when raiding has stopped, Shimshal gains a certain romantic notoriety as the poorest, purest, and most remote community in Hunza, set amidst a landscape of awesome grandeur. As the section on current tourists illustrates, those characteristics continue to be the main motivation for visiting Shimshal.

4.3.2.2 Francis Younghusband, 1889

The first European visitor to Shimshal was Francis Younghusband, at the relatively late date of 1889. The objective of his expedition was to explore territory, and especially passes, along the eastern Karakoram and Mustagh, with a particular concern for investigating the routes taken by raiders from Hunza. Younghusband introduces his expedition:

The Kanjutis (Hunzakuts) have for centuries raided on all the defenceless inhabitants within reach. They have carried into slavery with equal impunity the Kirghis of the Pamir and the peaceful inhabitants of Baltistan and Gilgit; they have attacked caravans as far off as the road from Yarkand to Leh... An unusually daring attack on a caravan coming from Yarkand to Kashmir attracted more than ordinary intention, and in the summer of 1889 I proceeded along the road from Kashmir to the spot where the raid was committed, thence to find my way back to India by Gilgit. (Younghusband, 1892:206).

...the region from Shahadula to the Tagh-dum-bash Pamir and Hunza was completely unknown; and how the rivers and ranges ran, and where this Shimshal Pass was situated by which the Kanjuti raiders issued from Hunza, were all matters for conjecture. (Younghusband, 1904:200)

What Younghusband discovered was that the Hunza raiders had, as expected, come from the west over Shimshal Pass. His account consists mainly of topographical description, but he does provide the first narrative of Shimshal people and Shimshal territory. He mentions cultivation of terraces on the Central Asian side of Shimshal Pass (Younghusband, 1892:219). He describes a fort inhabited by Shimshalis, which defended the eastern approach to Shimshal Pass (Younghusband, 1892:217), and comments on the ease with which the pass itself is traversed,

compared to the rugged country on either side. Younghusband's interest is in the route itself, not Shimshal village, so he travelled only a few miles toward Shimshal from Shimshal Pass. He remarks briefly on the presence of two shepherd villages near the pass (identifiable as Shuwart and Shujerab), and provides a brief description of the Shimshali keepers of the fort as "rough, hard, determined-looking Kanjutis, in long loose woollen robes, round cloth caps, long curls hanging down their ears, matchlocks slung over their backs, and swords bound to their sides" (Younghusband, 1904:229):

They complained much of the hardships they had to suffer on the raids, and the little benefit they got from them...They were in abject terror of their chief, and during their conversation they were constantly discussing the probability of their heads being cut off...They wore always a grave, hard look, as of men who lived in a constant struggle for existence, and were too much engrossed by it to think of any of the levities of life. I afterwards found that in the lower valleys of Hunza the people are fond of polo and dancing, but these I first met were men from the upper valleys, where the struggle is harder, and where they were frequently turned out for raiding expeditions. (Younghusband, 1904:230-1)

Younghusband's comments are remarkable for their lack of detail concerning the lives of the people he met, especially considering they were the first humans his party had met for 41 days (Younghusband, 1889:218). Other than establishing a precedent by perceiving the Shimshalis as poor, downtrodden people with little capacity for enjoyment, he tells us nothing of their lives. This, of course, is not surprising considering his objectives. Indeed, it is evident that what he writes about the people he met may depend more on his motives, Victorian background, physical discomfort and loneliness, than on the characteristics of his hosts. At some level those characteristics are facts. But Younghusband could not present them as facts. The very act of moulding them into a text involved an act of selection and interpretation, and created facticities. And facticities, as noted above, are products of those things that influence experience. This is not a condemnation of Younghusband. All interpretations are fictions (incomplete truths) in that they string facticities from a variety of sources together, all of which facticities derive from the author himself or herself. Still, it is the interpretation itself, and not its context, which survives as text, and influences later interpretations. It is important that writers and readers acknowledge the context in which facticities

are created.

4.3.2.3 George Cockerill, 1892

George Cockerill, the first European to actually reach Shimshal village, in 1892, was, like Younghusband, an army officer commissioned by the Indian government to explore unknown territory near the divide between the Indian sub-continent and Central Asia. His objectives were also topographical with an underlying political motivation. However, by 1892 Hunza was friendly territory: the rulers of Hunza had been subdued the previous year. Consequently, Cockerill's journey was more relaxed than was Younghusband's, both physically and mentally.

Cockerill approached Shimshal from the main Hunza Valley, with the specific objective of reaching the point near Shimshal Pass where Younghusband had turned back three years before. He describes the routes from Hunza to Shimshal, and within Shimshal territory, in detail, emphasising the difficulty of paths, and the stages and rest places used by Shimshal residents. Cockerill's detailed description, complete with translated place names, provides random ethnographic information that would otherwise be completely lacking. For example, he mentions that one stopping place along the route is the shrine at Ziarat:

without whisky and without bread we camped in the river-bed opposite a shrine. No native would cross the river, since it meant death within the year. Even the cliff is said to be sacred, and flood water powerless against it. (Cockerill, 1922:101)

In another part of the narrative he mentions that "the Shingshal people regard the whole of the Shimshal Pamir as far as Darband as belonging to them, and assert their right by grazing cattle on it" (Cockerill, 1922:105). None of these comments provide any comprehensive image of Shimshal life, although, as with Younghusband's work, the reader receives the impression that Shimshal is an isolated and dreary place. This perspective is emphasised in sections which describe the difficult route from Hunza to Shimshal (see Plate Eight):

Proceeding north, I skirted the great Pasu glacier and camped at Pasu, where I found the son of the *Mukaddam* [*Jumbardar*, headman] of Shingshal awaiting me with two or three Shingshalis. I asked if I could take a horse with me to Shingshal. "No!" "Could I take my dog?" I received the sinister reply that I could not take a

goat by the road by which we should travel. (Cockerill, 1922:160)

The next 50 yards we followed an ever-narrowing ledge of rock over which the cliff bent closer and closer, until forced to our knees and then compelled to wriggle like serpents, until finally we dropped feet foremost into a rocky little cup formed by a summer waterfall, and from thence onto further ledges from which at last we reached the river-bed again. In no other valley of the Hindu Kush is anything wilder or more desolate to be found. Not a gleam of sunshine reaches the bottom of the gorge; the river bed is choked with boulders of enormous size, and two, leaning one against the other, form a cave which could shelter forty or fifty men. Here we spent the night. (Cockerill, 1922:101).

Unfortunately, this narrative detail is absent from the description of Shimshal village. In his 1922 article Cockerill merely states that "the village of Shingshal lies at a height of 10,000 feet on the left side of the river in a crescent-shaped bay, 1500 yards long by 600 yards wide, nearly the whole of which is cultivated in terraces with barley and buckwheat" (Cockerill, 1922:102). In 1939, his sole comment on Shimshal village is that "after resting a day in Shingshal, I left for a point near Shingshal Pass..." (Cockerill, 1939:21). This seems a brief commentary on a village that had never before been seen by European eyes. But the village was not important for Cockerill's interests. As with Younghusband, the choice of details in Cockerill's account represents the community in a partial way. Certainly he realized he was travelling at the most difficult time of year, and that Shimshal residents travelled frequently and easily in other seasons. Otherwise, how could large raiding parties strike over Shimshal Pass? As a result of this and other omissions, Shimshal is portrayed as an isolated, desolate community existing in a social vacuum. In one sense this contrasts with Younghusband's account, which stresses the unequal social, economic and political relations between Shimshal and Hunza proper.

The next two visitors to Shimshal were Captain F. H. Bridges of the Gilgit garrison, in 1908, and Captain J. F. Turner in 1913. Bridges submitted an unpublished report on Shimshal glaciers, which does not describe the Shimshal community. Turner, to my knowledge, published nothing at all (see Mason, 1930:242).

4.3.2.4 Phillip C. Visser and Jenny Visser-Hooft, 1925

In 1925 a Dutch national, Ph. C. Visser, led an expedition into Shimshal territory. It differed from previous expeditions for two reasons. First, he was accompanied by his wife, Jenny Visser-Hooft, the first western woman to visit Shimshal. She later wrote a book on her experiences. Second, while the expedition was approved by the Indian government, it was not "official". Visser was not a military man, but an academic. Both these circumstances resulted in a more relaxed and open atmosphere than might have been the case. This may account for the relatively wide scope of ethnographic detail provided in the Vissers' accounts, despite their emphasis on glaciology and topography. In particular, the Shimshalis are finally described in cultural terms, especially in Visser-Hooft's book Among the Kara-Koram Glaciers. With this added detail comes a condescending and patronising attitude toward the natives that was not evident in earlier accounts.

The reader is introduced to Shimshal by the *tham* (king) of Hunza, who asks Visser "does the Sahib know the way over the mountains into the Shingshal Valley by the so-called Karun Pir is very steep and difficult? Surely the Sahib would not think of taking the Memsahib with him?" (Visser-Hooft, 1926:35). Thus, the reader is told that even to Hunza proper (at least as represented by the *tham*) Shimshal is an isolated outpost. Then the *tham* had two Shimshalis brought into the audience: "two wild-looking fellows, who were pushed forward by the other men"; they could not speak the language of Hunza, and the Vissers' eventually "watched the wild men of Shingshal being led away- they really looked like frightened children" (Visser-Hooft, 1926:36). Evidently, Visser-Hooft is prepared to play the image of romantic isolation for what it is worth. This is explained in part by the nature of her book: it was written as an adventure story to entertain armchair travellers, most of whom were familiar with the **type** of the quaint and primitive savage living happily amidst desolation. She was utilising and perpetuating a *genre* of fiction, albeit true fiction, that relied on the assumption that the concept of a noble savage was an appropriate tool for experiencing and interpreting facts. Note in the following quotation that Visser-Hooft sees some romance in the Shimshali lifestyle, where previous travellers saw **only** desolation. Such a

perception of romance was a feature of the *genre* she was using, and reflected attitudes that were current in Europe.

Due to some difficulty fording rivers the expedition entered Shimshal territory via the Ghujerab Valley, which had never been explored by Europeans, rather than along the normal route up the Shimshal River. In Ghujerab, they discovered large Shimshal pastures, inhabited seasonally by Shimshalis:

In Hunza nobody had been able to give us any information concerning the Gujirab, and we were greatly surprised to see a little Shingshali colony, consisting of a few primitive stone huts. The male inhabitants ran out to meet us. We found that six men and twelve women lived here, together with several pale and sickly looking children, and a large community of diminutive sheep and funny dwarf goats with long silky hair... They had all in great terror taken refuge in the miserable shelters made of rough stones which served them as dwelling places. But when they saw that we were harmless folk, they re-emerged and even allowed themselves to be photographed. (Visser-Hooft, 1926:78)

She goes on to describe the clothing worn by the women, the interiors of the "wretched hovels", and their continuous "struggle not only to force the sterile soil to yield enough to keep them from starvation, but also a struggle against the terrible menace of Nature" (Visser-Hooft, 1926:79). Strangely enough, this futile existence does not seem to bother the Shimshalis:

And yet the heavy cloud of mountain gloom does not seem to obsess their primitive souls. They are not melancholy and taciturn as one sometimes imagines mountain folk must be; they love to make merry, to gather round a fire, to sing and dance and listen to a good tale of adventure and wonderful happenings. (Visser-Hooft, 1926:79)

This observation contrasts with Youngusband's perception of "the Shimshal personality", some thirty-five years before. Visser-Hooft's description of Shimshal life begins again when the party reaches Shimshal village, and discovers that the village is not as poor as previously imagined. Indeed, it seems a beautiful and prosperous place:

The village was larger than we had expected it to be, and we found that the *lumbardar* (headman) could provide us with a certain amount of ata (flour) and with as many extra coolies as we should need. The cultivated area stretched from the river right up the hill-side. The houses were very quaint, many of them having round or square towers which gave them a fort-like aspect. After so many weary marches in the uninhabited wilderness, it was a pleasant change to look upon the

midsummer wealth of the ripening corn-fields and shady gardens surrounding us on all sides... In the camp peace and content reigned supreme. (Visser-Hooft, 1926:104).

Still, the supposed dreariness of Shimshal life soon casts a shadow over the narrative:

One afternoon... we went to pay the *lumbardar* (headman) a visit in his house. The indescribable gloom and stuffiness of the interior were explained by the fact that the low room had no windows, a hole in the roof being the only means of letting in light and air and of getting rid of the smoke. We were struck by the complete absence of any kind of furniture, rugs, or articles of household use. There was nothing at all... What must be the life of these people during the long winter days when they are imprisoned in these miserable hovels? (Visser-Hooft, 1926:106).

The account goes on to describe dances and music, marriage customs, recreation and mythology, but always with an emphasis on loneliness, futility, and simplicity. Visser-Hooft is quite willing to portray the Shimshalis sympathetically, and to give them credit for their achievements. But she cannot get beyond a conception of the community as an inherently tragic place. Even her good will is tinged with doubt:

At times they might be difficult to deal with, but we found that these primitive folk had the saving grace of a sense of humour which often showed in their quaint speeches. They were also absolutely honest, although whether this was prompted by fear, or was a genuine virtue, it is impossible to tell. (Visser-Hooft, 1926:156)

4.3.2.5 C.J. Morris, 1927

Captain C. J. Morris, and a companion Henry F. Montagnier, travelled through Shimshal territory briefly in 1927. Their expedition was not official; it was funded solely by Montagnier, and had the objective of exploring the territory beyond Shimshal Pass. This objective was thwarted when they received a telegraph in Shimshal (carried by foot from Gulmit, five days away) which prohibited them from proceeding beyond Shimshal Pass.

Most of Morris' account concentrates on routes and topographic features around Shimshal, as well as some of the trekking hazards they encountered. At one point he remarks that "Montagnier, who has done a great deal of mountaineering, described this as the most extraordinary day's climbing in the whole of his experience" (Morris, 1928:524). Any references to

Shimshalis in Morris' article refer solely to their abilities as porters:

Sadiq, who was the only member of our party who knew the lower Ghujerab, was one of the most intrepid cragsmen I have ever seen. Before taking us over a difficult place he would invariably implore us to remove our climbing boots, as he considered them a terrible handicap, which, from the point of view of a Hunza man, who depends almost entirely on balance, they undoubtably are. (Morris, 1928:522)

...I did not think it would be possible for laden porters. In this manner I sadly misjudged the powers of the men of Hunza, who this day proved themselves to be mountaineers of the very first order... They disdained our proffered assistance, however, and came over climbing like cats, and with never a murmur at the hardships of this day's work. (Morris, 1928:524)

4.3.2.6 Reginald C.F. Schomberg, 1934, 1945

Colonel Reginald C. F. Schomberg visited Shimshal twice, in 1934 and in 1945. Like the Vissers, Schomberg was travelling without an overt official purpose, although he was an officer of the Indian army. His vague objective was to re-explore sections of territory that had not been described in detail. Schomberg is the author of three travel books which describe his adventures in the mountains around Hunza, so in the absence of other information, it is fair to assume that his prime motive was to gather information for popular publication. However, he seemed to enjoy his experiences so little, especially in Shimshal, that it is hard to imagine why he bothered.

Schomberg was not impressed with the landscape of Shimshal, and disliked its inhabitants. Only the mountaineering prowess of the Shimshalis impressed him, and even that credit was given grudgingly. He introduces the human life of Shimshal in the Introduction to Unknown Karakoram:

We were also greatly handicapped by the non-co-operation of the Shingshali coolies as well as by the failure of the Mir [same as *tham*] of Hunza to give me any assistance whatever... As animals, or even men (the Shingshali coolies) were splendid. They were agile, tireless, and extremely helpful whenever they chose, but as they failed to co-operate with us unless it suited them, our journeys were long and exhausting wrangles. I attribute most of my success to my head man, Daulat Shah of Hunza. On him fell all the brunt of dealing with these tiresome swindling savages, and it was not surprising that he was somewhat worn out at the end of the season... I do not blame the Shingshalis. They live in a remote valley, free from any control. The Mir, their nominal chief, is frankly afraid of them, terrified lest, if he deal firmly with them, his annual tribute of butter and other products may be diminished. The object of the Shingshalis was quite simple. They hoped to bleed us of as much as they could and then manoeuvre us out of the valley. Much the same happened to the Vissers when they were in the country in

1925. Many travellers are fond of excusing the vagaries and the dishonesty of their coolies, and regard it as a slur on the white man if relations with the local inhabitants are not harmonious. I see no reason to exculpate the people of Shingshal. They behaved abominably, and for the sake of future travellers, their conduct should be recorded. (Schomberg, 1936:13-14)

Schomberg expresses his position boldly. No "neo-orientalist" sentimentality for him: the locals are savages who must be endured, nothing more.

Several comments Schomberg makes in this short passage contradict earlier travellers. First, despite Schomberg's comments, the Vissers do not mention in their publications that they had porter problems of any significance, but they may be among those white "men" who are ashamed to admit that their relations with natives are not perfect. Second, unlike Schomberg, Visser-Hooft implies that, far from being "swindling", the Shimshalis were content with very little of the expedition's kit. Third, Schomberg portrays the inhabitants' relations with their *tham* very differently than did Younghusband. Rather than fearing for their heads, Schomberg's Shimshalis enjoyed too much freedom. It is likely that increased knowledge of the outside, due partly to the impact of Visser's expedition, had caused the inhabitants to perceive their own interests differently than a decade earlier. It may also be that the *tham* lost interest in controlling Shimshal, and thus the community's autonomy increased, as the Shimshal Pass raiding route became obsolete. As information regarding changing conditions, Schomberg's comments are valuable. However, what he chooses to tell, and how he tells it, represents Shimshal from the perspective of a man who has very specific notions of the inherently unequal relations between white men and natives.

Much of Schomberg's description covers the same aspects of Shimshal existence that Visser-Hooft discusses: shrines, rest places, crossing rope bridges, the history of Shimshal, customs, demography, food, cultivation, pastures, territory, etc. The description is more detailed than Visser-Hooft's; it contains a wealth of interesting information, including the first reference to Shimshal as a penal station (Schomberg, 1936:41). But the narrative overflows with sarcasm and sourness. Two examples demonstrate this. The first describes one of his few pleasant sensations, which he quickly overcomes. The second concludes his discussion of the actual Shimshal

community.

On the whole I was agreeably surprised at the village, which must be almost the most remote and inaccessible inhabited place in the Indian Empire, cut off as it is from the outer world, and hardly visited by anyone, native or foreign. The community is quite self-contained, and the many faults and disagreeable qualities of the people are aggravated by this undesirable isolation, for they do not live the ordinary life of hillmen but pass a squalid if contented existence. (Schomberg, 1936:38)

I saw a great deal of the Shingshalis during my two visits to their valleys, and I am afraid that, generally, they proved but a sorry lot... I found them unamiable to deal with, feckless, and shy of all endurance and enterprise. They have, however, one priceless advantage, and are much to be envied. They are, happily for themselves, out of all reach of that well-meaning but misguided interference that is such a curse to many communities... they are the one community of any land most likely to be left alone. I have no love for the Shingshalis, very much the reverse, but I should be sorry to see any attempts to modernise them. They are happy and contented, surly, intractable, and quite untrustworthy. There is nothing to be gained by improving them... (Schomberg, 1936:48)

In the end Schomberg seems to celebrate Shimshal for its isolation, its material and cultural independence, the purity of its savageness, the uncooperative nature of its inhabitants, and its exoticism. Despite his approval of the white man's prerogative to condescend, he does not accept the white man's burden to civilise. The Shimshalis should be envied, if only because they might be left to be themselves.

Much of what is stated in the two passages quoted above romanticises Shimshal, and helps to establish an attitude that persists in the comments of visitors today. The most obvious expression of that attitude is the parallel between Schomberg's admiration of Shimshal's isolation (in the second passage, although in the earlier passage he calls it undesirable), and the lament of current visitors that a road is being built. They, like Schomberg, romanticise Shimshal's "purity" and worry that it will become "spoiled".

4.3.2.7 Eric Shipton, 1937

In 1937, the year after Unknown Karakoram was published, Eric Shipton and a party of surveyors and mountaineers, visited Shimshal territory. Their objective was to explore and survey

the area on the northeastern side of the Karakoram watershed, especially the upper tributaries of the Mustagh River. One of those tributaries is the Braldu River, which originates within a few kilometres of Shimshal Pass. Shipton's small party of Englishmen and Sherpas approached Shimshal lands from the east, as had Younghusband almost five decades before. Shipton notes landmarks mentioned by Younghusband, including the raiders' fort, and terraced areas on the Central Asian side of Shimshal Pass. Neither were inhabited. He also comments on active Shimshali winter herding villages, on the Chinese side of the pass.

Shipton was first introduced to the people of Shimshal when four men with five yaks and a horse visit his camp several marches east of Shimshal Pass. These men had been working a salt deposit nearby. He describes their meeting as follows:

...when the man saw us he dismounted, came over, and shook us cordially by the hand. He was the first human being, outside our party, whom we had seen for nearly three and a half months... Beside him we could see three men and four yaks. After much fuss, they shifted their loads to a sheep pen and came across [the river], riding on the yaks and the horse... When they arrived, after a round of formal introductions, we settled down with Lhakpa and Angtarkay to a lengthy conference... Conversation was difficult and laborious, as we had first to establish a system of conventional signs which were mutually understood... However, our friends were intelligent and had a great sense of humour, so that things went better than might have been expected. (Shipton, 1938:243)

The outcome of this stilted conversation among Englishman, Shimshali, and Sherpa was that the Shimshalis sent for food from Shuwart pasture. But first they demanded that the foreigners write their names on a scrap of paper, along with their purpose and itinerary. Having acquired this document, one of the Shimshalis set off for Shuwart. Then came an embarrassing moment for Shipton's party, when they were obliged to share their hosts' supper, without having much to contribute themselves, except curry powder and a little flour:

They were positively cheerful about it; as if the curry powder had transformed bread and hot water into an extra special debauch!... we felt that they had given us a lesson in the real meaning of "travelling light". Even those of us who have a reputation for "toughness" make far too much fuss about the danger of running short of food. (Shipton, 1938:245-46)

While members of Shipton's party awaited supplies from Shuwart, they surveyed part of

the Braldu Valley, and attempted to learn something of Shimshal:

The Shimshalis were most instructive and attentive. Whenever we stopped they took off their coats for me to sit on, and they were quite unnecessarily helpful whenever we came to the slightest difficulty on the route. They were extremely eager to explain everything about the country. It exasperated poor Mohi Bacha that we could not converse more easily. He kept holding his tongue and tugging it, in a gesture of despair at its impotence! (Shipton, 1938:248)

On the second day, their party was met by a delegation from Shimshal, including the *lumbardar* of the village. It turned out that, underneath his polite exterior, the *lumbardar* was greatly distressed by the arrival of these foreigners. The messenger who was sent to Shuwart for food took "the news that some Chinese had come across the Mustagh River-he had evidently taken our pig-tailed Sherpas for the leaders of our party; this startling report was carried to Hunza and thence to Gilgit" (Shipton, 1938a:329). When that misunderstanding had been overcome the two parties "got on splendidly", which companionship resulted in "a most interesting week in the lower Braldu valley escorted by our Shimshali friends who were quite delightful" (Shipton, 1938a:329).

The narrative goes on to describe the natural and cultural phenomena which Shipton encountered in the Shimshal valley. It is replete with descriptions of warm welcomes, and feasts, at each inhabited pasture or hamlet the party visited, and with comments on the extraordinary mountaineering and path-making ability of the Shimshalis. He mentions many of the things covered by Schomberg and Visser-Hooft, sometimes expanding on their observations (he refers to both books). However, Shipton's story is told in terms of respect, friendship, and gratitude. That is evident in the paragraph which summarises his experiences in Shimshal:

In all our dealings with the Shimshalis, we met with kindness, courtesy and good humour. In this we were agreeably surprised, as we had not been led to expect these qualities. The community of Shimshal is remarkable for its isolation and independence of support from the outside world. Very few of the Shimshalis go out of their valley. From any direction their country is difficult of access, but they have sufficient arable land and grazing to support a much larger population than exists at the present day. They grow barley, wheat and peas, the flour of which, with cheese, butter and curd, is their staple food. They have no tea, sugar or tobacco, and they do not grow many vegetables. They are a strong and healthy race; far superior in this respect to the people of Askole. We were surprised to find a complete absence of goitre among them. They weave all that is necessary to clothe themselves. They pay tribute and taxes in kind to the Mir of Hunza, who

exercises jurisdiction over them. The control of the Mir, however, is somewhat laxly enforced... They are a happy community leading an ideal existence in magnificent surroundings. (Shipton, 1938:265-66)

From Shipton, Shimshal receives a truly sympathetic review. Readers of his narrative discover an independent and self-sufficient community that relies not on stinginess, and meagre expectations, but on abundant supply and intelligent stewardship. His Shimshalis are hospitable, cordial, curious, and self-aware. Current readers may want to accept this evaluation as **the** truth, as against the biased opinions of his predecessors. But, of course, Shipton's account is nothing more than another true fiction (although it helps to balance the composite picture of Shimshal), based on his own facticities.

Shipton was an accomplished mountaineer who had built his success on small and unpretentious expeditions. He seemed to have no aversion to relying on the knowledge, experience and hospitality of the indigenous peoples he encountered. An attitude of tolerance and forbearance pervades all his books (see Shipton, 1985). His journey to Shimshal was an adventure, an opportunity, not an unpleasant task. He was eager to see the best of his hosts, and this, in turn, made him an easy guest to treat with friendliness and hospitality. Two quotations from the remarks of Shimshal elders in 1989 demonstrate the different attitudes of Shimshalis to Shipton and Schomberg:

In 1936 an Englishman by the name of Schomberg travelled up the Shimshal River to Shimshal. A few men from Shimshal were his porters. One of them is still alive, and spending the summer at Waraband Pasture in Ghujerab. The food that they received from Schomberg was no good; just poor chapattis and tea without milk. At that time tea was unknown in Shimshal, and all the people drank milk. The Englishman payed porters a half rupee per day. Because of this short visit the Shimshal people got in the habit of calling foreigners "*Angrez!*", even though they know that not all foreigners are English.

Another Englishman visited Shimshal in the 1930s. His name was Eric Shipton. He was a good man who liked Shimshal. While he stayed in Shimshal he would sit and work under a particular apricot tree. This tree still exists, and is called Shipton's tree. He left his binoculars with Daulat Amin's grandfather who was *arbop* at that time. A cousin of Daulat Amin's has them now. It is important that the people of Shimshal read the books that Shipton wrote.

The themes of hospitality, subsistence abundance, and wise management that are first introduced

by Shipton continue to be evident in the comments of current tourists who visit Shimshal. Like other visitors before and after, Shipton's presentation is romantic, and follows in the tradition of orientalism.

4.3.2.8 Sabrina and Roland Michaud, 1975

In 1945 Schomberg returned briefly to Shimshal, only to be disappointed again. Two years later the events surrounding partition resulted in the closing of Hunza to foreigners. Continuing uncertainty about the Chinese/Pakistan border made Shimshal a particularly sensitive area. From 1963 to 1973 a detachment of Pakistan Army troops camped near Yazgil Glacier, just upstream from Shimshal village, to monitor the border area. This continuous exposure to the outside changed many things for Shimshal, but did not change the conception by outsiders of Shimshal as a remote, inaccessible and untainted place. When Sabina and Roland Michaud visit the *tham* of Hunza in 1975, the *tham* laments the progress which had changed his kingdom. But he mentions that the Michauds can "find our traditions alive" in "more difficult valleys, like Chapursin, or Shimshal" (Michaud and Michaud, 1975:646). On the strength of the *tham's* advice and intervention the Michauds became the first westerners to visit Shimshal in thirty years.

The National Geographic article in which the Michauds describe their experiences covers nothing that had not been described before except for an inventory of modernisations that serves to emphasise the theme of isolation and self-sufficiency. They tell us that Shimshal has six transistor radios, four hand-powered sewing machines, and a school teacher. Their article, written as it was in 1975, has an almost *deja-vu* quality about it. Except for the kodachromes, parts of it could have been written by Visser-Hooft, Cockerill, or even Schomberg. The impression given by all these authors is that Shimshal is a changeless place, in fortunate (or unfortunate, depending on individual perspective) harmony with its natural surroundings:

There is a simple self-sustaining quality to life in Shimshal... Accepting their destiny, these solid, easy-going mountain people cultivate barley and wheat, and also grow some vegetables: chickpeas, potatoes, carrots, cauliflower, and turnips. They tend orchards of apricot, apple and mulberry trees. (Michaud and Michaud,

1975:655-56)

Outsider interpretations of Shimshal offered by "explorers" who visited the community contrast with the folk history's internal interpretation. "Explorers" wrote books and articles which describe the community in negative terms, emphasising its remoteness, poverty and incivility. These visitors' interpretations are constrained by their motives, their audiences, and their attempts to internalise or familiarise the unfamiliar social landscape of their hosts. Interpretations evolve through time as motives for travel change. The fundamental 'orientalism' of interpretations does not diminish, but its emphasis changes from what might be called 'Victorian orientalism' to 'neo-orientalism'.

4.3.3 Amateur *Angrezi*: The Story Retold

One of the older houses in Centre Shimshal is a large sprawling dwelling situated just above the river cliff, and surrounded by apricot trees. In it are two spare rooms. One is arranged like a traditional Shimshal living area, with a fire pit and a hearth, and a raised sleeping area around the edge. The other is big, square and empty. These two rooms comprise the Distegil Tourist Cottage, a guest house run by the family that lives in the rest of the house. In the cottage is a note book, and in the note book are comments written by foreigners who have stayed at the cottage since 1986. The Batura Inn in Pasu has a similar book, which also contains entries by people who have visited Shimshal. Together these comments create another true fictional account of Shimshal.

Of the several hundred entries in the Batura Inn guest book, eight pertain to Shimshal. The Distegil Cottage guest book contains 33 entries in English, and six entries in other European languages, dating from April 26th 1986 to June 25th 1989. If the summers of 1988 and 1989 are

an indication, about two thirds of foreign visitors to Shimshal have written in the guest book.¹⁴

The entries of these visitors, when put together, provide another true fictional account of Shimshal, albeit a selective one. This story overlaps, and partly derives from the accounts of earlier professional travellers. It perpetuates aspects of orientalism, sometimes crudely, and sometimes with a "neo-orientalist" perspective that tries to perceive inhabitants on their own terms, but fails to overcome the world vision of orientalism.

Comments in the visitor books fall into two main categories: those that resemble Schomberg's interpretation, and those that follow Shipton. Both Schomberg and Shipton, it should be noted, recreate certain elements of earlier interpretations. Shipton and Schomberg are probably the two authors reviewed above that have been read most widely by recent visitors to Shimshal (except perhaps for the National Geographic article).¹⁵ But there is no way to tell if their interpretations directly influenced the interpretations of recent visitors. Suffice it to say that Schomberg and Shipton represent two versions of orientalism that recur in the comments of current visitors to Shimshal. These versions recur either (or both) as a result of the accounts of these two authors themselves, and/or in response to a much more pervasive attitude that persists about Shimshal, Hunza, Pakistan, and indeed the whole "Orient". In addition, a very small third group comprises a few individuals whose comments reject the interpretations of other guests.

The main characteristics of Schomberg's true fiction about Shimshal are that (a) the people are greedy, unfriendly and primitive, (b) the natural and built environments are inhospitable in their ruggedness and isolation, and (c) the community has value as a sort of preserve, where the inmates can get on with their primitive lives without outside interference. These three

¹⁴ Certain visitors, because they had no interaction with the proprietors of Distegil Cottage, did not have an opportunity to contribute entries. Others, like me, were invited to contribute but did not. I suspect that those most inclined to develop some original and self-conscious interpretation of the community were among those least inclined to write in the guest book. If this is the case, then the tried-and-true orientalist interpretations may be over-represented in print.

¹⁵ Two of Schomberg's books have been reprinted by an Indian press, and are available at book shops in Gilgit. Shipton is a well-known mountaineer and explorer. His books are still carried by mountaineering and adventure stores throughout Europe and North America.

characteristics, or facticities, are articulated in varying degrees in the following quotations. The third characteristic is especially prevalent. It implies that the place's primary value is for outsiders, similar to the creation of a national park (for trekking and climbing), or the preservation of an endangered species (for observation or moral satisfaction).

It is easy to go there from Shimshal in five days, but the porters don't do it. The rule of Mr. S. Khan is normally seven days to that camp!. And whatever Mr. S. Khan says, everyone in Shimshal will do. (July 1987)¹⁶

We walked from Shimshal to a base camp below Yazgil Sar in one easy day with loads, even though it is three or four stages: 495 rupees for one and a half days work, which is one third of a teacher's salary! (August 1988)

If you sit and wait at the meadow long enough, some locals will come along. They are very greedy, but will be paid in some part of your equipment (sunglasses etc.) ...The people of Shimshal are poor and can be a little greedy for the bags of gold you carry. If someone says "my house" stay there; the hotel charged me 250 rupees for three nights, and I only ate *piratha* and drank *chai*! They charged me 25 rupees for one travelling bread. They looked at my equipment and told me it was all no good, but still couldn't fathom that I wasn't a dollar tourist... (May 1987)

The main objective of our expedition still remains unclimbed, but we managed to climb a 19000 footer behind (to the east of) Khurdopin Sar (first ascent). (August 1987)

Strength sapping, foot rotting, head banging, sweat drenching, ankle taping, back snapping, bottom blasting SHIMSHAL. (August 1987)

A curse on the road... If you arrive here when AKRSP [funders of the road] is complete, I pity you. Perhaps it will be the year 2000, though then everything will go up in smoke. (June 1987)

One of the last paradises left in the world for the trekker and adventurer. Let's hope they never finish the road from Pasu to Shimshal. (September 1986)

I think the expeditions that have come here have motivated the peoples' hearts toward materialism. When the road is complete this trend will increase. (June 1989)

I have the dream to come back here in, let us say, ten years to find this place an oasis of peace and silence, like it is now. One is always free to dream, is one not? (June 1988)

The second main group recreates the facticities experienced by Shipton. One party

¹⁶ Shambi Khan is son of the present *lumbardar*. I talk about him in Chapter Seven, in connection with portering regulation.

even refers to Shipton, in a very un-Shipton-like entry:

Two days ago my partner and I followed in Shipton's footsteps, as it were, echoed his spirit of adventure and challenge by reaching Shimshal, not by Pasu, not by Shimshal Pass, but by Khurdopin Pass (19000ft) from Snow Lake. Our scientific work carried us to the north side of the pass, and our pioneering spirit drove us down Khurdopin Glacier... (July 1987)

Shipton's true fiction of Shimshal emphasises (a) hospitality and friendliness, (b) toughness and mountaineering prowess (c) self-sufficiency, and (d) a feeling of well-being that these indigenous attributes evoke in visitors. Many recent visitors shared these facticities:

...they have in the warmth and friendliness of their community something very special and priceless. (September 1988)

We were overwhelmed when a mile before Shimshal people appeared, asking to carry our packs. We were then taken to our guide's house for tea and chappatti... (August 1986)

We were welcomed very warmly by the people of Shimshal who are, evidently, famous for their warmth and generosity. (May 1989)

With us were Shambi Khan and Rajib Shah, both highly respected Shimshal porters and men. (July 1986)

The hardest three days backpacking I've ever done. I'm no adventurer. Eight Shimshal students walking to Pasu were leaping like lunatics where I had walked at one step per minute. This place makes you feel humble. (September 1988)

The trek to Shimshal, often mentioned in these pages, is a fairly tough one, but worth the effort because the Shimshalis are honest, hard working and friendly. (August 1987)

The simple beauty and the unforgettable pure living here in Shimshal area make me feel the warmth in my body at many places. I wish that every visitor may have the same sensations I have had. (June 1989)

This oasis is a great place to let ideas, visions and hopes fall into perspective. (August 1986)

I've said all our pleasure, Evelyn and I, to meet the people of Shimshal, his kindness, his smile,... and so on. No word can say the beauty of the country; what the eyes see, what the heart can feel, I cannot write it because it's more higher than body and soul can keep in. And my English is very poor! (August 1987)

The comments of this second group indicate a more positive experience of Shimshal, which leads individuals to romanticise the community. This process of romanticising also reifies the

community, takes away its meaning for inhabitants, as do the more blatantly orientalist comments of the first group. It is worth repeating that it is important not to attribute too much meaning to hastily written comments in a guest book, for the reasons outlined earlier. But some of the entries are obviously expressions of intense emotion; their authors meant something serious by writing them.

And some commentators struggle to get beyond this tendency to reify. They seriously attempt to understand the community and its circumstances from the inside. These individuals make up the third group. I submit that the comments of this third group represent the (non-orientalist) "exceptions that prove the (orientalist) rule". Indeed, these final comments are not inconsistent with parts of my own interpretation of social change in Shimshal:

They are building a road- slowly, slowly- to Shimshal; the key for them to open the door to development. I shudder at the thought of Suzukis buzzing back and forth through Shimshal, but this again is perhaps only the selfish feeling of a westerner who wants to visit simple and unspoiled places. The local people I met struggling under loads of 50kg of provisions certainly have good reason for wanting a road... I can only hope that the Shimshalis who seem to be very intelligent and perceptive people, will be able to take the good things that come with modern civilization without destroying what they already have. (September 1988)

In one evening at the roadwork camp I was asked unabashedly for a pen, stomach and head medicine, fracture treatment, games and even my down sleeping bag... Is this a reflection of what might be called the Nepalization of Pakistan? Giving... to guides and porters before returning home is certainly a nice gesture, and may improve the comfort of some of the people here, but what are its other effects? ... How can we give without reinforcing endless, arbitrary and obnoxious begging? I'm afraid I don't have the answers. But if we can't find a better way I'm afraid we won't have to wait for the completion of 'the road' to see the spoiling of this last isolated community. (November 1987)

I'm not sitting on any pedestal. Shimshal and its people have been good and honest. When the road arrives the place is bound to change, but the people themselves seem to want that. It's not our business to tell them what's good or bad. (September 1988)

As perhaps the last still intact native cultural unity in the region, this town (and its people) may be more unique and important than all its surrounding magnificent peaks. Absence of a road has, and the gradual approach to completion of the road over a decade or so will, help to see that the inevitable introduction of 'modernity' to this native culture is slow enough to be significantly absorbed into the prevailing native culture. (November 1987)

It is worth noting that all of these entries are written in a guest book in Shimshal, that is kept in a house owned by an English-speaking Shimshali, and that is accessible to all Shimshalis through the dozen or so inhabitants who read English. And yet the comments, without exception, seem to be written for an audience of outsiders. That visitors to Shimshal appear willing, in effect, to engage in conversation about Shimshalis in the presence of those Shimshalis, but without including them in the conversation (or even acknowledging their presence), indicates the extent to which Shimshalis continue to be reified by western visitors.¹⁷ Outsider interpretation of Shimshal is decided in a discourse that excludes the inhabitants themselves, except as objects.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has been concerned with showing how certain key facticities have dominated outsiders' interpretations of Shimshal. These facticities can be described as orientalist, although they do not represent all that Said means by that concept. As long as the truths these facticities engender remain in and for the "west", these facticities affect their objects minimally. But they have not remained in the "west". They have come back to influence the people of Shimshal in the form of an orientalist world view, and in the form of the specific orientalist interpretations of Shimshal provided above.

The orientalism of today is more insidious, if less extreme, than a century ago. Throughout most of the colonial period it was manifest as a negative attitude toward indigenous societies that was overt and official, and often dispassionate. Current travellers to places like Shimshal profess

¹⁷ I recognise that I may be overstating this, because I cannot attribute motives to the individuals who contributed to the guest book. I do not know whether contributors were conscious of the reification implicit in their actions, or whether they were merely participating in a more or less codified "style" of "guest book writing", which is itself orientalist and which implicates contributors who follow this style without their awareness. The effect of this reification on the community of Shimshal, through Shimshali readers or outsider readers, is the same whether it occurs intentionally or unintentionally.

an eagerness to see the "good" about the place and its inhabitants. I have termed this positive reification "neo-orientalism", to distinguish it from negative "orientalism". But what constitutes "good" is as much for the "West" as what previously constituted "bad". Thus, Shimshal's supposed isolation is "good", as are its peoples' supposed "simplicity" and supposed "ruggedness". But who are they good for? They are good for, and just plain for, the visitors. To the extent that comments in the Distegil Cottage guest log are indicative of visitors' attitudes, then indigenous communities are still interpreted as objects, without an agenda of their own.

In the end, orientalism among people of good will amounts to the uncritical acceptance of "western" perspectives on "non-western" societies. It is in the context of this statement that an appreciation of Denzin's (1989) conceptualisation of fact, facticity, fiction, and truth becomes important. The examination of true texts in terms of the contexts through which facts become facticities and then fictions aids in a critical interpretation of those texts, and leads to a recognition of the process whereby indigenous peoples lose their identity as subjects in their own lives.

The process of development must involve, and perhaps begin with, an appreciation of how indigenous community members identify themselves as subjects in their own lives, and as subjects in their community's meaningful existence.¹⁸ Then, programmes and initiatives can be generated which incorporate a sensitivity to indigenous lifeworlds. Interpretations like the account provided above, and the "Social History of Hunza" offered in the next chapter are useful starting points toward developing an understanding of indigenous social reality.

¹⁸ The tale of Mamu Shah, included in 4.2, is an example of an indigenous expression of villagers' identity as subjects in their own lives and the lives of their neighbours.

Chapter Five: A Social History of Hunza

5.1 Introduction

My purpose in this chapter is to set the community of Shimshal in the larger historical and social context of the kingdom of Hunza, and to situate current agency-initiated development programmes at the end of a long progression of influences which have affected social organisation in Shimshal. Like the last chapter, it provides an historical context for the evaluations of contemporary developments detailed in Section III of the thesis. In so doing it offers an example of the type of information I think should inform a development process that aims to incorporate the practical social reality of recipient communities.

Chapter Four describes the perspectives which outsiders have constructed of Shimshal over the past hundred years. The present chapter deepens that picture by examining the social world from which Shimshal's social organisation derives. The facts and facticities that are offered here are discussed in the language of the outsider, specifically the anthropological language of segmentary lineage. But what the language attempts to express is at least an approximation of how the people of Hunza perceive their world and its social development. It is here that we can **begin** to make the connections between the material existence of inhabitants of Hunza, and their symbolic world. We can begin to connect social system and lifeworld: the institutions which influence how individuals behave in society, and the shared assumptions, convictions and beliefs that give behaviour meaning.

My account of Hunza's history is divided into **two time periods**, and subdivided according to **levels of social organisation**. The temporal categories consist of (a) the period before the British subdued Hunza in 1891, and (b) the period when Hunza was recognised as a princely state under first the Indian and then the Pakistani government, from 1891-1975, and since then as a

subdivision of Gilgit Administrative District. Discussion in this chapter takes Hunza up to about 1983, when the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) began to participate in the development of Hunza communities. The history of AKRSP's intervention is discussed in Chapter Six. The first section (5.2) describes Hunza society in what inhabitants consider to be its **Ideal state**, with an equitable balance of power between citizenship and lineage (Tahir Ali, 1983:97). The second section (5.3) outlines how social relations have changed in the past hundred years. Chapter 5.2, especially, is long and detailed.¹ The detail is necessary, because the section describes a system of social relations that serves as an ideal for current social conduct. In the absence of a body of written law and morality the Burusho of Hunza draw upon the memory of the period before annexation for normative guidance. That idealised memory comprises a significant element of a shared Burusho lifeworld. The detail in 5.2 provides a context for understanding the changes that occurred in the 20th century, that I describe in 5.3. More than that, it also serves as a reference point for the evaluations of Shimshal's sustainability in Chapters Seven through Ten. Throughout the chapter I refer readers to discussions offered in those substantive chapters, and I relate examples in those chapters back to the social systemic conditions described in detail here.

Within each of the two temporal categories I describe four spheres of social organisation: **kinship, kingship, village and household**. These categories follow those identified by Tahir Ali in his exhaustive study of social structure among the Burusho of Hunza, and refer to social units that Burusho recognise, attribute meaning to, and within which they categorise their activities (Tahir Ali, 1983).² Tahir Ali's dissertation, along with sources contemporary to the time periods I discuss,

¹ Much of the empirical detail is contained in a series of appendices.

² The relations and history I describe here also apply in Shimshal. Although Shimshal is a Wakhi speaking community in the midst of other Wakhi speaking villages Shimshalis claim to be descended, on the male side, from a Burusho. The community has been under the control of Hunza *thamkushi* (kingship) for at least half of its fifteen generations of existence. In addition, as far as I can judge, household and lineage structure in Shimshal resembles that described by Tahir Ali (which is, in any case, very similar to that of the sedentary Wakhi of Wakhan, as described by Shahrani (1979)). Certainly, Shimshal had a similar (if less immediate) relation to *thamkushi* as other villages in Hunza.

is the main source of information for this chapter.³ According to Tahir Ali:

The essential features of the **external** social system of the Hunzolum Burusho may be understood in terms of a single structural model composed of two interworked principles. The elements of one principle consist of units and relations based on the reckoning of **kinship**, most especially agnatic kinship with and through patrilineal ancestors. The elements of the second principle are coordinate sets of units and relations ordained by **kingship**, (*thamkushi*), that is, recognised on the basis of citizenship in the royal state. (Tahir Ali, 1983:35 emphasis added)

Tahir Ali goes on to say that these "features of the external social system" are **internalised** through the **household**, and specifically in the role of household head. Indeed, it is through the household head that the struggle for authority between kinship and kingship is functionally resolved. Society is organised in terms of kinship and kingship, but it works mainly through households operating within **villages**. In the language of Chapter Two, this complex relationship

³ Tahir Ali is a Pakistani structural anthropologist who conducted field investigations in a village in central Hunza from February 1975 to October 1976. He applied standard ethnographic methods: namely a combination of directed interviewing and participant observation. Two quotations, one each from his abstract and introductory chapter, reveal his academic motives in Hunza:

This is a study of selected aspects of Burusho social structure. It focuses on the relationship between civic status and household organisation and develops an analysis of the structural factors which govern household viability under a given set of ecological-economic conditions. (Tahir Ali, 1983:v)

This is a study of the relationship between civic status and household organisation among the Burusho of Hunza. It constitutes an attempt to derive the form, functions and operational requirements of the household from an analysis of the interaction of isolable relational systems or principles constitutive of the social order. The aim is to develop a structural understanding of the nature of the household and the ingredients of household viability in given ecological-economic conditions. (Tahir Ali, 1983:2)

That Tahir Ali takes an explicitly structuralist approach is worth emphasising. It results in a particular interpretation of social life in Hunza that affects the way material is presented in this chapter. Specifically, Tahir Ali's interpretation emphasises structure and function, to the detriment of our appreciation of lifeworld and meaning. Despite the perspective articulated in his true fiction, Tahir Ali's dissertation remains the most complete interpretation of Hunza's social history to date. I attempt, in each section of the chapter, to introduce lifeworld and meaning into the interpretation, and especially to describe the interplay **between** structure and meaning, and system and lifeworld, in the social history of the Burusho of Hunza.

among kinship, kingship, village and household represents a continuing conflict, and a continuing resolution of conflict between systemic media (represented by the *tham's* agenda for Hunza) and lifeworld (represented by kin-based interests).

We see, in this chapter, that the progression toward modernity through increasing rationalisation, as defined by Habermas, is not necessarily a one-way process temporally, or a process that influences all areas of life uniformly. It seems that there were times in the past when Burusho succeeded in rationalising parts of their lifeworld through a discourse approaching competent speech. These periods were followed by others in which sub-systemic media, first bureaucracy and then the monetary economy, disrupted the discourse. Over time these initially disruptive media were incorporated into a newly rationalised lifeworld. Thus, I argue that one useful and provocative way of conceptualising Burusho history is in terms of alternating **cycles** of increasing and decreasing modernity, decolonisation and colonisation of the lifeworld, increasing and decreasing royal authority, and alternating emphases on communicative and instrumental action (or practical and technical interests).

The relations and history I describe here also apply in Shimshal. Despite the fact that Shimshal is a Wakhi speaking community, its social structure evidently derives from Burusho Hunza. At the same time, Shimshal's situation as a community consisting of only one clan, located far from the hub of feudal authority, and far from other villages, alters the specific relations among the institutions associated with kinship, kingship and household.⁴

The ancient history of settlement in the region now comprising Hunza is uncertain. What is known is a mixture of local mythology, archival fragments of early travellers, and disjointed information gathered by archaeologists, anthropologists and taxonomists of language. In the past

⁴ Some of the changes affecting Central Hunza had dissipated somewhat before they reached Shimshal. Certain other changes, such as the closing of Pakistan's border with China, had greater effects on Shimshal than on other villages. It is also important to recognise that Shimshal consists of one clan living in one village, with no phratry affiliation. This alters certain aspects of kinship. For example, clan intermarriage is common.

scholars have imposed the term "Dardic" or "Dard" upon the languages of Hunza and the surrounding areas, in an effort to link the various linguistic groups to a common source (Tahir Ali, 1983:13). Currently, some scholars consider "Dardistan" to coincide roughly with the Western and Central Karakoram and the Hindu Kush, including areas between Chitral-Kafiristan in the west and Gilgit District in the east (Keay, 1979; Staley, 1982). Hunza is included in this area (see Figure 5.1a). Others maintain that the use of this term has only added to the uncertainty, because it has been employed "in a sweeping and indiscriminate fashion, having been applied, at one time or another, to all of the varied groups residing between the Kalash valley in the west to central Kashmir in the east" (Tahir Ali, 1983:13). According to Clark:

Not only is it unclear as to exactly which people are to be considered as Dards, but the group so named evidently contains heterogeneous peoples, with little connection other than their contiguity. The labelling of these peoples as 'Dards' lacks firm basis, either in the ideas of these peoples themselves, or in the classical sources. Both the grouping and its labelling appear to result from misconceptions that have arisen from theoretical biases in the colonial [orientalist?] literature. (Clark, 1977:344)

Four main linguistic groups currently comprise the indigenous population of Hunza: Burusho, Shin, Dom (also called Bericho), and Wakhi. The latter three languages owe their origin to the Indo-Iranian branch of the Indo-European language group. However, their paths of development, and current characteristics vary greatly (Kreutzmann, 1989:41). They are mutually unintelligible. The Burushaski language, whose speakers form a majority, is totally unrelated to the other three languages. Indeed, Burushaski remains unclassified; it has not been linked to any other existing language (Tahir Ali, 1983:13). Given these linguistic dissimilarities, the classification of Hunza residents as "Dards" is tenuous.

German ethnologist Carl Jettmar cites evidence that Burushos were the original inhabitants of "Dardistan", and have lived there since at least the 12th century (Jettmar, 1980:24). What he calls the "true" Dards, of Indo-Iranian stock, migrated into the area some time after that, and forced the Burushos into less accessible valleys: namely Hunza and Nagyr.



Redrawn from Staley, 1983

Figure 5.1a: Dardistan

Within Hunza itself, the Burushos inhabit the main Hunza Valley, and occupy the oldest settlements. Shins occupy villages at the lower end of Hunza valley, closest to Gilgit. Wakhis are relatively recent inhabitants of Hunza, having settled the upper reaches of Hunza Valley within the past three centuries. The Dom are a small group (about 305 in 1981) located in segregated communities amidst the Burusho of central Hunza. They were traditionally employed only as servants, musicians, blacksmiths and metal workers by the Hunza *thams* (chiefs, kings, Persian: *mir*) (Biddulph, 1880; Drew, 1971; Tahir Ali, 1983). Currently the Dom continue in that capacity, and tend small private agricultural holdings. They are considered by the Burusho as inferior by birth, and may not intermarry with the other groups. The Wakhi, Burusho, and Shin culture groups do intermarry occasionally; Wakhi/Burusho intermarriage is fairly common in Ghujal (the name given to the Wakhi-speaking area of Hunza). Shimshal, in particular, owes its descent to the intermarriage of individuals of Burusho and Wakhi origin.

The Shins are dominant in lower Hunza and in the Gilgit and Indus Valleys, but they have had almost no interaction with the inhabitants of Ghujal. The Bericho people, or Doms, have always been virtually unseen and unacknowledged except in the villages around the *tham's* residence at Baltit. They form a small and decreasing minority, and were not recognised as citizens of feudal Hunza. Even now their presence escapes notice, except by their nearest neighbours.

Wakhi speakers comprise a majority in upper Hunza (Ghujal). Since their settlement they have been recognised as citizens of the royal kingdom of Hunza (but not the Burusho descent-based moiety⁵), and like Shins, have participated in the government of the kingdom. Shimshal inhabitants speak Wakhi, and claim that the original women of their village were Wakhis from Sarikol. However, the male founder of Shimshal, Mamu Singh, was a Burusho from Hunza. In addition, Shimshal originated and existed for most of its history as part of a Burusho kingdom.⁶

⁵ Moiety denotes "tribe", with a connotation of common ancestry.

⁶ Shimshal's cultural identity is problematic, even to the residents of Shimshal. They speak Wakhi, claim matrilineal descent from Sarikol, live in Wakhi style houses, and put a Wakhi-type emphasis on herding. At the same time their founder and hero was a Burusho from Hunza, and

Thus, an understanding of the history of the Burusho people and state of Hunza is important background for the interpretations of Shimshal offered in Chapters Seven to Ten. The remainder of this chapter is concerned with the social history of the Burusho, a history that has been instrumental in the development of Shimshal.

5.2 Hunza Before 1891

5.2.1 Introduction

Hunza (including Nagyr, on the opposite side of the Hunza River) was recognised as a region as early as the 12th century. In his book Gilgit: the Northern Gate of India, F. M. Hassnain records that in 1120AD a Shia Moslem, Azar Khan of Skardu, invaded Gilgit and subsequently subdued its tributary state Hunza, as well as other regions adjacent to Gilgit (Hassnain, 1978:24). At that time the region was introduced to Islam; previously it had been ruled by Hindus.⁷ Presumably the governorship of Hunza itself remained unchanged, because it is not until the 16th century that a Hunza ruler with a Muslim name appears (Biddulph, 1880:35). In 1390, however, Hunza broke allegiance with Gilgit and gained autonomy. For the next 450 years Hunza maintained its autonomy, and even extended sovereignty for short times into Gilgit, and other adjacent territories.

it seems that most of their social, political, and religious organisation approximates that of the Burusho of central Hunza. A comparison of Shahrani (1979) and Tahir Ali (1983) suggests that Wakhi and Burushaski social organisation shares many similarities. Both cultures attempt to organise themselves according to agnatic kinship, which at its upper end, comprises a number of unrelated clans. Each society has been under the control of a *mir* or *tham* whose influence reaches distinct villages through semi-hereditary royal officials, including headmen, beadles etc. Where major differences do occur, Shimshal society seems to have emulated that of central Hunza rather than Wakhan. See Chapter 4.2: The Tale of Mamu Shah.

⁷ There are also Buddhist artifacts in Gilgit and Hunza.

Until the late 16th century Gilgit and Nagyr were parts of the same state, which had its capital in what is now Nagyr "Proper". The first Muslim ruler of Hunza, Maiyruo Khan, married a princess from Gilgit, with whom he sired twins, Moghlot and Girkis (Biddulph, 1880:35). Upon Maiyruo Khan's death Hunza was divided (between the twins) along the Hunza River, and became Hunza and Nagyr⁸. Girkis became ruler of the new state of Hunza. Moghlot ruled Nagyr (see Plate Nine). During their lifetime each brother attempted to gain control of the other's kingdom, an objective which resulted in Moghlot murdering Girkis, but which did not achieve the reunification of the kingdoms (Schomberg, 1935:145)⁹. From that time until 1891 Hunza and Nagyr were in a state of relaxed war, although the ruling families often intermarried, and the two kingdoms always united against outside threats (Younghusband, 1904).¹⁰

The first serious threat to Hunza and Nagyr since the 1300s was the invasion of Gilgit by the Sikhs in 1840, and subsequent Kashmiri Dogra occupation of Gilgit beginning in 1846. The Dogra *maharajah*, aided by the British government in India, sought to extend his control into the autonomous states north of Gilgit. At the same time these states, including Hunza and Nagyr, occasionally raided the garrison at Gilgit in an effort to minimise the military strength of the Dogras. Over the next 45 years a series of treaties between Kashmir and Hunza were made and broken, either by attacks from Hunza on the Dogra garrison at Gilgit, or by Hunza raids on caravans passing from Leh to Central Asia.¹¹ Despite documents in which the *thams* of Hunza acknowledge suzerainty to Kashmir, it seems that Hunza retained practical autonomy until 1891 (Tahir Ali,

⁸ Information regarding the history of Hunza prior to its division into two kingdoms is very sketchy. Even after its division a variety of similar, but not quite complementary, versions exist. I have selected details that seem credible and ubiquitous. For more detailed discussions see Biddulph (1880), Schomberg (1935), Staley (1982) and Tahir Ali (1983).

⁹ This is the time at which Mamu Shah is supposed to have left Baltit and eventually founded Shimshal. The Shimshalis say that Mamu Shah lived 16 generations ago, or about 400 to 500 years ago. The two stories complement one another. See Chapter 4.2.

¹⁰ See Figure 5.2a for a genealogy of Gilgit, Hunza, and Nagyr rulers.

¹¹ See Alder, 1963; Biddulph, 1880; Drew 1875; Keay 1979; and Younghusband, 1904, for detailed accounts of British/Hunza/Kashmir relations in the period leading up to 1891.

Plate Eight: Walking from Pasu to Shimshal

Plate Nine: Hunza (foreground) and Nagyr (across the river) with Mt. Rakaposhi in the Distance

The Moghloté of Nagyr

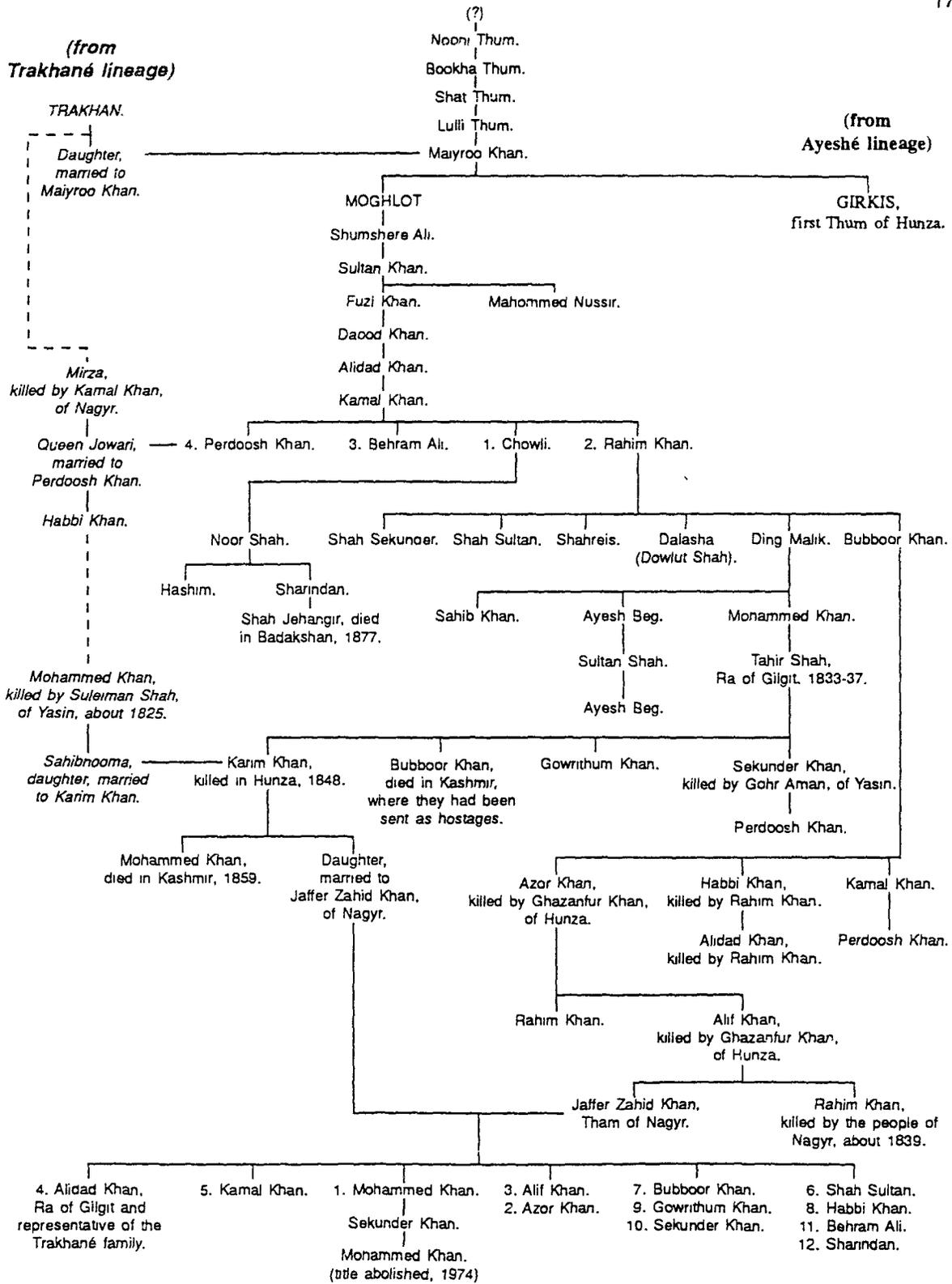


Figure 5.2a: A Genealogy of Gilgit, Hunza and Nagyr Rulers

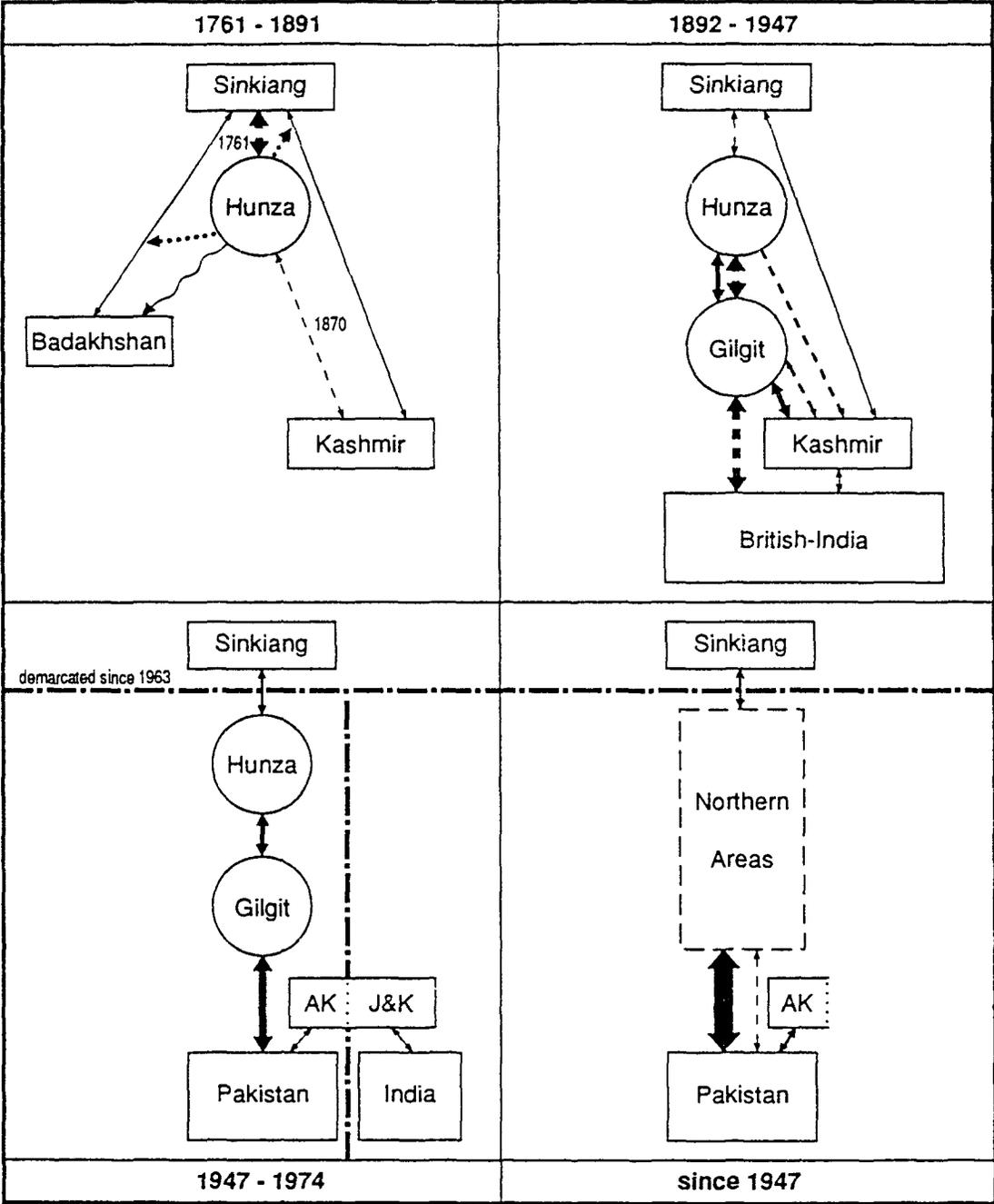
1983:19). For most of the period Hunza paid a nominal tribute to both Kashmir and the Chinese governors of East Turkestan, and received a larger allowance from both powers in return (Biddulph, 1880:28; Douglas, 1952:299; Etherton, 1911:53; Knight, 1893:351; Schomberg, 1935; Tahir Ali, 1983:19) (see Figure 5.2b). The rulers of Hunza also met, and formed tenuous political agreements with representatives from Russia (Knight, 1893:352). The indifference with which Hunza rulers made and broke agreements, together with reports from contemporary sources stating that Hunza won most skirmishes with the Dogras, suggest that the kingdom was free from outside control, if not influence (Drew, 1875:447,450; Knight, 1893:355). Knight reports that "the Hunzas... had never known defeat before Colonel Durand's successful campaign (in 1891)" (Knight, 1983:348).

By the beginning of the 1890s the British in India had decided that they were unable to establish peaceful relations with Hunza, and that they could no longer tolerate slaving-raids on caravans from India (see Chapter 4.3.1). In addition, they worried that Hunza's friendly relations with Russia and China would lead to expansion by those powers toward the northern frontiers of India. On December 1st 1891, a British-led expeditionary force advanced on Chalt, the fort at the entrance to Hunza. By the end of the year the rulers of Hunza and Nagyr had been subdued, and Hunza became tributary to Kashmir, which was itself a principality of British India.¹²

The levels of social organisation I discuss in the following subsections pertain to the period from the late 16th century when Hunza and Nagyr split, to 1891 when Hunza was subdued.¹³

¹² Durand, 1900; Knight, 1893; and Younghusband 1900, describe the Hunza/Nagyr campaign in detail.

¹³ According to Tahir Ali, historical information applies most accurately to the period since the early 19th century. Beyond that Burusho have little "memory" of events or circumstances, except some clan and lineage related material (Tahir Ali, 1983:148-149).



Legend

- Principality of the Karakoram (rulers: mir, rājā, thām)
- States/provinces etc. having exchange relations with Hunza (AK-Azad Kashmir J&K - Jammu & Kashmir)
- Disputed political status controlled by Pakistan
- Tributary relationships
- Trade exchange
- Raids on caravan
- Slave trade
- International boundary
- Cease-fire line

Figure 5.2b: Historical Development of Hunza's Exchange Relations (source: Kreutzmann, 1989:20)

5.2.2 Kinship¹⁴

The Burusho of Hunza see the domain of kinship and its descent-based institutions as an autonomous sphere of social life that exists within, but does not derive from, the parameters of the political kingdom. Kinship is itself "an independently determined source of critical jural rights, duties and obligations- capacities without which no individual can operate effectively in the wider society" (Tahir Ali, 1983:35-36). The kingship (*thamkush*), on the other hand, is the domain of "outside people", whose interests are separate from those of non-royal Burusho. Among commoners themselves, the king ("*tham*"- Burushaski, "*mir*"- Persian) and his institutions are dangerous and alien: dangerous because they have a tendency to "eat" the resources of households and kin groups through taxes, obligatory labour etc., and alien because they are not Burusho. They act in ways that are not acceptable to Burusho. At the same time, the *tham* is a reluctant source of wealth and prestige, and the reluctant sponsor of ceremonies and rites that are beneficial to society (Tahir Ali, 1983:36). Thus Hunza people are ambivalent in their attitude toward kingship. They feel that their powers as citizens in the royal state are insecure, and "subject to negotiation during the rise and fall of personal careers" (Tahir Ali, 1983:36-37). In contrast, kinship and descent are perceived as natural and inalienable, especially the bonds of agnation¹⁵. Wherever possible Burusho attempt to organise collective enterprise around agnatic lineage.

Burusho recognise two categories of kin, namely *eiltiin* or agnate blood relatives, and *jaam* or spouse's blood relatives. Practical relations complicate these simplified categories. In the narrow sense one's mother is not *eiltiin*, but she is recognised broadly as such, because she is part of one's father's household (as is his mother). By the same token, one's spouse's agnate's spouses

¹⁴ Throughout this section, and the ones that follow, I use the "anthropological present" when describing social relations, practices and conventions. I use the present tense because the relations described here remain relevant, if only as ideals. I employ the past tense when attempting theoretical interpretations of descriptive material.

¹⁵ Male descent on the father's side.

are broadly accepted as *jaam*. Other permutations abound, and are detailed by Tahir Ali (1983:39-48). The point here is that the closer the agnatic blood tie, the more important is considered the relationship; matrilineal relationships are secondary to patrilineal ties. Burusho residents have traditionally explained this gender specification in terms of procreation. Burusho lore maintains that both mothers and fathers contribute to a child's physical make-up, but their roles differ. Conception and in-utero development are "like seeds germinating and growing in a field". The field (mother) is absolutely necessary, and will influence the strength and thriftiness of the plant (child), but the seed (father) determines what kind of plant it will be, regardless of where it is planted. Thus "a child's blood (*multan*), which they regard as the elemental quality-bearing constituent of the body, is entirely the same as its father's" (Tahir Ali, 1983:49). Tahir Ali goes on to say that "whereas maternity is the primary source of nurturant effects on a child's health, personality and disposition, paternity [within marriage] fixes his [sic] place in the society at large" (Tahir Ali, 1983:50).

Paternity determines the status of individuals within the descent system, and conversely, father-child relationships are governed by larger descent group relations (Tahir Ali, 1983:51). What this means is that descent group authorities ensure the fundamental right of fathers to custody and control of his descendants (except married daughters), and the fundamental obligation of fathers to provide descendants with residence, protection, access to a means of livelihood, and a share in the estate (Tahir Ali, 1983:51). A child is guaranteed official social, economic, political and ecological recognition as his/her father's child, but until the father's death (or a daughter's marriage) is denied other official recognition.

Within the agnatic lineage all Burusho belong to one of three major groups, or phratries, associated with the three ancient settlements of Hunza: Altit, Baltit, and Ganesh. Every Burusho, except the royal family, is either Altitkut (people of Altit), Baltitkut, or Ganeshkut. These phratries are recognised as having existed prior to the *thams*, and prior to Hunza itself. Members of phratries are blood-relatives only if they belong to the same clan. Thus, phratries are supra-descent groups. They are discussed later in 5.2.3 and 5.2.4, in terms of kingship and village.

Within each phratry are a number of clans, members of which can trace descent from a common male founding ancestor, who came to Hunza from some other place. Each clan originator is identified by name, and by a tale which tells of his background and accomplishments (Tahir Ali, 1983:54). Clans are named after their founder, or where he settled.¹⁶

Some clans are divided into sub-clans, if members can trace their ancestry to one of a number of sons of the clan originator. Sub-clan originators are remembered by name, and perhaps by some distinguishing quality (such as bravery or strength), but they do not typically possess as complete a history as do their fathers.¹⁷ Sub-clans, like clans, are fixed in number, and cannot be altered. In the period before 1891 all adult males were expected to be familiar with much of their clan and sub-clan history, because it was important to the proper conduct of political and legal proceedings (Tahir Ali, 1983:58).

Burusho of today's generation are not usually aware of the details of their descent from sub-clan founders, but they do know who their first ancestors were. Typically, they are also knowledgeable about their male ancestry two or three generations before the oldest living male of the group. Thus, an adult man will possess detailed knowledge of his grandfather's father or grandfather, and at least all of that individual's descendants. Such knowledge includes specific information about the households, spouses, social interrelations and property of several hundred people who may be scattered over a number of villages. In addition, the genealogical details of all male descendants of patrilineal ancestors one or two generations beyond this are confidently (and usually accurately) known; easily a few hundred more persons. The persons within the former group comprise a maximal lineage, which is known as the "nation" (*roam*) of that ancestor. For example, all descendants of Amin become *Aminkuts*, "the people of Amin". The ancestor so

¹⁶ Mamu Shah, for example, is the originator of the single clan (Shimshali) which occupies Shimshal. He came from Hunza, and the story of his travels and arrival at Shimshal are well known to Shimshalis (see Chapter 4.2).

¹⁷ Shimshal inhabitants are divided into three sub-clans named after the grandsons of Mamu Shah, and the sons of Sher (see Chapter 4.2).

honoured is perceived as "grandfather" to all members of the group.

This **maximal** lineage is important to Burusho, because it defines the largest group of kin with whom one is intimately involved, and whom are considered "close agnatic kin" (Tahir Ali, 1983:62). All members of the group of one's own age are referred to as "brother" or "sister", all members of the next youngest generation are called "son" or "daughter" etc.

The next largest kin group, the **medial** lineage, consists of the eldest living man, and all his descendants. This group is referred to as the "offspring" (*olad*) of whoever their living ascendant is. The lowest order structure of the descent system is the **minimal** lineage, consisting of a man and his own sons and daughters (Tahir Ali, 1983:63-64).¹⁸ Medial and minimal lineages are often the same, and may coincide in composition with households in certain circumstances.

The minimal lineage is important mainly because it is the source of structural fission in descent-based institutions. A father and his offspring form the nucleus of a medial lineage, which may eventually form a maximal lineage if he outlives his direct ascendants. Thus two brothers, members of a minimal lineage, form two medial lineages, and may eventually head up two maximal lineages, of which a number of medial and minimal lineages form a part. Therefore, these three lineage groups are transitory, and dependent on specific demographic circumstances. In this way they contrast with the clan and sub-clan, whose numbers may vary, but which entities endure nevertheless.

Certain important organisational characteristics are associated with membership in three of the four descent-based categories: clan, maximal lineage, and medial lineage. The most important features at each level are listed in Appendix 2. Minimal lineage is functionally subordinate to household, so it is not included in these tables.

Chapter Four describes the perspectives which outsiders have constructed of Shimshal over the past one hundred years. The present chapter attempts to deepen that picture by

¹⁸ The terms "maximal", "medial" and "minimal" lineage are those used by Tahir Ali, not translations of those recognised by Burusho.

examining the social world from which Shimshal's social organisation derives. The facts and facticities that are offered here are discussed in the language of the outsider, specifically the anthropological language of segmentary lineage. But what the language attempts to express is at least an approximation of how the people of Hunza perceive their world and its social development. It is in this section of the present chapter that we can **begin** to make the connections between the material existence of inhabitants of Hunza, and their symbolic world. To use the language of Habermas, we can begin to connect social system and lifeworld: the institutions which influence how individuals behave in society, and the shared assumptions, convictions and beliefs that give behaviour meaning.

One aspect of Habermas' social theory which I raise in Chapter Two is the intimate link he theorises between social system and lifeworld in pre-modern or non-modern societies. He theorises that such a link lends resilience and credibility to the functional aspects of sub-systemic institutions. Clearly, this link is well-established in the Burusho conception of kinship as a lifeworld imbedded phenomenon.

Kinship is an element of the lifeworld which survived rationalisation. Burusho legitimate the bonds of agnatic kinship (and its consequent sub-systemic institutions) with validity claims based on truth (their interpretation of reproduction) and sincerity (the authentic and continuously demonstrated bond between an individual and his or her kin). Having established the validity of the Burusho kinship system, individuals were able, in the period before 1891, to rationally employ it as an element of lifeworld which was itself a legitimate validity claim for certain other sets of instrumental and communicative actions, and also as a key for locating themselves in the larger Burusho social order.

The notion of clans, clan founders, subclans, lineages, and sub-lineages were imbedded, taken-for-granted facticities which were shared by Burusho. Kinship related each inhabitant symbolically with his or her history and place of residence, and with other Burusho of the same clan. At the same time kinship and lineage provided legitimacy to different levels of institutions

which related concretely to political, economic, social and ecological sub-systems. To the extent that kinship was accepted within the shared lifeworld as a legitimate basis for organisation, communicative and instrumental action were not problematic: Burusho were willing to abide by the rules of decision-making developed from the kin system, and they accepted the kin-based economic and ecological hierarchy.

However, kinship was never accepted as the **sole** legitimate basis for organisation among the Burusho. Kingship and the citizenship which stems from kingship have been considered as supplementary and competing bases for organisation.

5.2.3 Kingship

The descent system in Burusho society has no authority at a level greater than the clan. The fifteen clans, each with its own origin, identity, symbolically significant places, farmlands etc., are not tied by claims to common ancestry. Thus, descent can play no part (except in the choice of spokespersons) in the negotiation of relations, economic, political, social or ecological, among clans. Clans are interrelated from without by the institutions of kingship (and as discussed later, from within by household relations).

As mentioned earlier, Burusho have ambivalent feelings toward *thamkushi* (Burushaski for kingship). It is both an "alien presence located at the very centre of their society of clans and kin groups", and a "unique possession, an intrinsic feature of their tribal image" that separates them and sets them above the other tribal groups that constitute Hunza state (including the Shina, Wakhi and Dom groups) (Tahir Ali, 1983:90-91).

Burusho see themselves as being arrayed in clans around the king, but the kingship and

the kingdom is not "of them". Rather it is a focal point for supra-clan organisation.¹⁹ Many people do not consider the royal clan, the *Ayeshkuts*, to be Burusho. Instead they are a clan of intruders who came to rule over the Burusho. This conception is reinforced by the *Ayeshkuts*' neglect of local custom and morality: they either marry their "own kin" or total outsiders (non-Burusho), they are fractious toward fellow clan members, they even engage in fratricide and parricide for the sake of the throne. Clearly their morals, interests and values are different than those of normal Burusho (Tahir Ali, 1983:92). For these reasons commoner Burusho believe it is important that the *tham* be constrained and influenced as much as possible by clan authorities.²⁰

Not surprisingly, descent group seniors who comprise the *tham*'s councillors and the *tham* himself view each other with distrust and ambivalence. This occurs despite an understanding by both parties that Burusho society coalesces around kingship. The Burusho need the *tham*: he is the final arbitrator of all disputes, the trustee of all lands, the protector from outside intervention, the ritual guarantor of good weather, good health and fertility in the soil, and the source of wealth, prestige and patronage. At the same time they recognise *thamkushi* as "inherently an expansionary and self-aggrandizing force", and the *tham* as a person whose consistent purpose is to reduce his dependence on descent-based leadership and enlarge his control into all spheres of social activity (Tahir Ali, 1983:94). Descent seniors must successfully limit the *tham*'s sphere of influence to the court, if they are to maintain some clan autonomy. The *tham*, on his side, considers lineage elders as "his subjects and judges, supplicants and accusers, guardians and captors" (Tahir Ali, 1983:94). The result of these tensions has been a delicate dynamic between lineage elders and the *tham*. In the period before 1891 the entire political system was "constituted dialectically, as a movement

¹⁹ People go to Hunza (where the king lives); they do not live in Hunza (Tahir Ali, 1983:91). Kingship is an ordering phenomenon which exists outside the Burusho moral and social order.

²⁰ This line of reasoning is important, because it provides a lifeworld-based legitimisation for striving to limit the *tham*'s authority.

back and forth between the antipodal forces of descent and kingship" (Tahir Ali, 1983:97)²¹. Kingly power increased and decreased according to the combination of characteristics displayed by the *tham* on one side, and the lineage elders on the other. In the main however, several sets of characteristics relating to kingship may be said to apply. These are outlined in Appendix 3.

It is evident that the ruling family in Hunza has attempted to undermine the autonomy of descent-based, or kin-based groups, in order to increase its own centralized control of Hunza's resources.²² It has done this in three ways, each of which caters to the development of a centralised bureaucracy.

First, the citizens of Hunza have been subdivided into smaller and smaller organisational units which only at the smallest level (the household) coincide with descent-based organisational groupings (see Table A3.3).

Second, descent-based leaders have been absorbed into the state bureaucracy, so that the *tham's* administrative system lends them prestige outside of their lineage authority, and derives authority from them. The effect of this is to compromise the loyalty which these elders might otherwise direct toward their lineage.

Third, the *thams* have settled entirely new units in a way that prevents these settlements from becoming clan enclaves. Indeed, Shins and Wakhis were invited to become citizens of Hunza

²¹ Tahir Ali gives four examples to show the importance of this dynamic in the lives of Burusho.

First, in court discussions and decision-making sessions the tacit rule was for the *tham* to wait until debate in council was almost over, and then confirm the consensus that he thought was emerging among factions of elders. He did not attempt to force his will before that time.

Second, rites and ceremonies existed in which commoner Burusho had the authority to loudly harangue and admonish the *tham* to undertake his obligations justly and prudently.

Third, when the *tham* sponsored schemes to establish new settlements he inevitably tried to mix homesteaders from different clans, while descent leaders worked toward establishing communities along descent lines.

Finally, factions of elders often resisted the *tham's* efforts to appoint an heir. They intrigued with one or another claimant to the throne, whom they considered more able (from material and mystical perspectives), and when successful they eliminated other princes to avoid the potential for strife and rebellion in the kingdom (see Lorimer, 1979:95 for a discussion of Burusho intervention in royal succession).

²² Most important among the resources that the royal family did not control, but strove to, were labour... to generate revenue, create public works, and establish military strength.

without any Burusho clan affiliation at all, and some new settlements were inhabited by both Burusho and members of other groups. This third strategy was very important in decreasing the powers of clans. Prior to the early 1800s "the peoples of the three phratries resided in their separate, consolidated territorial enclaves... inside the enclaves settlements directly reflected sub-phratry and clan boundaries" (Tahir Ali, 1983:149). After the settlement schemes of the early 19th century this was no longer the case. Members of different phratries and different clans resided in the same settlement, and villages (essentially bureaucratic inventions) became much more important than they had been previously.

Certain elements of kingship, such as the *tham*'s inherent right to control barren land and untapped water, and his divine ability to ensure the land's fertility, are imbedded in the Burusho lifeworld. However, for the most part kingship is an imposed basis for action and organisation. Throughout his dissertation Tahir Ali (1983) emphasises the ongoing struggle between kinship and kingship. This may be understood as a struggle between an imposed social system and lifeworld.

The original *tham* of the *Ayeshkut* line united the Burusho clans, freed them from Gilgit, and created the spatial and political Hunza moiety. Clan leaders formed his retinue, and a symbiotic relationship evolved whereby the clans, united in phratries, supported the *tham* materially, and he intermediated between the Burusho on the one side, and foreign powers and the supernatural on the other. According to Tahir Ali's Burusho informants the *thams* attempted to increase their control of indigenous institutions and decision-making processes, but initially without much success. The clans retained control over most areas of social organisation, and provided a forum within which consensus and understanding were achieved. Kingship remained primarily a basis for economic and ecologically focused instrumental action, with little control over communicative action. This changed when circumstances combined to facilitate the expansion of settlement onto barren lands.

With the acceptance of Shin and Wakhi groups into the state of Hunza in the early 1800s, and the resettlement of many Burusho onto lands remote (physically and symbolically) from their

ancestral homes, phratry and clan elders lost their ability to prevent kingship-based bureaucracy from affecting everyday social relations. Clan and phratry members were dispersed, non-Burusho groups had to be assimilated, and new organisational units were necessary for the conduct of daily activities and the fulfilment of ritual and citizenship obligations. The *tham* solved these problems by creating new organisational units (villages) comprised of members of several clans, and appointing functionaries to represent these villages to him and to each other.

These developments, initiated by the settlement of new territory, increased the power of the royal court, and led to an uncoupling of system and lifeworld. A rationalised lifeworld based on kinship continued to exist, but became increasingly alienated from the new, royally-imposed, social system. A centralised state bureaucracy separate from kinship hierarchy was developed. Still, the *tham* needed to anchor the mechanisms of this kingship-based social system in the lifeworld in order to provide them with legitimacy. Headmen were chosen from among lineage elders, citizenship continued to be granted according to medial lineage leadership, "great ones" were selected from among clan elders, and so on. Lifeworld split into two domains, one (kingship) responsible for large-scale political, economic and ecological interaction, and the other (kinship) responsible for cultural transmission, socialisation, day-to-day economic and ecological activities, and formation of personal identity. Gradually the bureaucratic domain began to infiltrate (colonise) the kinship domain, but at the same time kinship continued to resist with considerable success.

The outcome of these historical circumstances was a Burusho lifeworld that was colonised to a certain extent (eg. identity became partly a function of the royal hierarchy; economic position was partly a function of royal patronage). At the same time the village, an organisational unit imposed by kingship, became a vehicle for resisting bureaucratic control, and for recreating kin-based functions and ceremonies at a smaller scale. This "reverse colonisation" is evident in the next section, particularly in terms of the anti-*tham* and pro-equity stance of the *kuyotch*, or village council.

These developments did not render kinship unimportant at any level. However, kinship was

compelled to achieve its influence within an infrastructure imposed by kingship. This interplay between kinship and kingship was most evident at two levels: village and household. The following two sections describe these organisational units in some detail.

5.2.4 Village

It is evident from the foregoing discussion that the Burusho conceptually segregate the organisational prerogatives of the royal state from the descent-based polity. At the same time, the practical organisation of Burusho (and other Hunza) life is an adaptation to, or conformation of, the two (Tahir Ali, 1983:130). The maximum unit at which this conformation is applied in every day practice is the village. In order to understand the dynamics of kin/king interplay within village organisation it is useful to examine how villages came to evolve from the original spatial organisational designation of phratry.

As has been noted, all Burusho in Hunza belong to one of three major divisions identified with reference to the three ancient settlement centres. The members of each of these phratries possess separate bodies of oral tradition which tell of their origin, and how specific clans came to be associated with their parent phratry. The oral traditions of each phratry are exclusive, in the sense that they say nothing of the other phratries. A second set of oral traditions exists which tells of the deeds of the ruling clan, and places specific phratries and clans within those deeds (the clan ancestors came together as the original *tham's* retinue). These two sets of mythology link Burusho people to specific sections of the land (which predates the rule of the *thams*) and also establish them as subjects of the *tham*.²³

Until the early 1800s Burusho were organised and governed spatially according to phratry

²³ See Tahir Ali (1983:129-148) for a discussion of these sets of mythology and their significance.

boundaries. All members of a phratry occupied a single territory (one of the three original settlements), which was at once a symbolic and kin-based entity (clans belonged to and lived in specific neighbourhoods of phratries) and a *maqso*, or royally defined administrative section. Villages did not exist as functional units. Each phratry had a number of headmen who represented clans (usually medial lineage heads), and other administrative positions were filled at the phratry level.

Within this framework the *tham's* authority was relatively subsumed by lineage authority. While phratries are supra-lineage bodies, their organisation tended to follow lineage lines, so that the *tham's* administrative levels were already and primarily descent-based organisational levels. The *tham* could use phratries to marshal the clans on his behalf, but at the same time the spatial concentration of clan members within a phratry (clans formed exclusive residential communities within phratries), and of phratry members as a group, facilitated the effective consolidation of clan interests and clan militancy in opposition to the royal agenda.

This situation changed dramatically over a period of several decades in the early and mid-1800s (Tahir Ali, 1983:149). At that time a combination of population increase, and new-found wealth, engendered by the exploitation of raiding opportunities to the north, encouraged the development of new settlements. These were the prerogative of the *tham* to approve, finance, and oversee²⁴. Originally, phratry enclaves expanded from their original location. But new annexes depended on different sources of water than the original settlements, were constrained by different ecological conditions, and were often fairly inaccessible even from adjacent parent settlements. To the *tham* this meant that they formed organisational units that were distinct from the phratry settlements, and required their own council, headman, water controller, access to a fortified centre,

²⁴ This prerogative stemmed from both symbolic and practical considerations. First, only the Tham had the **right** to utilise unsettled land and unexploited water. Second, only the Tham had the **ability** to marshal sufficient resources for land and water development.

etc. These units became villages²⁵. Over the next several decades more settlements were colonised at considerable distances from the original phratry settlements, and other existing Shin and Wakhi settlements (eg. Shimshal) came to be incorporated into the kingdom.

Rapid expansion in the early 1800s changed the power balance between kin and king considerably. Land within newly settled villages was distributed among several clans, so that clans were no longer congregated in a single neighbourhood, even within villages. Phratry membership came to be dispersed all over the kingdom. The *tham* even tried to mix several phratries within a single village, although that never succeeded (Tahir Ali, 1983:159).

The effect was to reduce the autonomy and solidarity of clan and phratry members, and consolidate the central authority of the *tham*. Certainly, groups of clan and phratry members quickly established relations of solidarity within villages, but those relations could no longer easily encompass the whole clan or phratry membership. In addition, a clan council became something different than a locality council, so that the *tham's* administrative hierarchy came to exist apart from the internal clan and phratry hierarchy. All Burusho still belonged to one of three phratries, but only those residing in the original settlements were identified with those phratries by the state bureaucracy. Moreover, the original phratry territories became merely three of many administrative *maqsos*, all of which were taxed according to a separate schedule.

Phratries maintained their symbolic significance as spatial and symbolic centres of origin even after the period of rapid colonisation. They remained the largest social grouping that commoner Burusho recognised as intrinsic to their lifeworld. However, their importance as organising corporate entities diminished, and was subsumed by the emerging importance of villages. Clan authority suffered in the same way, but clan segments managed to reemerge as powerful forces within villages. In the daily collective life of a village "the clan emerges as the widest segmentary unit which may command effective loyalty as well as the moral and political

²⁵ It is interesting to note that villages are still referred to only by their proper name, given by the founding *Tham*. There is no word denoting village in the Burushaski language.

authority to enforce its discipline on its members" (Tahir Ali, 1983:168). This is because relationships among fellow clan members are immediate and familiar, and localised clans are composed as face-to-face groups with obviously common interests. These interests are strengthened as clan members, over time, attempt to form an exclusive spatial neighbourhood within a village.

The village, then, is the level at which the dialectical relationship between kingship and kinship is most vigorously contested and resolved. Villages provide the framework for, and set limits on, the major forms of politico-legal, religious and economic organisation that exist in Hunza society. Citizens experience their citizenship in the royal state primarily at the village level. They own land that belongs to a village, and they can assert their rights as members of a village to representatives of that village. Villages are creations of the *tham*. We see in Appendix 3 that they are important bureaucratic and administrative units. At the same time, citizens experience their clan and lineage membership primarily as those entities exist within villages. Collective enterprise by clan members, and most clan authority itself operates within individual villages. Clan-based authorities share with government functionaries the responsibility for village prosperity and harmony. This is demonstrated by a closer look at village government.

The political hierarchy of a village may be divided into four categories. First are the holders of formally defined, semi-hereditary offices which are conferred by the *tham*. Second are the *akabirting*, the great ones, who liaise between the village and *tham* in a less formal way (see Table A3.3). The third category is called *kuyotch* (citizens-at-large), and consists of the gathering of all household heads in publicly convened office (including official functionaries and *akabirting*). At the bottom, and without recognised authority, is everyone else. The first two categories constitute kingship in the village: government from above. The third category, specifically *kuyotch*, represents lineage.²⁶

²⁶ Village government is described in detail in Chapters Seven and Eight, in the context of Shimshal.

According to Tahir Ali (1983:120-125), the council of household heads (*kuyotch*) has as its explicit purpose the protection of the sameness of all villagers' rights, and the enhancement of the village's collective welfare. Councillors take this to mean that they have the duty to protect the general interest against all forms of self-aggrandisement, such as that routinely sought by *akabirting* and headmen. They also recognise the responsibility to preserve equity among villagers in their internal dealings, and to resist encroachments and impositions from parties external to the village. The *kuyotch*, more than any other recognised entity, maintains an adversarial attitude to the *tham*, his intermediaries, and all locals who seek special privilege, because it sees those individuals as destructive to equity and collective welfare.

Government functionaries and the *akabirting* participate as members of the council, and tend to do most of the talking, but it is accepted that a decision must be approved by the entire body.²⁷ Meetings are called by the headman whenever he feels a public issue has arisen which is not routine. Typically about a quarter of household heads attend, as well as other young men who have no formal right to speak unless invited²⁸. Conversation usually begins informally when the first few villagers have arrived, and gradually develops into formal speech-making as the congregation grows. The headman presides, and attempts both to keep the discussion formal and impersonal, and to steer it toward a consensus. The meeting breaks up when such a consensus is inferred: votes are never cast. Sometimes, when strong factions have developed, subcommittees or arbitrators are appointed to resolve the dispute.

The concern of the *kuyotch* for equity, together with the insistence on a more-or-less

²⁷ It is worth noting that functionaries and the *akabirting* are in a paradoxical position. They are legitimate and probably sincere members of the *kuyotch*, who may have a strong loyalty to village interests. At the same time their very prosperity and authority suggests that they seek and hold positions of individual privilege, which sets them against the *kuyotch*. They are the persons in whom the dialectical relationship between kinship and kingship resides most immediately.

²⁸ Tahir Ali states that certain members always attend, and some never do. This seems to be a function of household wealth and well-being. Heads of poor or small households tend not to be respected in council, so they typically encourage a more powerful clansman to represent their interests.

unanimous consensus, means that village government tends to be conservative. Almost any proposal or initiative can be seen potentially to compromise equity and encourage self-aggrandisement, so most proposals are rejected. Together with that restraint and caution regarding internal affairs is a willingness to challenge any outside encroachments or interventions.

Three types of issues regularly confront the *kuyotch* (today, as in the past):

1) regulating irrigation schedules, co-operative agricultural practices, and communal pasture use. These are all important agricultural issues which are discussed and decided upon each year, or several times each year.

2) protecting village interests from the competing interests of neighbouring communities and the central government. This may include negotiating water rights, government subsidies, taxes and obligations, etc.

3) sponsoring and organising village-based ritual festivals and ceremonies. Ritual and ceremonial events require a certain amount of harmony and unity within a village, which is not taken for granted. Council must decide if the village is sufficiently healthy, materially and morally, to mount such an activity.

Village government is a judicial organ which operates within the limits of descent-based institutions, and the royal court. It is charged primarily with enforcing the "rules of participation in the village-wide and village-specific economic and political organisation; other sets of controls and regulations governing jural status are beyond its purview" (Tahir Ali, 1983:128). Issues concerned with marriage, inheritance and paternity are strictly the concern of descent groups. Disputes which concern supra-village or trans-village entities are adjudicated by the *tham's* central administration.

Villagers group together in one other important formal capacity: as a "ritual congregation". They share a set of self-evident, lifeworld, moral axioms which go beyond both the practical interests they might share, and their common subjection to a single political authority. These axioms stem from an ethic of equity: "in and of themselves villagers believe they are equal and

equally deserving of the same consideration from each other" (Tahir Ali, 1983:178).²⁹ This notion of equality as an overriding principle is not inherent in descent or kingly rule (although it infiltrates both of those spheres; ie. purpose of the *kuyotch*). According to Tahir Ali, at least, it stems from the village-based ritual domain. In addition to being a means of government the village belongs "to the domain of religion, and village relations are also ritual relations" (Tahir Ali, 1983:179).

This coincidence of political, material and ritual/religious organisation does not occur at any other level. Indeed, apart from in the royal court, permanent religious institutions exist only at the village level. Clan and lineage membership entails certain religious obligations, but clans and lineages do not have standing arrangements for ritual collaboration. Villages have such arrangements in the form of buildings, sacramental implements, facilities, specified allocation of tasks, etc. Moreover, these institutions and arrangements are not only organised at the village level; they exist for the village polity, so that village membership, and that alone, authorises (and compels) individuals to participate in village-based religious activities.

Unified religious organisation is maintained despite sectarian differences among members of individual villages.³⁰ The existence in Hunza villages of these two Islamic sects "do not make for any deep or long lasting social cleavages in the village. They represent, rather, differences of degree which stem from the impact of missionary influence and high scriptural authority on beliefs and institutions in an indigenous, orally transmitted tradition of prayer, sacrament and devotion" (Tahir Ali, 1983:180). It seems that all Burusho (and Hunza Wakhis) interpret the basic values and premises of Islam similarly, as they bear on everyday life, social and political relations, and the

²⁹ "Equality" here refers to the civic status of citizens, which includes only household heads. Other household members share the consequences of their head's equality. It does not refer to a strict concept of equality of possessions or prestige or authority.

³⁰ About 70% of Hunzakuts are Ismaili Moslems, followers of the Aga Khan. The remainder are Shias, who look to the religious centres of Iran and Iraq for spiritual guidance. Many villages are inhabited by both Ismailis and Shias. They maintain separate facilities and hold some separate sectarian rites and celebrations. For the most part, however, each sect attempts to support the other's celebrations. In addition, those aspects of "civic religion" which are not immediately related to sectarian beliefs are observed in common.

agricultural cycle. All villagers are interrelated as ritual actors who comprise a unified religious community which operates in coordination with the political and material (economic/ecological) community.

This religious unity, expressed in coordination with other sub-systemic spheres, is expressed and enforced in several types of ritual activity. The most important of these are death related rituals, *ni'az* (optional public sacrificial rites), *khudai* ("belonging or promised to God"), periodic and compulsory village rites, and Burusho dance ceremonies. The main features of each of these are summarised in Table A4.1.³¹

I noted above that the system of social organisation imposed by kingship initiated a separation of social system and lifeworld. Rationalised kinship-based sub-systemic mechanisms came to dominate instrumental action, and a rationalised lifeworld continued to inform communicative action. Over time the sub-systemic medium of bureaucracy partially colonised the lifeworld realm of intersubjective understanding. Simultaneously, elements of a kin-based lifeworld penetrated the instrumental sphere of the social system. This mutual colonisation occurred at the village level.

Burusho commoners reconstituted the village polity as a ritual congregation whose primary purpose was to facilitate and regulate intersubjective understanding (practical interests) in the form of dances, ritual celebrations, the *kuyotch*, and the ethic of village-wide equity. At the same time they resisted attempts by the *tham* and his functionaries to utilise the village as a vehicle for the royal technical (instrumental) agenda. This resistance operated mainly through the *kuyotch* (lineage-based leadership) who struggled against the system of privilege which defined and perpetuated the royal bureaucratic hierarchy. In short, as the royal social system was rationalised into the lifeworld domain, so the kinship-based lifeworld penetrated technically-oriented organisation.

At a conceptual level Burusho kept kingship and kinship (system and lifeworld) separate

³¹ Dance ceremonies are discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven.

(uncoupled), and perceived them as antagonistic. In practice, however, they combined in defining the most important unit in material and symbolic organisation: the household.

5.2.5 Household

The royal framework dominates Burusho social organisation primarily because it articulates important relationships within and between territorially consolidated groups, and provides a comprehensive plan for their consolidation in the form of royally-based institutions. Clans and lineages, on the other hand, are dispersed and thus poorly situated to maintain a set of specialised institutions. This means that they are constrained in the types of functions they may perform in the overall society (Tahir Ali, 1983:211). At the same time, descent groups are able to maintain considerable corporateness, and even retain exclusive control (within the royal system) over important areas of existence, including marriage, inheritance, virtue and honour, and to a considerable extent, prestige and personal identity. These two planes of social organisation, kinship/descent and kingship, converge and interact mainly at the household level, and specifically in the position of household head.

The centrality of household head to both kinship and kingship gives that position a unique importance; it is the only entity which has legitimacy in both polities, and is the principal means by which they cooperate. Villagers (household heads) act as members of a village corporation, members of a descent based corporation, and the sole legal representatives of domestic interests to either corporation. In terms of the external social system the household is a solidary unit represented by its head who alone possesses fully adult status. Other members of the household participate in kinship or civic affairs only as the head's representatives.³² Because of the overall

³² In principle, descent status provides individuals with an independent source of jural rights, privileges and responsibilities. But, the rules of patrilineal seniority stipulate that these can be exercised only if no direct lineal ascendent is alive (Tahir Ali, 1983:215).

importance of the household head in any type of formal social interaction, the household emerges as the prime operational unit for most collective secular activities, and many religious ones.

Among Burusho, recruitment into the domestic group (household) is fundamentally and rigidly governed by kinship, marriage and descent criteria. Household heads seldom recognise other bases for permanent household membership. Households are therefore collectivities of kin and affines, plus occasional temporary members. See Appendix 5 for overviews of household membership and recruitment.

Household, as the Burusho conceive it, is not equivalent to "family". They have no concept of family as a corporate unit. Rather they distinguish sharply between *olad* (offspring) and the residential/economic group *halum jamaat* (house's following). *Olad* changes only through birth or death regardless of residence or economics. *Halum jamaat* varies according to several criteria, including birth, death, marriage, partition, and contractual inclusion or exclusion. Household, therefore, is an entity that is constantly in flux. Despite these inevitable fluctuations and rearrangements a sense prevails of the fixity of household as a constant place through which generations pass. Household is perceived as a permanent corporate institution.

The *halum jamaat* is considered to be a cohesive domestic economic unit, whose members share a single set of resources to meet their culturally defined needs. Household members dwell in one house, eat from one hearth, pool their labour and resources, and "operate on the principle of one account book" (Tahir Ali, 1983:219).³³ Burusho expect an attitude of mutuality and constancy to prevail among household members, and in their dealings with "outside people". Such an expectation is illustrated in Table A5.1.

The value that Burusho attribute to mutuality, cooperation and constancy expresses the related beliefs that (a) members owe material obligations to the group, (b) economic security requires cooperation among individuals, and (c) households should cultivate and display a degree

³³ Some large households occupy several houses, possibly spread among a number of villages. See the discussion of "great houses" below.

of social integrity. A variety of attributes such as honour, shame and pride attach to a household according to its members' reputations for hospitality, ritual participation, managerial astuteness, diligence, fiscal responsibility, self-sufficiency, female virtue, etc. Each individual suffers or benefits according to fellow members' reputations, and each individual contributes to that reputation. Therefore, individuals are compelled to act in a way that is beneficial to the household's overall quality, as described by those attributes listed above. In addition, quantitative strength and health are considered to be important variables which help to define a household's honour and pride.

A healthy, prosperous and strong household is, among other things, one that is large, with lots of "able bodied young men and boys, junior females and youngsters of both sexes" (Tahir Ali, 1983:236). A man who heads a large household obtains a certain amount of prestige regardless of prosperity or other personal characteristics. He is called *sapuyar* (one who is worthy of compliments and congratulations). Status is denied a man with a small household, despite his wealth or honour. He is called *hinuman* (alone, vulnerable).

While Burusho recognise a practical upper limit on the number of persons who can dwell effectively at one hearth, they are reluctant (because of the prestige associated with being *sapuyar*) to stipulate an upper limit on household size. This has led to the evolution of "great houses"; households who have members dispersed throughout several dwelling places in a single village, or among different villages. Each segment typically consists of a man, his wife and children. This party has significant autonomy from the larger household group, but in no way does it comprise a household on its own, either economically, politically, ritually or socially. Each segment exists under the overarching authority of the household head, who travels from dwelling place to dwelling place to manage the household's property. Burusho emphasise that no partition has taken place in great houses; if individuals all lived in a single neighbourhood they would share a common hearth. Segments, however dispersed, share one "balance sheet" and shuffle implements, animals, food and personnel among dwelling places. The existence of great houses in no way interferes with the constitution of household membership or its rules of operation (see Appendix 5).

So far discussion pertaining to household has focused on the internal composition and internal operation of households. Now I shift attention to the relationship between household and larger social organisational units.

Whatever the demographic and social position of a household, a central concern of members is its viability: the household's maintenance and enhancement.³⁴ Among other things a household is conceived as a "system of means to ends" (Tahir Ali, 1983:274). Primary among those ends is the necessity to support the individuals within its fold. Tahir Ali suggests that the term "viability" encompasses what Burusho mean by the "support" that all households are striving to maintain. He uses a definition provided by Stenning (1958:92) that "a household is viable when the labour it can provide is suitable for the exploitation of its means of subsistence, while the latter is adequate for the support of its members", and adds to it the ability of a household to represent its members in a wide range of politico-jural, ritual, domestic and economic respects (Tahir Ali, 1983:273). He goes on to note that, in terms of his addition to Stenning's definition, households at any time "exhibit varying degrees of viability correlative to their ability to manipulate or utilise various aspects of status" (Tahir Ali, 1983:273). In addition, then, to encompassing strict ecological/economic support viability refers to the "relative structural competence of households, meaning thereby the capability to engage, in a culturally acceptable way, in various types of relationships and occasions" (Tahir Ali, 1983:273).

This concept of relative social viability accords well with how Burusho themselves conceptualise their households. They state that an ideal household comprises at least a full complement of the four major categories of members (see Table A5.4), plus many additional junior males and females. This is optimal because certain tasks, services and obligations cannot be performed without certain position holders (Tahir Ali, 1983:274). Households are considered well-rounded when they can fulfil their share of communal labour, contribute to village and kinship rites,

³⁴ Tahir Ali's use of the term "viability" goes beyond Matthews' definition to include elements of political validity, social vitality and ecological volition, as well as economic viability.

ceremonies and enterprises, hold life-cycle events, participate in councils, provide hospitality, protect their membership and possessions, and meet subsistence needs (Tahir Ali, 1983:274).

Very few households can remain viable for long on their own. Eventually subsistence requirements and social demands outstrip the resources of individual domestic units.³⁵ Before that happens Burusho households resort to external mechanisms for providing mutual aid and assistance. Indeed, all but the most isolated households regularly draw on (and contribute to) "outside" sources to help achieve their standard of viability. The way in which resources and personnel are shifted among households is regulated by two complicated sets of networks operating at the egocentric and sociocentric levels of interaction. These networks are described in Tables A5.5 and A5.6. Of course, the interaction between household and the wider society is not one-way. Tables A5.7 and A5.8 describe the nature of the household's contribution to larger social units.

Interpretive comments placed at the end of each preceding section of this chapter suggest that the Burusho of Hunza experienced at least one cycle of modernity in the period leading up to 1891, centred around spatial and demographic expansion in the early 19th century.³⁶ Despite the fact that Burusho society went through the stages of modernity postulated by Habermas, that same society did not experience a comprehensive process of modernisation in this time period. Increasing bureaucratisation had the potential, and according to Tahir Ali (1983) tried, to "infiltrate spheres of social life in which traditions and knowledge are transferred, in which normative bonds are intersubjectively established, and in which responsible persons are formed" (White, 1988:112), so that specialised forms of argumentation could become the most powerful forms of legitimisation. That this did not occur may be due to the resistance of the council of household heads (*kuyotch*)

³⁵ For example, the immediate costs of marriage and funeral feasts, the need for rare or expensive implements, and the time and labour associated with certain agricultural or infrastructural tasks (creating new terraces, building a new dwelling, shearing yaks, felling large trees).

³⁶ By **cycle of modernity** I am referring to a period during which system and lifeworld realign in response to external systemic changes.

who, within the severe constraints imposed by the exclusivity of household headship, maintained an ethic of equity in the satisfaction of both technical and practical interests. The *kuyotch* was imitated in these qualities by the operation of individual households and their informal interaction. When the authority of the *kuyotch* was threatened by bureaucratic forces its ideals continued to be supported by interaction at a lower level, which was less susceptible to colonisation by bureaucratic media.

The *kuyotch* was far from an ideal speech community. But it had (a) the support from below, (b) the indulgence from above, and (c) its members shared a genuine interest in intersubjective understanding, necessary to combat the tendency toward modernisation in a way that was accepted as legitimate in terms of both social system and lifeworld. It is significant that the *kuyotch* resembles in some ways, one of Habermas' "new social movements".

It is worth noting that the successful operation of the *kuyotch*, and indeed the Burusho social system as a whole, depended on the recognised authority of household heads within the household. Only if individuals were accepted as leaders by members of their households could they exercise authority in the larger social realm. By the same token, effective leadership of a household depended on recognition from outside authorities, including clan elders, royal functionaries, and the *kuyotch*. Acceptance of individuals as leaders of households derived primarily from descent-based validity claims centred around normative appropriateness; it was appropriate for the oldest male in a medial lineage to lead the household of which he was a part. In addition, the success of the household head in external affairs legitimised his leadership within the household, just as success within a household legitimised his authority to the outside world. Finally, the extent to which a man's leadership was perceived as authentic or sincere in subjective terms, especially by household members, but by others as well, contributed to his legitimacy as household head. Except in the case of brothers, who have the option to partition, descent-based criteria are the principal determinants of household leadership. There is no indication that the lifeworld elements related to descent-based household constitution were threatened by bureaucratic media. Indeed, the

bureaucracy relied on these elements for its own legitimacy.

5.3 Hunza Since 1891

Chapter 5.2 examines social relations in Hunza as they were in the period before 1891. Burusho, and many of my Shimshali informants, consider that era to represent an ideal of how indigenous society should operate. Throughout the period from 1891 to the present Burusho and Wakhi Hunzakuts have attempted to reproduce that stated ideal, and have succeeded in many spheres of life. Thus, it within the context of that lifeworld-based normatively ideal social system that we can understand Hunza's more recent history. Kinship, citizenship, village and household remain four distinct and interrelated spheres of association with meanings and functions that resemble those of previous times. The relative importance of each sphere, however, and the balance among them, changed dramatically with the events of 1891, and then readjusted gradually from that time to the present.

On December 1st 1891 a combined British/Dogra expeditionary force marched into Hunza, and within three weeks overthrew the kingdom's *Ayeshkut* rulers (see Durand, 1900; Knight, 1893; and Younghusband, 1904, for a description of events surrounding the Hunza/Nagyr campaign of 1891). The *tham* and his family fled to Chinese Turkestan, from whence Nazim Khan, half brother to *tham* Saifdar Ali Khan, returned to Hunza and was installed as *tham* of Hunza, the new principality of Kashmir. Since Kashmir was itself under the sovereignty of British India, effective control of Hunza devolved to Britain (Durand, 1900; Staley, 1982:232).

Far from hindering the internal authority of the *tham*, this turn of events facilitated the ascendancy of kingship over kinship. In exchange for control over Hunza's external relations, the British agency in Gilgit guaranteed the *tham's* internal autonomy and authority (Hassnain, 1978:53-

54; Tahir Ali, 1983:20). Indeed, for the first time kingship was backed by a political and military authority other than that which was given grudgingly by the *tham'* constituents, the clans. According to Tahir Ali (1983), the ruling family was quick to exploit this advantage. It is worth quoting him at length on this point:

Prior to that time, it is currently maintained by members of the wazeer lineage, commoner elders and others, the *tham* was sustained by and subjected to the collective will of the senior clansmen; afterward he ruled, in effect, unilaterally, with the full backing and guarantee of the colonial administration. The outward forms of the old polity were still maintained throughout the colonial and post-colonial periods, some of them right up to the death of *tham* Jamal Khan in 1976. But the fundamental premises of the *tham's* status in Burusho society changed irrevocably.

In the immediate post-conquest years the new system quickly took shape. The *tham* installed by the British... consolidated his regime under the guard of occupying troops and with the aid and advice of a British Political Officer posted in the capitol. He was granted a yearly subvention and accorded various personal perquisites and honours, including, eventually, a knighthood...

The *tham* was left to govern internally "according to custom" but he was abetted in suppressing his traditional opposition. Thus he could deal with moves against him by having persons arrested and imprisoned by the Gilgit militia. In a connected policy he imposed restrictions on travel outside the country, requiring a royal permit for crossing check posts set up on the main roadways down country and to China. His exclusive arrangements with the colonial administration also gave him substantial new means for extending patronage and centralised control. At a time when the Burusho population was rapidly outgrowing its land supply new lands made available for settlement by the *Pax Britannicum* were handed to him for distribution. Appointments to the NCO and Ordinary Ranks of the Gilgit Scouts and other agencies in Gilgit -principal career moves for ambitious men and much coveted for their cash salaries and prestige- could only be made by him and he was allotted an annual quota of such positions to fill as he saw fit. Sometime in the 1930s, in perhaps what was the culminating achievement of *thamkushi* under its new dispensation, a telephone line was strung connecting the *tham* directly with the Political Agent in Gilgit. From the *tham's* private study the line extended spoke-like to the houses of his village headmen who thereby could communicate instantly and confidentially with him but with no one else. (Tahir Ali, 1983:97-99)

Tahir Ali goes on to state that monarchical absolutism characterised sociopolitical relations during Nazim Khan's rule from 1892 to 1938 (Tahir Ali, 1983:100). Commoner Burusho were prohibited from wearing ties or feathered caps similar to the *tham's*, building houses in the royal style, and growing cherry trees. Arbitrary new taxes were imposed, clan and village grazing lands were appropriated for the *tham's* use, lineage elders were publicly humiliated and imprisoned, or

had their property confiscated or were exiled to Shimshal (Lorimer, 1979:274). Nazim Khan even exerted an exclusive right to appoint local lay Ismaili clergy and collect and expend religious tithes. Previously this had been the prerogative of hereditary *pirs* residing in Chitral and Gilgit. After the late 19th century these individuals were prevented from entering Hunza.³⁷

The changes to *thamkushi* initiated by British intervention in 1891 had far reaching effects on all of kinship, village, and household. Kinship lost much of its formal authority and regulatory responsibility. Many of its collective functions were forced underground as clan elders became representatives rather than councillors of the *tham*. Most lineage activity became localised at the maximal or medial lineage level. Villages turned into what they were intended by the *tham* to be: centrally controlled political units. The village congregation lost much of its grassroots political and religious significance as councils became dominated by royal appointees who did not rely to a significant degree on consensus for their authority. Households, if anything, increased in importance, because they became the only viable remaining focus for voluntary collective organisation.

It is instructive to examine the events of the late 19th and early 20th century in terms of Habermas' theories of communicative rationality and modernity. The accounts of D. Lorimer (1979), E. O. Lorimer (1939), Schornberg (1935), Tahir Ali (1983), and others suggest that this was a period during which the population of Hunza modernised rapidly, but decreased in terms of communicative rationality and modernity.

Kinship, which had always been an element central to lifeworld, could no longer be confidently technically validated by all Burusho. Its importance became mainly symbolic except at the very localised level, because the reciprocity of interest expected of clan members could not be expressed. Most kinship-based institutions were not relevant to the evolving social order, which

³⁷ David Lorimer, a linguist and former political agent who studied in Hunza during the late 1930s, quotes a Burusho saying of that time which summarises the overwhelming power of *thamkushi*: "in Hunza in these days one can only lie with one's wife after asking the *tham*'s permission" (Lorimer, 1979:274).

revolved around centralised bureaucracy. Bureaucratic functionaries continued to be chosen from among lineage elders, but in order to maintain their positions functionaries had to cater to the source of their authority, which had become almost solely the *tham*. They could use their position to benefit lineage members, but that was coincident to their structural position in the social system of the state. That structural position was one of subservience to the *tham*, where it had formerly been rationally validated and accepted influence. In short, bureaucracy emerged as a dominant social system mechanism which bore little relationship to those kinship structures responsible for symbolic interpretations.

These events resemble two of Habermas' steps toward modernity -the rationalisation of both social system and lifeworld, and their progressive uncoupling- except that simultaneous to these developments large portions of lifeworld became colonised by bureaucratic mechanisms, leading to a loss in the potential for communicative action. Specifically, clan councils became obsolete, and most members of the *kuyotch* lost their ability to engage in "communicatively competent discourse". Both of these circumstances arose from the newly unequal relations between ordinary citizens and the few elders who enjoyed the indulgence of the *tham*. A lifeworld ideal of equity in discourse and action remained, but was rendered impotent by the bureaucratic system which relegated collective decision-making authority to royal functionaries. Some degree of communicative competence was retained at lower levels of organisation, but groups found it increasingly difficult to translate intersubjective understanding into technical action outside of ritual activity.³⁸ To use White's words "everyday consciousness (was) robbed of its synthesising power" (White, 1988:117). The lifeworld ethic of kinship lost its rationality in terms of the larger social system, and became a dogmatic ideal accepted by the majority, but ignored by many of those with positions of influence. At the same time, the formal bureaucratic structure was neither instrumentally nor communicatively rational to anyone but the *tham* and his most favoured officials.

³⁸ The *kuyotch* continued to meet, and certain aspects of egocentric and ethnocentric networks of mutual aid continued to operate, and even gain in legitimacy.

Ultimately, the modernisation of Burusho society during this period resulted in a substantial loss of communicative rationality.

The household as a structural entity probably benefitted from these changes. Much of what had been arranged consensually at the village level now became the exclusive responsibility of individual households, and of households in informal coordination with one another. It seems likely that institutions such as *batikush* (see Table A5.5), and other localised egocentric and sociocentric frameworks for assistance became more important during this period. Households were increasingly left to fend for themselves.

I mention above that kinship lost its technical efficacy and state bureaucracy became alienated from legitimation within the Burusho lifeworld. Over time, kingship itself lost its normative legitimacy for Burusho, as well as any claim to sincerity-based validity. Increasingly, the *tham* collected largesse from his constituents without performing traditional regal duties. Several commentators contemporary to that period note that Hunza villages were becoming overpopulated, settlement schemes were not being implemented, and commoner Burusho were paying special taxes to persuade the *tham* to fulfil his ritual obligations (see Clark, 1957; Lorimer, 1979; and Schomberg, 1935). Before 1891 Burusho viewed the royal clan with ambivalence, but recognised its necessity and legitimacy in terms of normative and technical validity claims. By the 1930s there seemed little technical benefit in supporting the *tham*, and, if comments recorded by Lorimer and Clark are any indication, at least some commoners doubted the *tham*'s normative legitimacy.³⁹

By the end of Nazim Khan's reign the Burusho had come to expect little in the way of benefit from the kingship. The new *tham*, for his part, was content to collect taxes, and leave village and household affairs to villagers, as long as his position was not threatened. After partition the

³⁹ Tahir Ali includes some quotations in his dissertation which reveal the cynicism with which some Burusho viewed kingship in the 20th century. For example:

Special payments and gifts are not required by law; they ought to be recognised for what they are: forms of graft, bribery and kickbacks. These are really meant to bring pressure on the *tham* and to the extent they are efficacious they reveal his venality. (Tahir Ali, 1983:108)

tham's day-to-day intervention in commoner affairs decreased even more; the Pakistani government was wary of too much internal control by leaders of Pakistan's princely states. The *tham's* main stance during the period between the late 1930s and 1974 was reactionary.⁴⁰ He resisted all outside influences which threatened to change the social structure of Hunza, with the result that Hunzakuts were relatively free to regroup and re-legitimise their social environment.

As the *tham's* personal involvement in village-level affairs decreased, he was obliged to rely increasingly on the loyalty of his officials. But, centralised bureaucracy never constituted an important part of the Burusho lifeworld; now, without supervision from above officials felt no culturally-imbedded obligation to cater to the *tham's* interests. In addition, they lost much of the legitimacy which derived from their royal connection. That meant that village-level officials needed, once again, to establish legitimacy with their constituents. Headmen, in particular, began to serve the interests of their lineage groupings and the *kuyotch*, at the expense of the *tham*. The "great ones" within villages were compelled to "remake" themselves, to re-establish their credibility as leaders and spokespersons in terms valid to the village polity. These shifts in loyalty resulted in the steady erosion of the royal prerogative (Tahir Ali, 1983:114).

As the authority of kingship disintegrated villages were left without strong and unequivocally accepted leadership. The royal bureaucracy had been separated from traditional kin leadership, so that lineage elders were no longer necessarily official village leaders. The efficacy of kin-groupings for large-scale collective decision making had been undermined, yet the legitimacy of kin elders as authority figures remained an imbedded feature of the lifeworld. At the same time royal appointees still claimed some legitimacy within the lifeworld. Neither type of authority emerged as most valid, with a result that the *kuyotch* reverted back to a body in which understanding and consensus was reached through discourse. However, without a strong headman or powerful *akabirting* to force decisions the *kuyotch* lost its capability for concerted action. A style of

⁴⁰ John Clark lived in Altit, central Hunza for over a year in the mid 1950s. In his book Hunza: Lost Kingdom of the Himalayas (1957) he provides numerous examples of the *tham's* reluctance to allow his subjects any interaction with the outside world.

government emerged in which the *kuyotch* shied away from confrontation (Tahir Ali, 1983:125). In addition, many Burusho were disenchanted with what they perceived as "old time" government (Tahir Ali, 1983:208) A trend emerged in which technical projects were decentralised wherever possible, and reduced to the level of neighbourhood, or a functionally defined grouping such as a segment of a village dependent on one branch of the irrigation network.⁴¹

The result of these trends is that large-scale projects (those requiring coordination at the village level) were seldom undertaken by villagers, or anyone else, because the *kuyotch* could not coordinate them and projects were no longer supported by royal sanction or financed by the *tham*. The village took on its previous character as a ritual community, in which equity among residents was stressed, but it lost its role as a polity oriented to collective instrumental economic and political action. That function was recreated to some extent at lower levels, and within lineage and household institutions, but only for small-scale collective activity. To the present, Hunzakuts lack valid institutions for village and supra-village collective instrumental action.⁴²

In 1968 Hunza was incorporated as a subdivision of Gilgit Administrative District in Pakistan's Northern Areas. However, the *tham* retained official authority within Hunza until the fall of 1974, at which time his post was abolished at a public meeting in Gilgit (Tahir Ali, 1983:20). Even after that time *tham* Mohammad Jamal Khan remained a powerful figure within Hunza, although official political authority now dwelt in an Assistant Deputy Commissioner, who reported to the Commissioner for the Northern Areas. The *tham* died in 1976, and was succeeded by his son, who calls himself *tham* but does not claim official authority.

The official termination of *thamkushi* did not, in itself, significantly change Burusho social organisation. It was merely an episode in a transitional period which began around mid-century and continues to the present. A much more important development has been Hunza's gradual exposure

⁴¹ I am speaking here of the pre-AKRSP period.

⁴² This is a characteristic of social organisation in Hunza which the AKRSP recognises. Village Organisations are meant to be mechanisms for enabling collective instrumental action.

to the outside world.

Prior to 1891 Hunza had well-developed (if often hostile) official and unofficial relations with neighbouring states. Many contemporary observers document and discuss trade, diplomacy and war between Hunza and other countries (including China, Chinese Turkestan, Kashmir, Nagyr, Baltistan, Chitral, Russia, India and Afghanistan) (Bellew, 1875; Biddulph, 1880; Curzon, 1896; Drew, 1875; Durand, 1900; Fraser, 1907; Gordon, 1876; Knight, 1893; Rawlinson, 1869; Stein, 1907; Younghusband, 1904). During the colonial period Hunza's *tham* limited unofficial interaction with the outside, although some trade did continue under his watchful eye, and European explorers and climbers made occasional forays into his domain. He also allowed the regulated passage of goods through Hunza between India and Chinese Turkestan (see Kreutzmann, 1989:26, Table 1). After partition, interaction between Hunzakuts and outsiders became even more restricted. In addition to the *tham's* reluctance to expose his subjects to outside influences, the Pakistani government closed all Northern Areas borders with China, India and the Soviet Union, and made Hunza a restricted area.⁴³ For a period from 1947 to 1964 (when a border treaty was negotiated with China), very few casual visitors were allowed into Hunza, and then only by the personal intervention of the *tham*.⁴⁴ As a result visitors, Pakistani or foreign, interacted only with the *tham* or a few villagers chosen by him. Commoner Burusho absorbed very little of the outside world, and visitors got a distinctly one-sided view of life in Hunza. It was during this period that visitors wrote the most extreme versions of "happy, healthy Hunza" myth (see Mons, 1958; Rodale, 1949; and

⁴³ Some parts of Hunza, including parts of Shimshal, are still restricted to foreigners.

⁴⁴ Jean and Franc Shor, in a 1953 National Geographic article describe their difficulty in acquiring permission to visit Hunza:

"I'm afraid there is little hope," a Pakistan official told us. "Hunza is a highly strategic area. It borders Chinese Turkestan and Afghanistan and is only a few miles from Russia on one side and India on the other. Technically it's part of Jammu and Kashmir. Some people might be suspicious if we permitted Americans to travel there"... By good fortune the Mir himself came to Karachi a few days later on one of his infrequent visits to the outside world. He assured the Pakistanis we would be welcome... In a week permission was granted. (Shor and Shor, 1953:485)

Tobe, 1960).⁴⁵ When John Clark, an American, lived in Hunza in 1950, he was struck by the Burusho's lack of familiarity with all things foreign, including recent visitors from the outside (Clark, 1957).⁴⁶

Despite a deliberate policy of isolation during the colonial and post-colonial periods, the *tham* of Hunza allowed certain of his subjects to join military corps in Gilgit. After partition, the government of Pakistan enlarged its military presence in the Northern Areas, and increasing numbers of Hunzakuts served in the Gilgit Scouts and the Northern Light Infantry. This created an avenue for Hunzakuts to learn Urdu and English, and to participate in the events of the outside world. Many individuals established contacts in Gilgit and the lowlands and achieved some economic solvency which did not rely on the *tham*. By the 1960s retired army personnel had returned to Hunza with some education, wealth, and personal contacts with individuals within the Pakistan government hierarchy. In the mean time, the Aga Khan commissioned schools and medical clinics in Hunza, which gave Hunzakuts an additional source of independence from the *tham*.⁴⁷ Moreover, since the late 1930s Hunza had experienced shortages of arable lands in the main accessible valleys. Land shortages led to the development of government sponsored agricultural colonies in and around Gilgit. Once settlers left Hunza, they were outside the *tham*'s jurisdiction, and were able to branch out into other endeavours and occupations. Gradually, the *tham* lost his ability, and perhaps his desire, to isolate the inhabitants of Hunza from lowland Pakistan. At the time of Tahir Ali's research in 1975 he estimated that "nearly one third of all teenage and adult males [in the village he studied] are away for a significant part of every year

⁴⁵ Several researchers who worked in Hunza during the colonial and post-colonial periods remark on the *tham*'s desire to monitor their every interaction with commoner Burusho. The Lorimers discovered that they were unable learn much about Hunza life, except for that experienced by the royal family (E. O. Lorimer, 1939; D. Lorimer, 1979). Clark also comments on the constant involvement of the *tham* in his every action (Clark, 1957).

⁴⁶ See also Stephens (1953), and Shor and Shor (1953).

⁴⁷ The Aga Khan built schools throughout Ismaili world. The first of "DJ" schools were constructed in 1947, on the occasion of his Diamond Jubilee.

earning supplementary income as wage labourers, holding down salaried jobs, serving apprenticeships, operating business enterprises or attending secondary schools, mostly in Gilgit" (Tahir Ali, 1983:32). Still, Burusho continue to consider themselves subsistence farmers, and most household members are most concerned with the ability to rely on their household's agricultural lands.⁴⁸

⁴⁸ Tahir Ali summarises the diversification of Hunza's society and economy as follows:

Since the 1930s steadily increasing migration has been taking place out of the Hunza valley. One stream of emigrants has pioneered farms in the government sponsored agricultural colonies laid out near the mouth of the Hunza River and in the adjoining tributary valleys of the Gilgit River. A second as been attracted to Gilgit town itself where a large separate bazaar consisting of small businesses owned and operated by Burusho has arisen. Contingents of Burusho entrepreneurs are found throughout the Northern Areas region, principally engaged in running general merchandise stores, restaurants, jeep transport and construction contracting partnerships. Perhaps half again as many Burusho as have permanently emigrated retain their home base on the ancestral lands while pursuing new business, training or employment opportunities in Gilgit, the Punjab, Karachi, or yet farther away in the Persian Gulf entrepots or in Libya. Typically, the young men of a household will venture forth on these missions while older men, women and children stay and work the farm for their essential needs. Remittances will be sent by money order or brought along on periodic visits. Formerly enlistment in the Pakistani Army or the Gilgit or Northern Scouts was a preferred recourse, because one could retire early with a pension and ration privileges and come home with a respected personal title. It is still significant today but, increasingly, other types of employment in the bazaar economy and in civilian government departments are seen as more lucrative and pleasant. Persons who lack the wherewithal or the connections with which to start a business or land a government contract may try to have themselves put on the government payroll as road maintenance workers, rest house caretakers, bridge guards, construction foremen, etc., all jobs which yield monthly salaries, ration entitlements and pensions while permitting a flexible duty schedule...

The diversification of the Burusho economy has been greatly accelerated in recent years by the completion of the Karakoram Highway which links China with Pakistan and traverses the length of the Hunza River valley. Whereas previously it took three days to walk to Gilgit, at the time of fieldwork jeeps made the trip in five to six hours [...buses now regularly make the fifty mile trip between Gilgit and the central village of Aliabad in two hours]. In the late 1960s and early 1970s motorised transport facilitated a growing local commerce with surplus fruit, nuts, kernels and woollen materials being taken for sale to the Gilgit market, and wheat flour, kerosene, sugar, cloth, cement, salt, tea, shoes, agricultural and cooking implements and sundry dry goods being brought in the opposite direction. The ongoing work on the highway itself provided opportunities for manual labour as well as for bartering with and supplying the Chinese and Pakistani engineer's camps strung along the roadside. The new District administration established in 1974-75 had its separate requirements for personnel and local commodities. In these years, too, large sums were paid out by the government in compensation

These developments in the economic sphere have had significant impacts on Hunza's internal social and political organisation, at all four levels. Most obviously, *thamkushi* ceased to exist as a formal context for organisation, except to the extent that certain functions were taken over by the new district government. Hunza's borders were retained as the boundaries for the new sub-district (Tahir Ali, 1983:111). Traditional semi-hereditary *lumbardars* (headmen) continue to mediate between villagers and a higher political authority, now the union council.⁴⁹ The current head of the *Ayeshkut* line has no formal authority as *tham*, and is careful not to assert any. However, due partly to his relative wealth, education, and social position, he has achieved election and/or appointment to a number of government and military positions. Although many Hunzakuts with whom I have spoken have little use for him, most accept his legitimacy as one of Hunza's most eloquent and influential spokespersons. The *tham's* current legitimacy seems to derive from a combination of respect for his traditional position, and an appreciation for his "paternal" intervention on behalf of Hunzakuts.⁵⁰ In addition, he continues to lead a variety of ritual

for land appropriated for the highway, the District offices, and a proposed tourist hotel. This money was being used to buy up property in and around Gilgit or start small businesses there. Salaries were being increased frequently and sharply as inflation ran high.

In face of these developments, by the time of fieldwork, Burusho were extremely sceptical of the money economy even as they strove to gain as much profit from it as they could. They gave first priority to the management of the farm and to the improvement of the farm-based house. Basic foodstuffs, including wheat flour and cooking oil, could be acquired by cash purchase, they knew, but the supply was erratic, the quality poor, and the open market prices astronomical. It was essential, therefore, to rely as far as possible on one's own lands. Spare time and resources could be diverted to earn needed cash but without a household hearth steadily supplied, however much inadequately, on the basis of intensive agriculture even that would be precluded. Farming, moreover, was afforded the protection and support of the local community and within this context was largely self-regulating, stable and complete in terms of the inputs and skills it involved. (Tahir Ali, 1983:28-31)

⁴⁹ *Lumbardars* have the responsibility of attempting to bring infrastructural projects, government contracts, pensioned positions, etc. to the village. See Chapter Eight for a more detailed description of village participation in regional government.

⁵⁰ He has involved himself in a number of development programmes. In addition, he deeded many of his personal land holdings and pastures to Hunza villagers.

observances, which remain important to most Burusho. The most important remnant of *thamkushi* is the spatial organisation of society. Hunzakuts continue to "arrange their everyday lives within the fold of the discrete, territorial village, as neighbours and householders in a political community defined regardless of their descent affiliations (though in places coincident with them)" (Tahir Ali, 1983:111).

Traditionally the village had both instrumental and communicative significance for Burusho. It was a body in which intersubjective understanding concerning ritual observance, equity and honour was achieved. The *kuyotch*, in particular, was a forum for achieving something approaching communicative rationality. The village also served instrumental ends, as the focus for collective ecological and economic activity. During the colonial and early post-colonial period strong, although not particularly validated, leadership emerged at the village level, which allowed the village polity to increase its instrumental efficacy. The *kuyotch*, under the strong authority of village headmen, became an efficient decision-making body, but lost its potential for rational, intersubjective communication. The ritual significance of villages was undermined as lifeworld became colonised by bureaucratic media. Later, the bureaucratic system under *thamkushi* began to disintegrate, and villages experienced a power vacuum. Several types of authority had some lifeworld-based legitimacy, but they were all open to argumentation. None emerged as dominant in the ensuing discourse, a situation which enabled the *kuyotch* to regroup, once again, as a body oriented to intersubjective understanding, and not instrumental action. Indeed, little collective activity was undertaken at the village level, except traditional ecologically and ritually-based activities which had their own embedded legitimacy in the lifeworld. According to Tahir Ali (1983:303) "(I)ncreasingly, diverse new relationships between individuals and institutions of the outside world give prestige and leverage within the local community and render obsolete many of the traditional functions of village government".

The increasing diversification and currency-orientation of Hunza's economy in recent decades has had conflicting influences on this trend. Village-based instrumental activity has

become less and less important. The lifeworld ideal of collective village enterprise has been colonised by media of the economic sub-system. Currency-oriented enterprises have not lent themselves to village-level collective organisation.⁵¹ Money tends not to be shared collectively in the same way that a pasture, or a channel, or an ideal of honour can -at least not without some pre-existing institutional arrangements. The *kuyotch* was not a valid forum for the expropriation and collective utilization of individual earnings. At the same time, monetary wealth (as well as military rank, contacts outside Hunza etc.) became a new and legitimate source of prestige, accomplishment, and personal identity, also indicative of the inner colonisation of the lifeworld. New sources of legitimate authority (monetary, military etc.) emerged to compete with previously existing sources. But they did not immediately dominate other sources. This contributed to the **potential** for communicative understanding, but hampered the **realisation** of such intersubjective understanding. Many sources of legitimacy existed, none with a privileged position, and all open to question. Unfortunately, almost nothing was easily accepted by everyone, because the Burusho lifeworld had become fragmented. A forum existed for intersubjective understanding, but achievement of understanding was problematic. The village polity, therefore, focused on those areas where intersubjective understanding did exist (eg. traditional agricultural practices and ritual observance), and left other areas to smaller units who could reach internal consensus.

As interaction with an outside money economy became more important the role of the village congregation to promote equity took on a new meaning. Clearly, the differential widening of horizons in economic and socio/political terms meant that citizens were no longer even as "equal" as they were previously. However, within the village polity citizens were expected to treat each other equitably, and to share the benefits of their social and financial gains, if not the gains themselves. Thus, money became an important commodity in the fulfilment of ritual and technical

⁵¹ I am speaking here of the period prior to 1983. In 1983 the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) became involved in the economic (and social) development of Hunza, with some success. See Chapters Six through Ten.

obligations. Villagers were expected to share their knowledge of the outside world with fellow villagers, so that the village as a whole could increase its strength and prosperity. Moreover, with more and more husbands and fathers absent from the village in pursuit of prosperity the village's overall reputation as a harmonious and honourable place, where all inhabitants were treated with the same respect, became more important. While economic media came to occupy a place in the village's ritual composition, it did not colonise the ritual congregation.

Correspondence between the lifeworld ideal of lineage solidarity and resource-sharing, and the ability to express those sentiments instrumentally increased as economic activity lost its spatial orientation. Unlike land, money is easily transferred from place to place, among members of a dispersed lineage. Furthermore, a well-defined hierarchy existed within lineages for the allocation of money and entrepreneurial influence. Households within individual lineage groupings began agglomerating their financial resources for specific purposes. For example, several households of the same lineage may own a shop in the Gilgit bazaar, or a jeep along the Karakoram Highway. The profits from such enterprises accrued to the lineage, to be used for the further benefit of lineage members. With this development came the creation of a new level of lineage leadership. Lineage elders continued to lead in terms of intra-village affairs, and made final decisions on all other matters, but increasingly relied on the advice of other (usually younger) lineage members with more influence or commercial acumen in extra-village economic ventures (Tahir Ali, 1983:328). Increased mobility also strengthened the role of extended lineage groupings. Individuals living or working in other villages, Gilgit, or down country wanted to recreate the Burusho neighbourhood atmosphere. They relied on ties with lineage or clan members (and less-often village members) to provide that familiarity. In many respects clan obligations are strongest when fellow-members meet outside of Hunza (Tahir Ali, 1983:309).⁵²

⁵² While the overall importance of clan solidarity increased, it too was colonised in many small ways, more by external social norms than by the monetary economy. For example, detailed knowledge of clan ancestry is no longer considered important, because it no longer provides an essential basis for social relations. It is sufficient to understand the basic elements of clan nomenclature (Tahir Ali, 1983:58). Down country Islamic values have also had an impact on clan

Most economic activity, and day to day social activity, continues to occur at the level of households. Increased interaction with the outside has altered the constitution of much of that activity. The concept of household "viability" has changed to include cash. Households can no longer survive materially, or fulfil their obligations within a ritual community, without at least some access to cash. Certain commodities considered culturally necessary such as sugar, tea, metal pots, cotton clothes, watches, etc., are virtually impossible to obtain without money. All interaction with the outside world, from the purchase of a bus ticket to enrolment in school, requires money. Beyond the absolute necessity of cash in external relations, it can be used within the village to compensate for a lack of labour power, land, and so on. For example, small, wealthy households are able to buy their way out of communal labour obligations. To the extent that this occurs, certain lifeworld ideals related to household composition, and household interaction with the larger corporation, are compromised. It must be noted however, that the Burusho still conduct labour agreements without the imputation of inequality, and still prefer payment-in-kind within the village (Tahir Ali, 1983:301).

What the Burusho call "great houses" are more common now than in former times, as are extended households of non-partitioned brothers. Many Hunzakuts are engaged in endeavours outside their natal village which require the supervision of a household member. This means that segments of large households are located throughout the Northern Areas, and even down country. These "great houses" attempt to keep a common "account book", although that becomes increasingly difficult when modes of production among segments differ.

Increasingly, heads of an otherwise complete household are absent for extended periods. Households cannot function in Hunza without at least one member of each category (see Table A5.4). Therefore, close male agnates delay partition, or re-amalgamate, until the absent member returns permanently (Tahir Ali, 1983:328).

relations. It is no longer considered unequivocally evil for members of the same clan to intermarry (Tahir Ali, 1983:74-75).

Certain lifeworld-based elements of household are threatened by increasing interaction with the outside. Most important among these are the gender division of labour, and the rule of equity (see Butz, 1987; Kreutzmann, 1989). Gender divisions still exist, but today serve more as a guideline than a strict rule. Many households find themselves without enough men to undertake subsistence agricultural activities in the village. Women have begun to share certain jobs with men, as well as complete their own tasks. A circumstance is arising where Hunza is overpopulated in terms of subsistence consumption, and understaffed for subsistence production.

Household equity beyond the level of food consumption is no longer perceived as practicable. In theory everything belongs to the household head, but as household property increases and diversifies, certain things inevitably become individual property. A child's school book is as good as individual property: it may be useless to anyone else. By the same token, different segments of the household may require more or less expensive standards of living. A son studying in Karachi may easily consume a larger share of family wealth than all other members combined. The **ethic** of equality remains: household members are expected to share the benefits of their disproportionate consumption with other household members.

It seems that economic media are changing the role of household without eroding its importance. As long as Burusho society is geared toward subsistence agriculture (and it still is despite an increasing interest in the monetary economy) the household is likely to remain the central unit of social organisation. Its legitimacy in the lifeworld is irrevocably integrated with its systemic function... within a subsistence-oriented mode of production.

5.4 Conclusion

In this chapter I describe the main elements of Hunza's social history. I also interpret those elements according to the concepts introduced in Chapter Two: namely communicative rationality,

modernity and modernisation. The purpose of this discussion and interpretation is to set the community of Shimshal in a larger historical and social context, and to situate current agency-initiated development programmes (discussed in Chapter Six) at the end of a long progression of influences which have affected social organisation in Hunza. Despite comments made by western travellers to the area in the last hundred years (see Chapter Four) Hunza has not been isolated from social upheaval and outside influence.

Shimshal is a Wakhi speaking community in the midst of other Wakhi speaking villages. However, Shimshalis claim to be descended, on the male side, from a Burusho. The community has been under the control of *thamkushi* for at least half of its fifteen generations of existence. In addition, as far as I can judge, household and lineage structure in Shimshal resembles that described by Tahir Ali (which is, in any case, very similar to that of the sedentary Wakhi of Wakhan, as described by Shahrani (1979)). Certainly, Shimshal had a similar (if less immediate) relation to *thamkushi* as other villages in Hunza. On the basis of these similarities this chapter provides a useful introduction to Chapters Seven to Ten, on Shimshal. Having said that, it is important to recognise that many of the changes affecting Central Hunza had dissipated somewhat before they reached Shimshal. Certain other changes, such as the closing of Pakistan's border with China, had greater effects on Shimshal than on other villages. It is also important to recognise that Shimshal consists of one clan living in one village, with no phratry affiliation. This alters certain aspects of kinship. For example, clan intermarriage is common. This and other differences in Hunza and Shimshal's social composition are discussed in Chapter Seven.

I maintain, in the present chapter, that the people of Hunza have experienced several periods of modernity (ie. periods of increased potential for rational communication) which were disrupted to some extent by corresponding periods of modernisation (inner colonisation of the lifeworld). Through each of these cycles four levels of social organisation have been important: kingship, kinship, village and household. However, the relative importance of each has shifted at different times, as has the degree to which their structural properties are validated by a rationalised

lifeworld. Currently, *thamkushi* is obsolete except in a very limited way, and has yet to be replaced by a valid state-sponsored structure at the level of sub-district. **Kinship** is more important and more integrated with lifeworld than it has been for a century. **Household** is changing, but maintains its validity both in traditional terms and in terms of the emerging monetary economy. The decline of *thamkushi* has had a paradoxical affect on **village** level organisation. I think that a situation has emerged in the past several decades where interaction within the village polity has become increasingly oriented to intersubjective understanding: communicative action. This stems from a lack of dominant authority, and the consequent potential for argumentation based only on validity claims. At the same time, consensus regarding instrumental actions have been slow to emerge. The village has lost much of its potential to serve as a focus for collective initiative.

Although they use different language, founders of the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) recognise the ineffectuality of village level organisation. Their development programme centres around creating Village Organisations (VOs) which have the instrumental capability and lifeworld-based legitimacy to initiate cooperative ventures at the village level. The AKRSP is the latest major phenomenon to influence social organisation in Hunza. The following chapter describes the AKRSP development programme in some detail. Chapters Seven to Ten interpret the effect of AKRSP initiatives on communicative rationality, modernity, modernisation and community sustainability in Shimshal, as well as evaluate Shimshal's sustainability more generally, in terms of social vitality, political validity, economic viability, and ecological volition.

Chapter Six: The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) in Northern Pakistan

6.1 Introduction

The history of system/lifeworld interaction in Hunza, as presented in Chapter Five, reveals that since the early nineteenth century the Burusho of Hunza have experienced a series of abrupt changes to their social system. These systemic changes have disrupted the balance between system and lifeworld that Burusho conceive to have existed in the past, and which remains a stated ideal of Burusho social life. Each of these periods of systemic change was followed by a longer period of realignment between system and lifeworld, so that a series of cycles of modernity may be described. Since at least the late 1800s systemic changes have been linked to developments external to Burusho social life. Indeed, the history of the twentieth century has been a history of increasing interaction with the outside world, despite attempts by *thams* to prevent direct intercourse between commoners and outsiders. One of the most recent and most powerful outside influences to affect the inhabitants of Hunza **at the community level** is the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP). The AKRSP is the most important development agency operating in the Northern Areas of Pakistan, and the only development agency that has had a sustained impact on the community of Shimshal.¹

What follows in this chapter is a description of the AKRSP. My main objectives are to describe the mandate and strategy of the agency, and to present information which illuminates the

¹ Two other development agencies have been active in the agricultural communities of Gilgit District: the Pakistani government's Northern Areas Works Organisation (NAWO), and FAO/UNDP's Integrated Rural Development Programme (IRDP) (see Kreuzmann, 1991). Neither of these agencies has developed independent projects for Shimshal, although NAWO has contributed funding to the AKRSP road initiative.

extent of its impact on participating communities in northern Pakistan. In particular, I comment on the relationship between AKRSP strategy and the theories of development reviewed in Chapter Two. Material presented here provide background for Chapters Seven through Ten, in Part III, which interpret the effect of AKRSP initiatives on communicative rationality, modernity, modernisation and community sustainability in Shimshal.

6.2 The Origin of AKRSP

The population of Gilgit District in 1982 was 227,000 (AKRSP, 1984a:53). Over 90 percent of that, or 25,000 households in 290 villages, survived mainly from subsistence agriculture (AKRSP, 1984a:53; 1984b:8). According to Shoaib Sultan Khan (the general manager and founder of AKRSP), and Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) personnel who had visited the area, the standard of agricultural subsistence was dismal and had been declining for generations.² The authors of AKRSP's third quarterly progress report, covering the period from August to October 1983, summarise their conception of the state of agriculture in Gilgit District prior to AKRSP intervention:

To the 90 percent or so of the region's population which lives by farming, the

² I am unaware of any statistical evidence of this trend. None is cited in AKRSP publications. Neither does a strong consensus as to this trend exist among inhabitants of Gilgit District. For example, Daulat Amin of Shimshal told me that subsistence conditions had improved steadily at least since his childhood 35 years ago. Other Shimshalis agreed. Members of Hopar community, with whom I lived for parts of 1985 and 1986 complained that agricultural subsistence is becoming increasingly difficult. Reports by visitors also provide poor sources from which to infer trends. Contrast, for example Rodale's (1948) description of healthy, happy Hunza "where everyone has just enough" to the descriptions of poverty provided by earlier visitors (see Chapter Three: Cockerill, 1892; Schomberg, 1936; and Visser, 1926). Again, John Clark who lived in Hunza in the early 1950s contradicts Rodale's earlier report, by describing conditions of extreme poverty among most Burusho commoners (Clark, 1957).

This lack of consensus indicates that AKRSP founders' impressions of agricultural decline result, at least partly, from an outsider's ahistorical impression of internal historical change: in short, they are partial outsider facticities. Still, two general trends, on which there is a consensus among villagers, suggest that AKRSP personnel's assessment has some validity. First, population is increasing rapidly in Gilgit District, with little increase in cultivated land. Second, an increasingly smaller percentage of able-bodied men are engaged in full-time agriculture.

future of agriculture as a way of life must appear bleak. In the last generation or two, little new land has been brought under cultivation, productivity increases have been few and far between and diversification within the crop sector or into non-crop rural activities has been constrained by limited markets. Agriculture is viewed with despair by the large numbers of rural dwellers seeking jobs in urban centres. (AKRSP, 1984d:8)

The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme was formed in December 1982 as a temporary agency to help small-holders in Gilgit District reverse the perceived trend in agriculture summarised above: that of declining subsistence. The programme's mandate was as follows:

...to increase the capacity of local people in the program area to make use of opportunities to improve their welfare and to overcome the problems facing them. The main focus of the development effort is on income-generating activities, toward meeting the program's stated objective of "a doubling of (rural) per capita incomes over a period of 10 years" (World Bank, 1987:xi).^{3,4}

AKRSP's mandate has not changed since 1982, but the spatial scope of the agency's operations has increased. By spring of 1983 an office had opened in Chitral, to serve Chitral District, and in 1985 the programme was extended to Baltistan. These two expansions increased the area served by AKRSP from 28,500 to 69,200 square kilometres, and increased the population of the programme area from 277,000 (29,600 households) to 802,000 (98,200 households) (AKRSP, 1988:xiv). Currently AKRSP serves the entire Northern Areas, and part of the North West Frontier Province.

The AKRSP is defined as a non-profit company. Initially it was funded solely by the Aga

³ In 1986, and again in 1989, the Aga Khan Foundation commissioned the World Bank Operations Evaluation Department to complete an evaluation of AKRSP. AKRSP is **not** a World Bank project, and does not receive financial support from the World Bank.

⁴ Given Tahir Ali's (1983) assertion that Hunzakuts consider themselves first and foremost subsistence farmers (see Chapter Five), and given the regret with which many Hoparis spoke of their declining subsistence base, it seems that AKRSP's goal to "double per capita incomes in 10 years" is somewhat beside the point. Indeed, like other outsider perspectives, the AKRSP's, despite the best intentions, interprets villagers' needs from within a western world view, and in so doing perpetuates an orientalist view of indigenous social reality.

Khan Foundation (AKF), as a project of that organisation.⁵ However, after operating for three months "it became apparent that the level of funding required... was much higher than stipulated by the founding fathers of the programme" (AKRSP, 1984a:35). In 1983 nine international organisations committed Rs. 13,239,400 (approximately 750,000 Canadian dollars) above the initial AKF contribution of Rs. 7,330,000 (AKRSP, 1984a:61).⁶ By 1989 the AKRSP had received contributions from 12 international organisations, bringing the total programme cost for the first seven years to Rs. 445,891,000 (World Bank, 1990:118). The consistency of donor support indicates that donor organisations are impressed with the beneficial effects of their money. By 1990 each beneficiary household had cost AKRSP (and its donors) an average of only Rs. 2,103 (about \$150 Cdn.) (World Bank, 1990:108). Considering that development programmes commonly receive strong initial support which dwindles rapidly, the increasing financial commitments enjoyed by AKRSP are remarkable.

⁵ The Aga Khan Foundation is a "private, non-denominational, philanthropic network established by His Highness the Aga Khan. It seeks to promote social development, primarily in low-income countries of Asia and Africa, by funding programmes in health, education and rural development. Grantees and beneficiaries are selected without regard to race, religion or political persuasion" (World Bank, 1987:ix). The AKF is registered in Switzerland and operates from Geneva. It has branch offices in Pakistan, the UK, Kenya, India, Bangladesh, and Portugal, and has independent affiliates in Canada and the US (World Bank, 1987:ix) His Highness the Aga Khan is spiritual leader and Imam of Ismaili moslems. Funding for the AKF derives from the Aga Khan's personal fortune, as well as from a proportion of the 'tithes' received by federal and local Ismaili councils wherever Ismaili congregations exist. In addition, other development agencies often fund specific AKF programmes.

While about a quarter of the population of the AKRSP programme area is Ismaili moslem, initiatives are not limited to Ismaili villages, and to my knowledge AKRSP personnel make no attempt to link initiatives with religious motives. Ismailis, other moslem denominations, and non-moslems are represented fairly evenly among AKRSP staff.

⁶ Three Canadian organisations contributed Rs. 8,513,100.

6.3 AKRSP's Conception of the Problem

AKRSP administrators' conception of the programme's purpose may be expressed generally as follows: to increase the capacity of local people in the program area to make use of opportunities to improve their welfare and to overcome the problems facing them. This section describes the theoretical context within which AKRSP personnel perceive that purpose. Most of the information discussed here appears in the leading article for the First Annual Review, 1983, entitled "Principles and Implementation for Small Farmer Development" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984), and the first chapter of the First Progress Report, December 1982 to April 1983 (AKRSP, 1984b) entitled "Introduction to AKRSP" (some information also comes from the two World Bank evaluations in 1987 and 1990). The position of these two papers at the beginning of the first review circulated by AKRSP, and at the beginning of the programme's first progress report, respectively, vest them with considerable authority, as statements of principle to guide the efforts of AKRSP personnel.⁷ The first article is the closest thing to a theoretical stance that I have encountered while interacting with AKRSP. Like many other field-based development agencies, AKRSP documents stress strategy and methodology over development theory⁸. Even "Principles and Implementation for Small Farmer Development" concentrates mainly on implementation strategies, although it does comment on the theoretical underpinnings of AKRSP's approach.

AKRSP publications emphasise that the programme is concerned with a specific type of development problem: "rural development when the target group consists of small farmers: it is not about national planning for development, nor does it deal specifically with other segments of the rural population" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:1). However, it is clear that the

⁷ These documents are not important to villagers, or even known to most of them, although some of the sentiments they express are shared by members of participating communities.

⁸ This is not a bad thing for agencies such as the AKRSP who are concerned with specific problems among a very specific target population. These agencies have to be field-based and field-motivated. Still, all development strategies have some theoretical basis, and discourse among parties is likely to be most authentic if theoretical assumptions are acknowledged explicitly.

aims of AKRSP go beyond the specific population of small farmers who are affected by initiatives. What the programme expresses as its "ultimate aim", beyond practical benefits to villagers of northern Pakistan, is "to evolve an innovative and replicable model of development for high mountain valley areas" (AKRSP, 1984b:1). That statement, combined with concern elsewhere for the replicability of the programme (see World Bank, 1987:ix, 61-67; Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:12-13), suggests that AKRSP hopes for theoretical and methodological influence outside of northern Pakistan.

What then is the general development problem facing small farmers, that is addressed by AKRSP? To policy makers at AKRSP the central problem facing small farmers is one of **scale**. Farmers' land holdings are too small:

More specifically, the small farmer is handicapped in exploiting available opportunities because, by himself, he [sic] cannot do so profitably. In other words he is constrained by the scale of his operations in acquiring resources, as well as in marketing the output. Having stated the problem this way, one's attention is drawn immediately to questions of economies of scale and indivisibilities in inputs. (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:2)

In defining the problem that way, the AKRSP allies itself strongly with classical economic theory, and modernisation theories of development. The problem is perceived as fundamentally economic: that of exploiting the capitalist world economy. It is not perceived as a problem of dependency or underdevelopment, nor is the political, social or ecological system at the root of the problem. At the same time AKRSP administrators recognise that the existing economic system, because it favours large operations, contributes to the plight of small farmers.⁹

While policy makers at AKRSP hold that villagers' poverty results from their inability to exploit the larger capitalist economy, they explicitly reject the corollary argument of much

⁹ For example, Pakistani banks are required to provide interest free loans of up to Rs. 6,000 to eligible farmers. Not a single such loan had been given in Gilgit for the three years prior to 1983, because small farmers needed to borrow only Rs. 100 to 200 for a couple of bags of fertilizer. The banks could not afford to process thousands of tiny loans, and farmers would spend most of the loan travelling to and from Gilgit to collect and pay.

modernisation theory that small farmers lack the initiative, or intelligence, or desire needed to improve their economic lot. They argue that it is evident that big and small farmers are economic maximisers, even while they may be political maximisers or have other non-economic priorities.¹⁰ The point is made strongly, and is emphasised as fundamental to AKRSP's "rejection of strategies of rural development that assume the existence of a superior allocative mind only in urban planning centres and universities" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:2). Of course, this is not a rejection of modernisation theory as such, it is merely a criticism of lingering colonial and paternal attitudes toward indigenous populations, that exist in modernisation programmes (as well as in programmes informed by other theoretical approaches). It seems, however, that in their determination to avoid treating villagers like inferiors, AKRSP policy makers may be assuming too much in the way of economic maximisation. To admit that villagers possess "superior allocative minds" is not the same as stating that they are "economic maximisers". Effective allocation can mean a number of things, including economic maximisation. It should be possible to treat indigenous populations as our mental equals, without assuming that they share our priorities.

AKRSP policy makers conclude that the problems facing small farmers in northern Pakistan are not symptomatic of structural problems in the make up of the regional economy, nor are they due to individual inadequacies (intelligence, initiative, etc.) of small farmers. Rather, problems result from the scale of farmers' social and economic organisation *vis a vis* the regional, national and global economies, and *vis a vis* the prevailing ecological conditions.

Agency publications maintain that opportunities exist within the present economic structure that farmers could, and would be willing to, exploit through cooperative behaviour and cost-sharing.

¹⁰ It is worth providing the context for the authors' use of the term "economic maximiser": Economists and policy makers once believed that economic development of smallholder farming systems was constrained by other-worldly and non-acquisitive preferences of farmers in poor countries. The argument was said to hold quite generally; it has also been shown to be invalid, quite generally. The small farmer's problem is not his optimisation behaviour: scores of books and articles since Shultz have demonstrated that big and small farmers alike are, indeed, economic maximisers at the same time as they might be political maximisers and other-worldly as well. (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Husain, 1984:1)

Indeed, until the disruptions imposed by *Pax Britannica* destroyed them, institutions for cooperative action existed under feudal law (see Chapter Five). Personnel at AKRSP feel that much of that cooperative, even communal, sentiment remains, and needs only to be coordinated and mobilised to suit the current economic situation (World Bank, 1987:61). For AKRSP then, "the problem of smallholder development is one of transferring the advantages of large holdings to settings in which there are mostly smallholders" (Shoab Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:3). In short, mountain villagers are faced with what AKRSP personnel perceive to be a managerial/institutional problem, which manifests itself economically.

A discussion of how AKRSP conceptualises the problems facing small farmers yields nothing specific about its initiatives in the field, yet it does reveal some important theoretical assumptions that help to define the direction that AKRSP strategies will take. The first of these assumptions is that the process of development affecting the Northern Areas follows the rules of modernisation theories, and not dependency or any of the other marxist-oriented theories. Thus, according to AKRSP administrators, small mountain farmers are not victims of global capitalism. They are merely unable to exploit the benefits of a capitalist economy. The initial implication of that assumption is that solutions to farmers' problems must, at some level, involve integrating them into the market economy. Any value associated with non-developed, inward-looking, subsistence-based, communities is abandoned. Communities are not perceived by AKRSP as non-developed. Instead they are undeveloped, the lowest position on a continuum which leads toward capitalist development. That perception leads to a second implication, that development agencies either assist farmers to develop toward market oriented production and consumption, or they fail to do so. Agencies in general, and AKRSP specifically, are not seen to contribute to a process of underdevelopment. It is assumed, somewhat simplistically, that initiatives will have positive impacts, as communities embrace the intervention of AKRSP, or no impacts at all. Nowhere in AKRSP literature have I encountered a worry that modernisation might damage, in a structural way, the

current standard of living of mountain communities.¹¹ Confidence of this sort allows AKRSP to be very optimistic concerning the programme's success, but it is an optimism borne of ignorance of potential negative outcomes.

Associated with that first assumption is a second; that the plight of small farmers in northern Pakistan is fundamentally economic: they are not able to exploit economic opportunities. The problem facing villagers is not cultural, it is not political, it is not ecological, nor is it primarily social. This is a common assumption among development programmes. It is also a sweeping one, especially in an area that is intensely religious, politically unstable, ecologically challenging for agriculture, populated with communities of unique and indigenous culture, and controlled by particularistic social institutions.

What separates AKRSP from other agencies who make the same assumption is that, to its credit, AKRSP has stuck with the assumption rather than blame backward natives or unfriendly environment at the level of practice. In addition, AKRSP policy makers manage to retain the emphasis on economic development while recognising the role of what may be called non-economic variables in that process. Thus, right from the start the problem is seen as economic, and the solution begins with a change in social organisation toward increased cooperation among villagers. It is commendable that AKRSP explicitly establishes linkages among spheres of community organisation, and it is expedient that the programme concentrates on the primacy of one of these spheres. Unfortunately, the linkages are explored in only one direction. Social organisation certainly affects economic development, but how does economic development affect social organisation?¹² What is the value of the present social and cultural profile of communities that will be lost in a move toward greater cooperation? These questions are crucial, but they are

¹¹ Certainly there is a concern that specific initiatives in, say, marketing do not backfire on small farmers. But to my knowledge that is not perceived as a structural danger, but rather a danger associated with individual choices. The organisation monitors initiatives closely and attempts to respond to potential failures quickly.

¹² See, for example, the gendered labour example at the end of Chapter Two.

not recognised by AKRSP at the theoretical level, precisely because economy is given paramount causal importance.

Both of these theoretical assumptions stem from a final assumption: that the world for indigenous populations in the mountains of Pakistan is essentially the same as for populations in Europe and North America. The goal of economic maximisation is universal and primary. Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain (1984:1) argue that villagers can be economic maximisers despite having "otherworldly" priorities and being political maximisers. That raises two questions. First, is it true? Now, it **may** be in a limited sense, but the burden of theoretical validation or empirical proof must lie with the agency who makes that assumption. Asking villagers if they would like help to improve their per capita income, and receiving an affirmative answer is not proof. Beyond that, there is no indication that AKRSP has tested this assumption. The second question is, assuming that villagers are economic maximisers, how can economic initiatives reflect those other, undefined priorities? I suspect that the answer lies in a sensitive field approach. The field procedure of AKRSP achieves at least the basics of that needed sensitivity. Communities are obliged to choose their own initiatives, and have considerable (but not absolute) leeway to tailor them to the constraints of other priorities. It seems that AKRSP assumes a universal based on capitalist economies that should not be assumed, but then attempts to employ that assumption sensitively.

The criticisms I have offered of all three assumptions relate to themes that I introduced in Chapter Two, where I criticised the tendency in development theory to ignore indigenous spheres of community and their integration, and went on to question the unthinking assumption of false universals. At the **theoretical** level AKRSP does both of these things.

6.4 AKRSP's Conception of the Solution

6.4.1 Principles of Small Farmer Development

According to Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain (1984:2) the problem facing farmers in northern Pakistan is one of small scale, both in production and marketing. They identify three ways in which economies of scale enjoyed by large farmers can be transferred to smallholders: collectivisation along the lines of the Chinese and Soviet models; the creation of a massive corporate system; and the preservation of private ownership of land, along with cooperative management of resources at the local level. Given AKRSP's theoretical commitment to capitalist development on the one hand (and its sources of funding), and local autonomy and equality on the other, they could not adopt an approach that advocated either large scale collectivism or corporate control. The third option, a combination of private ownership and collective resource management, suits both of those theoretical prerequisites, and is the route chosen by AKRSP.¹³

The next step that AKRSP takes to translate development theory into practice is the refinement of a combination of principles and implementation methods which can be employed empirically. According to Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain (1984:4) the AKRSP is informed by three principles of small farmer development. These are derived and refined from postwar programmes in Taiwan and Korea (see Choe, 1981), and more directly from the experiences of Akhter Hameed Khan with the Comilla Academy of Rural Development in East Pakistan (see Khan, 1985), and of Shoaib Sultan Khan at Daudzai Markaz, Pakistan and Mahaweli Ganga, Sri Lanka

¹³ There are other reasons to choose the third option as well. The government of Pakistan would be unlikely to favour either large scale collectivism or agriculture dominated by a large corporate structure, in a politically sensitive area. In addition, the terrain necessitates a labour intensive, machinery non-intensive, method of farming that may be poorly suited to corporate agriculture.

(Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:4; World Bank, 1987:4).¹⁴

The initial principle employed by AKRSP for small farmer development is that "small farmers in isolated communities require a village organisation to overcome the disadvantages of small scale" (World Bank, 1987:3). The **village organisation (VO)** conceived by AKRSP is a coalition of "all those residents of a village whose continuing economic interests are best served by organising as an interest group" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:4). The VO, initially with agency help and eventually independently, has the mandate to coordinate all development activity engaged in by community members. As such, it is meant to be a self-sustaining development institution, that can enter into contracts and partnerships with agencies and institutions outside of the village on behalf of VO members. To do this effectively, the VO must be perceived as legitimate and credible. According to Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain (1984:5) the test of legitimacy is "if it does not compromise existing social and political institutions", and the test of credibility is "if it continues to convey benefits to its members".¹⁵

It is fundamental that the VO remains broad-based and works toward self-reliance (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:5). Therefore AKRSP has initiated two rules. First, the VO must meet regularly (every couple of weeks) as a general body. Second, AKRSP members must make savings deposits into the VO treasury at each meeting. This accumulated equity is the basis for a saving and loans programme that is meant to ensure the VO's eventual ability to sustain itself. Regular meetings by the entire VO help to ensure that only projects and VO expenditures that benefit all members will be instituted. The success of AKRSP depends on maintaining collective control of VO resources.

¹⁴ Akhter Hameed Khan is a consultant to AKRSP. Shoaib Sultan Khan is founder and General Manager.

¹⁵ These are internal tests of legitimacy and validity. Although they are unwritten, external tests also exist, and are associated with AKRSP's requirement that the benefits conveyed are those anticipated by AKRSP: increased economic wealth, increased participation in market production, and continued adherence to AKRSP regulations.

The second principle is that "villagers can be most effectively organised initially around economic, rather than social, sector activities... a PPI [productive physical infrastructure] project is an effective entry point and catalyst for the organisation of villagers" (World Bank, 1987:3). In its initial contact with villages AKRSP has the difficult task of establishing the tone of future interaction. AKRSP personnel want to convince villagers that it is in their interests to form a VO, while avoiding the common perception among development beneficiaries that initiatives are short term windfalls to be exploited while they last. With those considerations in mind AKRSP insists that a VO be built around what they call a **productive physical Infrastructure (PPI)** project. AKRSP policy makers argue that "farmers often experience large increases in income as a result of improvements in the stock of their productive physical infrastructure" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:5). Therefore, in exchange for forming a VO, having regular meetings, and depositing regular savings, villagers receive expertise, equipment and funding for an initial physical project which the VO chooses as beneficial to all VO members (usually a link road, irrigation channel, holding tank, bridge or protective work). Members are paid by AKRSP for their labour, but are encouraged to remit part of their wages to the VO. Thus, the PPI is used as an incentive to organise, as well as a means to begin developing the equity and cooperative skills necessary to sustain the VO.

AKRSP has received some criticism for paying members to improve their well-being. The response of AKRSP personnel is worth noting, because it reveals an attitude toward beneficiary communities that is not evident in AKRSP policy documents. According to AKRSP, conventional concepts of community participation are rooted in the notion that land, material or labour contributed by villagers is a measure of the community's participation in attempts to improve its welfare. Indeed, many projects assess their success by that variable. AKRSP policy makers believe that the practice of financing rural development initiatives through the use of 'free' or 'voluntary' labour and materials needs to be reassessed, because it rests on two myths. The first myth is that labour provided by villagers is in any sense free, or without cost. Labour may "be without cost to the sponsoring agency, but it does have a tangible cost to the villagers, equal to the value of time

spent by them on the project. The value is not zero, nor can it be expected to be close to zero for much of the farming year" (AKRSP, 1984a:17). Second, "labour supplied by under-privileged groups is seldom 'voluntary' except in a perverse meaning of the term" (AKRSP, 1984a:17). In the past villagers were coerced into providing labour to further the agendas of more privileged classes. Coercion is a poor start toward a self-sustaining, egalitarian development effort. In short "the use of village labour without compensation is neither free nor particularly voluntary"; programmes based on this type of financing "might succeed in implementing particular projects, but they do so at the cost of imposing an unusually inequitable burden on the poorer segments of the population" (AKRSP, 1984a:17). By paying wages AKRSP undertakes "an essential investment in the fostering of VOs that will retain the capacity to undertake development work long after the completion of the first project" (AKRSP, 1984:18). This argument in favour of paying VO members for their labour exemplifies the care and integrity with which AKRSP attempts to establish just relations with a previously powerless and disenfranchised constituency.

The third principle for small farmer organisation is that village organisations need to be supported by an administrative infrastructure that specialises in **extension (training) and supplies**, and that goes down to the village level. Agency administrators maintain that such an infrastructure would ensure that "members of a village organisation can acquire the necessary organisational and technical skills to serve themselves and their community, and for which other villagers are prepared to pay" (World Bank, 1987:3). By feeding VOs with training, information, and supplies, an administrative infrastructure can enhance the ability of VOs to manage village resources productively and collectively, so that they become all purpose service organisations that can meet the development needs of farmers on a continuing basis.

These three principles are a first step toward operationalising the stance offered in AKRSP's conception of the development problem facing small farmers. As such, they share that

stance's advantages and failings, which I summarised above.¹⁶ There are also several theoretical implications which pertain to AKRSP's three principles of small farmer development, that are not apparent earlier.

First, all three of these principles strengthen the programme's debt to parts of modernisation theory and its emphasis on integrating small communities into the capitalist world economy. The second principle states that villagers are most effectively organised around economic, and not social sector activities. The first principle defines a VO as a group of residents whose continuing economic interests are best served by organising. Savings deposits are mandatory at each meeting, villagers are payed money for their labour, and specially trained villagers are to be payed by other villagers for their services. Clearly, villagers are expected to commit themselves to a monetary economy, both outside and within the community. For some communities, where economic relations **among** villagers do not involve currency, this is a drastic modernisation indeed, and one which deserves more assessment than AKRSP has given.

Second, at this level at least, AKRSP has a casual attitude about the impact of initiatives on internal community relations. A VO is considered legitimate if it does not compromise existing social and political institutions. However, there is no theoretical commitment to evaluating existing institutions within villages either before or during the implementation process. Nor is there a practical avenue through which villagers or agency personnel can question whether existing social and political institutions are being compromised. Rather, AKRSP assumes that disruption of indigenous institutions will be an obvious exception, and not the rule. This is a large assumption, considering the economic and political authority that VOs are likely to enjoy.

Third, AKRSP theory displays an affinity to sustainable development theory that was not evident before. An important concern is that VOs develop the ability to sustain themselves as permanent development institutions, which satisfy villagers' continuing economic interests. In this

¹⁶ However, these principles also exhibit a certain concern for flexibility and integration among spheres of social existence, that is not apparent in agency's purely conceptual arguments.

AKRSP seems to have anticipated development theorists, because sustainable development did not receive popular recognition until after 1982, when AKRSP policy was documented. Nevertheless, AKRSP's interpretation of sustainable development corresponds with that of contemporary theorists: sustainability is primarily economic with ecological implications. Sustainability of community as a specific social, cultural and political milieu is of secondary importance in the sustainable development framework.

Finally, I think it is worth noting that AKRSP strategy deliberately exposes villages to what Habermas calls 'sub-systemic media', namely economic and bureaucratic power. A very real potential exists for an extension and supply infrastructure to mediate indigenous relations between social system and lifeworld. Already, agricultural innovations are regulated by AKRSP trained experts, both within and outside the community. The fact that agricultural knowledge, which was previously ubiquitous, must now be purchased from expert villagers suggests that money too may be starting to occupy a mediating position. This position is strengthened by other initiatives which increase the dominance of currency. I realise that attempts to increase quality of life in poor communities must include economic initiatives, and that these may need to rely on currency. In addition, I laud the sentiment that requires AKRSP to pay villagers for their labour. Still, internal colonisation is a danger that is worth recognising, and that should be avoided if a community's long term sustainability is a development objective.

6.4.2 Implementation: the Diagnostic Survey and PPI

AKRSP administrators argue that if the three principles outlined above are implemented, participating villages will develop an ability to sustain a trajectory of development unassisted by outside agencies. Implementation, however, is a difficult task, and one that requires consistency and care throughout the programme. Formulating an initial agreement that is understood by both

AKRSP personnel and village members, in an atmosphere in which villagers are comfortable, is recognised as especially important. AKRSP policy makers express an eagerness to dispel the relationship of petitioner and benefactor that characterises the prior experiences of villagers. To that end formal contact begins with a visit by AKRSP management to any village that has agreed to meet them. Agency personnel feel it is important that this initial contact occur in the village, where all members are able to participate, and where concerns particular to that village are likely to be recognised. Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain express the process of initial contact in the village as follows:

...village level planning does not lend itself to a distant planning process. For the purposes of creating a capacity for self-sustained development at the village level, planning from urban centres must give way to planning from the villages. The villagers must be the effective planners, and the planning process must draw upon the knowledge and experience of the villagers. The process of identifying projects must also be able to incorporate variations between one village and another and, sometimes, even within a single large village. In practice, this would mean that every step of the first three phases of the project cycle - identification, preparation and appraisal - should proceed through a series of interactive dialogues between the villagers and the development agency. Together these series of dialogues can be termed the Diagnostic Survey - a survey to diagnose the poverty of a village and identify a cure for it. (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:7)

The first stage toward implementing a development programme, then, is the **diagnostic survey**. This consists of three sets of dialogues. First, AKRSP management meets with the assembled members of interested villages. The general manager explains the objectives and methods of AKRSP, and then invites villagers to identify an "income-generating project that would benefit most of the households in the village and that can be undertaken by the villagers themselves" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:8). If the first dialogue is successful, it results in the choice of a small, productive project by villagers.

The second dialogue involves a feasibility survey of the suggested project. During this stage agency personnel work with "informed village residents" to assess the feasibility of the proposed scheme, and to work through its various costs. The result of this dialogue is a blueprint and cost estimate, which is reviewed and finalised by AKRSP's management group.

The finalised scheme is presented to villagers by the management group, and discussed with them. This leads to a third dialogue, in which terms of partnership between the anticipated VO and AKRSP are negotiated. During this process AKRSP states their expectations and villagers explain precisely how they intend to organise to "plan, implement, manage and maintain specific projects that involve physical works, skill development and the creation of equity capital over time" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:8). The third dialogue results in the creation of a VO, assessment by AKRSP of potential benefits, and the beginning of a PPI project. Tables 6.4a through 6.4d summarise the AKRSP's achievement in persuading villages to form a VO and start a PPI project.

After the diagnostic survey (and during parts of the survey) each VO is attached to a particular AKRSP social organiser (SO). Social organisers are employees of AKRSP, usually local men with some post-secondary education. Each SO is responsible for about 60 villages, and is assisted by village supervisors, who are chosen from among VO presidents. All AKRSP initiated communication with VOs occurs through the social organiser. VO members may initiate discussions with AKRSP without contacting the social organiser. The social organiser spends his time travelling among VOs in an effort to motivate village members, help solve problems, suggest training programmes etc. The SO is instructed not to make decisions for villagers.

The procedure employed during the diagnostic survey can, and usually does, involve several meetings at each stage. It has the advantage of familiarising agency personnel with a dossier of development needs, apart from the one that is finally chosen for the PPI. Thus, it is easy to identify targets for further development work. This may be especially true if, during the course of the dialogues, villagers become familiar and comfortable with agency personnel and their methods, and share their ambitions openly. In addition, this continual interaction between AKRSP and the assembled villagers limits opportunities for powerful villagers to misinform or cheat fellow villagers out of the benefits of development. It does not prevent powerful households from dominating and coercing others at several stages throughout the dialogues. For instance, who

Table 6.4a: Population Information for AKRSP Programme Area, June 1989¹⁷

	Gilgit	Chitral	Baltistan	Total
Area (square kilometres)	28500	12300	25587	66387
Estimated Population	246600	271600	299800	818000
Urban Population	32000	12000	13000	57000
Number of Households (approximate)	29600	32600	36000	98200
Number of Villages (approximate)	306	500	244	1050
Number of Village Organisations	446	344	297	1087
Average Population per VO	492	383	300	408
Average Households per VO	59	46	36	49

Table 6.4b: Cumulative Household Involvement in AKRSP to June 1989¹⁸

	Gilgit	Chitral	Baltistan	Total
Total Rural Households	29600	32600	36000	98200
Households Involved In:¹⁹				
Village Organisations	26500 90%	15815 49%	10668 30%	53003 54%
PPI Projects	26615 90%	14834 46%	11024 31%	52473 53%
Women's Programmes	8137 27%	2160 7%	0 0%	10297 10%
Short-Term Credit	131078 443%	48668 149%	15533 43%	195279 199%
Medium-Term Credit	17137 58%	3559 11%	732 2%	21428 22%
Total Beneficiary Households	148215 501%	52227 160%	16265 45%	216707 221%

¹⁷ Statistics from AKRSP, 1989b; World Bank, 1990:104, 108.

¹⁸ Statistics from AKRSP, 1989b; World Bank, 1990:108-109.

¹⁹ Some households have been involved in certain ventures more than once, so percentages greater than 100 occur.

Table 6.4c: Cumulative Growth of AKRSP Village Organisations, 1983 to 1989²⁰

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989 June
GILGIT							
No. of VOs Established	131	289	316	349	376	414	446
Member Households	12050	23120	24590	26412	26500	26500	26500
% of Rural Households	41	78	83	90	90	90	90
CHITRAL							
No. of VOs Established	0	90	139	168	224	323	244
Member Households	0	7920	9800	10667	12383	15337	15815
% of Rural Households	0	24	30	33	38	47	48
BALTISTAN							
No. of VOs Established	0	0	22	54	162	256	29
Member Households	0	0	1402	2915	6309	9417	10688
% of Rural Households	0	0	4	8	18	26	30
TOTAL							
No. of VOs Established	131	379	477	571	762	993	1087
Member Households	12050	31040	35792	39994	45192	51294	53003
% of Rural Households	12	32	36	40	46	52	54

²⁰ Statistics from AKRSP, 1989b; World Bank, 1990:108.

Table 6.4d: Summary of Productive Physical Infrastructure Projects to December 1988
(for all Districts)²¹

Type of Project	Identified ²²	But Not Initiated	Initiated	Complete
IRRIGATION	814 82%	341 34%	473 48%	308 31%
Feeder Channels/Pipes	717	296	421	275
Lift Irrigation	13	9	4	2
Storage Reservoirs	80	34	46	29
Sedimentation Tanks	4	2	2	2
TRANSPORT	260 26%	93 9%	167 17%	112 11%
Link Roads	184	50	134	91
Bridges	38	23	15	11
Pony Tracks	38	20	18	10
OTHER	272 27%	142 14%	130 13%	94 9%
Protective Works	224	125	99	79
Boundary Walls	31	8	23	10
Plant Nurseries	14	9	5	3
Hydel Schemes	2		2	1
Flour Mills	1		1	1
TOTAL	1346	576	770	514

really decides what project is most beneficial to all households? Who chooses the "informed villagers" that help prepare blueprints and establish costs? When the VO is established, what internal dynamics are involved in selecting VO presidents, managers, secretaries, etc.? To their credit, AKRSP personnel do not make these decisions for villagers. But decisions are made, and

²¹ Statistics from AKRSP, 1988a; World Bank, 1990:108, 111-112.

²² Some village organisations are involved in more than one PPI project, so this column adds up to more than 100 percent. Percentages in the other columns represent percentage of those identified.

there is no guarantee that they are made in an egalitarian fashion. Throughout this diagnostic procedure AKRSP policy relies heavily on the validity of a conviction that fundamentally collective, cooperative, and egalitarian relations prevail in participating communities.

A second criticism of the diagnostic survey approach is that the equality of partnership breaks down at two stages. The first breakdown occurs when the PPI proposal is "finalised" by AKRSP staff at headquarters, and then presented to villagers. There is an opportunity to discuss the finalised scheme, but the situation is one that depends upon a very fine balance of power. Villagers may be reluctant to challenge a decision already made.²³ The second breakdown in equitable relations occurs when terms of partnership are discussed. These terms are not really negotiated. Discussion centres on ensuring that villagers understand what is expected of them. While I realise that certain expectations must be formalised, a wider sphere for the negotiation of partnership may be appropriate, especially since AKRSP is concerned with tailoring the whole process of development (not just the PPI) to the needs of each village. The nature of the VO, and its relationship to other institutions should be treated with as much importance as the PPI and its relationship with other economic ventures.

Once a village has established a working VO, and begun its PPI project, the remaining categories of implementation begin. They include training and supplies, savings and credit, marketing, women's programmes, and monitoring, valuation and research.

6.4.3 Training and Supplies

One of AKRSP' initial principles is that an administrative infrastructure is necessary to

²³ Villagers, with a history of feudal and colonial subordination, may be reluctant to question the authority of institutions which resemble, in some respects, their previous rulers cum benefactors. It is important that clearly defined opportunities are available to villagers to question decisions of the AKRSP, at every stage. See Goldthorpe (1975) for a discussion of power relationships between development benefactors and their beneficiaries.

provide access to training and supplies. AKRSP hopes to create a cadre of specialists in each village which would contribute to the potential for VOs to achieve self-sustainability (AKRSP, 1984a:28).

Each district (Gilgit, Chitral, Baltistan) is served by a single training centre. In depth courses of two to three week duration are held at the training centre. Room and board is provided at hostels near by. Participants for training in a variety of courses are selected by VOs, within certain AKRSP guidelines. In particular, AKRSP is concerned that candidates have a genuine interest in the subject matter, and that they have a strong motivation to employ their expertise in their home village (AKRSP, 1984b:29). Courses concentrate on practical training. Each candidate is given a kit of relevant supplies to begin his practice back in the village. When these supplies are gone they are replaced at cost, so that trainees are encouraged to develop an entrepreneurial enterprise in which they charge enough for their services to cover their labour and the cost of supplies. Periodic refresher courses are held, and experts are welcome to approach AKRSP staff for advice. Tables 6.4e and 6.4f provide an overview of training provided by AKRSP. In addition to supplies connected with village specialists, AKRSP organises the purchase of fertiliser, seed, etc., which is then bought by individual VOs.

I think it is worth noting that while training and supply programmes rely on an egalitarian and cooperative ideal, the creation of specialists who are encouraged to sell their expertise has the potential to erode collective and egalitarian relations among villagers.

Table 6.4e: AKRSP Training Courses to June 1989²⁴

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989 (June)	Total
No. Regular Courses	4	8	14	16	24	37	19	122
No. Refresher Courses		5	9	15	14	10	4	57
Trainees (regular courses)	91	179	275	347	401	770	370	1433

Table 6.4f: Types of Training course Offered by AKRSP to June 1989²⁵

Course Topic	No. Regular Courses	No. Refresher Courses	Percent of Total
Agriculture	45	21	37
Livestock Devpt.	31	24	31
Poultry Devpt.	26	5	17
Marketing	14	7	12
Accounting	3	0	2
Appropriate Technology	3	0	2
TOTAL	122	57	100

6.4.4 Savings and Credit

Together with training, the establishment of a communal savings and credit programme is essential to AKRSP's concept of self sustaining VOs. Agency administrators argue that only communal accumulation of equity capital can provide villagers with the collateral against which to borrow from outside agencies (AKRSP, 1984a:40), and they consider credit to be an important tool

²⁴ Statistics from AKRSP, 1989b; World Bank, 1990:115.

²⁵ Statistics from AKRSP, 1989b; World Bank, 1990:115.

of the development process.

Initially, the potential for villagers to contribute savings to the VO account is boosted by wages from the PPI. However, experience has shown that most VOs continue to save after those wages stop (World Bank, 1990:42). Indeed, AKRSP expects (but does not require) savings to increase by 30 percent each year. AKRSP is currently faced with the happy circumstance that increases in savings are beginning to overtake "readily identifiable credit needs" (World Bank, 1990:42). An important second stage of AKRSP is to help VOs to identify long term schemes to employ these savings to support further development.

Table 6.4g: Growth of Village Organisation (VO) and Women's Organisation (WO) Savings Deposits to June 1989 (Rs. x 1000)²⁶

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989 June
Total No. of VOs	131	379	477	571	762	993	1087
Cumulative Savings by VO	733	5870	10530	15900	30990	46510	60150
Average Savings per VO	5.6	15.5	22.1	27.8	40.7	46.8	55.3
Total No. of WOs	na	na	100	133	174	248	271
Cumulative Savings by WO	24	520	1380	2120	3350	4820	5940
Average Savings per WO	na	na	13.8	15.9	19.3	19.4	21.9
TOTAL SAVINGS	757	6390	11910	18020	34340	51330	66090

AKRSP began credit operations in 1983. Initially money was lent to VOs without interest, except for one percent each month in the case of default. In 1988 in an effort to introduce villagers to the realities of capitalist finance AKRSP began levying service charges from one to ten percent

²⁶ Statistics from AKRSP 1989b, World Bank 1990:122

Table 6.4h: Summary of AKRSP Loans to June 1989 (Rs. x 1000)²⁷

	Gilgit	Chitral	Baltistan	Total
Short-Term:				
Amount Dispersed²⁸	45.0	13.6	5.9	64.5
Amount In Default	0.8	0.1	0.2	1.1
Percentage In Default	1.8	1.0	2.9	1.7
Total No. of Borrowers	125955	48668	15533	190156
Total No. of Loans	2662	1140	435	4237
Average No. of Borrowers per Loan	47	43	26	45
Medium-Term:				
Amount Dispersed²⁹	32.7	10.7	1.4	44.8
Amount In Default	0.4	0	0	0.4
Percentage In Default	1.3	0.2	0	1.0
All Credit:				
Amount Dispersed	77.7	24.3	7.3	109.3
Amount In Default	1.2	0.1	0.2	1.6
Percentage In Default	1.5	0.6	2.0	1.0

on short term loans, and five to 12 percent on medium term loans (World Bank, 1990:42). No collateral is needed for short term loans, but VOs have to deposit their savings in a scheduled savings account, and can only withdraw with the permission of AKRSP. Medium term loans require cash collateral, the percentage of which varies according to the purpose of the loan. Gradually AKRSP is attempting to disengage itself from the credit business, while encouraging the development of an independent profit-making savings and credit organisation that would be owned

²⁷ Statistics from AKRSP, 1990b; World Bank 1990:124-5.

²⁸ Includes loans allotted for fertilizer, plants, seeds, marketing, WO credit, heifer purchases, poultry, pesticides.

²⁹ Includes loans allotted for land development, agricultural machinery, sulphur tents, marketing.

and managed by villagers of the Northern Areas themselves. Tables 6.4g and 6.4h summarise AKRSP's credit operations.

6.4.5 Marketing

The evolution of a farming community in the Northern Areas that is profitable and competitive in a market economy relies eventually on successful marketing of produce. Thus, AKRSP is striving to develop "vertically integrated marketing institutions [that are] built on the cooperative collection of produce at the village level, and the subsequent marketing along the same principle" (AKRSP, 1984a:31). Policy makers at AKRSP believe that through cooperation small farmers can compete in the larger business world.

Villagers are encouraged to concentrate on producing high quality products that have real market value (mainly nuts, dried apricots, and seed potatoes). Marketing specialists are trained to organise marketing collectives in interested villages, and organise the transportation and sale of produce, either in Gilgit or down country. AKRSP personnel hope that district wide marketing cooperatives that monitor each stage of production (especially timing of harvest and grading) and marketing will evolve. Initially, attempts were made to avoid dealing with marketing agents. AKRSP is currently emphasising the establishment of profitable marketing strategies in which villagers benefit from the expertise and contacts of agents. As with other AKRSP strategies, eventual self-sustainability depends on a gradual trend toward non-subsidised integration in the marketing economy. AKRSP savings and loan strategies and marketing strategies are designed to shift production away from subsistence and agricultural self-reliance, toward full integration with the monetary economy. Given that almost all villages fail to feed themselves through subsistence, this is reasonable. At the same time, integration of villages and households into the market economy poses risks that should be investigated by AKRSP, and could be investigated from a dependency perspective. This is not being done by AKRSP's Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Section.

Table 6.4i summarises AKRSP's marketing experience.

Table 6.4i: AKRSP Marketing Operations to December 1988³⁰

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
Total No. of VOs	131	379	477	571	762	993
No. of VOs Involved in Marketing	11	8	45	164	191	215
Metric Tonnes of Produce Marketed	46	23	176	293	431	973
Gross Sales (Rs. x 1000)	324	159	940	2735	3432	6360
Beneficiary Households	515	251	1070	4372	6581	8522

6.4.6 Women's Programmes

AKRSP claims to recognise that women's activities are undervalued. In many villages women do most of the agricultural work and all household chores. Their responsibility is increasing as men seek employment outside of the village agricultural economy. Despite their importance to household economy, or perhaps partly because of it, there is a scarcity of skilled and literate women, and women have not been integrated into the wage economy. This condition is exacerbated by the religious tradition of segregation that is practiced in many communities.

Because women are integral to the agricultural sector it is important that they be intimately involved in the development process. At the same time, these other circumstances inhibit their active involvement at the level of decision making. The route taken by AKRSP has been to create separate Women's Organisations, with the same principles as those of VOs. However, the creation of women's organisations (WOs) was delayed until after men had completed an AKRSP sponsored project, in the hope of diffusing the opposition that men might have to the organisation of women

³⁰ Statistics from AKRSP 1989b; World Bank, 1990:108, 114-5.

and their participation in development (AKRSP, 1984a:43). This attitude of conceding women's interests to those of men characterised AKRSP's women's programmes until 1987. Since then, on the recommendation of the World Bank report, AKRSP has made a concerted effort to employ female staff, especially for women's programmes.

While the introduction of innovations to save women labour have been important, the women's programme has concentrated more on institution building, confidence building, gender interaction, and technical, management and financial skills. There has been an emphasis on social emancipation that is lacking in (male) VO programmes.³¹ Given the circumstances of women in the Northern Areas this is entirely appropriate, but also potentially disruptive to the internal dynamics of community. Theoretical and methodological direction from the social sciences is needed to assess the impacts of women's programmes on the larger community. To be fair to AKRSP, WOs are an attempt at a compromise between a desire to involve and benefit both genders, and a respect for a tradition of separation in the formal activities of men and women. If not for a need to be sensitive to these circumstances it would make more sense to focus organisation on households (the basic unit of production and consumption), rather than on one gender or the other.

Currently, women's organisations are thriving. Indeed they are accumulating savings deposits more rapidly than their male counterparts. Still, in practice WOs are essentially smaller and less important versions of VOs. The World Bank's 1990 report suggests that all AKRSP "interventions in village or women's organisations... have a specific gender focus" and that a deliberate attempt should be made to cater equally to men's and women's development needs (World Bank, 1990:66). Table 6.4j summarises the involvement of women's organisations.

³¹ This is one example of a direct intervention in the social and cultural institutions of villagers that contradicts AKRSP's stated intention to avoid interfering with traditional community institutions.

Table 6.4j: Status of AKRSP Women's Programmes to June 1989³²

	Up to 1986	1987	1988	To June 1989
Number of Women's Organisations³³	133	174	248	271
Cumulative Savings:				
Total Cumulative Savings (Rs. x 1000)	2120	5470	10290	16230
Cumulative Savings per WO (Rs. x 1000)	15.9	31.4	41.5	59.9
Loans:				
Short-Term Loans (Rs. x 1000)	10.0	490.0	1600.0	1000.0
No. of WOs Borrowing	10	62	113	61
Medium-Term Loans (Rs. x 1000)	0	200.0	400.0	200.0
No. of WOs Borrowing	0	5	7	10
Technology Packages:				
No. of Production Packages	6	49	78	187
No. of Training Packages	119	82	145	152
No. of Labour-Saving Packages	37	338	110	32
Women's Programme Staff	4	11	11	21

6.4.7 Monitoring, Evaluation and Research

Unlike many development agencies AKRSP has a specific section devoted to monitoring, evaluation and research (MER). However, unlike other sections of AKRSP staff, the duties of this branch are somewhat ephemeral, and I think unfortunately skewed to the narrow (mainly economic) expertise of staff members.

³² Statistics from World Bank, 1990:58-67.

³³ Baltistan has no separate Women's Organisations

Statistical monitoring (gathering) is very thorough. According to the most recent World Bank evaluation "the AKRSP database is, by any standards, impressive in its detail, content, breadth and precision. The AKRSP operation can claim to be one of the best-documented rural development programmes anywhere" (World Bank, 1990:68). To date 30 progress reports have been published, each with at least 20 pages of tables and graphs. In addition, nine annual reports have been issued which describe the activities of AKRSP. These publications constitute a small part of the documents and manuscripts floating around AKRSP headquarters. If anything, more reports are generated than can be absorbed by staff or other interested parties.

Research into potential innovations, the material success of initiatives, marketing and credit opportunities, etc. is also thorough, although research occurs less consistently than monitoring. The research activities of the MER section are concerned mainly with intermediate or appropriate technology. Like the intermediate technology approach in general, research by AKRSP staff concentrates on what is appropriate economically, and neglects the social or cultural ramifications of innovations.

Evaluation by AKRSP is poor, perhaps because evaluation implies a comprehensive understanding of programme results: it should constitute more than the presentation of tables and graphs. AKRSP's MER section has neglected thoughtful appraisal of the total impact of AKRSP initiatives on participating communities. Thus, staff have no way of knowing just how disruptive of, or supportive of, or complementary to, indigenous institutions, practices and relations specific initiatives, and the programme in general, have been. It is hard to imagine how AKRSP can develop an understanding of the long term sustainability (economic or otherwise) of villages without that type of evaluation. This concern is shared by members of the World Bank evaluation team, who write that MER "may not be achieving their more precise aims of yielding structured assessments of performance in the major themes that the program is attempting to pursue" (World Bank, 1990:70).

6.5 Conclusion

The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme has evolved from a premise that small farmers in the mountains of northern Pakistan are unable to satisfy their subsistence needs because the scale of their household farming operations is too small for either subsistence or for profitable interaction in a regional economy. The solution advocated by AKRSP administrators is to increase the scale at which agricultural resources are managed (from production to marketing), so that collective groups of small farmers can compete within a regional economy. The organisation conceives its primary role in this process of development as one of helping small farmers to organise themselves collectively at the community (village) level. Three principles of small farmer development have been identified by agency personnel to help satisfy this purpose. These principles are (a) the formulation of a collective village organisation, (b) the identification and implementation of a productive physical infrastructure (PPI) project that will help unite community members toward a common goal, and that will initiate a process of capital accumulation at the community level, and (c) the development of a training and supplies infrastructure to provide the materials and expertise needed to sustain the process of collective resource management.

A number of strategies have been developed to aid in the successful creation of village organisations, and the identification and completion of suitable initial projects. These strategies are grouped together under the term "diagnostic survey". In addition, five task-oriented sections of the agency attempt to facilitate the development of village organisation resource management beyond the completion of the PPI project. The five sections deal with training and supplies, savings and credit, marketing, monitoring, evaluation and research, and women's programmes.

The first three task-oriented sections contribute directly to AKRSP's goal of integrating communities into a market-oriented agricultural economy. As such, they are agents of modernisation: sponsors of western technical expertise, capitalist credit arrangements, and a mode of production which is integrated into a global capitalist mode of production. The fourth section -

monitoring, evaluation and research- concerns itself primarily with ensuring that the modernisation (as in modernisation theory) goals of the other sections are met. With their fundamentally technological/economic thrust these four sections contribute to AKRSP's goal of creating a competitive collective economic unit at the village level. However, in so doing they threaten the indigenous cultural and social characteristics that AKRSP professes to value (and to which they are sensitive in their VO and PPI formation stages). Without providing unnecessary detail, suffice it to say that the positive and negative attributes of AKRSP's general conceptual scheme are reflected in the four task-oriented sections.

In contrast to the other four sections, that devoted to women's programmes does not emphasise economic integration and change at the potential expense of indigenous lifeworlds. Rather, women's programme initiatives seem most concerned with developing and strengthening indigenous social organisation, and indigenous autonomy, among women. They are cast at a practical level rather than at a technical level. I think this has occurred because women's programmes are seen as less important than programmes that are ostensibly for men, and because too much invasion of technical/financial male space by women would be perceived as a threat by both male villagers and AKRSP personnel. It is ironic that negative reasons might account for the evolution of a section whose initiatives address the most important concerns: intersubjective understanding, autonomy and the reproduction of an indigenous lifeworld.

In this chapter I have attempted to provide an indication of how AKRSP approaches the task of helping villagers improve their quality of life. AKRSP uses a great variety of specific innovations and detailed strategies to improve agricultural techniques, and to increase productivity, that I have not mentioned. These have an impact on communities, but their choice is determined by the overall approach of the agency, and their impact is subordinate to the overall role that the agency enjoys within villages. For a description of particular initiatives and strategies employed by AKRSP see World Bank (1987:33-8; 1990:49-57), and relevant sections of AKRSP annual reviews. Somewhat in contrast with AKRSP's overall theoretical stance, specific innovations and strategies

owe much to theories associated with appropriate technology, and ecologically sustainable development.

AKRSP has, by all accounts, succeeded in meeting its initial objective of organising and involving villagers in their own economic development. The tables included above testify to that. Criticisms expressed throughout this chapter should be interpreted as criticisms directed at a development programme that has been successful, according to the terms its founders have set for it. Those terms are mainly economic, and the success so far has been short term. The criticisms I present relate to long term sustainability and its relation to social and political structures within villages. While AKRSP is concerned with long term economic sustainability, they have neglected to consider the implications of their programme for the sustainability of community in a socio-cultural and political sense. In Part III I devote chapters to each of the four spheres of community sustainability I identified in Chapter Two. My concern is with interpreting the level of sustainability in each of those spheres in Shimshal, and specifically with evaluating the impact of AKRSP intervention in Shimshal on indigenous community sustainability. Although the activities of specific AKRSP sections weave in and out of the narrative, I am concerned primarily with the influence of the village organisation itself, as a new institution added on to an existing system of social organisation.

PART III:
Interpretation of Empirical Information

Chapter Seven: Social Vitality and Community Sustainability in Shimshal

7.1 Social Vitality

7.1.1 Introduction

I conceive the community of Shimshal as composed of four spheres of social organisation operating at a variety of levels. Community sustainability relies on the ability of human agents at those various levels to integrate the four spheres into a whole that is vital, valid, viable and volitional in terms of the shared values and convictions of community members. Intrinsic to this notion of an indigenously-defined, shared and accepted collage of sustainability is the concept of communicative rationality. I argued in Chapter Two that the quest to improve sustainability, in its full social, political, economic and ecological sense, is defined by a struggle among community members to reach an intersubjective (practical) definition of what their community is, and how (technically) it might be improved. Thus, sustainability requires an integration of practical and technical interests, lifeworld and system, levels and spheres of organisation.

The nature of this integration, while complicated in reality, can be conceptually unravelled fairly simply. Practical interests are those motivations geared toward reaching intersubjective understanding and agreement within a community of individuals. Intersubjective understanding is a matter of meaning, conviction and identity, all of which are lifeworld-based. Individuals reach intersubjective understanding by drawing on shared lifeworld elements, and arguing the validity of those elements in something approaching an ideal speech situation.¹ The venues for this

¹ Something **approaching** an ideal speech situation, precisely because it is an ideal that cannot be achieved. Remember that an ideal speech situation occurs when the following rules are acknowledged:

1. Each subject who is capable of speech and action is allowed to participate in discourses.

argumentation are institutions relating to the various levels of organisation. The result of the process of rational discourse (as conceived in Chapter Two) is twofold: some progress may be made toward achieving a shared and rationalised lifeworld, and (related to that) a symbolic frame of reference for judging the validity of collectively-oriented technical action may be established. This second result of communicative action provides the practical (as in practical interest) constraints within which sub-systemic spheres of social organisation operate, in essence establishing the ground rules for sustainability in symbolic terms. Sub-systemic spheres are fuelled by technical interests, but informed by practical interests through the shared lifeworld of community members. The several levels of social organisation within Shimshal (from Chapter Five) re-enter the picture, because they provide a direct link between lifeworld and the sub-systemic spheres, and in so doing provide a vehicle whereby practical interests are translated into technical activities. At the same time they are products of the integration of technical and practical interests.

This discussion relates back to my discussion of how community sustainability is achieved, which may be briefly reiterated as follows: **the sustainability of a community is heightened if the rationally-defined technical and practical interests of the community are realised in the four sub-systemic spheres that support it.** This concern for practical interests, as opposed to concentrating solely on technical interests, gives a certain priority to the social sub-system over politics, economy and ecology, because the social sub-system has among its functions the socialisation of individuals into the prevailing lifeworld. For that reason social vitality is discussed in the present chapter, before the other three sub-systemic spheres.

2. a) Each is allowed to call into question any proposal, (b) each is allowed to introduce any proposal into the discourse, and (c) each is allowed to express his [sic] attitudes, wishes and needs.

3. No speaker ought to be hindered by compulsion -whether arising from inside the discourse or outside of it- from making use of the rights secure under 1 and 2. (White, 1988:56)

The fact that an ideal speech situation is an ideal that community's strive for but never attain does not diminish its usefulness as a standard.

7.1.2 Social Vitality

What is described here as sustainability within the subsystemic sphere of social organisation can be termed **social vitality** (Matthews, 1983: 157-159). According to Matthews the "social vitality of a community can be measured in terms of all the formal and informal social structures not primarily concerned with either economic well-being or social control" (Matthews, 1983:157). He goes on to say that certain "basic organisations and activities", both formal and informal, relating to socialisation, sociation and communication provide a community with its social vitality (see Table 7.1) (Matthews, 1983:157-158). Therefore, social vitality **is** the socialisation and sociation of individuals, and the communication of important information, within a set of constraints shared by the community at large.

I have three objectives in this introductory sub-section: (a) to precisely define the terms socialisation, sociation and communication, (b) to employ Habermas' conception of lifeworld to establish the theoretical links among these concepts, and between them and the more general issues of individuals' shared identity, identification of and with, and commitment to a larger community, and (c) to emphasise the analytical, as opposed to experienced, nature of the separation among socialisation, sociation and communication.

Socialisation is the process whereby community members are inculcated into the predominant norms and values of the community, and the ways the community provides to earn a living. Matthews suggests that this process occurs both informally, through families, friendship groups and the like, and formally through religious and educational institutions (Matthews, 1983:158). Over time, as communities modernise, formal vehicles for socialisation are likely to become more important relative to informal institutions (Matthew, 1983:158). If social vitality is defined as the successful socialisation and sociation of individuals, and the successful communication of important information, all within the constraints of a shared lifeworld, then we can begin to interpret a community's social vitality by examining the extent to which socialisation is

Table 7.1: Formal and Informal Relational Structures of Community Social Life

	Formal Social Organisation	Informal Social Organisation
Social Vitality	All organisations formally organised for socialisation in the values, norms, and skills necessary to live in the community and society (schools, churches), formal organisations for communication (radio, telecommunications, television, newspapers), and all groups formally organised for sociation (service clubs).	All informal groups and activities in the society engaged primarily in socialisation, sociation, and communication , including many informal networks and friendship groups, as well as informal communication networks which spread information, news, and gossip. To understand the role and significance of such groups attention must be paid not only to their form but also to the content of what is exchanged and its meaning for those involved.

Source: Matthews, 1983:162; emphasis in original.

occurring, either formally or informally, and then integrating that with interpretations of sociation and communication.

While socialisation pertains primarily to the process whereby individuals become capable and productive members of a community, **sociation** refers to social activity which people engage in "for the benefits derived purely from contact with other people" (Matthews, 1983:158).² Matthews asserts that in all communities individuals associate with others through formal structures such as church groups and service clubs, as well as informally, for the express purpose of cultivating friendships and filling leisure time. These sociation networks contribute to community members' personal interpretations of quality of life (an element of lifeworld), and are therefore important factors involved in social vitality.

Communication is a third objective for certain kinds of social activity. Individuals tap into formal (eg. radio, newspapers) or informal (eg. conversation, gossip) networks of communication in order to relate their own lives to events which surround them. Social vitality depends, to an

² Matthews' definition of sociation follows Simmel's (1950) "pure form of social activity for its own sake" (Matthews, 1983:158).

extent, upon the effectiveness with which community members obtain information which is pertinent to their lives.

The recognition and understanding of these three social processes can contribute usefully to an interpretation of what sustainability, in a purely social sense, might be. However, the three structural processes considered separately, and apart from the larger question of community, do not take us very far. We need to establish connections among individual motivation and action, social structures for socialisation, sociation and communication, and community solidarity. Matthews recognises this need by repeatedly stressing the importance of individuals' identity, identification of and with, and commitment to their larger social milieu, be it region or community (Matthews, 1983:22-24, 162-163, 218).³ He maintains that an analysis of identity, identification and commitment provides the potential to "understand how members of a particular community relate to it individually... to understand the meaning community life has for them" (Matthews, 1983:161). In terms of my framework, it is identity, identification and commitment that ensure the genuinely **shared** attribute of indigenous lifeworld; that provide a common basis for socialisation, sociation and communication. It is worth quoting Matthews at greater length on this point:

(I)n addition to considering the formal and informal organisational structure of a community, it is also important to consider the way in which its members identify with it and express that identification in and through their actions... The essence of community integration lies in the level of 'communitism' which the members of a community demonstrate through their actions. (Matthews, 1983:163)

Even communities that exhibit little formal or informal community organisation may maintain a high degree of vitality if inhabitants display a high "level of personal social integration" (Matthews, 1983:163). He proposes that personal social integration can be assessed according to an examination of community members' identity of themselves and degree of identification and commitment to their community. The relationship between system and lifeworld as conceptualised

³ Matthews' conception of identity, identification, and commitment derives from a concern for regionalism. He sees these three processes as "fundamental dimensions of regionalism" (Matthews, 1983:22).

in Chapter Two helps provide the necessary integration among the variables with which Matthews is concerned.⁴

As Matthews has conceived them socialisation, sociation and communication are sub-systemic functions. However, the efficacy of those functions, that is the extent to which community members are socialised etc., depends to a great extent upon two considerations: how well individuals agree about what these functions are meant to achieve (common identity and identification), and how much individuals are willing to support particular formal and informal institutions for their achievement (commitment). Individuals are integrated into a community through a shared lifeworld, which represents members' common characteristics of identity and identification. Commitment to that common identity can therefore be understood as recognition of and support for a common lifeworld. But the distinction made earlier between sub-systemic functions and community members' commitment to them is more rigid than it should be. For most aspects of community existence the process of socialisation breeds its own identity, identification and commitment, because it reproduces the lifeworld upon which its validity is based. Socialisation fulfils a technical (sub-systemic) objective, a part of which is the dissemination of symbolic

⁴ Anthony Cohen deals with the issues of identity, identification and commitment by subsuming them within the larger category of **belonging** (Cohen, 1982). I think that Cohen's interpretation of belonging can be incorporated within the relation I perceive between indigenous lifeworld and social system, because belonging involves recognising one's integral attachment to and inclusion within a particular and inseparable web of meanings and activities. Cohen expresses it as follows:

"Belonging" implies very much more than merely having been born in the place. It suggests that one is an integral piece of the marvellously complicated fabric which constitutes the community; that one is a recipient of its proudly distinctive and consciously preserved culture -a repository of its traditions and values, a performer of its hallowed skills, an expert in its idioms and idiosyncrasies. The depth of such belonging is revealed in the forms of social organisation and association in the community so that when a person is identified as belonging to a particular kinship group or neighbourhood he becomes, at the same time, a recognisable member of the community as a whole and of its cultural panoply. (Cohen, 1982:21)

Belonging to a community, then, results from recognising one's acceptance of a communal set of traditions, values, idioms, skills, idiosyncrasies (lifeworld), and recognising ones integral place within indigenous forms of social organisation and association. Many of the papers in Cohen's edited volume Belonging: Identity and Social Organisation in British Rural Cultures (1982b) explore this theme.

commonalities. The same is true of sociation and communication. Indeed, the boundaries between socialisation, sociation and communication are also blurred if they are examined in the context of system and lifeworld.

The norms of socialisation, sociation and communication are rooted in a single lifeworld, the components of which are not easily separated.⁵ The conviction as to what constitutes an acceptable setting for the cultivation of friendships and leisure activities, and even the choice of suitable friends and activities is a production of socialisation. Likewise, choosing proper formal and informal channels for communicating relevant information, and the assessment of relevance, derive from socialisation. On the other hand, venues for sociation are also venues for socialisation and communication. Communication is in itself a form of socialisation. The main activity of sociation may be communication, etc. In Shimshal, at least, it is impossible to separate, except crudely, the processes of socialisation, sociation and communication. The empirical events during which socialisation, sociation and communication occur may be the same; only in terms of analytically conceived outcomes are the three processes different. Moreover, it is equally difficult to separate the process from individuals' identity, identification of and commitment to that process and its results. I suspect that this is true, except in degree, in other communities as well.⁶

These disparate conceptual categories are so entwined because, even in modernised

⁵ Although lifeworld is shared it has multiple meanings: different actors experience the shared lifeworld differently. This different experience leads to differentiation among individuals: an indigenous community is not a community where everyone is the same.

⁶ Another boundary that exists only for analytic purposes is that between formal and informal social institutions. In a small and highly integrated community such as Shimshal almost all interaction has at once formal and informal elements. For example, school is a formal institution, in which certain formal socialisation occurs. However, since the school teacher is known and respected in the community in a variety of formal and informal capacities, he/she cannot help but practice some informal (and perhaps contradictory) socialisation during school hours. His/her formal role lends credence to his/her informal function, and vice versa. Moreover, an institution or event which fulfils one task formally, say socialisation, may also be fulfilling another informally, say communication. For example, men gather at the religious building, the Ismaili *Jamaat Khana*, for formal religious socialisation, but in the course of the formal ritual exchange information and establish friendships informally. It is difficult to prioritise the various informal and formal capacities that garner an institution or event validity within the lifeworld. Role theory may help clarify these complicated relationships.

communities, large parts of system and lifeworld remain "intimately coupled", especially in the social organisational sphere. Sub-systemic media derive much of their legitimacy from a shared lifeworld. That legitimacy is established either by **assuming** that lifeworld convictions are valid (as in Habermas' "traditional" community), or by **arguing** their validity in rational discourse ("modern" community).

Of course, social practices are conceivable in which there is no shared lifeworld, and no forum for rational discourse.⁷ In that case socialisation, sociation and communication either take many paths and follow several sets of rules, or are constrained to operate within one imposed (and not lifeworld-socialised) set of rules. There can be temporary social stability but no social vitality in that circumstance, because identity, identification and commitment are either lacking or focused at a different operational level.

Most communities are probably situated somewhere between these extremes. Some elements of *lifeworld* remain intimately coupled with sub-systemic organisation on the basis of unchallenged convictions. Other vehicles for socialisation, sociation and communication (but especially socialisation) infiltrate from outside, and remain uncoupled from lifeworld convictions (for example, the elaborate royal bureaucracy described in Chapter Five). Over time these vehicles, or sub-systemic media, become socialised into lifeworld, and effect the partial "inner colonisation of the lifeworld". This is the process of modernisation. Finally, certain lifeworld elements may be coupled with parts of the social system through the outcome of rational communication. That is the process of modernity.

Most small communities are experiencing powerful systemic influences from the outside, which are disruptive of a social system that is validated by lifeworld convictions that are internally **unchallenged**. Such a lifeworld is vulnerable to inner colonisation by economic and bureaucratic media, which are themselves destructive of the perpetuation of a shared lifeworld (see Chapter

⁷ Colonialism, for example.

Two for a theoretical discussion of this process; 7.2 offers formal education in Shimshal as an example).⁸ Social vitality is threatened because shared commitment and identity are compromised. It follows then, that social vitality depends on the recoupling of a rationalised system and a rationalised lifeworld through a process of communicative discourse. The rules for socialisation, sociation and communication must be challenged and argued and reformulated communicatively, so that commitment, identification and identity may be enhanced and shared.

7.2 Socialisation and Sustainability in Shimshal

7.2.1 Introduction

Socialisation has been identified as the process of moulding individuals according to a community's "norms and values and the ways it provides to earn a livelihood" (Matthews, 1983:157-158). Socialising functions may occur informally (eg. through the family), and formally (eg. through such things as educational systems and religious organisations) (Matthews, 1983:158). One approach to understanding social vitality at the community level is to interpret the extent to which socialising functions are being performed formally or informally.

Shimshal employs a variety of formal and informal institutions to socialise its members. Socialisation occurs informally at a variety of scales, including the household, medial agnatic lineage, medial affinal kinship, maximal lineage, and neighbourhood (see Chapter Five). All of these institutions share some characteristics of what we might call family; people of various ages and various aptitudes live and work together, and in the course of their interaction the younger and less experienced learn the norms, values and technical skills exemplified by the rest. Most informal

⁸ This is a marxist political economy argument. Capitalism works so that money and power are distributed unevenly, resulting in a change in existing community relations and in the destruction of common interests and convictions.

fora for socialisation are not specifically or primarily geared to that purpose. They may be focused on sociation (as are affinal kinship relations), or communication (as are many lineage interactions; see Chapter Five). Or they may be geared to another organisational sphere altogether. The household, for example, socialises individuals in the course of its economic and ecological activities. In my experience, informal socialisation in Shimshal is seldom deliberate or single-minded.⁹

Formal socialisation tends to be more deliberate. That is not to say, however, that formal socialising institutions are not also (or even primarily) institutions related to communication, sociation, or even other systemic organisational spheres. For example, in Chapter 7.3 I discuss the *kuyotch* (community council) as an institution which facilitates communication and political representation. At the same time participants in the *kuyotch* and the larger community it represents become socialised into both the ideals which govern the *kuyotch*'s decision making process, and norms, values and ways to make a living that are negotiated within the *kuyotch*.

Traditionally the *kuyotch*, various lineage councils, the Ismaili congregation, and an array of ritual obligations and observances associated with Shimshal's ritual congregation provided the main formal avenues for socialisation. Within the past two decades a number of new socialising institutions have evolved. These include the village organisations and women's organisations, several Ismaili councils and boards, activity clubs, and the three Shimshal schools.¹⁰ These new organisations have changed the process of socialisation in Shimshal, and have shifted the norms, values and ways to make a living that are socialised. In so doing, they have been important mechanisms in the trend toward modernity.

The best-established and most ubiquitous of these new socialising institutions is Shimshal's

⁹ One form of socialisation is disciplining children. Shimshali children are rarely disciplined in any planned or systematic way. Any elder who observes misbehaviour in a child feels free to scold or slap the child, and then ignore the incident. This community-wide old/young distinction and nonchalance in terms of intent characterises all types of informal socialisation in Shimshal. (That, of course, is similar to most informal socialisation in our society.)

¹⁰ Ismaili boards and councils and activity clubs are discussed in more detail in 7.4.

system of formal education. The three schools in Shimshal, and the down country colleges to which many students graduate, have had a direct, deliberate and radical socialising influence on members of virtually all households in Shimshal. In addition, the presence of schools and graduates from schools has had far-ranging systemic implications. In 7.2 I trace the history of formal education in Shimshal in an attempt to interpret its effect as a socialising mechanism on social vitality, and community sustainability. I show that the modernising tendencies of formal education, as it has occurred in Shimshal, have been ameliorated as graduates from that system have turned to the VOs to reintegrate themselves, and their new cosmopolitan lifeworlds, into the dominant shared lifeworld of other Shimshalis. I conclude from the example that VOs in Shimshal are combining with the formal education system to create a more sustainable community.

7.2.2 Socialisation In Shimshal: The Example of Formal Education

Formal education, either religious or secular, has only recently become a vehicle for socialisation in Shimshal. Prior to the Hunza/Nagyr campaign of 1891 the community was visited perhaps once a year by an hereditary Ismaili *pir* from Gilgit, who collected tithes and offered some brief religious instruction. After 1891 the *tham* of Hunza established personal relations with the Aga Khan, and secured from him the right to appoint lay Ismaili clergy and collect religious contributions. At that time *tham* Nazim Khan summoned men from all constituent villages to his palace at Baltit. The two men summoned from Shimshal were the leaders of the Graziktor and Baquiktor sub-clans. At Baltit they learned the gospel of the Aga Khan, and then returned home to preach and teach to the people of Shimshal. Daulat Amin, a direct agnatic descendent of the Graziktor elder is current leader of the Shimshal *Tariqah* board for religious education, and headmaster of the boys' school. For the next sixty years occasional homilies by lay clergy, and some more intense instruction for particularly motivated boys provided the only formal education

to the inhabitants of Shimshal. It seems unlikely that the level of teaching was vigorous; lay clergy themselves had very little instruction or background in Ismaili doctrine.¹¹

During this period informal education for children occurred mainly at the household and medial lineage levels, among the persons with whom children were most familiar. It consisted, as it does today, of the sharing of stories and songs, and the cultivation of practical and technical social and ecological skills. For the most part instruction blended in with other forms of socialisation (eg. example, imitation, participation, reprimand) and with other social mechanisms of sociation and communication. Most educational opportunities for children also existed for adults.

Village-wide dance ceremonies are a good example of this blending among social sub-systemic mechanisms and among age groups. Dances are primarily manifestations of sociation: opportunities for community members to come together in recreation (see 7.4). However, they are also opportunities for the community to express its shared norms and values in a show of solidarity. Dances test the effectiveness of socialisation, while at the same time ritually enacting, recreating and revising the range of social, political and economic relations of the community in a way that can be absorbed by everyone, including children (see Chapter Five and 7.3). The recreational acts of dancing, feasting and speech-making that accompany dance ceremonies serve as powerful forms of socialisation, even as they demonstrate the effectiveness of previous socialisation.

Today what is absorbed at home, or in the fields, or at the meeting place is only part of a larger array of educational opportunities for children. Until the 1960s it represented education almost in its entirety. One other avenue for education existed for adult males that did not exist for children or women. That was participation in councils, primarily the *kuyotch*, but also lineage councils.

The *kuyotch* is where some community norms, values and capabilities, a little at a time, may be openly contested and decided. One of its functions is to make technical decisions. The

¹¹ Several Shimshali elders showed me a photo taken in 1963, and pointed to the only Shimshali at that time who could speak a language other than Wakhi (he spoke Urdu, the national language of Pakistan, and Burushaski, the language of Burusho Hunza and Nagyr).

other function of the *kuyotch* is to forge an intersubjective understanding of lifeworld among all members where an intersubjective understanding did not previously exist. It is where villagers come to educate, and be educated about, one another. Just as dance ceremonies are manifestations of education through sociation, so does the *kuyotch* manifest education by communication (see 7.3.3)

In 1951 the district government in Gilgit sent a teacher from lowland Pakistan to Shimshal to establish a boys' school. According to the present headmaster and several other elders the people of Shimshal felt no need for formal education at that time. They did not cooperate in the logistics of setting up a school, and did not send their children to classes. After a few weeks the teacher left.¹²

Twelve years later, in 1963, one of Shimshal's leading households sent their eldest son to Gilgit to receive formal education. This boy of 14, by the name of Daulat Amin, was the first Shimshali to learn to read or write with any proficiency. The fact that this particular person was allowed or encouraged to study outside of Shimshal establishes an early link between traditional status and authority, and formal education. His direct agnatic elder was head of the Graziktor subclan and one of two Ismaili lay clergy. His matrilineal grandfather had been *lumbardar* (Wakhi: *arbop*; English: Headman), so he was also directly descended from the leading lineage of the Bachtikator subclan. In addition, Daulat Amin's grandmother, who was from Gulmit, nursed one of the *tham's* children.

While Daulat Amin was gone, in 1965, the *tham* arranged for two Hunza men to operate a Diamond Jubilee school in Shimshal.¹³ This second venture in formal education had a better chance of success, because it had some roots in the lifeworld. First, it had the official support of

¹² Until that time all formal education had been associated with Islam, and particularly with teaching Ismaili doctrine. A non-Ismaili lowland teacher with no religious authority was far outside of Shimshal's lifeworld conception of a legitimate educator. In addition, what he taught did not seem to have relevance to Shimshal existence at that time.

¹³ Diamond Jubilee or DJ schools were sponsored by the Aga Khan to commemorate the 60th anniversary of his reign as Imam. Thousands of these schools were built in Ismaili communities in Asia, Africa and the Middle East.

tham and *Imam*, both of whom occupied a place in Shimshalis' lifeworlds. Second, the teachers were Hunzakuts and Ismailis who shared at least some of the norms, values, and convictions prevalent in Shimshal. Third, Shimshal had entered a period of modernisation. In 1963 a detachment of army troops established a camp about five kilometres upstream from Shimshal village, in the midst of the community's pastoral territory.¹⁴ The people of Shimshal had continuous contact with the soldiers, who were mainly natives of Hunza and Gilgit. By all accounts this contact was positive; Shimshalis with whom I talked remember those years fondly, and explain their present positive feelings toward the Pakistani army as an outcome of that contact. Shimshalis supplied the detachment with firewood, meat and other local commodities. They received their first extended supply of cash, tea and sugar, as well as a great deal of information about the outside. Although few Shimshalis are old enough to remember the period well the impression I get is that this was a time when system and lifeworld were uncoupling.¹⁵ The economic media of money (both cash and commodities) and power (unequal access among households to army officers) were beginning to alter the way households governed their technical activities, so that these activities became divorced from legitimisation in the lifeworld, and gained legitimacy in systemic terms. Very quickly these media infiltrated parts of some individuals' lifeworlds, so that they achieved some symbolic value of their own. Under these circumstances formal education with a lowland bias became much more valuable. It was an obvious source of access to the distributors of money and power.

The Hunzakut school teachers succeeded in establishing a Diamond Jubilee school, and building a schoolhouse. However, according to Shimshalis who were potential students at that time

¹⁴ The troops were guarding the newly-established border between China and Pakistan.

¹⁵ The uncoupling process is not in itself negative. Certainly, Shimshalis remember the presence of the army as beneficial, although many do not perceive a connection between that initial contact with a capitalist world system and present system/lifeworld dilemmas. Uncoupling is the starting point toward both modernity (rationality) and modernisation (colonisation and a subsequent loss of freedom and meaning). Either one of these outcomes may result from the uncoupling of system and lifeworld.

few children were encouraged to attend, or did attend, on a regular basis. Most children and adults considered school time to be a waste of time.

Daulat Amin returned to Shimshal in 1966 with instructions to replace the two Hunza men as teacher. He has been headmaster of Shimshal's boys' school ever since. He does not have his matriculate degree (about grade ten), but on the strength of many brief training sessions in Gilgit and a number of correspondence courses his formal education is equivalent to the other Shimshal teachers, all of whom have college diplomas.¹⁶ Daulat Amin recalls that his initial attempts to propagate a formal educational system in Shimshal had only slightly more success than the efforts of his predecessors. For a long time only a few boys had the encouragement from their elders (fathers, mothers and household heads) or the personal motivation to attend classes. Most household heads continued to consider school an unnecessary obstacle to the natural process of learning and doing that children would otherwise experience in the course of performing household chores. At the same time, the position of Daulat Amin's household and lineage, as well as the awe inspired by the realisation that a local son had become educated enough to be a teacher, provided the school a measure of community-based legitimacy. The very fact that the school remained open demonstrates its success: it was not certain at that time that a school would remain operational even if supported by the government, *tham* and Aga Khan. Even today numerous communities in Gilgit District are without fully operational schools. The success of the Shimshal school, such as it was, resulted initially from its incorporation into the prevailing indigenous norms and values of the community, and later from its modification of those norms and values. It was initially accepted as at least a potentially legitimate venue for socialisation, largely because its headmaster was a member of a respected Shimshal household and an important Shimshal lineage. In this sense it became a sub-systemic social institution whose legitimacy was based on the traditional lifeworld.

¹⁶ For a person who has not been away from his village for more than a couple of weeks at a time since 1966 Daulat Amin has a formidable education. His competence in several languages provides a good example. I am confident that he speaks Urdu, Wakhi and Arabic fluently, and has a working knowledge of English, Burushaski and Shina. I have seen him read and write English, Urdu and Persian. He also has a rudimentary grasp of French, Italian and German.

Any independent, technical system-derived legitimacy the school or "teacher-role" claimed came from outside the socialisation mechanism of formal education. Daulat Amin traces his initial acceptance as a teacher not to his accomplishments in the classroom, but rather to other innovations and ideas his education and outside experience allowed him to introduce to the community. Others that I talked to verify this statement. For example, Daulat Amin claims that when he returned from Gilgit he convinced elders that potatoes and vegetables would improve the traditional diet of cereals and dairy products. Before that time no vegetables were grown in Shimshal, and people believed that "if they grew potatoes the goats and sheep would die".¹⁷ His household is still among the most experimental in terms of trying different varieties of vegetables. In addition, when he returned to Shimshal, Daulat Amin spoke Burushaski and Urdu and had learned the rudiments of accounting, so he was able to competently negotiate economic contracts with the army quartermasters on behalf of his household and lineage. He became valued as a person who could represent Shimshal in technical interaction with the outside; something his traditional status alone did not guarantee. These ecological innovations and economic skills facilitated the school's acceptance as a technically useful institution, and initiated the long process whereby it became technically valid according to its own systemic terms.

This process exemplifies the decoupling of system and lifeworld, and its partial (at least) subsequent rationalised recoupling, as the formal education process gains a new technical legitimacy apart from its initial (practical) lifeworld legitimacy. Over time the systemic interests achieved through formal education begin to socialise students according to technical norms, and to the extent that this occurs, portions of the lifeworld become colonised.

The second Shimshali to be formally educated was Suleiman Shah, a youth from another affluent, but not especially prestigious, household. He belonged to a household of non-partitioned

¹⁷ Several other villagers, including Daulat Amin's harshest critics, credit him with the introduction of several varieties of vegetable. It seems that potatoes had been introduced earlier (Schomberg writes that he saw potatoes in Shimshal in the 1930s), but became more widely cultivated around this time.

brothers.¹⁸ His father was younger brother to the household head. In 1967 Suleiman Shah enrolled in school at Gilgit against his senior uncle's wishes, so he received no financial support from his household or lineage. After studying in Gilgit for several years he was invited to try his matriculation in Karachi. A distant member of his mother's lineage named Ali Rahman (not a Shimshali) who was attending university in Karachi offered to help support him, so he enrolled. After earning his matriculation he was forced to leave school because Ali Rahman had died and all funds returned to his household. Suleiman Shah joined the Pakistani Army, where he was able to continue his education sporadically. When he enlisted Suleiman Shah changed his name to Ali Rahman.¹⁹ He retired from the army in 1988 at age 32, and returned to Shimshal.

Throughout his employment in the army Ali Rahman visited Shimshal for periods of extended leave. Some of the wages he earned returned with him, as did the benefits of his education and experience of the outside. Over the years he served as secretary or treasurer to a number of local political bodies, including the union council, the district council, and the AKRSP village organisation (see Chapter Eight). He also became an important contact and source of advice for villagers who wanted to establish economic ties with the outside. All of these technical benefits to the community at large derived from Ali Rahman's formal and informal education outside of Shimshal. Although he was not (and is not) a household head, nor the member of a particularly important household, Ali Rahman accumulated considerable status and prestige in Shimshal. He had made himself indispensable to the community.

Ali Rahman's significance here is that he was the first Shimshali to achieve a high social status virtually independent from the traditional lifeworld, and indeed against the wishes of his

¹⁸ Non-partitioned brothers are those who could legally separate into independent households, but who have not done so (see Chapter Five).

¹⁹ Ali Rahman told me that he changed his name for two reasons. First, because he wanted to honour the man to whom he owed his education and opportunities, and second because Suleiman Shah is a very proud and regal name that ill suited a youngster from Shimshal who was trying to remain inconspicuous in the Pakistani army.

household head.²⁰ The fact that he has been accepted as an important, almost "great", Shimshali on the strength of his technical accomplishments, and without benefit of a strong household or lineage, signifies the beginning of the inner colonisation of the lifeworld by subsystemic forces. The status of lifeworld diminished with the appearance of educational (socialisation) opportunities that bore little direct relation to those structures responsible for symbolic interpretations. Gradually, lifeworld was no longer the only source of identity or social status; neither was it any longer the only milieu for socialisation. Formal education and informal economic interaction with the outside, both subsystemic creations outside of the lifeworld, had begun to supplement lifeworld as sources of identity, social status and socialisation. It seems, however, that even as this process of modernisation was evolving it was ameliorated by the incorporation of Ali Rahman's new-found identity and status into the shared lifeworld of the community.²¹ He used his experience and monetary wealth to benefit his community, lineage and himself in traditionally acceptable ways. For example he built a dwelling at Spordin pasture as a memorial to his grandmother, and a bridge at another pasture in honour of a different ancestor. In addition, he lent his wisdom to the *kuyotch* when it was asked for (not otherwise for he is not a household head), and served in a variety of official, but not overtly leadership, capacities.

The result of this careful participation was to increase the status of his whole household in terms acceptable to the traditional lifeworld, while at the same time subtly shifting the dimensions of that lifeworld. Of course these changes occurred over a period of decades and relate to circumstances in Shimshal far beyond the control of Ali Rahman. Still, his story exemplifies the myriad individual cases that contribute to Shimshal's shift toward modernity, and demonstrates the

²⁰ Villagers of my acquaintance speak glowingly of Ali Rahman despite their personal attitudes toward village politics or economic development. He is described as an intelligent and knowledgeable man who is "kind and gentle to his family", and who is "cooperating with the villagers".

²¹ Although this process is easy to describe it is difficult to explain. I suspect that the resilience of the lifeworld owes something to the fact that in Shimshal it has traditionally been moulded to some extent by communicative rationality. In this particular case Ali Rahman's village-oriented motives may have facilitated the process.

positive process whereby traditional system and lifeworld are decoupled, rationalised, and rationally recoupled in a more modern form.

When Ali Rahman returned to Shimshal in 1988 his father and wife were ill with tuberculosis. He spent his summer earning money by portering, and in the autumn took both invalids to Karachi for medical treatment. Informants in Shimshal say that he is spending his savings and pensions for medical treatment, and has taken a job in Karachi as a security guard. His father recovered only to be hit by a bus and crippled. His wife is still undergoing treatment. Ali Rahman took this action against his household's wishes. They believe that he is wasting household money and labour on two non-productive household members. For the most part, however, public opinion in Shimshal supports Ali Rahman. One elder predicted that Ali Rahman would partition from his uncles. This support of an individual in opposition to his household head is unusual, despite the humanitarian implications. Ali Rahman continues to test the constraints of traditional lifeworld.

All other Shimshalis who have participated in formal education have been students of Daulat Amin. Fermanullah was the third person to leave Shimshal for formal education. He was Daulat Amin's only regular pupil for the first few years that the school was open. Fermanullah belongs to the leading household of the Baquikator lineage. He received his matriculate degree in Gilgit, took some additional medical courses, and is now medical dispenser for Shimshal. Again we see the link between formal education and traditional social (and economic) position.

In 1977 the Pakistani government took over the education of boys. The boys' school in Shimshal became a government school with Daulat Amin as headmaster, and a girls' DJ school was formed (see Plate Ten). An educated Shimshali man was appointed teacher at the girls' school. When I was in Shimshal in 1989 there were four teachers at the boy' school, two teachers at the girls' school, and one instructor at a recently formed "DJ Coaching Centre" for girls. Boys and girls can finish middle school (about Grade Eight) in Shimshal. After that boys must leave Shimshal to receive their matriculate degree. Women can receive an unofficial "tenth class"

Plate Ten: Shimshal Boys' School
(Taken from the courtyard of the headmaster's household dwelling. The school has three rooms.)

education at the DJ Coaching Centre. Instruction at the Coaching Centre is oriented toward practical skills that are considered important in Shimshal (ie. some reading, writing and languages, accounting and arithmetic, gardening, sewing, cooking, hygiene, child rearing). In essence, the coaching centre is a preparation for marriage. The half dozen women that attend are between 13 and 17. Most women are married at 15. Despite their responsibilities as junior (or senior) members in their husband's household, several married women attend the coaching centre fairly regularly.²²

Currently roughly 70 of 90 Shimshali boys are registered in school, and 50 of 90 girls. Headmaster Amin tells me that daily attendance is about a third below that, so that approximately half of Shimshal's boys and a third of its girls attend school regularly.²³ In addition, three or four boys are attending middle school outside the community, and perhaps 20 young men are working toward matriculate, college or university degrees down country.²⁴ On the whole these numbers compare favourably with other rural communities in Gilgit District, although circumstances vary greatly from village to village. Certainly, school attendance in Shimshal is higher than in rural Shia communities.²⁵

²² Typically these women share two characteristics: they are from wealthy households, and their husbands are well-educated. Attending the coaching centre is a sign of status: it associates a woman with an "in" group, and demonstrates a household's wealth (at least in terms of female labour). In addition, some young husbands told me that they liked their wives to attend the coaching centre because the experience made them more like their educated husbands, with the same goals and interests.

²³ I spent several days at the Shimshal schools, and lived adjacent to the boys' school. My observations agree with Daulat Amin's estimate.

²⁴ None of these figures are certain. Since school is not compulsory in any practicable sense not even Daulat Amin can say who exactly is registered. Some youths who are residing in Gilgit or Karachi are devoting their time to working and studying in various proportions, so they are hard to categorise. Several men have been "studying" down country for extended periods with little contact with Shimshal. Some of these have doubtless initiated the messy and uncertain process of dissociating themselves from the community. Ali Rahman's brother, for example, has been a student and journalist in Karachi for several years. He does not remit wages to his household in Shimshal, and it seems unlikely that he will return.

²⁵ In 1986 I spent three months in a Shia community with a population of 4000. There was no girls' school. The boys' school was often closed, and when it was open it seldom had an attendance of more than 30.

Formal education has clearly become an accepted and unexceptional form of socialisation in Shimshal. However, levels of attendance demonstrate that not all households have utilised schooling to the same degree. The success, and lack of success, of formal education in emerging as a socialising mechanism relates to Matthews' statement that a community must socialise members according to its prevailing "norms and values and the ways it provides to earn a livelihood" (Matthews, 1983:157). It is important to understand, first, how formal education has been accepted as a legitimate form of socialisation, and second, whether it has successfully socialised members into prevailing norms, values and ways to make a living.

Shimshal's three schools have been successfully incorporated into the community's shared lifeworld, so that community members accept formal "school-oriented" education as a legitimate and expedient (even necessary) institutional component of Shimshal. Villagers believe that their children (especially their boys) **ought** to have access to formal education, even if many households choose not to exploit that access. Such an acceptance of school-oriented education seems to stem from both practical and technical sources.

First, the headmaster and founder of the current education system is Daulat Amin, a man with strong lifeworld-based prestige and legitimacy. Other Shimshal teachers also come from prosperous households and respected Shimshal lineages. Thus, formal education in Shimshal derives its status as a **practically legitimate** institution from the personalities most closely associated with it (this process is described above in terms of Daulat Amin and Ali Rahman).

Second, the initial few educated Shimshalis used their formal education to technical advantage. Daulat Amin returned to Shimshal with initiatives to improve diet and health, and with the acumen to negotiate successful deals with the army. Ali Rahman translated his education into an army career, a regular pension, and the ability to contribute "good works" to the community. Fermanullah's education allowed him to provide medical care to Shimshal. These examples demonstrated to villagers that formal education could benefit both the individuals involved, and the community itself. As the community became more involved in relations with the outside the benefits

of formal education increased, and more villagers perceived some level of schooling as a **technically expedient** attribute for at least one member of their household. Some villagers with whom I spoke had mixed feelings about the necessity and benefit of education for themselves or their children, but all agreed that it was important to have some educated individuals in the community who could deal with the outside on the community's behalf. Shimshalis are convinced that access to education or educated persons can improve their exploitation of technical subsystemic structures.

Formal education has become an accepted form of socialisation within the community, but not for all persons and not to the exclusion of other forms of socialisation. Individuals under thirty are, as a group, much more educated than individuals over thirty. Wealthy or high status households tend to be somewhat more educated than poorer and more "common" households.²⁶ Males are more educated than females, although that gap is smaller now than any time in the past. Finally, the labour of members belonging to large households is more easily spared for education than that of individuals belonging to labour-poor households.

Shimshalis perceive a trade-off between formal education and other types of socialisation and technical opportunity. Not only is this a trade-off in terms of wealth and labour, but also in terms of conviction and belief. Community members recognise that a commitment to education can replace (to some extent) previous lifeworld commitments to traditional norms and values. However, this dilemma is perceived to be important only at higher levels of education, away from the village.

The need to choose between an educated outlook and a traditional outlook is relatively unimportant at the level of primary school in Shimshal. School attendance in Shimshal costs virtually nothing in financial terms. The children are too young to contribute much labour, and in

²⁶ These trends are not absolute. For example, members of the *lumbardar's* household, which is the most important and one of the wealthiest in the community, have attended school only sporadically.

any case school teachers schedule classes around periods of high labour demand.²⁷ More importantly, the school teachers are respected villagers who are trusted to formally educate children **within** the prevailing lifeworld of the community. Most villagers perceive primary school as an opportunity for children to learn some technical skills associated with effective interaction with the outside world. Skills include reading, writing, arithmetic, and some knowledge of Urdu and English. For Shimshalis school provides a way to socialise children into new ways to make a living which have become increasingly important technically, and increasingly valid in lifeworld terms, but for which few other efficient socialising mechanisms exist.

The schools in Shimshal are seen as fora for technical training, and not as important vehicles for socialising children into prevailing or new lifeworld convictions. Household heads invariably described their children's participation or non-participation in terms of potential material gain for the household. Without exception, villagers I spoke with link primary education to technical goals, and not practical (symbolic) considerations of identity, identification or commitment. Primary education within Shimshal is seen as something which cannot hurt, but which might help, household viability in economic terms.

Shimshalis perceive their children's education within Shimshal as a fairly safe and reliable opportunity for individual and community improvement. Education outside of the community is recognised as something different altogether, with more serious potential benefits and hazards in terms of both social system and lifeworld.

The most immediate constraints to educating children outside the village may be described as cost and opportunity cost. Despite assistance from the Aga Khan Education Services for tuition, room and board (at least at Aga Khan Education Services sponsored schools in Gilgit and Karachi) students rely heavily on financial support from home or from relatives outside the village. Only a few households have easy access to the needed financial resources. These are households who

²⁷ They have to, since they are all farming villagers themselves.

have managed to convert traditional agriculturally-based wealth into money, and/or who have achieved a strong economic position through recent financial interaction with the outside. Traditional wealthy and high-status households do not necessarily have the monetary resources to support their children's education. Neither do traditionally poor and low-status households. According to Daulat Amin, when village children were first sent away for education, it was at the expense and initiative of their parents, so that students tended to come from a certain sector of Shimshal society, namely those households who had gained some of their wealth recently, and outside of the traditional agricultural sector. Now the community in *kuyotch* decides which boys have the most potential, and the village organisation (AKRSP VO) contributes to their expenses according to the circumstances of each deserving child's household. Although neither Daulat Amin nor any other informant brought this to my attention, it seems that as schoolmaster, and Ismaili education leader, and village organisation president, Daulat Amin has considerable say in the choice of deserving students. The practice of village sponsorship has enlarged the socio-economic range from which prospective students are drawn. Still, most advanced Shimshali students are members of what villagers would describe as respectable and prosperous (if not wealthy) households.²⁸

The reason for this continued correlation between socio-economic status and educational opportunity stems from several sources. First, prosperous households can provide children the freedom from agricultural labour needed to excel in primary school. Second, households who have experienced some benefits from interacting economically with the outside are more likely to encourage their children to pursue formal education. Third, despite sponsorship by the community individual households end up paying many miscellaneous expenses associated with living and studying away from home. Fourth, the selection of "deserving" students occurs at least partly on the basis of community-based lifeworld convictions. Social status and prosperity, in terms of

²⁸ Of course households are free to send their own boys away for education at their own expense, even if they are not sponsored by the community. Several households have done this.

household, lineage and subclan, are accepted as legitimate validity claims on behalf of prospective students. All other things being equal, members of certain households are considered more deserving of the chance for education than members of other households. Finally, only well-established households can afford to forego the participation of an intelligent male member in household affairs. This opportunity cost is one which Shimshalis perceive as problematic at several levels.

At the simplest level household heads are reluctant to allow a thirteen or fourteen year old boy to leave the community for several years at the very time when he can begin to contribute valuably to the household's agricultural subsistence. Many land-rich households cannot spare the labour, and most land-poor households cannot spare the income that could be derived from portering or other wage-based activities.

At a more subtle, but still technically-oriented, level is the recognition of opportunity costs that go beyond forgone labour for a few years. In essence, household heads are committing students to a life as something else, or something more, than a traditional farmer. They realise that at least some of these students' subsistence-based labour is gone forever, to be replaced by some other, probably more monetary, benefit to the household. Otherwise, there is little point in advanced education. Household heads may want returning students to begin new economic enterprises within the community in addition to participation in the subsistence economy, or they may hope that their sons use their education as an avenue for an army career, or some other temporary occupation outside of the community. In either case the household must have sufficient other members to ensure continued agricultural viability, and continued participation in community affairs. Indeed, if the student does not plan to return home after graduation, then another prospective household head must be available (see 5.2.4 and 5.2.5). Not all households have enough junior males to pursue this option, or the commitment (or perceived need) to widen the household's sources of economic viability.

Recently villagers have begun to recognise what they consider a more disturbing

opportunity cost associated with sending boys away to school. Boys are becoming socialised into a lifeworld, a set of norms and values and ways to make a living, that are not those of Shimshal. Adults realise that their children may choose never to return to Shimshal or maintain their commitment to Shimshal. If they do return (which almost all have), many return with convictions and skills and attitudes which are not perceived as appropriate to Shimshal, and without lifeworld and technical attributes which would allow them to contribute to the community's indigenous lifeworld and social system. Returning students know many things their elders do not know, and do not know many things their elders know, so that for the first time in memory Shimshal is experiencing a generation gap. This is especially true of students who have spent time in Karachi.

This is not a very clear-cut generation gap, because most young men have not left for education and therefore have more in common with their parents than with educated peers. Neither is it clear what the ramifications of this situation will be; the first students educated in Karachi have just returned in the last year or two, or have only returned for holidays. Nevertheless, it is clear that many elders are worried about the future of these young men in the village. The following comment by a Shimshali elder is fairly representative of what I heard from other adult villagers:

At the present time Karachi is a poor place for Shimshali boys to go to school. There is political strife and violence, and the schools are often closed. Many serious problems are caused by boys returning for holidays from Karachi. These problems are new to Shimshal, and change many things. When they return they do not belong to the village. They are not satisfied with simple existence in Shimshal after the urban amenities of Karachi. They do not cooperate with their parents. They no longer respect the hard labour of farming, and many have not learned how to sow and irrigate. So most of the boys do no work, but rather play cricket all day, and stir up political and religious problems in the village, especially among younger schoolboys. This last is an especial problem. Returning boys are full of national politics that mean nothing in Shimshal. They argue and fight among themselves according to their political affiliation, and set families against one another. However the larger problem is to come, when these boys return permanently and must manage the agricultural and social responsibilities of the household.

Ghulam Shah, an eighteen year old who had in 1989 himself just returned from five years working (not going to school) in Karachi, admitted that he and another eighteen year old friend (Hasil Shah) who had been to school in Karachi were having some difficulties fitting back into

Shimshal. Ghulam said that Hasil is a sort of "lost soul... He has land and animals but doesn't know what to do with them. He has been away at school and doesn't know the irrigation system, the pastoral cycle, or how to harvest crops". Ghulam went on to say that he himself is the same because "I have spent most of my life away from Shimshal, so now I don't really understand the whole farming business. I don't know when I have rights to water, or how much water the crops need, or even how the council or village organisation works. My uncle and brothers do all that sort of work. I don't even like the food any more". Neither Ghulam nor Hasil do much to contribute to indigenous social obligations or subsistence agriculture; they perform agricultural tasks that are usually undertaken by children. Yet both are recently married, and Hasil is household head.²⁹ During the time I was in Shimshal Hasil spent his days portering for me, visiting with me, and teaching his young wife her lessons. Ghulam spent some time working for me, but also worked part time at a hotel along the Karakoram Highway at Gulmit. In addition, he and his uncle plan to buy a jeep, so that Ghulam can earn money taxiing Shimshalis and others along the Karakoram Highway between Pasu and Gilgit.

The cases of these two men do not comprise isolated examples. A skit performed at *Salgarah* (a feast held each July 11th in honour of the Aga Khan; see 7.4.2) provides a poignant demonstration that this situation is recognised by the community at large. Part of the *Salgarah* celebration involves a *tamasha* (a "do") which is itself comprised of speeches, competitions, awards, ceremonial dancing, reviews of community groups, and skits. As described in Chapter Five these various events serve as expressions of community solidarity, and also venues to express changing relations in the village, changing norms and values, and village members' responses to symbolic and technical aspects of the community (ritual congregation) at large. The events of *Salgarah* are public and yet safe and subtle expressions of individuals' feelings about the community. At each *Salgarah* several skits are performed, usually by the male youth and younger

²⁹ Hasil's case is exceptional. He was orphaned as a child, and was brought up by his uncle. When Hasil married he formed his own household, but his lands are worked by his uncle. In essence, Hasil is a household head who is totally incapable of managing his own household.

male adults. They are comedies intended to portray some aspect of Shimshal's history. In 1989 three skits were performed. The first reenacted the discovery and founding of Shimshal by Mamu Shah. The second portrayed how an early Shimshali tamed the first domestic yak. The third outlined the evolution of Shimshal, as follows. First, a group of youngsters marched into the courtyard wearing skins and scratching themselves. They represented primitive Shimshal. These primitives were joined by other youths in homespun clothing who were driving a yak: early Shimshali herders. Next, a group of youths dressed in typical current Shimshali clothing (pyjamas, vest, Hunza hat) arrived, and pretended to plough, irrigate, work on the road, recite the Koran, and carry porter loads. This represented contemporary Shimshal. The last scene involved four or five teenage boys dressed in running shoes, jeans, t-shirts, aviator sunglasses and baseball caps. They walked into the courtyard, shrugged, and turned on a transistor radio. For several minutes they stood listening to the radio. After that they shrugged again and then walked off-stage. These youths represented the latest stage in Shimshal's evolution: returning "Karachi kids".

The last scene in this evolution was a new addition to a familiar skit. It was a great success; the assembled congregation (virtually the whole community) responded with shouts of "well done" and "how true". Most community members thought that the scene was hilariously funny. At the same time, given the ritual significance of the venue in which it was performed, the skit served as tacit recognition, by the youth who performed it and by the adults who applauded it, that the predicament of returning students is a problem for the community, and a threat to ritual solidarity.

What the evolution skit expresses, along with comments by youths and elders, is that returning students are poorly socialised into the norms, values and ways to make a living that prevail in Shimshal. They do not share important elements of the lifeworld of other Shimshalis. Nor are they acquainted with indigenous technical social, political and ecological skills. They are the least well-socialised of all Shimshalis. This contrasts with earlier graduates who returned to Shimshal (ie. Daulat Amin, Fermanullah, Ali Rahman, school teachers, and others), who are

generally acknowledged to exemplify the contemporary well-socialised Shimshali. Reasons why the apparent success of formal education as a socialising mechanism has diminished may be understood in terms of my model of community sustainability.

The men I introduced earlier in this section left Shimshal when they were well into their teens. By the time they departed they were already well-socialised into the indigenous lifeworld of the community, and were familiar with agricultural and pastoral cycles. Current students are usually several years younger when they leave the community. Their socialisation as children may be complete, but they have not yet been fully socialised as adult Shimshalis. When they return to Shimshal in their late teens their indigenous lifeworld elements are still those of children, while their down country lifeworld elements are adult. They are unable to re-enter Shimshal except as indigenous children, or foreign adults. Neither stance is acceptable to the prevailing social system and lifeworld of the community, and of course neither option is realistic. It seems that most returning students are content to exist as children for the time being, and most elders accept them in that role, but that cannot last.³⁰ This circumstance, if it continues, will present a problem when the number of dependant graduates becomes more than the village or household economies can bear.³¹ The rationale that I was given by both young and old was that these young men are biding their time until the road is complete. Then they will use their education and familiarity with the outside to economic advantage for their households and community. Several, together with their elders, have begun plans for taxi services, guest houses, trekking companies, and other cash oriented enterprises (eg. Ghulam Shah). This, of course, is evidence of a willingness on the part of the community to exploit opportunities associated with development. At the same time, the road

³⁰ This may not be completely accurate. Many students that I knew had returned only for summer holidays, and thus felt that they did not yet have to re-establish a permanent position in the community. Still, Hasil is a good example of some one who had been home permanently for over a year, and still had not adopted an adult position, despite being married and household head.

³¹ The village closest to Shimshal, Pasu, is currently facing that problem. In 1988 the community of about 500 people boasted over 70 college graduates, many of whom were unable to contribute productively to the village economy.

will not be finished for at least five years (more likely ten), and despite their potential technical usefulness, the community is still left with a group of young men whose lifeworld convictions differ from those of most Shimshalis. The normative validity claim (socio-economic status) that allowed them to leave Shimshal for education no longer justifies their actions, because they are not able to interact practically (as in practical interests) in the community according to their lifeworld-based social position. An objective validity claim (technical efficacy of education and a changed world view) could help re-establish their legitimacy in the community, but has not, because the road is incomplete.³²

Daulat Amin, Ali Rahman and Fermanullah, on the other hand, left Shimshal as adults with a clear sense of their identity as household members, sub-clan members and Shimshalis. Daulat Amin and Fermanullah enrolled in schools with specific objectives relating to their return to Shimshal. When they brought their newly acquired skills and experiences back to the community they were able to draw on their traditional lifeworld validity (which they could utilise competently) to introduce new technical skills into the village. The sub-systemic advantages of the skills these men brought back enhanced their validity in the lifeworld; a process that led to the partial rationalisation of both system and lifeworld. The effect of the first few individuals to be educated, as described earlier in this section, was one of increased modernity.

A second circumstance that separates the experience of early graduates from current students is that the former were never completely separated from many of the lifeworld elements of Shimshal. They went to school in Hunza or Gilgit, both of which were populated by people with world views and life experiences similar to those in Shimshal. Most of their classmates were other village boys, and many of their teachers were from Hunza. For the past decade a lot of parents have been sending their boys to school in Gilgit, either before or after they have finished eighth class in Shimshal. For several years some children have gone directly to Karachi after a few years

³² See Chapter Nine for a more complete discussion of the road's role in Shimshal's changing social world.

of early schooling in Shimshal. This has become possible because several men from Shimshal are living and working in Karachi. They can help to watch over the children from Shimshal. In addition, the Aga Khan Foundation has built a boarding school in Karachi which subsidizes the education of Ismailis.³³ Most of the classmates of Shimshali students are urban dwellers, and many (especially in Karachi) come from progressive and wealthy middle class families. Shimshali boys are exposed to influences in school and out of it which socialise them into a very different set of norms and values than they encountered in Shimshal.³⁴ These influences relate to lifeworld and system constituents of all four spheres of social organisation. In the course of my fieldwork returned youths provided me with a whole litany of characteristics about Shimshal that they found hard to tolerate. These areas of dissatisfaction ranged from petty complaints about the food, the physical labour, the lack of electricity, the lack of cigarettes and so on, to what seemed to be more deeply felt problems with social isolation, traditionalism, large families, the chain of authority, the gender division, lack of economic opportunity, lack of education in their elders, lack of political and religious awareness, and a sense of personal alienation from the community as a whole.

In all of these complaints young men give the impression that they retain a sincere commitment to the community, and that their personal identities still encompass their status as Shimshalis. But they no longer identify with much of symbolic and material existence of the community. This circumstance can be seen as the result of both the rationalisation of system and lifeworld, and the colonisation of lifeworld.

³³ Karachi is Pakistan's largest and most cosmopolitan city. In the last decade Gilgit has become a multi-cultural boom town. It has grown rapidly and become a centre for tourism, government and the army.

³⁴ Even things which link boys' urban experience with Shimshal, such as contact with urban-dwelling Shimshalis and the Ismaili affiliation of their schools, contribute to a lifeworld that differs from that of their peers in Shimshal. Most Shimshalis living permanently in Karachi or Gilgit have retained only nominal ties with Shimshal. They have in effect become urbanites themselves, and while they may provide village boys with a frame of reference that frame of reference is not likely to be a particularly Shimshali one. By the same token, the indigenous and largely folk Ismaili tradition in Shimshal is quite different than the much more intellectual and doctrinal tradition in Karachi, which is an important centre of Ismaili learning.

The experience of formal education outside of Shimshal gave young men an opportunity to question the validity of their inherited lifeworld. They participated in a larger social system to which their inherited lifeworld related only poorly. In essence, their lifeworld was not coupled with their new systemic surroundings. They perceived many of their lifeworld convictions to be invalid sources of validity within the speech community they now occupied, and so they rejected them in favour of more rational norms and values: a process of rationalisation. At this stage a variety of subsystemic media occupied the vacuum left in the lifeworld, and began a process of inner colonisation of the lifeworld. Specifically, media of state bureaucracy, party politics, educational bureaucracy, organised religion, and capitalist economic institutions came to infiltrate parts of the lifeworld "in which traditions and knowledge are transferred, in which normative bonds are intersubjectively established, and in which responsible persons are formed" (White, 1988:112). Intersubjective discourse was replaced by adherence to a variety of sets of "rules", similar to the sets of rules that govern social interaction in Shimshal, except that in Shimshal the rules are decided, or at least accepted, intersubjectively. The process described here began as a positive (in terms of my definition of sustainability) transition to rationalisation of the lifeworld, which became thwarted part way through by inner colonisation: modernisation.

The return of students to Shimshal provides an opportunity to reverse the colonisation of the lifeworld, and claim the benefits of rationalisation, but as the discussion above indicates this opportunity is difficult to realise. The opportunity exists because subsystemic media prevalent in Karachi have little pertinence in Shimshal; had they, other villagers in fora of the *kuyotch* and the household and the subclan grouping could be obliged to recognise valid challenges to indigenous lifeworld convictions (as they did when Daulat Amin and Suleiman Shah returned). At the same time they could challenge the validity claims of returned students which were based on subsystemic media. The lifeworld would become more rationalised at the same time as the influence of subsystemic media over students' lifeworlds would diminish. Such a process has not occurred to any great extent because many returning students are not considered legitimate participants in

the intersubjective decision-making process. That results from their lack of socialisation into the norms, values and ways to make a living prevalent in Shimshal. In other words, a young man (whose authority is tenuous in any case) who is unfamiliar with the bases of subsistence agro-pastoralism, who is unaware of indigenous social relations and protocol, who cannot fulfil ritual obligations, and who cannot validate his convictions and technical activities in terms recognised by the community, is not likely to influence public opinion. The fact that students have been immersed in formal education at the expense of other forms of socialisation has hampered the technical and practical potential of their education. An immediate result has been the development of an alienated and burdensome group of young and able men. Such a circumstance hampers the social vitality of the community, and its sustainability in general.

Meanwhile, another set of youths has established itself as indispensable to contemporary Shimshal. These are young men who finished middle school in Shimshal and continued to contribute to the indigenous social and ecological/economic systems, at the same time as they participated in the regional economy through portering for foreigners and labouring seasonally in Gilgit and Hunza. They have learned some English and Urdu, established a few contacts outside of Shimshal and earned some money. At the same time, they have developed their validity as important members of the community both through new technical skills and accomplishments, and because of their competence within the ritual community of Shimshal. Village elders are beginning to realise that these less ambitious students contribute more to the community than their Karachi-educated age mates. The comments of one Shimshali teacher may be paraphrased as follows:

It is a good thing for children to be educated, but it is best if they finish middle school in Shimshal, then go to Gilgit to get their matriculation, and then if they are worthy, go to Karachi or some other large city for university. It is foolish to push students away from Shimshal. Indeed the Aga Khan has said that it is bad for boys to go from a quiet place like Shimshal to the big city. Therefore he has built dormitories in Gilgit where village boys can become accustomed to the outside world under the guidance of local people. I hope people will be much more cautious before they encourage their sons to attend school in Karachi.

While returning students have had a hard time fitting back into the social milieu of Shimshal in general, there is one person that they seem to be able relate with in a positive way: their former schoolmaster Daulat Amin. This has had important effects on the political and economic spheres of organisation in Shimshal, and particularly on the way the AKRSP works.

Daulat Amin is the indigenous social leader whose authority can be most clearly validated in terms of returning students' modernised lifeworld. Students are able to identify with him as a man who has shared some of their experiences in the outside world, and who shares some of their new-found technical skills. They also perceive Daulat Amin as a person to emulate; someone who has translated his formal education into practical and technical benefit for his household and community, and someone who has successfully integrated traditional and modern claims to authority. Fermanullah the dispenser, the animal health specialist, and several of the younger school teachers share this role with Daulat Amin, to a lesser degree. In addition, Daulat Amin is the only person who can claim a fairly intimate relationship with all educated males in Shimshal. He was their teacher and headmaster for as long as they studied in Shimshal. In most cases he was also instrumental in the process which allowed students to leave Shimshal, and he acted as something of an advisor and tutor throughout that process. Individual students have perceived him as an authority figure, and it seems a benevolent one, since they were five or six years old. For them, Daulat Amin's authority is at once immediate and personal (as a teacher and advisor), and more structural and formal (as VO leader, lineage elder, subclan elder, and headmaster).³⁵ During the summers of 1988 and 1989 he was visited almost daily by former students who sought his advice or company.

Daulat Amin recognises his unique position in relation to returning students, and attempts

³⁵ Students are not alone in seeking advice and consultation from Daulat Amin. He is considered a "wise" man throughout the community, a reputation he has cultivated by seeking formal education, religious expertise, competence in mythology and ritual behaviour, knowledge of lineage and history, etc. Even members of factions who do not approve of his social and political influence, or his vision of the community, seek him out for advice.

to utilise it for the benefit of the students themselves, the community, and, I suspect, for his own benefit.³⁶ He states that he encourages students to visit him, consult with him, and solicit his help. He also admits quite explicitly that one of his motives is to encourage former students to use their education in pursuit of Daulat Amin's vision of the community. It is appropriate to speak of the "vision" of Daulat Amin. It may be clear by now that he is a remarkable and somewhat charismatic individual, whose life history is unique in Shimshal. He has a specific agenda for Shimshal, which he has followed at least since he began his formal education in Gilgit. As far as I can discern, the central motivation for that agenda is a belief in the equity of the ritual congregation in Shimshal (see 5.2.4), a motivation which differs sharply from that of some other important leaders in Shimshal. He speaks often of the need to "cooperate with the people", by which he means the less prosperous majority of Shimshalis. He sees formal education and the AKRSP village organisations as vehicles to facilitate equity and material and symbolic well being within the community. He believes that returning students can use their skills to contribute to that equity and well being, if they re-establish their legitimacy in indigenous lifeworld terms.

A forum for exploiting the skills of graduates is the AKRSP village organisation. Daulat Amin is president of the Shimshal Centre village organisation. Fermanullah is its manager. The other unpaid administrative positions (eg. secretary, treasurer) are filled by school teachers or other educated individuals. Paid positions (animal and crop specialists) and unpaid agricultural positions are mostly held by farmers. The VO management is over-represented by educated persons, partly because certain positions benefit from formal education, and because educated Shimshalis seem to be more willing to "buy into" planned development than villagers who have not been exposed to the socialisation of formal education.³⁷ Returning graduates fit well into this type of organisation

³⁶ Daulat Amin has never expressed it in quite this way to me. He has said, however, that it is his duty as their former headmaster to "help these students", and try to convince them to "cooperate with the people", for the good of the village.

³⁷ This is a criticism of AKRSP. Despite its claims to cater to the social reality and needs of normal villagers, it is structured so that VO leaders almost have to be chosen from the more educated (and thus probably wealthier and higher status) minority of villagers.

for several reasons. First, their education and experiences down country have socialised them to value the technical things that the VO represents in Shimshal: the road, integration into a larger economy, participation in a supra-village bureaucratic structure, and the ideal of modernisation itself. Indeed, these changes are necessary for the realisation of their individual plans for the future: tourist cottages, taxi routes, trekking and outfitting agencies, marketing agricultural produce. Second, their skills are useful to the VO. All formal VO leaders are subsistence farmers, and some have other occupations as well. They do not have much time to spare for VO business, and may be uncertain of their accounting, or book keeping, or secretarial skills. Graduates have both the skills, the time, and the inclination to help with these responsibilities. Third, the lifeworlds of formal VO leaders are closer to those of returning graduates than are those of other villagers. In addition, because several VO leaders are teachers they have fairly immediate relationships with graduates, who were their former students. In essence, these VO leaders recognise the lifeworld convictions and technical aspirations of returning graduates as having **some** validity. This establishes a basis for intersubjective communication between these two parties. Fourth, despite a commitment to the village organisation, most households are burdened by their obligations to it. Household members are busy with agricultural and pastoral activities and individual projects. They have little labour to spare for VO business. Their returning sons are uninterested in farming, and inept at it, so that these sons provide the cheapest way to fulfil obligations to the VO.

These four reasons facilitate the involvement of perhaps two dozen formally educated young men in the business of the VO. As they become increasingly involved, and their abilities are shown to advantage, their legitimacy within the shared Shimshal lifeworld increases. Gradually they become active, if not full, participants in the community's decision-making discourse. As they participate in communicative decision-making they are able to challenge the validity of traditional convictions, and become susceptible to challenges to their own lifeworlds. Over time the two sets of lifeworlds shift closer together in a process of modernity: as individuals readjust to Shimshali life their feelings of alienation and frustration begin to dissipate. Two qualifying comments are worth

making here. First, the process of re-integration I describe here in terms of the VO, has also occurred through participation by some graduates in other ventures which display their continuing lifeworld-based commitment to the community, or their ability to benefit it materially (eg. success in guiding tourists, involvement in the *Tariqah* board for Ismaili Education, employment as research assistant for glaciologists or geographers, success with agricultural innovations). Second, not all graduates evolve back into meaningful participation in the community. Those who have not have either abandoned their commitment to Shimshal, or have sought permanent employment outside of the community with the intention of settling down in the community after they have made their fortune (or pension).³⁸ So far the number who have taken this option is small, so that it has not hampered the social sustainability of the community. In fact, the semi-permanent or temporary emigration of small numbers of Shimshalis may actually enhance Shimshal's economic and ecological sustainability.³⁹

7.2.3 Interpretation

I have attempted to provide some understanding of the role formal education plays in socialising the residents of Shimshal, the problems it has engendered, and the part AKRSP VOs play in all of this. Now I want to expand on this last point in terms of Shimshal's social vitality and sustainability.

The social system in Shimshal is changing as the whole Karakoram region becomes more integrated with global capitalism. Many inhabitants of Shimshal are consciously pursuing this systemic change, as is the village organisation as a whole, but even a deliberate policy of

³⁸ Ali Rahman is an example of that. Only after two decades in the army did he return to Shimshal, take a wife, and resume full participation in community affairs.

³⁹ They support a small remittance economy without actually drawing from the community's ecological resources.

stagnation would not prevent many of the systemic changes that are occurring. It is important that lifeworld -convictions, beliefs, norms and values- shifts from within the symbolic domain in response to systemic shifts. This means discarding or modifying elements of the traditional lifeworld which are no longer valid within a revised social system. What is required for that modification of lifeworld is a change in the socialisation of individuals, and perhaps a shift in emphasis toward particular institutions for socialisation. Shimshal's formal education system has emerged as a vehicle for socialising individuals into a modified and rationalised lifeworld. At its advanced stage (that of schooling outside of Shimshal) formal education has socialised individuals selectively and almost exclusively, so that many teenage boys of a certain socio-economic stratum have been socialised differently than other Shimshalis. These boys have become disenchanted with their inherited lifeworld, but did not succeed in communicatively establishing other bases for a shared lifeworld.⁴⁰ Rather their lifeworlds were colonised by subsystemic media. When they returned to Shimshal these youths found themselves alienated from their peers and from their elders. Their different experiences and different lifeworld attributes disrupted the potential for communicative action, and returning students found themselves non-participants in community-based decision making. The alienation of any group within a community is destructive of communicative action. To the extent that formal education has failed to socialise these young men into the norms, values and ways to make a living of the Shimshal community, it has impeded social vitality. Both of these related conditions reduce the sustainability of Shimshal.

The AKRSP VO provided a forum to reintegrate returning students into Shimshal's ritual community. Young men discovered an ally in Daulat Amin, the VO president. They also discovered a way to express their commitment to the community, through service on behalf of the village organisation. This service gave returning students a renewed validity in terms of the shared

⁴⁰ As outlined in Chapter Five, disenchantment is a process which has occurred in greater or lesser degrees among Hunzakuts for centuries. It is the rate of change that is important: some Shimshali school boys have become disenchanted with a traditional lifeworld more rapidly and more radically than have most other Shimshalis either past or present.

indigenous lifeworld, which facilitated their participation in communicative decision making. The result which I anticipate is a newly shared lifeworld which has been rationalised, and which integrates more closely with systemic changes than did the previous shared lifeworld.

I see this as an enabling aspect of the AKRSP VO in Shimshal, which has led to a more modern, and more sustainable community. The enabling potential of the Shimshal VO stems from both the characteristics of individuals involved, and the characteristics of the AKRSP VO model. Daulat Amin and the other VO leaders happen to be educated men with relatively modern outlooks. In addition, several of them are teachers with personal affinities to both the system of formal education and students themselves. Thus, it was particularly easy for graduates to find a niche in VO business. The AKRSP framework is conducive to the participation of returning graduates (and other educated elites) because its operational structure almost requires leaders and active participants who are familiar with skills and perspectives associated with supra-village economy and society. Throughout the Northern Areas the AKRSP has encouraged and enabled the most educated and most cosmopolitan villagers to direct their talents toward collective enterprises.

The same characteristics of VO leaders and the AKRSP framework itself, have disabling, or modernising, influences on the community. The AKRSP functions as a bureaucracy. Leaders are chosen to represent the community to the parent organisation, and to oversee certain functions within the community. AKRSP management has stipulated that frequent mandatory meetings should be held, in the hope that the body politic will participate in decision making. The fact that the VO has been practically integrated with the traditional *kuyotch* facilitates this participation (see 7.4). At the same time, most of the administrative positions require some expertise that is beyond the grasp of most villagers (eg. English or Urdu, accounting, modern veterinary skills, secretarial skills). This in itself leads to the development of an "expert culture". By filling these positions with individuals who are educated far beyond the requirements of the position, and far beyond the education of most VO members, the VO in Shimshal is exacerbating the influence of bureaucratic experts. The result, as Habermas explains, may be a loss of freedom for the majority of villagers

to participate in decision making, and a loss of meaning as most individuals fail to understand the language of expert decision making.

A place like Shimshal is particularly vulnerable to these losses, because differences in education among villagers are great. Whether this process of colonisation and modernisation gains momentum depends on the tenacity of non-experts to challenge the validity claims of experts, and upon the lifeworld-embeddedness of experts themselves. Daulat Amin is unequivocally committed to the indigenous lifeworld ideals of equity and collective decision making. He is careful to use his education and technical expertise as a tool, and not as a rationale for increasing his authority. Rather, he validates his arguments on the basis of indigenous convictions which his constituents understand and which they are free to challenge. He is aided in this process by his traditional authority. Many of Daulat Amin's younger colleagues have a weaker position in the indigenous lifeworld and a weaker commitment to those lifeworld ideals. These individuals, returning graduates among them, are more prone to rely on their expertise as educated elites to acquire some technical end or some practical validity. So far these individuals have been kept in check from above (so to speak) by Daulat Amin, and from below by the majority of villagers who are quick to challenge the practical validity of these largely indigenous lifeworld-incompetent individuals.

In summary, the bureaucratic structure of the AKRSP facilitates the colonisation of the lifeworld by bureaucratic "expert cultures". The socialising institution of formal education has provided the "expert" ingredient. This process of modernisation is of course detrimental to community sustainability because it alienates potential participants in communicative action. In Shimshal, the expert elites have not gained inordinate control of the VO, although their influence is great, and the potential exists. Rather, the VO has provided an avenue whereby an alienated group of "experts" can participate in communicative decision making. Indeed, the fact that many of these newly participating graduates are not household heads, and have no traditional claim to participate in council, suggests that the participants in discourse toward intersubjective decision making have become more numerous.

The interpretation of Shimshal's formal education sub-system presented above provides an example of how one component of social vitality -socialisation- (a) directly influences the community's sustainability, and (b) mediates the impact of AKRSP village organisations on that sustainability. Throughout the example I mention links to other components of social vitality, other organisational spheres, and the various levels of social organisation recognised in Shimshal. Some of those links are discussed in later interpretations and examples. Appendix 6 enumerates links that are implicit in the foregoing example. The discussion I include in the appendix is not essential to my argument. However, it does emphasise and demonstrate the integration among spheres of organisation, within spheres of organisation, and among levels of organisation, which integration characterises all social systems, especially those which are based on an indigenously-defined and shared lifeworld (see Chapter Two).

7.3 Communication and Sustainability in Shimshal

7.3.1 Introduction

Communication is primarily a technically-oriented activity encompassing community members' needs to know what activities are occurring within and outside of the community that pertain to them. Matthews (1983:158) maintains that "people need to know what is going on in their community and about its relation to the larger world". This technical orientation is an important component of communication. It is achieved through a variety of formal and informal structures, including radio, post, informal conversation, formal conversations within the fora of the *Jamaat Khana*, lineage groupings and the *kuyotch*, reports on the outside world by returning students, formal education, meetings with AKRSP personnel, and so on. Chapter 7.2 provides an example of how the development of a new socialising structure -formal education- influenced changes in the

pattern of technically oriented communication in the Shimshal community.

In addition to its technical orientation, communication also encompasses a practical emphasis. Communication involves the transmission of technical information about things and events, but some types of communication also transmit information about feelings, beliefs and symbolic meanings. This latter aspect is especially important to community sustainability, because it provides the basis for rational intersubjective understanding. Practical communication is the basis of **communicative action**. Technical and practical communication relate to systemic and lifeworld concerns; concerns related to material function and subjective meaning.

Many formal and informal structures and institutions that aid in technical communication provide little opportunity for practical communication. Schools, radio, interaction with AKRSP and reports by returned migrants all involve a one way flow of information in which a limited number of individuals actively participate. Other institutions, such as dance ceremonies, are also limited to a one way flow of information, but the number of potential active participants (individuals who are allowed to transmit) is large, so that the process approaches communicative discourse.

Most opportunities for practical two-way communication are informal and involve only small numbers of participants at a time. Gossip, conversations with friends, household and lineage members, discussions with visitors from the outside, and visits to kin from other neighbourhoods and villages are examples of venues for practical communication. All of these venues are also, and perhaps primarily, opportunities for sociation and socialisation. Indeed, informal practical communication and informal sociation are often analytic distinctions within the same process. Informal socialisation also relates closely with informal communication and sociation.

Few formal structures are arranged to facilitate practical communication. Those that do exist in Shimshal derive their practical orientation from the ideal of equity within the ritual congregation. The best example of that type of institution is the *kuyotch*, although AKRSP VOs, subclan councils and lineage councils also stress practical discourse. The example that follows interprets the recent history of Shimshal's *kuyotch* in an attempt to show how practical and

technical communication relates to social vitality, and ultimately to community sustainability. The example of the *kuyotch* is particularly relevant to my interpretation of community sustainability as an objective for development, because the AKRSP developed its village organisation project partly in response to the decline of village *kuyotchs*' ability to provide a forum for communication and political representation at the community level. The example that follows interprets the cause of that decline, and the effectiveness with which village organisations in Shimshal have reversed it. Because the *kuyotch* is an important political institution, as well as a social one, I anticipate some of the contents of the next chapter by discussing relations among social vitality and political validity as they pertain to the *kuyotch* (for discussions of political validity see Chapters Two and Eight). Indeed, it may seem at times that the sections that follow have more to do with political validity than with communication as an element of social vitality. This is because the *kuyotch* is not only a forum for communication, but also a forum for deciding what gets communicated, what gets discussed and by whom. This latter function is a political one, one associated with the exercise of power.

7.3.2 The *Kuyotch*

The word "*kuyotch*" translates more or less literally as "council of villagers", but its meaning to the people of Hunza and Shimshal encompasses a great deal more. First and most simply, it is a community council comprised of all senior males (household heads) and invited junior males, with the technical responsibility of regulating agricultural and social practices, and ensuring a **degree** of equity within the community. It communicates technical decisions, and exercises social control. Second, the *kuyotch* is a ritual congregation of villagers who recognise a mutual interest and responsibility in one another's spiritual and material well being; that is a community whose members recognise a shared lifeworld. It is a body of individuals who engage in practical

communication (discourse) toward reaching an intersubjective understanding of what is right and good for participants. Finally, the *kuyotch* is itself a representation of the lifeworld ideals of equity and solidarity. Its very existence confirms the existence of a ritual congregation of members who share a lifeworld, the central elements of which are community-wide equity and solidarity (see Chapter Five for more on the symbolic meaning of *kuyotch*).

All household heads (senior male household members) are full participants in the **physical** *kuyotch*, the actual active body of discussants (see Plate Eleven). Other adult males, and occasionally females, may be substitute or invited members, as I was. The *kuyotch* as a **ritual congregation** encompasses all community members. Full physical participants are considered to be different only because they are the ritual congregation's official representatives. In theory, Shimshal society operates so that all Shimshalis have access to the discourse enacted in the *kuyotch* via several routes: their lineage and subclan elders, their household heads, and their very membership in the community.⁴¹

Kuyotch meetings are arranged and chaired by the *lumbardar* (headman). In former times he occupied a hereditary position as the *tham's* (king's) representative in the community. Now the *lumbardar* sits on the district council, and acts as a hereditary representative of Pakistan's assistant commissioner to Hunza. Thus, the *kuyotch* is a kingship-based (now state-based) institution as well as a community level institution. Ideally, the *lumbardar* has an equal voice with all other members, with additional responsibility of ensuring that discussion proceeds smoothly and decisions are made. In reality, the *lumbardar's* opinions carry extra weight, as do the views of lineage elders, and the heads of especially wealthy or capable households. Recently, educated individuals or those with outside experience and connections have come to occupy positions of relative privilege within

⁴¹ In practice, all Shimshalis have some access to the *kuyotch*, but certain individuals are inevitably better-connected than others.

Plate Eleven: Household Heads in *Kuyotch*

the *kuyotch*.⁴²

Despite the existence of different degrees of influence and legitimacy within the *kuyotch*, it has an explicit purpose to uphold equity and counter all forms of privilege or inequality that are recognised within the prevailing lifeworld. Members are quick to challenge opinions or propositions that seem to undermine that ideal of equity. As a result influential participants tend not to voice explicitly self-aggrandising schemes or views in council, unless they are sure that they can be validated by claims that are legitimate within the prevailing lifeworld. Decisions are never voted upon. They are argued and contested until consensus is reached, or participants lose interest until another day. Occasionally sub-committees are chosen (consensually) to solve problems, the solution to which escaped the larger *kuyotch*.⁴³

Within the obvious restrictions of membership rules the activity of the physical *kuyotch* approximates rational discourse geared to intersubjective understanding.⁴⁴ It is a forum where both a shared lifeworld and systemic organisation are established through argumentation. Its effective operation is therefore conducive to sustainability. Any initiative that relaxes the membership rules to include women and junior household members without stressing the institutions' integrity will also enhance sustainability.

⁴² The participation of women and junior household members, as well as heads of lowly households, depends to some extent on connections with these more important personages.

⁴³ It is evident that in this type of forum many issues are dropped because members fail to reach consensus. Such a process leads to conservative decision making.

⁴⁴ What actually exists in Shimshal is a hierarchy of communicative fora, of which the *kuyotch* is the top. Only certain individuals can participate in *kuyotch*, but other fora exist for all community members to engage in communicative discourse with these individuals (household, lineage, etc). So, while certainly the communicative ability of *kuyotch* depends on "who gets to play", this selectiveness is ameliorated by other levels of the communicative hierarchy. Of course, more direct participation by more people would enhance sustainability.

7.3.3 Communication In Shimshal: The Example of Shimshal's *Kuyotch* (Community Council)

The Shimshal *kuyotch* is an institution which relates to all three areas of social vitality, especially communication. It has traditionally been a forum for a discourse which approaches rational communication, in which community members reach some intersubjective understanding of one another. Indeed, the *kuyotch* is the primary forum for communication at the community level. In addition, the intersubjective understandings reached in the *kuyotch* are a primary source of the norms and values into which Shimshalis are socialised, and from which these norms and values are communicated to the rest of the community. The *kuyotch* is a vehicle whereby lifeworld norms and values are discussed, updated, rationalised and communicated as systemic circumstances change. Finally, the *kuyotch* is itself a product of socialisation, an expression of commitment to a shared lifeworld.

It is worth noting again that the Shimshal *kuyotch* is also central to political validity. First, it is the primary formal community level institution for maintaining social order (a function closely related to communication). In a community like Shimshal social control relies on effectively regulating and communicating norms. The force of law, as we understand it in Europe and North America, is virtually unknown in Shimshal. The *kuyotch* is an important disseminator of appropriate norms and values to be socialised by community members (again the blurred lines between communication and socialisation, and between social and political organisation). Second, the *kuyotch* has traditionally been the most representative political institution at the village level. All individuals are linked to it from three directions: their membership in the households of *kuyotch* members, their membership in the lineages of household leaders, and their membership in the ritual congregation represented by the *kuyotch*. All three of these sources of political legitimacy are lifeworld imbedded.

The ability of the *kuyotch* to fulfil the social and political roles described above has increased and decreased in the past hundred years, as its capacity to integrate lifeworld

convictions with systemic circumstances has changed. *Kuyotch* members are collectively responsible for reaching intersubjective understanding of lifeworld elements, and for making technical decisions regarding the four organisational spheres of Shimshal's social system. As long as lifeworld convictions of the ritual congregation, as represented by the *kuyotch*, are integrated with technical mechanisms of the social system then the *kuyotch* can be an effective means of communication (and socialisation), and a valid source of political representation. Individuals will identify with it, retain a commitment to it, and will formulate their identity partly in relation to it. If, however, system and lifeworld become uncoupled so that the norms of the ritual congregation stop regulating how individuals behave technically, then much of the *kuyotch's* validity is lost. Such a process of uncoupling occurred over a period from the British conquest of Hunza in 1891 until the early 1980s (see Chapter Five). In order to understand the shifting efficacy of the *kuyotch* as a forum for practical and technical communication, it is necessary to review its history as a political institution.

Prior to the British conquest the *tham* of Hunza derived his legitimacy from clan and lineage elders. Clan leaders were his principal advisors and local lineage elders were his headmen and other village-level officials. The clans supported the *tham*, to a degree, because they recognised his divine right to control all land and water, to mediate all relations with the supernatural, and because only he could mobilise labour at the supra-clan level for large scale collective projects. At the same time, clan and lineage elders were primarily interested in the well being of their clan and lineage constituents, not the well being of the *tham*, so they supported him reluctantly. The *tham* realised that he owed his authority to the favour of the clans, so he strove to maintain that favour while advancing his own agenda. This process ensured two way communication between the court and commoners.

The *kuyotch* had an important place in the communicative process because it was where state bureaucratic officials (eg. *lumbardar*), lineage elders and commoner household heads came together. Despite their individual positions members of each of these groups recognised the

lifeworld-based legitimacy of the *kuyotch's* Ideal of equity.⁴⁵ Therefore, the three groups could engage in practical communication and technical decision-making which incorporated the norms and values associated with kingship, lineage, village and household. The *kuyotch* at large was usually able to prevent collective schemes which threatened to increase the privilege of the *tham* or his representatives. Members merely had to validate their position in terms of the second of Habermas' validity claims: the normative correctness of equity within the community, and the normative correctness of solidarity against exploitation from the outside.

When the British and Dogra forces conquered Hunza, they deposed *tham* Safdar Ali Khan, and installed a new *tham*, Nazim Khan, as *Raja* of Hunza. As ruler of a principality within British India he was given a new form of legitimacy: British military power. Suddenly the social system changed without a corresponding change in lifeworld. The *tham* no longer relied for authority on approval of the clans, so he was much freer to pursue his own agenda. He created a much larger bureaucracy based increasingly on royal favour, and he neutralised the kingship-based authority of clan and lineage leadership. Over time social system (represented by a royal bureaucracy) and lifeworld became increasingly uncoupled, and the lifeworld was colonised by the sub-systemic medium of bureaucracy. Shimshal, and all Hunza, experienced a period of modernisation.

The *kuyotch* was central to this process of modernisation. Headmen and certain privileged lineage elders came to dominate the *kuyotch* on the strength of their relationship with the *tham*. These former social leaders became primarily bureaucratic political leaders. They no longer gained their legitimacy from the lifeworlds of their constituents (their clan and lineage members and members of their village), but rather from the *tham* himself. A bilateral process of communication in *kuyotch* became a unilateral, top-down, hierarchy of communication. Previously the understanding and decisions reached in the *kuyotch* had been legitimised by the lifeworld, and particularly by lifeworld conviction regarding an equitable and impartible ritual congregation. With

⁴⁵ Remember, equity is not synonymous with absolute equality.

the separation of lifeworld social norms from systemic political representation, and the subsequent infiltration of that political representation into spheres of social organisation, the lifeworlds of Hunza communities became colonised. The lifeworld bases of the *kuyotch* were colonised by royal bureaucracy, a sub-systemic medium, and decisions in the *kuyotch* were being made according to demands of members of that bureaucracy. The ethic of equity remained among most commoner householders, so that the *kuyotch* continued to represent the ritual congregation, but the ethic no longer informed technical decision making.

Bilateral communication among different levels of authority (kingship, lineage and household), and especially communication geared to understanding among those levels, diminished. Rather a tendency toward unilateral, top down, communication developed. Commoner villagers still engaged in practical communication with one another as members of a ritual congregation. But that communication was empty of any technical significance, except to the extent that it was colonised by bureaucratic interests. During this time the decisions of the *kuyotch* became less conservative, because they no longer relied on consensus. Leaders were able to push initiatives through the *kuyotch*. This was a period when large scale collective works abounded, as did a consolidation of the wealth of privileged households.

Beginning in the 1950s the elaborate royal bureaucracy began to disintegrate, mainly because the *tham*, who now spent much time down country and had developed other sources of revenue, lost interest in controlling his kingdom.⁴⁶ Bureaucratic functionaries found themselves without political authority or technically-based validity. The *tham* no longer supported them politically with any consistency, nor did he provide the resources to undertake village-level projects for the construction of channels, roads, bridges and terraces. Gradually, bureaucrats shifted their loyalty back toward their constituents in an attempt to rebuild their old sources of legitimacy. By now, however, the legitimate strength of all forms of village-level leadership had declined, although the forms themselves continued to exist. Without a strong headman or powerful group of lineage

⁴⁶ See Chapter Five for a more detailed account of this decline.

elders to force decisions the *kuyotch* lost its capacity for concerted action, and thus also lost its role as a forum for technically-oriented communication. A style of government emerged in which the *kuyotch* shied away from confrontation. In addition, many villagers were disenchanted with what they perceived as "old time" government. A trend emerged in which collective business was decentralised wherever possible, and reduced to the level of neighbourhood or small groups of people with a single common technical interest. Bilateral technical communication had become unilateral, and now even unilateral communication focused around the *kuyotch* disintegrated.

The result of these trends is that few large-scale collective projects were initiated, because the *kuyotch* could not coordinate them, and because projects were no longer supported by royal sanction or financed by the *tham*. The village retained its previous character as a ritual community in which equity among residents was stressed, but it lost its role as a polity oriented to collective instrumental economic and political action. Until the 1980s the inhabitants of Shimshal, and other Hunza communities, lacked valid institutions for village and supra-village collective instrumental action.

That was the situation when AKRSP began promoting village organisations (VOs) in northern Pakistan. The founders of AKRSP, especially Shoaib Sultan Khan, recognised that despite an abiding commitment to equity and communal sentiment within communities, there was little new and innovative collective activity at the village level.⁴⁷ According to AKRSP literature and programme personnel with whom I spoke, there seemed to be no appreciation within the organisation of why collective organisation was lacking, only a feeling that it had at one time been provided by the *tham*, and now that the *tham* was gone new collective activity was gone too.

Villagers continued to participate in **traditional** collective communicative activity associated with herding and agricultural cycles, channel maintenance, dance ceremonies, death rites and so on, but had not recently undertaken large scale settlement or irrigation system improvements.

⁴⁷ See Chapter Six for a synopsis of AKRSP principles.

Indeed, in many villages some of the more marginal lands, channels and pastures were being abandoned despite increasing population pressure. Villagers professed to value and cherish the ideal of agricultural sustainability for households within an indigenous community setting. At the same time, most households were diversifying into individual non-agricultural enterprises including formal education, shop-keeping in Hunza or Gilgit, army careers, portering and wage labouring. These enterprises removed labour from the agricultural mode of production, and increased households' dependence on the outside social system. While these trends are not negative in themselves, they do represent a shift away from villagers' stated preferred norms and values.

7.3.4 Interpretation

The AKRSP perceives this as an economic problem with a social solution. Unlike the AKRSP, I interpret the root of Shimshal's plight as social and political, and not directly economic. A lack of communication about collective technical ends and a lack of legitimate political representation resulted in a socio/ecological problem: householders lost the capability to support their socially-defined agricultural needs. Resource supply decreased as the agricultural resource base broke down. At the same time ecologically and socially-based demand on resources increased. Rising population created an increase in demand for ecological resources. Access to the outside world, a money economy, and consumer goods were raising quality of life expectations, which also stressed the community's resource base. The previous account of formal education in Shimshal provides an example of this trend.

Lifeworld convictions of an acceptable quality of life were changing, but the indigenous lifeworld-based social system was unable to satisfy the new norms. At the same time the lifeworld ideal of an equitable ritual community remained, but was not supported by the new sub-systemic mechanisms, which facilitated, even necessitated, household and individual participation in

independent non-agricultural ventures. The community was disintegrating as individuals pursued technical ventures which pulled them away from activities that enhanced equity, solidarity and shared lifeworld ideals. The *kuyotch*, traditionally a forum for communication toward intersubjective understanding and corresponding ways to earn a living, was powerless to intervene.

The creation of village organisations provided an answer, because it allowed community members, and particularly the *kuyotch*, to forge a new and rational link between social system and lifeworld: it facilitated communication at the community level of organisation. Seen from this perspective it is clear that details of the process of forming village organisations, and the particular form VOs take, are important. I suspect that the AKRSP succeeded in establishing effective VOs in Shimshal and elsewhere because they recognised the need to allow villagers to incorporate VOs into their own social structures. The AKRSP played on a latent commitment to the ritual congregation and to communicative decision-making by encouraging members of all households to join the VO, and then leaving members to choose their own executive and an initial AKRSP-funded project. Funding for the initial productive physical infrastructure (PPI) project provided the needed incentive for villagers to initiate a process of practical and technical bilateral communication. Here was an opportunity to engage in a collective venture that could have obvious benefits for the community's well being, if community members could select from the range of potential benefits, and if they could decide upon legitimate leadership.

My impression of this process from conversations I had and from videos I saw at AKRSP is that it was difficult and painful. It certainly caused temporary divisiveness within Shimshal, and disillusionment as certain individuals and factions lobbied for control or privilege. Remarkably, members did not vote, rather they argued until a consensus was reached. From the beginning then, AKRSP attempted to rebuild indigenous strategies toward sustainability, by offering community members the chance to engage in communicative discourse toward some technical end. Also from the beginning the VO as an institution was validated by the lifeworld in terms of a claim to *normative correctness*: its leadership and its objectives were formulated according to the

rules of the ritual congregation. In essence, AKRSP intervention provided an initiative for community members to re-establish communication toward technical ends. In so doing it increased the community's social vitality.

Village organisation leaders were chosen communicatively, but because of the nature of their specific duties (president, manager, secretary, treasurer, marketing expert, crop specialist, animal health specialist) they were not necessarily chosen from among the various sources of traditional leadership. Rather, some of the leaders came from among a more systemically-legitimate group: those men who had achieved some success in interacting with a wider social and economic system. These men, many of whose previous authority was based on technical efficacy, suddenly achieved an added measure of lifeworld-based symbolic legitimacy: they had been chosen as leaders in a formal process of communicative decision-making. The choice of this sort of leadership that had both practical and technical legitimacy within the lifeworld helped to recouple a rationalised social system with a rationalised lifeworld. For a long time social sub-systems and lifeworlds in Shimshal had been rationalising, but separately. The VOs in general, and VO leaders in particular, acted as catalysts to bring rationalised system and lifeworld back together; to reintroduce the authority of lifeworld over system.

VOs were originally conceived by AKRSP as organisations whose mandate was to facilitate new development-related collective ventures, not as institutions that would interfere with the prerogatives of traditional leadership institutions like the *lumbardar* and *kuyotch*. Such a conception is unrealistic in a place like Shimshal, where the *kuyotch* claims some legitimate interest in everything concerning the village, where VO membership and *kuyotch* membership are the same, and where any development innovation is bound to affect traditional spheres of authority. What actually happened in Shimshal is that the VOs and the *kuyotch* are perceived as virtually one and the same, with a slightly different hierarchy of authority depending on the issue under consideration. The *lumbardar* remains the head of the *kuyotch* as a ritual congregation, and continues to act as ultimate authority concerning the agricultural, pastoral and ritual cycles. At the

same time, he carries considerable authority in the village organisations, because VO executive are aware that any decision they make (a) necessarily impinges on some aspect of his traditional authority, and (b) can gain credibility within the shared lifeworld of villagers through his endorsement. By the same token VO leaders have priority over development-oriented collective initiatives, and virtually all collective interaction with the outside. Their knowledge and authority in these matters also gives them an important voice in ritual matters. Both VO leaders and the *lumbardar* rely on lineage elders to support them in communicative discourse and technical activity. The rest of the individuals that make up the village polity treat the *kuyotch* and VO, in practice, as intertwined functional components of the same institution. Shimshalis recognise that VOs were developed as new economic development-oriented institutions, but they perceive them as innovations that returned technical efficacy to the *kuyotch* where it belonged, and where it could interact with lifeworld. In essence, VOs, as they have developed in Shimshal, place technical decision-making within the realm of bilateral communication.

There are several sources of legitimate leadership, each of which has its own source of validity within the lifeworld that gives it precedence in certain situations. Each of these types of leadership must be checked in its tendency toward self-aggrandisement and privilege. This, as in the traditional *kuyotch* of former times, is the principal contribution of the majority of villagers. They act together as a regulating force which challenges and/or validates the propositions of community leaders.

In Shimshal, this powerful new formal institution on top of all other existing institutions, and sharing authority with them, has added to a tendency toward factionalism. Indeed, there are a remarkable array of factions in Shimshal.⁴⁸ But in my experience, the composition and position of factions changes rapidly and continually, depending on the issue and the validity claims presented to resolve the issue. And in all but the most unusual circumstances members of factions

⁴⁸ The faction of "educated elites" is described in 7.2. The next chapter, on political validity, explores two of Shimshal's factions in more detail.

can be persuaded to place their commitment to the community congregation ahead of their specific objectives. I think that at the present time the existence of factions represents the playing out of rational decision making in a less than ideal speech situation. Whether they continue in that capacity cannot be predicted. That depends on Shimshalis' continuing commitment to communicative action.

For the present it seems that the *kuyotch* has come to incorporate the village organisations. This has given the *kuyotch* new credibility as both a social and political body. The political validity of the *kuyotch* has been expanded in both senses of representativeness. First it represents the general values and attitudes of the community more than in the recent past. Second, it has incorporated leadership which has considerable experience and legitimacy in dealing with the outside.

In terms of social organisation, the *kuyotch* has increased its sphere of socialisation and bilateral communication from purely symbolic issues, to also include technical issues of how to earn a living. More than that, it has regained its status as a forum for integrating the convictions of lifeworld with the technical mechanisms of the social system. These positive impacts on political validity and social vitality can only enhance the sustainability of Shimshal.

The enabling impacts of AKRSP VOs on the *kuyotch*, and social vitality as a whole, have occurred despite one important disabling or modernising influence. Specifically, village organisations have provided a mechanism whereby the lifeworld-based *kuyotch*, and the ritual congregation itself, can be infiltrated and colonised by the sub-systemic medium of bureaucracy. As I mention elsewhere, the AKRSP is a bureaucratic organisation, and village organisations are local branches of that centralised bureaucracy, with their own bureaucratic infrastructures. Despite the fact that all Shimshali villagers belong to the VO, only certain individuals have access to upper levels of the AKRSP's bureaucratic hierarchy. These individuals obtain a decision-making authority beyond their lifeworld-based legitimacy. They become "experts" with a type of knowledge or access to power that is denied most villagers. Those community members who are not experts are

vulnerable to a loss of meaning and freedom, both of which inhibit bilateral communication involving all community members. To the extent that bureaucracy infiltrates the *kuyotch*, an institution central to Shimshalis' shared lifeworld becomes colonised, and the sub-systemic medium of bureaucracy may begin to effect how traditions and knowledge are transferred and how responsible persons are formed.

Shimshal's VOs are closely integrated with the *kuyotch*, so that bureaucratic experts of the VOs have come to occupy important positions within the *kuyotch*. But the bureaucratic mechanisms (hierarchy, technical expertise) they represent have not succeeded in replacing the *kuyotch's* lifeworld-based symbolic significance. The *kuyotch* continues to operate according to the ideals of equity, solidarity, community impartibility, and bilateral communication. Certainly, it has derived a variety of technical characteristics from the AKRSP and members of the AKRSP bureaucracy, but at the same time the *kuyotch* has colonised the VOs with its own ideals and decision-making process. In short, the *kuyotch* has, for the present, successfully challenged the legitimacy of bureaucracy according to lifeworld-based validity claims. In so doing it has averted a disabling tendency of modernisation.

The interpretation of Shimshal's *kuyotch* provides an example of how communication, an element of social vitality, relates to Shimshal's overall sustainability. Clearly, in this example, communication relates closely to political validity as well as social vitality because the *kuyotch* is an important political and social institution. Other examples, such as communication through folk lore or dancing, would have revealed a less political dimension (and perhaps more ecological or economic dimension) to communication. The example I did provide demonstrates the influence of AKRSP VOs on the effectiveness of the *kuyotch* as a source of communication. Despite the potential for AKRSP VOs to become agents of modernisation they have facilitated rational communication in Shimshal, and in so doing have facilitated social vitality within the *kuyotch*. The example also demonstrates that the VOs have positively influenced the *kuyotch's* political validity. The extent to which these positive influences derive from the AKRSP strategy itself, or from the

context in which it was applied, is discussed elsewhere.

Like the example of formal education, the material presented in the interpretation of Shimshal's *kuyotch* relates to other components of social vitality, to other organisational spheres, and to the various levels of social organisation recognised in Shimshal. Some of these links are described in later sections. Appendix 7 provides an inventory of pertinent links.

7.4 Sociation and Sustainability In Shimshal

7.4.1 Introduction

The final component in Matthews conception of social vitality is sociation (Matthews, 1983:158). He suggests that "most people engage in social activity not only to make a living, but also for the benefits derived purely from contact with other people" (Matthews, 1983:158). Matthews follows Simmel (1950), who refers to sociation as "social activity for its own sake" (Matthews, 1983:158). This type of social activity can be focused either formally or informally. In the communities Matthews studied, formal institutions for sociation included such things as church groups and service clubs. Informal types of sociation tend to be intricate and difficult to classify in Matthews' Newfoundland communities, as in Shimshal. Many of the sets of household, lineage and clan interactions which I described in Chapter Five are informal venues for "social activity for its own sake". Indeed, in Shimshal, where almost all social interaction is with friends, neighbours, relatives or clan members, any socially based (or economic, political or ecological) interaction is an opportunity for informal sociation.

Informal sociation integrates very closely with socialisation and communication. The example of the informal sub-*kuyotch* of elders shows how communication and sociation are closely linked (see Appendix 7). Even unilateral communication, like listening to a transistor radio in a

group, provides opportunity for social activity, the benefits of which derive from contact with other people. Informal sociation and informal socialisation share certain elements as well. Matthews says that sociation networks are "often critical in their residents' personal assessments of the quality of life" (Matthews, 1983:158). The groups with whom individuals sociate will influence the norms, values and ways to earn a living which comprise their lifeworlds. To the extent that individuals sociate with other community members, other lineage members and other household members, they develop a shared lifeworld and a solidarity with those groups. Adult Shimshalis often complained to me that returning students spend their time sitting with one another arguing national politics and reminiscing about life in Karachi. These youths are engaging in social activity for its own sake, but in so doing are strengthening their socialisation into norms and values that conflict with those of the predominant shared lifeworld in Shimshal.

Formal sociation also overlaps with formal and informal socialisation and communication. Several new institutions for formal sociation have emerged in Shimshal in the past few years. These cater primarily to small groups of persons who wish to identify with a larger externally-based bureaucracy of sociation: packs of cubs and scouts, an acrobatic club, an Ismaili youth club, a Shimshal militia, and, to an extent, the AKRSP village organisations, the AKRSP women's organisation, and the DJ Coaching Centre. Except for the latter three groups, all of these exist **primarily** for the benefit of sociation. VOs and WOs have only a secondary interest in social activity for its own sake. Students at the coaching centre have an explicit socialising objective, but the classes have the atmosphere of a club for Shimshal's more "modern" young women. Female students with whom I conversed admitted that they attended as much for the enjoyment of the outing as for education. The other groups exist for fun; even the "militia" which has a uniform, but which is entirely invisible except at celebrations where military dress seems appropriate. Still, in imitation of the "western" service clubs they emulate, each of these clubs has meetings with announcements, speakers, minutes, discussion and so on. Some of them have constitutions and mandates and internal hierarchies. All of these characteristics facilitate communication and

socialisation.

Most fora geared to formal sociation are activities of the ritual congregation: namely marriage and death ceremonies, birth and circumcision visitations, Ismaili holidays, and indigenous feasts associated with the agricultural calendar (see Chapter Five). These occur at a variety of social levels; often at more than one level for each event. For example, death is celebrated in varying degrees and for varying durations by all of village, sub-clan, lineage, and household (see Chapter Five). In all of these ceremonies the specifics of group and individual participation communicate vital information about the state of the community and its constituent parts, and help to socialise participants (and particularly children) into appropriate lifeworld convictions.

A rich example of this type of sociation in Shimshal is *Salgarah*, the annual celebration of His Royal Highness Karim Aga Khan's tenure as *Imam* to Ismaili Moslems. *Salgarah* represents formal sociation in Shimshal at its most elaborate. Shimshalis anticipate its arrival for weeks in advance, and plan a variety of specific traditional and new events for its celebration. In addition, its various activities are important socialising and communicating mechanisms for the community of Shimshal. In 7.4.2 I use the example of *Salgarah* to interpret the relationships among sociation, social vitality, community sustainability and AKRSP VOs in Shimshal.

7.4.2 Sociation In Shimshal: The Example of *Salgarah*

Ismailis around the world celebrate their Aga Khan each July 11th. The people in Hunza, most of whom are Ismaili, call the festival *Salgarah* or *Imamat Day* (the day Karim Aga Khan became *Imam*). *Salgarah* is the most important moslem festival for Ismailis. Other moslem denominations do not recognise it. No other celebration in Shimshal, sacred or secular, receives the same attention. Only the annual marriage festival in late autumn elicits anything like the same enthusiasm. The two orthodox moslem festivals of *Eid*, for example, are considered minor in

comparison with *Salgarah*.

Salgarah is an opportunity for Ismailis to express reverence for their *Imam*. In Shimshal that reverence is conceived and expressed in concrete, direct and human terms.⁴⁹ Shimshalis demonstrate immense veneration, even adoration, for H.R.H. Karim Aga Khan, the living and tangible individual. Their regard for the religious tradition that he represents seems to be secondary, and is achieved through their devotion to the Aga Khan himself. Of course the two are difficult to separate, and Shimshalis with whom I spoke did not attempt to separate their religion from their *Imam*. However, Shimshalis I know have little interest in abstract theology, little interest in the Koran, and little interest in orthodox moslem observances. But they do have an insatiable interest in the Aga Khan, and every word he speaks. They believe they are good Ismailis, and thus good moslems, if (and only if) they revere the Aga Khan and try to do what he tells them. They perceive their own ritual community as a religious tradition within which this personal reverence for the Aga Khan occurs.

This emphasis on the Aga Khan himself is an element of Shimshali Ismaili faith that has become more important in the last decade or two, since the Aga Khan has become a more tangible personality in Shimshal. The Diamond Jubilee schools, the Aga Khan Foundation Health Services, and the AKRSP are all linked directly to the Aga Khan himself. In 1986 the *Imam* visited Hunza, inaugurated some development projects, and inspected the partial VO road to Shimshal. An Ismaili magazine, Hidayat, is available in Shimshal. Its pages are filled with information about human resources development opportunities for Ismailis, and with messages from the Aga Khan, most of which are technically oriented to increasing material well being and quality of life. This type of exposure to the Ismaili world has allowed Shimshalis to perceive their Ismaili religion in increasingly technical terms, and also with increasing conviction. Many villagers attribute recent "development" to the direct intervention of the Aga Khan. I was often told that "the *Imam* is providing a road", or

⁴⁹ My impression is that other Ismailis of northern Pakistan also perceive their religion as a direct and personal veneration of the Aga Khan.

that "the *Imam* wants us to cooperate with the village organisation", or "the *Imam* says we should not smoke, because smoking wastes money", or that "the *Imam* advises us that if we have one boy and one girl we should spend our money to educate the girl, because the boy will have opportunities even without education". The spoken or unspoken corollary to these statements is that "our *Imam* loves us and is helping us to live better lives. We are good Ismailis if we return his love and take his advice". A consequence of this highly personal reverence for the Aga Khan is that *Salgarah* (and Shimshali moslem ritual in general) does not have the atmosphere of an abstract and ritualistic religious rite. Rather, it feels like a party in honour of a particularly respected and admired person. The Aga Khan's specific teachings complement Shimshal's traditional lifeworld commitment to the ritual congregation. In that sense, interaction with national and international Ismaili organisations reinforces the legitimacy of the *kuyotch*. Just as the ritual congregation (partly via the *kuyotch*) is a symbolic entity with practical and technical legitimacy (ie. practising the ideals of equity and solidarity help with material survival), so also is Ismaili faith a symbolic entity with practical and technical legitimacy (ie. heeding the *Imam's* advice and exploiting the opportunities he provides help with material quality of life). In addition, the teachings of the *Imam* and the ideals of the ritual congregation suggest similar ways of living. At the same time, the *kuyotch* as a body has been relegated to a comparatively passive role in formal Islamic religious observances, because other more directly Ismaili institutions now exist in the community. These are, in order of formal Ismaili religious authority, delegates to the Local and Federal Ismaili Councils, members of the *Tariqah* board for Religious Education, teachers at the DJ school, and the Village Organisations.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The international Ismaili community is organised according to councils which exist at the national and sub-national levels. The Federal Council for Pakistan sits in Karachi; the Local Council in Hunza. Shimshal has two members on each council. These individuals receive doctrine and information from the executive branches of the two councils, which they are obliged to disseminate to other villagers. They are also responsible for soliciting donations from community households, and for organising Ismaili observances in coordination with the other Ismaili institutions in Shimshal.

The *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education is a village level educational organisation which exists under the authority of the Local Council. It works closely with villagers who represent the two councils, and with the school teachers. Teachers at the DJ schools are necessarily members of

Salgarah exemplifies the trend toward the *kuyotch's* more passive participation in Ismaili religious observances relative to the participation of other bodies. In the past *Salgarah* was a smaller festival comprising prayers, speeches by *kuyotch* leaders, ceremonial dancing and a feast. All of those activities were organised and supervised by the *kuyotch*, within the context of the *kuyotch*. By 1989, when I participated, those activities constituted a small part of the larger *Salgarah* festival. It is still sponsored, supervised, and legitimised by the *kuyotch*, but actual organisation and most active participation is by other Ismaili-related groups (Local and Federal Ismaili Councils, members of the *Tariqah* board for Religious Education, teachers at the DJ school, and the Village Organisations).⁵¹ None of these groups (except perhaps the *Tariqah* Board) is overtly interested in religion. That has led to a circumstance whereby *Salgarah* has become less sacred as it becomes more officially Ismaili. This becomes more clear as the example proceeds.

The most orthodoxly religious events of the festival occur on the eve of *Salgarah*. Men and boys gather at the *Jamaat Khana* for prayers, recitations by school boys, religious homilies, and for singing sacred songs (see Plate Twelve). In addition, a few individuals prepare the courtyard of the *Jamaat Khana* for the next day's festivities. In 1989 the evening's events lasted until about one o'clock in the morning. Women and outsiders were not invited to this celebration, although I was led to believe that their exclusion is not a fast rule.⁵² These activities were organised by the *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education, which is the most doctrinal and theology-oriented branch

the *Tariqah* education board.

AKRSP is not an Ismaili organisation, although it is sponsored by the Aga Khan. However in Shimshal, where the AKRSP is identified strongly with the Aga Khan the VOs have taken on a degree of religious authority, or at least religious validity. VO executives tend to participate heavily in formal Ismaili affairs.

⁵¹ Of course, most members of the institutions I mention here are also members of the physical *kuyotch*, and all participants in *Salgarah* are members of the ritual congregation of the *kuyotch*. The *kuyotch's* representation at *Salgarah*, however, comes from the dozen or so elders who provide its traditional leadership, and by the activities that are ritually associated with it (ceremonial dancing, feasting, speech making, and a particular organisation of ritual space).

⁵² As a foreigner, and non-moslem, I was not allowed to attend this part of the ceremony.

Plate Twelve: Shimshal's *Jamaat Khana*
(Ismaili Meeting Place)

of the international Ismaili organisation to function in Shimshal.⁵³ *Kuyotch* elders observed and participated in the evening's activities in their role as dignitaries, but they did not lead them.

On the morning of July 11th school teachers and children gathered at their respective schools. Most children received new school uniforms from their elders which they wore for the first time at *Salgarah*.⁵⁴ Each of the three schools has a different uniform. Around eight o'clock in the morning students formed processions to walk the twenty minutes from school to *Jamaat Khana*. That provided the signal for the rest of the community to assemble at the *Jamaat Khana*. Community members arrived there to find the enclosed courtyard surrounding Shimshal's *Jamaat Khan* strewn with tarps and carpets. A wooden dias had been constructed to protrude from the verandah of the *Jamaat Khana*. It was decorated with shiny gold and silver fabric, and upon it sat an elaborate hand-carved wooden throne. In the throne rested a huge portrait of HRH Karim Aga Khan. Perhaps half a dozen militia members in uniform stood on guard around the dias. Directly opposite the throne, against the courtyard wall, was a huge canopy under which the richest yak hair carpets and quilts were arranged. *Kuyotch* dignitaries sat on these rugs under the canopy, as did as many lineage elders as fit. Strung from every available structure were orange and green Ismaili flags and banners which welcomed participants (in Urdu and English) to enjoy *Salgarah*. All other adult men who were present in the village sat around the edges of the courtyard. Women and children occupied the surrounding meadows, dwelling roofs and courtyard walls. Men and boys are expected to attend the whole ceremony, and are obliged to behave sedately, because of their position within the courtyard. The congregation of women, girls and small children treated the affair much more casually. Individual women came and went at will, and few women attended the entire celebration.

Villagers with some special affiliation to the Aga Khan sat on chairs on the *Jamaat Khana's*

⁵³ Daulat Amin, VO president and headmaster, is also chair of the Shimshal *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education.

⁵⁴ Adults and children usually get a new set of clothing for *Salgarah*, which then becomes their every day wear.

verandah: VO executive members, *Tariqah* Board leaders, and Local and Federal Council members. Two women, leaders of the AKRSP women's organisation, also occupied the verandah. A microphone stood on a table in the centre of the verandah. The microphone and loudspeakers were powered by a gasoline generator which some intrepid men had carried from Pasu. The generator also powered strings of electric lights.

The ceremony started shortly before nine o'clock in the morning. Several lengthy responsorial prayers were recited by *Tariqah* Board members and Ismaili council members. These prayers, and all subsequent activities, were directed first at the portrait of the Aga Khan, and second, at the *lumbardar* and his attendant dignitaries. Each person who performed saluted the throne and then the *lumbardar*. When *lumbardar* Khan returned the salute the performance began. Performances were directed toward the throne. The events at the *Jamaat Khana* were choreographed and performed as if the Aga Khan was present in person, and as if the programme was meant for his enjoyment.

After prayers a series of reviews, speeches and progress reports continued for about three hours. One of the school teachers, secretary of the Local Council, was master of ceremonies. He introduced each performance, explaining to the Aga Khan who and what the performers were. At that point performers saluted the throne and the *lumbardar*, and addressed themselves to the throne. Leaders of Ismaili-related organisations made speeches praising the Aga Khan and his good works in the region, and secretaries reported on the accomplishments of their organisations. Several speeches were made about the VOs and their achievements. All school classes paraded before the throne, sang songs and recited lessons. Individual students from several of the classes also recited speeches or sang songs praising the Aga Khan and his works in Shimshal. Boy scouts and cubs (in uniform) performed a choreographed routine, as did the "militia". Women's Organisation leaders and female students participated fully in the performances, but then returned to their vantage point in the meadow outside the courtyard. Small groups and individuals kicked off their shoes and performed from the verandah. Larger groups occupied a space between the

throne and the *lumbardar*. Toward the end of the programme four groups of students (young and old girls and young and old boys) participated in a competition on Islamic knowledge. Finally, the programme organisers offered a couple more speeches and prayers, and this most formal section of *Salgarah* was finished.

None of the information provided in the various speeches and reports was new to the audience. These events were not intended to inform community members. Rather they represented a ritual report to the Imam on the state of Ismaili devotion (in terms of what was technically achieved).

Throughout the morning school boys circulated among the crowd offering glasses of water and cups of tea. Someone had gone to the trouble of hauling a large chunk of ice from the Molonguti Glacier (four hours distant), so that cool drinking water was available. Part way through the programme great bowls of sherbet were placed on the ground, and the audience was invited to enjoy sherbet and *chapattis* before festivities resumed. Every Shimshal household was obliged to contribute ingredients (or money) toward this snack and a feast held later in the day. This is a *kuyotch* obligation associated with membership in Shimshal's ritual congregation.

The atmosphere at the morning's programme was at once joyous, celebratory and serious. Participants performed enthusiastically, earnestly, and with great concentration. The audience responded in kind. In my experience a certain attitude of gaiety, even irreverence, accompanies most collective forms of sociation in Shimshal. It was absent during the morning *Salgarah* programme (but resurfaced in the afternoon's activities). The audience applauded loudly, but there was little laughter. I was not allowed to take photographs. Every performance was executed sincerely, competently and without a hint of embarrassment. Participants seemed to act exactly as if the Aga Khan was present in the flesh. I was struck by the intensity to which they appeared to identify the throne with the physical presence their *Imam*. Shimshalis were rejoicing and recreating in the ritual presence of their *Imam*.

The programme that was performed at the *Jamaat Khana* in the morning may be described

as a non-traditional innovation, a new way to celebrate *Salgarah*. Except for the schools, none of the institutions actively involved in the morning's events have existed in Shimshal for more than a decade. Even the schools are relatively youthful institutions. The *Jamaat Khana* itself is less than thirty years old. According to Shimshal residents the morning portion of the programme did not exist before the 1980s, although certain of the school performances had been incorporated into the traditional programme. The loudspeakers, the banners, the lights, the frequent use of Urdu and English, the portrait of the Aga Khan, the uniforms and all the marching about testify to the influence of supra-village organisations on the structure and performance of the morning's programme. The facts that women were forbidden to sit in the courtyard, that the atmosphere was one of sobriety, and that photos were prohibited suggest that lowland Islamic (although not particularly Ismaili) influences were present in how organisers conceived the event.⁵⁵ These two outside influences may result from the fact that the organisers are all members of local institutions which represent larger supra-village organisations. In addition, most executive members of these institutions have considerable experience outside of Shimshal, and (in the process described in 7.2) have been socialised partly by those experiences. The morning programme at *Salgarah* is an opportunity for cosmopolitan, and to an extent religiously trained (read orthodox), Shimshalis to throw the type of party they think should be thrown to honour the Aga Khan.

The nature of the institutions responsible for planning the morning's events, and their leadership, also accounts for the technical emphasis of speeches, performances and praise for the Aga Khan. The most visible Ismaili-related institutions in Shimshal are geared toward increasing material quality of life. Of these, the AKRSP VOs are by far the most popular and widely supported. It is not surprising then, that the whole morning focused on what the Aga Khan had provided for Shimshal, and what the various organisations had done to utilise those provisions. This combination of reverence for the Aga Khan and its expression in terms of material well-being

⁵⁵ Shimshalis are not usually concerned about who takes photos or who gets photographed. Nor do they condone the segregation of women.

allowed the morning's programme to be at once a serious religious event and a relatively secular one. The morning's activities reflect new avenues for sociation which reproduce new sources of commitment and identity that have become important to Shimshalis. It concentrated on systemic, technical circumstances. This combination contrasts with the afternoon's programme which was less sombre, less religious in doctrinal terms, and yet more sacred. The difference is that the afternoon's events revolved around practical considerations, and lifeworld-imbedded ritual practices. The morning's programme involved what could be called "passive" sociation. There was little informal conversation, joking, catching up on gossip, or the like. Rather the pleasure of sociation derived from sharing, as a community, a significant and celebratory moment. Proximity rather than activity was the basis of most Shimshali's participation in the morning's events.

After a final set of speeches the master of ceremonies invited the assembled congregation to adjourn to a threshing field just outside the courtyard of the *Jamaat Khana*. Low stone benches and the walls of several dwellings form the perimeter of this traditional ceremonial courtyard. A large canopy had been suspended from a roof to provide shade for the *lumbardar* and his leading elders (no one else could share this space unless invited). On the opposite side of the courtyard sat three musicians with their instruments: a fife and two drums.⁵⁶ The remaining Shimshalis stood or sat around the edges of the threshing floor. The sexes mingled more freely than at the *Jamaat Khana*. Still, women and girls tended to arrange themselves to the left of the dignitaries, and on the roofs of dwellings. Men and boys occupied the benches and ground to the right of the *lumbardar*. On the whole, men formed an inner circle with women behind them. One set of benches was informally reserved for leading Shimshali men who are not true elders. Individuals entered, left, and moved about the ceremonial space as they pleased throughout the celebration: a period of informal and active sociation had begun.

⁵⁶ The most popular musical instrument in Shimshal is the *rubab*, a type of Persian mandolin. It is the instrument associated most closely with Islamic music. Shimshalis never use it for dance ceremonies, just as they never use the fife except in dance ceremonies.

The afternoon's programme was more casual and less restrained than that in the morning. Particular activities began and ended rather haphazardously, without much introduction. Individuals' resumed their habits of interrupting, joking, applauding and conversing at will. I was invited to take photos (but admonished not to photograph women without their explicit permission). Throughout the afternoon the *lumbardar* and senior lineage elders were the centre of activity. As in the morning they said little, and made no effort to dictate the course of events. But they acknowledged and approved each activity as it commenced, and guided the cadence of the celebration by the pace of their salutes and acknowledgements.

The programme started with school boys playing games under the supervision of their teachers: tug of war, tag, and a game in which blindfolded children feed each other sherbet. Each participant saluted the *lumbardar* and was acknowledged by him before any game began. One boy cheated and was obliged to dance alone in front of the *lumbardar*, to the amusement of all Shimshal. Next, the teenage boys who comprise the acrobatic club performed an acrobatic display. It continued for about ten minutes before ending in confusion when one acrobat upset the flaming hoop through which he was jumping, and set a mattress on fire. After that, several comic skits were performed by a group of teenage boys and young men. These skits reenacted elements of Shimshal' history and mythology (see 7.3). The three sets of events (games, acrobatics and skits) were intended to be enjoyable and funny. They were not taken seriously; even the boy who was caught cheating was treated like a wag and not a miscreant. No clear winners emerged in any of the games. Indeed, none of the games were completed before something else began. Performers were treated indulgently and encouraged in an attitude of mild irreverence and facetiousness.⁵⁷ It was as if the afternoon's activities provided a way to dissipate the tension and nervousness that had built up throughout the morning as a result of the almost tangible presence of the Aga Khan. Few individuals remained at the threshing floor through all of this activity. Most came and went

⁵⁷ For example, leading Shimshalis, past and present, were lampooned in the skits. The assembled congregation seemed to be amused, and friends of mine laughed about the skits for days.

several times, and some found an hour or two to irrigate some terraces, or attend to other household duties. Still, over half the community was present at the centre of activity throughout (see Plate Thirteen).

Games and skits provided a rest between the morning's serious events and the most important ritual activity of the afternoon: ceremonial dancing. With the onset of this activity the festival's focus became more formal once again, but sociation remained active. Dancing began with all boys participating in an undisciplined sort of sabre dance, during which they tramped in a circle, waved wooden swords about, and chanted a song about Karim Aga Khan. When they had finished the assembled dignitaries invited *lumbardar* Khan to dance. After a show of reluctance he rose and proceeded to execute the traditional Shimshali dance: small delicate steps, occasional dips and twirls, arms outstretched at shoulder height, and a gradual counter-clockwise movement around the courtyard. After one complete circle his lineage members joined him one by one in order of precedence, and followed him in his movements. After a few minutes other men who felt they could claim some association joined in (other leading lineage age-mates, affinal relations, close friends and neighbours). The order in which individuals joined the dance was continuously negotiated. Each individual attempted to bow to others, and was urged to take precedence, before another person joined the dance. By the time the dance was over the line of dancers represented a newly reproduced expression of the order of obligation and expectation stemming from *lumbardar* Khan to his thirty or so closest associates (see Chapter Five).⁵⁸ The *lumbardar* had nothing directly to do with this; he continued to dance, apparently disinterested in the whole procedure. When the *lumbardar's* dance was done another leading elder was invited to dance, and the procedure began anew. All medial lineage groupings had an opportunity to sponsor a dance, although not all lineage leaders exploited that opportunity. When lineage-based dancing was complete, other special dances were allowed, with the *lumbardar's* approval. These were sponsored by groups of peers,

⁵⁸ *Lumbardar* Khan's dance was longer and larger than most others because of his important standing as *lumbardar*, lineage leader and sub-clan leader. The size of a dance, and when a lineage leader is invited to dance, expresses status among lineages.

Plate Thirteen: Afternoon Festivities at Saгарah
(Part of the skit described earlier. These performers represent the primitive ancestors of contemporary Shimshalis)

and individuals who are not lineage leaders but who contribute in some exemplary way to the ritual congregation (for example VO leaders, climbers, exceptionally good dancers). Again, participation in these dances is negotiated, although with less serious ramifications.⁵⁹ These last dances were more boisterous and less carefully choreographed than lineage-based dances.⁶⁰ Like lineage dances they reproduce and reaffirm a certain set of relations within the community, and acknowledge the lifeworld validity of individuals within the ritual congregation. In 1989, when every dance that the *lumbardar* considered legitimate was finished a final dance was performed by the community's best dancers, after which the congregation began to disperse (see Plate Fourteen).

After half an hour or so village men regrouped on the verandah of the *Jamaat Khana* for a feast of meat, *chapattis* and tea. Women participated in a similar feast at the traditional ceremonial ground.⁶¹ Blessings were offered for the food, and the meal proceeded. Participants ate small amounts of food, conversed with their neighbours, and then dispersed to their own homes with equal portions of the feast. The gradual departure of villagers provided an unceremonious end to the community-based festival. Household members continued to eat of the ceremonial food in their own homes, so that all resident household members received some of the ritual food. That evening many houses built bonfires on their roofs, and all the high channels surrounding the community were lit up with fire, according to ancient (non-Islamic) Shimshali custom.

The afternoon's programme, with the addition of a few prayers and speeches, comprised what had until recently been the entire *Salgarah* celebration. Indeed, those activities (prayer, speeches, games or skits, ceremonial dancing, and feasting) constitute the major ingredients in all

⁵⁹ Community members can express an affiliation with a dancer by joining him on the dance floor (if his affiliation is formally recognised by the *kuyotch*), by paying musicians to extend the dance, or by inserting rupees into the brim of the dancer's cap.

⁶⁰ More young men participate in these dances. They typically attempt to dance as energetically as their elders will allow. Older villagers prefer a carefully choreographed, sedate and disciplined style of dancing (see Chapter Five).

⁶¹ As with the earlier meal, each household contributed a set amount flour, butter, milk and tea. Money was offered for the purchase of meat.

Plate Fourteen: Dancing for the Ritual Congregation
(Household heads dancing in the lumbardar's retinue at Salgarah, as the assembled congregation looks on.)

Shimshali festivals. Together they demonstrate several characteristics of traditional Shimshali (and Hunza) ritual. First, there is no overt organisation, no master of ceremonies, no individual that ensures things get done. Activities are somewhat impromptu and confused.⁶² The fact that things go smoothly is acknowledged as an indication of community solidarity. Second, all households contribute equally to the feast, and all households have the opportunity to participate in ceremonial dancing. That these two circumstances occur is taken as an indication of community equity. Third, the emphasis is on the *kuyotch* and its leading members, although that emphasis tends to be understated. The platform of *kuyotch* dignitaries directs activities. If they succeed in directing those activities subtly and passively, so that all community members behave according to shared *lifeworld* norms without being told, then community members consider the authority of the *kuyotch* and the ideals it represents to be intact. Fourth, technical validation (objective truth) is less important than practical validation (*normative appropriateness and sincerity*). Indigenous ceremonial events are geared toward practical communication: affirmation of shared norms. Even the games seldom continue until one team wins.

Just as the morning's activities revolved around institutions identified with the Aga Khan, the afternoon's programme was geared to the indigenous ritual congregation itself. It had a less sombre, and less pious atmosphere, but a more spiritual one. While the morning provided an opportunity for groups to perform and account for themselves **technically** to the community and to their *Imam*, the afternoon's celebration included everyone as **practical** performers and participants in the ritual congregation. Both portions of the festival were parties; opportunities for community members to socialise. In the morning's programme socialisation interacted intimately with socialisation. It was a chance for a few "expert" Shimshalis to socialise the rest of the

⁶² The confusion and lack of organisation is superficial. All traditional ritual activities are firmly guided by precedent.

community.⁶³ This socialising is not education, in the strict sense. Rather it is a process of formalising what all participants already know (just as minutes of meetings do not educate, but rather formalise), and it is the communal reception of this formalising that comprises the passive sociating enjoyment of the morning's activities. The afternoon's programme linked sociation more closely with bilateral communication. Skits and games, and especially dancing are Shimshal's most anticipated leisure activities. At the same time, their execution communicates important information about the ritual community. The way the order of dancing is negotiated resembles communicative action; the dance is a discourse in which all adult male villagers participate toward reaching consensus.⁶⁴

7.4.3 Interpretation

The benefit of sociation for social vitality and for community sustainability is more difficult to ascertain than are the benefits of communication and socialisation, because sociation is an end in itself. Communication provides vital information to community members, and socialisation creates well-adjusted individuals, but sociation is social interaction for its own sake. I think the key to interpreting this social activity for its own sake is to examine how sociating activities produce, reproduce and express identity and commitment. The "modern" and traditional *Salgarah* events, enacted in the morning and afternoon respectively, relate to two different sets of identity and commitment, yet they converge in some crucial aspects.

⁶³ Again we see the close links among socialisation, communication and sociation. Unilateral communication is closely tied to socialisation. bilateral communication is closely allied with sociation. In a community like Shimshal communicative action is achieved through activities which combine active sociation with bilateral communication. Dance ceremonies are an example. The *kuyotch*, at its best, is another.

⁶⁴ As with other forms of collective discourse in Shimshal, the potential for dances to result in communicative action is compromised by the lack of direct participation by women and children.

Traditional indigenous *Salgarah* events, those that took place during the afternoon on July 11th 1989, focus on sociation at the community level and the lineage level; that is, on the ritual community as a whole and on its largest constituent parts (see Chapter Five for a discussion of community-based ritual events).⁶⁵ The *lumbardar's* dance was, in essence, a community dance which reproduced participants' commitment to the community polity. Likewise, the feast to which all households contributed was a community level activity. Each household contributed a set amount of food which then became the property of the ritual congregation, to be shared equally by all members regardless of household status. Participation in games and skits was limited to certain age groups, but all male village inhabitants within those age groups were invited to participate. They are still community-based events. Most dances are lineage-based forms of sociation, so that participation in a particular dance expresses commitment to a lineage elder, and public identification with the lineage group. The willingness of a lineage elder to allow a dance to be held for his lineage also expresses that leader's commitment to the existing nature of the village polity (especially the power structure of the *kuyotch*). Others who join his dance are also affirming their identity with the village polity.

A primary contribution of traditional *Salgarah* events to community sustainability, then, is the reaffirmation of community solidarity through sociation. Because the group involved in sociation incorporates the whole community, and because the result of the sociation is a consensually determined reproduction of the overall nature of the ritual community (worked out, for example, through dancing), then these sociating events reproduce lifeworld elements regarding the ritual community that are shared by participating community members. These shared elements have been rationalised to the extent that participants accept their legitimacy on the basis of one of Habermas' three validity claims: normative appropriateness. The rationality of shared elements is limited by the non-participation, or rather passive participation, of women.

⁶⁵ An exception to this was the acrobatics display. It does not seem to fit with the afternoon's other events. I suspect that it was placed in the afternoon programme because of its levity and lack of Ismaili sentiment.

Twenty years ago the traditional events of the afternoon would have been considered sufficient celebration of *Salgarah*. All important forms of formal sociation would have been enjoyed, and all supra-household level expressions of identity and commitment would have been expressed and reproduced. Formal religion was an internal affair based on the Islamic connotations of the ritual community, so that the Aga Khan (whose day they were celebrating) would be honoured by celebrating the traditional ritual congregation. In addition, the expressions of identification with and commitment to the symbolic domain of lifeworld would have implied a commitment to prevailing systemic circumstances: subsistence agriculture and a lineage-based political hierarchy.

Sociating events which pertained to the characteristics of Shimshal twenty years ago no longer suffice. Other formal avenues for sociation which reproduce and renew new sources of commitment and identity have recently become important in Shimshal. These changed circumstances are recognised in the morning's "modern" *Salgarah* program. Many Shimshalis have been socialised into different forms of sociation. Leisure activities organised around supra-village institutions are popular with individuals who have spent some time outside the community. A fascination for "service club" types of institutions has emerged in Shimshal. The boy scouts and cubs, militia, acrobatic club, and VOs exemplify that trend in varying degrees. The ritual congregation and lineages celebrated in dancing and feasting are no longer the only legitimate communal fora for sociation. The morning's activities are an attempt to modernise *Salgarah*; to make it relevant to new experiences.

Associated with new forms of sociation are new sources of commitment and identity. In 7.2 and 7.3 I traced how village members have recently utilised a variety of paths to achieving and expressing social integration into the shared Shimshali lifeworld. That has occurred because the shared lifeworld has itself expanded and become more rationalised. Organisations such as the AKRSP VOs, the local and federal councils, and the *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education provide alternative ways to serve the ritual community. Individuals whose personal lifeworlds have come to incorporate the validity of bureaucratic decision-making, social integration into a larger social

system, and participation in national economic and political structures, are likely to identify with the VOs and other such organisations more than with the traditional *kuyotch* or lineage groupings as such. As these organisations achieve a validity of their own within the *kuyotch* and ritual community as a whole, and become integral parts of the Shimshali social system, the individuals who identify with them are also committing themselves to the ritual congregation. That source of commitment and solidarity would be lost if the *kuyotch* (which is still the formal representative body of the ritual congregation) did not encourage the participation and integration of the sections of Shimshal's membership who identify with those organisations. One way to include new organisations in the ritual community is to facilitate their participation in ritual ceremonies, such as *Salgarah*.

Many of the new social institutions in Shimshal have a greater affiliation with the Aga Khan than does the ritual congregation as a whole. As a result they attract the most orthodox and enthusiastic Ismailis. Except for the *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education (whose membership virtually duplicates the VO executive and Ismaili council membership), all of these institutions relate to the Aga Khan in technical terms. They are recipients of technical advice and resources from the international organisations sponsored by the Aga Khan. In former times Shimshalis felt a symbolic bond with the Aga Khan, which was realised (and still is) through the ideals of the ritual congregation. Now Shimshalis feel an additional and stronger technical bond with the Aga Khan. Community members consider it appropriate that the stewards of that technical bond, the executive members of Ismaili institutions, be recognised at *Salgarah*, and that the technical bond itself be endorsed. That cannot be done effectively in a traditional ritual ceremony which concentrates on *kuyotch* and lineage, except in a few dances toward the end of the ceremony. The morning's *Salgarah* programme provided a venue for the full participation of the stewards of Shimshal's technical affiliation with the international Ismaili organisation in a community-based ritual celebration.

The emergence of Ismaili organisations motivated by technical efficacy, together with increasing infiltration of the external social system, have led to a change in the types of authority

that are recognised in Shimshal. Traditional *kuyotch* and lineage leadership derives the technical aspects of its legitimacy from the subsistence agro-pastoral system (and in the past from affiliations with the *tham*). The negotiated hierarchy of ceremonial dancing competently reflects these traditional technical issues of agricultural wealth, lineage leadership, herding competence, and hierarchical position in the *kuyotch*. However, it does not adequately reflect other recent types of legitimate technically-based authority within the community. For example, only lineage elders may participate in certain dances, and only household heads may join them (unless they are lineage leaders' direct agnatic descendants). Currently, some of the most influential and respected community leaders are neither lineage elders nor household heads. The reproduction of their status within the community must be negotiated in another forum. At *Salgarah* that negotiation occurs in the speech making and performances which highlight technical accomplishments during the morning's programme.

Thus, lifeworld norms concerning who participates passively and who participates actively in the ritual congregation have shifted. The traditional *Salgarah* programme is all inclusive; the entire ritual community (which includes all village members and visitors) is represented in the ceremony. All households have their chance to dance, and every individual partakes of the ceremonial meal. But only the *lumbardar*, lineage elders and household heads participate actively. The morning's programme is less inclusive, in the sense that most community members comprise the audience, but how they act as an audience (with reverence, approval and support that reinforces the ritual congregation as expressed in these new events and institutions) provides an active component to their status as audience. Only a small minority of Shimshalis actively participates, but there are no *a priori* restrictions on who that may be. In particular, women and junior men spoke along side lineage elders and household heads. Their participation recognises and legitimises a trend toward a more rationalised hierarchy of authority in Shimshal.

Salgarah, as it was celebrated in Shimshal in 1989, may be divided into two distinct sets of activities: a core set and a supplementary set. The core set comprised the afternoon's

programme. It is an important set of sociating activities for community sustainability, because it allows community members to participate in a reaffirmation of commitment to and identification with the ritual community as an equitable and impartible symbolic unit. It ensures that a shared lifeworld actually exists, and that this lifeworld corresponds to systemic characteristics surrounding *kuyotch* and lineage groupings. However, this core set of ritual activities, in isolation, assumes a much narrower lifeworld and a much more traditional social system than currently exists. The supplementary set of *Salgarah* activities provides the contemporary context for a reaffirmation of the impartible ritual congregation.

First, it acknowledges that in a technical sense the ritual community is not impartible or indivisible. Different organisations exist within the community, all of which claim some authority regarding certain issues which overlap the *kuyotch*, and all of which attract commitment and identification of their own. The morning's programme establishes a connection between these institutions and the ritual congregation. It provides a chance to reintegrate component parts into an impartible whole.

Second, the individuals who derive legitimacy within the ritual congregation because of their service in new social organisations are recognised. There is no place to recognise these individuals (especially women and junior men) in the traditional set of *Salgarah* events. *Salgarah*, as a manifestation of the ritual congregation, is rationalised and rendered more modern by recent additions to the programme.

Third, the traditional ritual programme is an artifact from a time when Shimshalis were inward looking. Shimshal is no longer guided by an inward-focused social system and shared lifeworld. Rather, the current social system relies on interaction with the outside, and lifeworld norms and values reflect that reliance. The way the morning's programme was enacted, as well as its content, recognises an increasing interaction between Shimshal and the outside world (eg. the microphone, the banners, the marching, the lengthy financial reports, the orthodox Islamic observances). It places the ritual congregation inside larger social, political, economic and

geographical contexts.⁶⁶

Finally, the supplementary set of activities contextualises the current relationship between the Aga Khan and Shimshal, and highlights the technical characteristics of that relationship. In so doing, the activities express the rationalisation of system and lifeworld as they relate to Shimshal's Ismaili heritage.

Shimshalis do not express the need for the morning's *Salgarah* programme in the terms I have used. However, they do acknowledge that the traditional activities no longer reflect the character of Shimshal, especially its experience of Islam. Each event was included deliberately. Nor are these new events solely the initiatives of a few individuals, although they were organised by a small group of educated men. The presence of the *lumbardar* and his leading elders as governors of the programme endorses the events as legitimate representations of the ritual congregation. Moreover, by placing the supplementary events before the main programme, and distinct from it, the *kuyotch* leadership recognises its contextualising role. In effect, the morning's programme breaks the community into a number of technical parts and explains their position within the symbolic whole. Then in a separate programme, the whole, the impartible ritual community, is celebrated, and the negotiated symbolic outcome of that celebration is understood in terms of its modern context.

The interpretation of *Salgarah* presented above provides an example of how sociation, a third element of social vitality, relates to Shimshal's overall sustainability. Unlike the previous two examples, this one does not discuss the influence of AKRSP VOs on the effectiveness of *Salgarah* as a source of sociation that is beneficial to sustainability. Rather, it shows how VOs, and other similar organisations, have changed Shimshalis conception of their relationship with the Aga Khan, and also how they have necessitated a reorganisation of the sociating activities of *Salgarah*. Moreover, these same organisations have contributed to a set of ritual activities which locate

⁶⁶ The traditional programme also recognises a larger context, but it is a much simpler and outdated context: the kingship. Outside influences are much more intricate and pervasive now.

traditional ritual events within the current shared lifeworld and social system. In so doing, the intervention of members of these organisations has rationalised the ritual celebration, and has facilitated the rationalisation of norms and values which are produced and reproduced by *Salgarah's* ritual programme.

As with the other two examples in this chapter, the material presented in the interpretation of *Salgarah* relates to other components of social vitality, to other organisational spheres, and to the various levels of social organisation recognised in Shimshal. Appendix 8 summarises pertinent links.

7.5 Conclusion: Social Vitality and Sustainability In Shimshal

Discussion in Chapter Seven interprets the interaction among four different sets of issues: specific empirical expressions of social organisation, the AKRSP village organisations, social vitality, and community sustainability. Three detailed examples, the specific empirical expressions of social organisation, provide a context for interpreting social vitality and its role in Shimshal's community sustainability, and for evaluating the influence of VOs on social vitality and the broader issue of community sustainability.

Early in the chapter I defined social vitality as the successful socialisation and sociation of all individual community members, and the successful communication of important information, within a set of constraints shared by the community at large. In other words, members of a socially vital community learn, live and teach their lives within the boundaries of a shared lifeworld which is itself reproduced through their lives. In times of rapid systemic change, such as that which many indigenous communities are presently encountering, the shared framework within which community members are socialised, sociated, and within which they communicate, threatens to disintegrate. Different individuals experience systemic changes differently so that shared elements of lifeworld

diminish. In addition, new systemic activities may become less embedded in legitimacy provided by lifeworld ideals, values and convictions for all community members. The challenge for communities is to weather expedient or desired systemic changes without sacrificing the identity and commitment of individuals to a shared lifeworld, and without allowing system and lifeworld to uncouple: in short, without entering a cycle of modernisation.

Each of the three examples I provided in the chapter describe systemic changes to an important Shimshali social institution. None of the examples say anything definitive about Shimshal's social vitality. Certainly, the changes I described have both enabling and disabling influences. But it seems that for now, at least, Shimshal's social vitality has been enhanced by these changes, not least because community members have utilised the new AKRSP village organisations to forge a stronger link between the technical activities of the social system, and lifeworld's practical interests. My interpretations suggest that Shimshal has developed an increasingly vital sphere of social organisation because it has interpreted village organisations as institutions devoted to instrumental action, but deriving their legitimacy from existing, shared and indigenous, practical interests.

Chapter Eight, which follows, demonstrates that the beneficial role of the AKRSP village organisations is not limited to the social sphere of systemic organisation. The community's utilisation of its AKRSP sponsored village organisations has also facilitated political validity, both internal and external. I discuss internal political validity in the context of the community's internal negotiations over who controls the distribution of portering employment. My interpretation of external political validity revolves around the increasing role of AKRSP VO leadership in representing Shimshal to the outside world.

Chapter Eight: Political Validity and Community Sustainability in Shimshal

8.1: Political Validity

In Chapter Two sustainability within the sub-systemic sphere of political organisation was discussed in terms of **political validity**. The concept of political validity is based on a conviction that all communities need "some means to control deviance and maintain social order" (Matthews, 1983:159). In essence, political validity relies on effective social control, and social control requires a process of making, adjudicating and enforcing laws, rules and conventions.

Table 8.1a: Formal and Informal Relational Structures of Community Political Life

	Formal Political Organisation	Informal Political Organisation
Political Validity	All formally organised groups and positions of leadership and control in the community recognised as valid by the members of the community.	All informal mechanisms of control and leadership in the community which the residents of the community accept as legitimate and in their interest.

Source: Matthews, 1983:162; emphasis in original.

The process leading to social control (and the political validity of a community) may be achieved through formal institutions such as police, town council or village elders, or by way of informal structures such as gossip (see Table 8.1a). Matthews suggests that in most small communities the force of law, in a formalised and strictly judicial sense, is less important than are indigenous rules and conventions (which may or may not be more flexible and/or less formal)¹.

¹ An exception which pertains in some traditional communities is religious law, especially fundamentalist Islamic or Judeo-Christian law, but also the more idiosyncratic laws of ritual responsibility, obligation and social conduct.

This is not to say that the political sphere of social activity is less developed in local communities than elsewhere. It does suggest that an action's legality may be less important than its appropriateness.

This distinction between legality and appropriateness relates to Habermas' three validity claims. Law, as conceived in a western judiciary context, derives mainly from a technical interest which judges the validity of an action in relation to prescribed notions of "propositional truth and... the effectiveness of means for attaining ends" (McCarthy, 1981:x). The process of maintaining social control in local communities such as Shimshal stems from a more practical interest, and relates to the validity claim that "an action is right or appropriate in relation to a certain normative context, or that such a context deserves to be recognised as legitimate", and/or to the claim that "an utterance [or action] is a sincere or authentic expression of one's own subjective experiences" (McCarthy, 1981:x-xi).

Technical legality can be evaluated from outside the intricate sets of structures, relationships and personalities that make up a community.² And social control based on technical legality may exist at the social systemic level, and be relatively separate from lifeworld. In contrast, a system of **practical** social control which incorporates the normative legitimacy and authenticity of human agency into its criteria for evaluation has to operate from within the domain of lifeworld, or at least have access to it. Otherwise, the persons responsible for social control cannot interpret the subtle criteria which constitute normative legitimacy and authenticity. Social control in this latter situation requires institutions and individual representatives who are fully incorporated into the

² For example, the propositional truth of a western-style judicial system can be (and is) validated in terms of its statistical effectiveness as a deterring, preventative or penalising force, which says nothing of its practical significance. Similarly, the activities of individual police derive the legitimacy they require from the technical validity of the letter of the law: which comes from outside, and is systemic.

community's social, economic and ecological fabric, as well as its political fabric.³

The less social control relies on the force of law, the more likely it is to rely on the quality and recognized authority of community leadership (see Matthews, 1983:159).⁴ Rules and

³ These two types of authority -technical and practical- relate to Weber's three ideal types of authority -legal, traditional and charismatic-, but the relationship is not direct (see Weber, 1962; 1947:328). My category of technically-derived authority is closest to what Weber calls legal authority based on rational grounds, but Weber's ideal type still implies some normative legitimacy (of a non-individual impersonal order) beyond purely technical legitimacy (oriented to achieving instrumental goals), so it does have a normative dimension (see Weber, 1947:332). Traditional and charismatic authority equate primarily with my category of practically-based authority, but again the categories overlap.

⁴ This can be understood in terms of Weber's three ideal types of authority mentioned in the previous footnote. Rational-legal authority **is** the force of law, and is not problematic for this discussion. Charismatic authority, as an ideal type, relies **solely** on the perceived quality and recognised authority of community leadership, so it too is non-problematic. Leadership based on traditional authority would seem, initially, to describe a type of social control that does not **necessarily** rely on either the force of law or the qualities of that leadership. Rather, traditional leadership relies on a normative structure, which **may** depend on leadership qualities, and **may** depend on traditions or regulations, which approximate laws. Indeed, Weber states that the decisions of traditional leaders are legitimised in some combination of two ways:

(a) partly in terms of traditions which themselves directly determine the content of the command and the objects and extent of authority. In so far as this is true, to overstep the traditional limitations would endanger his [sic] traditional status by undermining acceptance of his legitimacy.

(b) In part, it is a matter of the chief's free personal decision, in that tradition leaves a certain sphere open for this. This sphere of traditional prerogative rests primarily on the fact that the obligations of obedience on the basis of personal loyalty are essentially unlimited... (Weber, 1947:341)

However, the chief's free personal decisions are limited in gerontocracies and patriarchal communities (the most common types of traditional indigenous community socio-political structure) by the fact that though the "exercise" of those decisions "is a private prerogative of the person or persons involved" it "is in fact pre-eminently an authority on behalf of the group as a whole" (Weber, 1947:346):

It must, therefore, be exercised in the interests of the members and is thus not freely appropriated by the incumbent. In order that this shall be maintained, it is crucial that in both these cases there is a complete absence of an administrative staff over which the individual in authority has personal control. He [sic] is hence still to a large extent dependent on the willingness of the group members to respect his authority, since he has no machinery to enforce it. Those subject to authority are still members of the group and not "subjects". But their membership exists by tradition and not by virtue of legislation or a deliberate act of adherence. Obedience is owed to the person of the chief, not to any established rule. But it is owed to the chief only by virtue of his traditional status. He is thus on his part strictly bound by tradition. (Weber, 1947:346)

It is clear from Weber's description of the basis for traditional leaders' authority, especially as that description relates to gerontocracies or patriarchal societies, that traditional authority combines

conventions are identified with the positions of community leaders, and these leaders are responsible for their maintenance, and the maintenance of social order in general. Matthews states that "in most small communities, the force of law is not as important as the nature and quality of community leadership" (Matthews, 1983:159). He goes on to say that "leaders may be formally organised, as in a community council, or they may be an informal group of people who take responsibility for decision-making. In either case, one of the most important factors is whether or not the leaders represent the rest of the community" (Matthews, 1983:159). Political validity, then, comprises "community leadership and control" that is recognised as valid by the community at large (Matthews, 1983:149).

In The Creation of Regional Dependency Matthews (1983) effectively develops the twin concepts of political leadership and political validity. He maintains that political validity requires leaders to represent residents in one of two ways: by reflecting the general values and attitudes of community members (internal), and/or by effectively interacting with the outside world on behalf of the community (external).⁵ It is worth quoting Matthews' thoughts about political representation at length:

First, [leaders] may represent their communities by reflecting the general attitudes and values of the community as a whole. This is critically important in determining whether or not these persons are accepted by the community as 'valid' leaders. It might seem that formally elected leaders would be representative in this way. However, those leaders generally come from among the better educated and better informed members of the community and are also likely to have more contact with the outside world than the majority of community members. Such characteristics immediately set them apart from the community and their opinions and decisions do not necessarily reflect the attitudes and values of the majority of

elements of something like legal authority (traditional regulations and rules) and something like charismatic authority (recognition of the leader's personal claim to authority, based on his or her personal qualities, and the quality of his or her leadership). Thus, we can say that in communities where social control relies to a small extent on the force of law, it is likely to rely to a large extent on the recognised authority and personal qualities of community leaders, whether those leaders are traditional or charismatic.

⁵ This is true of rational-legal and traditional authorities, but less true of charismatic authorities, whose role is to change values, attitudes and methods of interaction... but still, I would argue, from within a shared lifeworld; otherwise, the source of charisma would not be recognised by community members.

those they supposedly represent. When this happens the 'validity' of even formally elected leaders may therefore be in question. (Matthews, 1983:159)

To rephrase this quotation in Habermas' terms, it is important that community leaders share the lifeworld (attitudes and values) and the generalisable interests common to other community members. Often, what sets formal leaders apart from other community members, and what gives them their authority, is the possession of exceptional education, wealth or contact with the outside. These very (technical) characteristics may lead to a leadership elite whose lifeworld (and technical agenda) differs from that of other citizens. What **makes** a leader valid (technical efficacy), and what allows a leader to **keep** his or her political validity (practical embeddedness) are often different characteristics. It seems that technical validity (Habermas' first category) makes a person attractive as a potential leader, but that it needs to be combined with normative validity (Habermas' second category), manifest in the possession of commonly-held values and attitudes, for legitimacy as a political leader to be sustained.⁶ In other words, leadership characteristics must, in a modern community, satisfy the technical demands of **becoming** a leader and the normative demands of **being** a leader⁷. Examples in Chapter Seven demonstrated how communicatively rational choice of social leadership strengthens community sustainability. Later sections of this chapter indicate that the same is true of political leadership.

Matthews suggests that the problems associated with the validity of formal political leadership are exacerbated at the informal leadership level, because the process whereby informal leadership is produced and reproduced is usually unclear:

An even greater problem exists in demonstrating that informal leaders within any community represent the majority of the community's residents. They cannot point to any electoral process whereby their right to leadership has been validated. Moreover, they are usually the élite from one of the key economic or religious

⁶ This is not always the case. In a modernised society technical efficacy may be both what makes a leader and maintains a leader.

⁷ Habermas' third category of validity claim, truthfulness or sincerity, reinforces each of the others.

sectors of community life and their positions set them apart from the rest of the community and possibly alienate them from those segments who have other values or who deal with rival merchants or follow different religious leaders. Consequently, the validity of informal leaders is almost always open to question. (Matthews, 1983:159-160)

This uncertainty concerning political validity of informal leaders exists in the minds of both informal leaders themselves and their constituents. As Matthews states, the main negative characteristic of informal leadership is that its probable status as an elite group alienates it from large parts of the community. This problem is likely to be more serious in heterogeneous communities. These features of informal political leadership -its elite status and its uncertain validity- have positive aspects as well, which I think Matthews undervalues. Specifically, many local communities have only recently been incorporated into a centralised political structure, so that economic or religious or ecological spheres of organisation are more indigenously-developed and more lifeworld-embedded than is the re-organised political sphere⁸. In these cases political leadership may need to transfer legitimacy from another sphere to be normatively valid. Economic or social or ecological elites who have demonstrated their identification with a shared lifeworld and their commitment to generalisable interests may be the most technically and normatively valid informal (or formal) political leaders⁹. Although their material circumstances do not represent the **actual** norm, these circumstances, and the values they exemplify, may represent a shared **idealised** norm.

Matthews asserts, correctly I think, that the validity of informal leaders is almost always open to question.¹⁰ This is because their legitimacy relies on the continuous, and perhaps fickle, favour of constituents. But the validity of formal leaders is also tenuous, because it often depends

⁸ Shimshal is a good example of such a community.

⁹ This type of leadership may represent some historical continuity valued by the community while expediently demonstrating to central government a political break with the past.

¹⁰ This applies to both charismatic and traditional leaders, at least in gerontocracies and patriarchal societies.

on political forces and personalities outside the community. The uncertainty associated with the validity of informal leaders is positive, in contrast with the uncertainty associated with formal (centrally-tied) leadership. The former's uncertainty necessitates ongoing bilateral interaction between leader and constituency, and facilitates a process of communicative discourse. Frequently, a close link between continued political authority and, for example, personal religious or economic aspirations provides an added incentive for informal political leaders to reach an intersubjective understanding with their constituents (and parishioners or customers).

So far I have discussed only internal political representation. Politically valid leaders may represent residents in a second way: by effectively interacting with the outside world on behalf of their community:

...there is a second sense in which leaders of any community can be seen as representing it. Leaders represent their community to the outside world as well. In rural communities in Newfoundland the traditional leaders were usually the merchants. They were often the only community members who had contacts with the outside political and administrative bodies. All political dealings with the community were arranged through them and they also negotiated with the educational authorities to ensure that teachers were available each year, with the church authorities to obtain the services of a clergyman [sic], and with virtually all outside administrative bodies. In many communities these external ties serve to validate the traditional leaders in the eyes of the community. (Matthews, 1983:160)

Two types of leaders represent local communities to the outside world: formal and informal. These are usually the same individuals or groups who represent the community formally and informally to itself, although there may be informal political leaders who represent a community internally, but who claim no authority in the larger world (eg. custodians of community level land and water distribution rules).¹¹ On the whole, external political representation is likely to lean farther toward formality than internal representation, because opportunities for political discourse tend to be more structured and formalised at the supra-village level. This is not to say that formalised political discourse is limited to formally chosen and recognised local political leaders.

¹¹ The interpretive distinction between internal and external leadership is somewhat forced in empirical terms. The same can be said of the distinction between formal and informal leadership. This hermeneutical problem is discussed in greater detail later in this section.

As in the case Matthews describes from Newfoundland, it is common for formal (or informal) leaders in economic, social or ecological spheres to represent the community politically in the larger political (or social, economic or ecological) arena. Political discourse is not limited to political fora.

Whether leaders who represent the community to the outside are formally or informally chosen, and whether they explicitly or implicitly occupy political leadership positions, they face the task of integrating internal and external interpretations of appropriate social control. This task can lead to problems of commitment and identity:

...In most small communities the leaders find themselves performing a function akin to that of a 'bridgehead' between it and the outside world. Galtung argued that such persons frequently have interests more in common with the outside world than with those who make up the majority of the population in their own region (1971). In most small communities the leaders find themselves in a position analogous to that of Clement's 'compradores', agents of outside exploitation in their own community (1975). They may be validated as leaders by their ties to the outside world, but these same ties may ultimately align them with interests that are not those of the majority of residents in their communities... Where the interest of local residents and outsiders coincide, there is no problem. When they diverge, however, the leaders involved are in a particularly anomalous and often vulnerable position. (Matthews, 1983:160-161)

While it is true that leaders act as bridgeheads between a community and the outside world, this position does not necessarily lead them to become compradores. Some institution must exist to mediate a community's involvement with the outside world. If the individuals who occupy that institution shift their allegiance to systemic mechanisms of the outside, then local political and social sustainability are threatened (in a process of inner colonisation), and leaders have indeed become agents of their community's exploitation¹². If, however, leadership is chosen (formally or informally) or reproduced according to its commitment to local generalisable interests and a shared lifeworld, as well as according to its ties with the outside, then this leadership has the potential to coordinate communicative action in which community members and outside forces participate

¹² That was what occurred in Shimshal in the period after the Hunza-Nagyr campaign of 1891, when village-level functionaries shifted their loyalty away from the village and toward an increasingly powerful royal bureaucracy (see Chapters Five and Seven).

toward rational social change at the local level. At some point it is necessary for leaders who represent communities to the outside to **make** "the interests of local residents and outsiders coincide" (Matthews, 1983:161). That is a condition of communicative action **between** community members and outsiders. Leaders who can claim some genuine interest both at home and in the larger world are well-situated to facilitate the necessary shifts in lifeworld and social system. It is up to the community at large, through ongoing communicative action, to ensure that leaders do not become mediatised experts whose interests are best served by alienating community members from the decision making process. In other words, the scenario presented by Matthews in the quotation above describes a process of modernisation which is plausible (even likely), but which can be prevented through vigilance (communicative action) in producing and reproducing leadership.

The forms of political leadership discussed so far in this chapter can be grouped into three sets of interacting categories, which categories themselves express pairs of oppositions:

- i) formal versus informal political leadership,
- ii) leadership which is representative within the community versus that which offers representation on behalf of the community, and
- iii) explicitly political representation versus implicitly political representation (ie. political leaders versus leaders in other organisational spheres who accumulate political authority).

The matrix in Table 8.1b integrates these three categories, and in so doing provides 12 types of political leadership (eg. informal internal leadership, external political leadership). Combinations of these types (so that variables from three categories create a single type) narrow the total down to eight precise types of leadership (eg. formal political leaders within the community, informal political leaders who represent the community to the outside). A leadership institution can potentially represent more than one of these precise types. It is important to recognise that these are conceptual types, and not types which community members are likely to

Table 8.1b: Forms of Valid Political Leadership

		LEVEL		DIRECTNESS	
		Internal	External	Explicitly Political	Implicitly Political
FORMALITY	Formal	formal internal	formal external	formal explicit	formal implicit
	Informal	informal internal	informal external	informal explicit	informal implicit
LEVEL	External			external explicit	external implicit
	Internal			internal explicit	internal implicit
FINAL TYPES	Chapter 8.2	a) formal political leaders within the community b) formal leaders within the community whose political authority derives from another sphere c) informal political leaders within the community d) informal leaders within the community whose political authority derives from another sphere			
	Chapter 8.3	e) formal political leaders who represent the community to the outside f) formal leaders whose political authority derives from another sphere, and who represent the community to the outside g) informal political leaders who represent the community to the outside h) informal leaders whose political authority derives from another sphere, and who represent the community to the outside			

identify with the degree of precision offered in the table. The line which distinguishes between a formal and an informal political leader is unclear, as is the difference between internally and externally based validity, and the distinction between a political leader and a social or economic leader whose authority infiltrates the political sphere. Matthews recognises this tendency for categories of leadership to blend together, and especially the potential for leadership in other spheres to infiltrate the political sphere:

...the leadership of a community can come from many sources and sectors. While we habitually think of political leadership in terms of elected office holders, those

who speak on behalf of a community are its merchants, clergymen [sic], and teachers. These are not political leaders, but leaders of the economic and socialization organisations in the community. In essence, they attempt to transfer formal or even informal leadership in one sphere of community life into leadership in other spheres. Thus, the lines between economic, social and political leadership are not as clearly drawn as might be assumed from the analytical framework presented here. One of the issues involved in a community is whether leaders who validly represent its economic, educational, and religious interests can also be accepted as valid representatives of its political and social control interests. (Matthews, 1983:160)

In the end a leader or a leadership institution depends for its authority on the source of its validity, and the political validity of any single party may come simultaneously from several or all of the four organisational spheres, at both the internal and external level, and through formal and informal mechanisms. Where leaders' interests stop being social, or economic or ecological and become political is a moot point. The most influential political leaders in Shimshal derive their authority from many sources of validity, and maintain authority precisely because they can effectively unite a variety of lifeworld and systemic interests into something approaching a single intersubjectively acceptable perspective or "platform". That suggests that the typification offered in Table 8.1b is probably less valid as a description of types of political leadership than it is as a checklist for identifying sources of validity for political leadership.

In this chapter the interpretation of empirical material is divided into two main sections: 8.2 examines political leadership which is focused at representation within the community, and 8.3 concentrates on political leadership which represents Shimshal to the outside world. Some necessary overlap exists between the two sections, because specific individuals or institutions may exercise political authority both internally and externally.

8.2: Internal Political Authority and Sustainability in Shimshal

8.2.1: Introduction

The political validity of a community corresponds directly with the validity of political leadership. One way in which the validity of political leaders can be ascertained is by understanding how and how well leaders represent the "general attitudes and values of the community as a whole" (Matthews, 1983:159). A community whose political leaders can justify their decisions regarding internal social control communicatively in terms of Habermas' three validity claims (objective truth, normative appropriateness, and sincerity) may be considered to be functioning sustainably in a political sense.

A variety of formal and informal institutions exist within Shimshal which perform social control functions. Not all of these are overtly (or explicitly) political, but rather derive from other spheres of organisation (I have termed them "implicitly" political in Table 8.1b) (see the examples in Table 8.2). Some are primarily socialising institutions. Socialisation can be seen as a pre-emptive form of social control which infiltrates the political sphere from the social sphere. In Shimshal socialisation is more important for social control than are any of the more explicitly political structures. Institutions associated with sociation and communication also contribute to Shimshal's social control. These are dealt with in Chapter Seven and are not discussed in detail here.

Links between the political and social subsystems appear to be stronger than those between the political sphere and either economic or ecological spheres. That is, fewer internal politically relevant institutions derive from the economic or ecological spheres than from the social sphere. Still, official positions such as the *gotsil-ey-yatkuin* (water controller; see Appendix 3) or AKRSP agricultural specialists overlap from the ecological to the political sphere. Similarly, for example, AKRSP treasurers and wealthy landowners successfully transfer their economic validity into the political domain. The case of Daulat Amin exemplifies the potential of validity in each

sphere to cause an increase in validity in all other spheres. His status as an important clan elder (ecological, political), headmaster (social), religious authority (social), cosmopolite (social), AKRSP president (social, economic, political), wealthy householder (social, economic), *akabirting* (social, political), etc. affords him considerable political validity within the shared Shimshali lifeworld, despite relatively weak claims to explicit and formal political authority. Daulat Amin has developed an overall validity, which can be utilised in all sub-systemic spheres. In essence, he can present **himself** as an intersubjectively acceptable validity claim. I think that this sort of "comprehensive validity" applies (to a lesser degree) to several leaders and leadership institutions in Shimshal¹³. Table 8.2 provides examples from Shimshal of how leaders derive legitimacy from sources within (explicit) and without (implicit) the political sphere.

Just as degrees of explicitness exist, so do degrees of formality. Political representation internal to Shimshal is largely informal, although it may derive from formal representation in other sub-systemic spheres. School teachers, for example, are formal social leaders who enjoy considerable informal political authority, because of their literacy, their influence on children and their parents, their unusual knowledge of folk history and convention, and their experience with the outside. The type of informal leader that teachers represent commonly derives validity from knowledge and **understanding** regarding rules and conventions (second order participation), rather than from **living** them (first order participation). The *akabirting* ("great ones") and lineage elders, on the other hand, are first order participants in informal social control. They represent, indeed they live, the conventions and rules basic to Shimshal's notion of social control.

This is something of a system/lifeworld or technical/practical distinction. The first sort of informal leader (eg. teachers) derives validity from technical efficacy in dealing with the Shimshali

¹³ I suspect that this "comprehensive validity" is possible only in small communities, where most members are likely to know the "complete personality" of a leader. Daulat Amin's current status as an almost ubiquitous leader is the culmination of a long period during which he repeatedly demonstrated his representation of community values and generalisable interests according to all three types of validity claim.

Table 8.2: Sources of Validity for some of Shimshal's Internal Political Leaders

LEADER OR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION	SUB-SYSTEMIC SOURCE OF POLITICAL VALIDITY (ranked)	LEVEL OF VALIDITY	FORMALITY OF VALIDITY
<i>Kuyotch</i>	political, social, ecological	internal, external (historically)	formal, but benefitting from informal validity of key members
<i>Lumbardar</i>	political, social, ecological, economic (as an individual)	internal, external (current and historically)	formal political, social, ecological, informal economic
<i>Jamaat Executive</i>	social, political, economic	internal political, internal and external social and economic	formal social and political, informal economic and ecological
VO President	social, economic, ecological, political	internal and external	formal social, economic, less formal ecological, political
VO Treasurer	economic	internal	formal economic, informal political
VO Crop Specialist	ecological, social	internal	formal ecological, informal social, informal political
Teacher	social, political, perhaps economic (as individuals)	internal	formal social, less formal political, informal economic
<i>Akabirting</i>	social, political, economic and ecological (as individuals)	internal, external (historically and perhaps as individuals)	a loosely defined group with semi-formal validity in all spheres.
Clan Elder	ecological, social, political	internal ecological, internal and external social and political (esp. historically)	formal
Lineage Elder	social, ecological, economic, political	internal ecological and political, internal and external social and economic	informal economic and ecological, formal social and political (partly derived from position in <i>kuyotch</i>)
Household Head	economic, social, ecological, political (as member of <i>kuyotch</i>)	internal, perhaps external as individual	formal economic and ecological, formal social and political derived from membership in <i>kuyotch</i>
Water Controller	ecological	internal	formal ecological, informal political

socio-political system. The second sort (eg. *akabirting*) of leader is valid because he or she practically represents Shimshal's shared lifeworld. The most influential informal leaders combine elements of practical and technical efficacy, so that, for example, at least two school teachers are also *akabirting* and medial lineage elders, and one is a clan elder.

Formal political leadership internal to Shimshal rests primarily in the institutions of

lumbardar and *kuyotch*, the *jamaat* (Ismaili congregation) and the AKRSP village organisations (see Table 8.2). Each institution addresses specific elements of social control. The *lumbardar* and *kuyotch* (incorporating lineage elders and household heads) together are responsible for such things as property, agriculture, traditional economy, community membership rules, and certain matters of honour and ritual observance. The leaders of the *jamaat* address these same issues as they pertain to the community's relationship with God, the Aga Khan, and the larger Ismaili community. Finally, the AKRSP village organisations are responsible for controlling villagers' provision and utilisation of resources for planned community development.

There is considerable formal and informal overlap between the *kuyotch*, *jamaat* and AKRSP. Such overlap occurs partly because key players tend to assume leadership roles in each institution. More important, however, is Shimshal community's lack of concern for specifying the roles and responsibilities of its guiding institutions. This lack of concern is demonstrated when, for example, VO meetings become *kuyotch* or *jamaat* meetings part way through on the strength of who is speaking about what. By the same token, the formality of a decision making process is often unclear. While the *kuyotch* as a formal institution is responsible for certain elements of social control most of its aims are achieved informally, or within the realm of inferred formality.

To complicate matters further (for analysis, although not necessarily for lived experience) each formal internal political institution also has authority in the economic, ecological and social spheres (see Chapter Seven), as well as external political functions. The relationships between specific formal external political institutions and specific formal external political functions are less problematic. They are discussed in 8.3.

In the remainder of 8.2 I present a detailed empirical case which enables an interpretation of political representation internal to Shimshal. The case examines the relationships among three sets of agents, within a particular set of circumstances. The circumstance in which I am interested can be summarised as the gradual increasing status of AKRSP leaders in informal political affairs relative to the status of a clique of individuals who are accustomed to traditionally-based privilege,

and the competition that has been played out in this gradual shift. The principal active agents involved are the traditional leadership group, led by Shambi Khan the *lumbardar's* son, and recent AKRSP leadership. The principal passive agents are the men who comprise Shimshal's "reserve army" of porters. As with the examples presented in Chapter Seven, I am most interested in interpreting Shimshal's sustainability as a community (this time in terms of political validity), and the way that the creation of AKRSP VOs in Shimshal has influenced community sustainability.

8.2.2: Representing Shimshal to Its Members: Who sets the Agenda for Portering Opportunities?

Portering -carrying loads for pay- is an important way for Shimshalis to bring cash into the community. I estimate that in 1989 Shimshali men earned over US \$20,000 from portering (not including equipment and food), during the four month summer season¹⁴. That sum is considerably higher than the cash earned by Shimshalis from any other source. For example, low altitude porters commonly earn US 20 dollars per day. High altitude porters can easily triple that in cash and equipment earnings. If they work 20 days a month, low altitude porters can take home US 400 dollars in a month for four months. Compare that with the US 110 dollars that the headmaster (the best paid resident of Shimshal) makes for working 25 days a month, and it becomes apparent that portering is an attractive and lucrative way for those Shimshal households with young and able

¹⁴ Shimshalis porter both within Shimshal for visitors to the community, and outside of Shimshal territory, mainly for expeditions. Several men from Shimshal are well-respected as high altitude porters and climbers; they frequently join foreign mountaineering expeditions and take some low altitude porters with them. The revenue from portering seems to be split about evenly among porters who labour outside Shimshal and those who carry loads within the territory. A very small amount of total porter revenues comes from Shimshalis carrying loads for other Shimshalis. Of course this latter practice does not bring money into the community, but merely redistributes it, and usually operates according to some traditional institution for mutual obligation among households (see Chapter Five).

males to earn some cash.¹⁵

Portering has other attractions as well. Men who porter within Shimshal, and even some who porter outside the community for short periods of time, can maintain their participation in (and obligation to) other social, economic and ecological activities within the community. Portering within Shimshal begins or ends most days either in the village itself or at high altitude pastures, so that astute porters often get paid for making trips that some member of their household would have to make in any case. In the evenings, household or village business can be transacted, and porters can lodge in comfort with their relatives. In addition, national porter regulations stipulate that no porter is required to carry more than 30 kilograms (most porters negotiate a 25 kilogram limit). Most Shimshalis can carry twice that amount up to about 5000m, so they end up getting paid to cart supplies to household members at high pastures, or produce from high pastures, from source to destination.

In my experience, porters usually dictate the pace and schedule of foreign visitors to the community. What that means is that porters travel **when** and **how far** they want, and often convince tourists to travel **where** they want¹⁶. Individuals can also decline to porter for a period of time (eg. the wheat harvest, or *Salgarah*) without seriously diminishing their chances for future employment.

Finally, portering, especially high altitude portering, is an occupation that is respected in its own right, and apart from the financial gains associated with it. Shimshalis perceive themselves as exceptionally sturdy and adventurous people who have a natural affinity for trekking, climbing and exploring. Their folk history (see Chapter Four) reflects and reinforces that self-perception. So does the knowledge that certain Shimshalis are valued as high altitude porters and climbers in the

¹⁵ I recently received communication that in the summer of 1992 a single trekking expedition spent some \$15000 in Shimshal.

¹⁶ Porters have less success dictating the agendas of mountaineering expeditions, which usually follow a much tighter schedule, and are led by experienced mountaineers and Pakistan government "liaison officers".

international climbing community¹⁷. Doing what porters do is part of a shared Shimshali identity. That means portering is one of the few types of wage-labour that is not considered demeaning, and the only one that does not require exceptional education. In short, it is an occupation that incorporates the systemic requirements of a changing economic sub-system, while satisfying traditional demands of a shared lifeworld. Household heads, *akabirting* and other respected personages can participate in portering and earn some cash without damaging their prestige and dignity, and without seriously hindering their attention to other ecological, social, political and economic responsibilities.

The preceding paragraphs present portering as an ideal occupation for Shimshalis, and indeed all Shimshalis with whom I am acquainted perceive it as such. It is an occupation which suits Shimshalis' conception of themselves, which integrates well with traditional activities, and which earns individuals (and by extension, households and the community at large) large sums of cash. Thus, the impetus to porter and the benefits from it are initially social and economic. But there is limited demand for Shimshali porters, particularly those who want to remain within Shimshal territory. This limited demand has raised a concern within Shimshal of who gets to porter and when. Resolving that concern, and legitimising the resolution, is a political process (see Plate Fifteen).

Several characteristics associated with portering make the political issue of controlling portering opportunities contentious. First, portering is exceptionally lucrative both financially and in terms of prestige, so that he or she who controls portering has considerable economic and social influence. This means there are numerous contenders for the informal or formal job of regulating porter choice and behaviour. Second, every able-bodied male is a potential porter. Education, wealth, age, social standing, ancestry, and external connections do not necessarily qualify or

¹⁷ At least two Shimshali men are full time climbers in the Pakistani army. Several more are mountain guides and scouts.

Plate Fifteen: Shimshali Porters on the Trail
(The man with the tripod and rifle is Laili Shah. Ali Rahman is kneeling in front.)

disqualify any individuals¹⁸. Third, portering voluntarily for pay is neither a traditional economic pursuit, nor a specifically development-oriented initiative. Shimshalis do not feel that it falls unequivocally within the realm of the *kuyotch*, or the *jamaat*, or the AKRSP, although each of these institutions relates to it in important ways.¹⁹ No existing political institution can claim certain jurisdiction over the practice of portering. Fourth, portering is at once individual and communal. Wages accrue to the individual (or household), but the "raw materials" of portering, including the landscape, trails, shelters, pastures, the village, time away from community obligations, representation of Shimshal to tourists, etc. belong to the larger community. Therefore, the community has some legitimate right in controlling the activities of individual porters. Finally, although no Shimshalis admitted this to me (a foreign employer of porters), I think that the involvement of foreigners (with their own perspectives and whims and expectations, many of which bewilder Shimshalis) confuses and complicates decision making.

Within Shimshal there are two main positions regarding the regulation of portering, one "conservative" and one "liberal"²⁰. The two positions correspond to two political factions, between which there are tensions that go beyond the issue of portering. The conservative position attempts to perpetuate a traditional attitude toward regulating the economic opportunities of villagers, based on the prerogative of a few traditional leaders. The liberal position represents the recent efforts of a group of individuals to overcome that status quo, and establish what they perceive to be a more equitable process for selecting porters and regulating economic opportunities in general. In the following paragraphs I describe first the conservative position and its basis for validity, and then

¹⁸ Certain extra requirements pertain to high altitude porters. These may include exemplary health, experience, language skills and contact within the climbing world.

¹⁹ Remember from Chapter Five that all individuals are heavily contextualised by their status as lineage, clan and village members. Individual actions **always** reflect on the validity of larger social groupings. Prospective porters cannot behave as independent agents; their portering activities relate to communal obligations, and are therefore subject to communal approval.

²⁰ The designations "liberal" and "conservative" are mine. Shimshalis do not speak of their positions in these terms.

develop the liberal challenge to that position.

The conservative faction within Shimshal centres around the *lumbardar's* household and clan, although *lumbardar* Khan himself is only loosely affiliated with the porter issue, and indeed tries to avoid what might be called "partisan" politics altogether. His son Shambi Khan is the principal proponent of the conservative position as it pertains to a variety of issues, including portering. Other main actors include other leading members of the Bachtikator clan (the clan from which *lumbardars* are chosen). Typically these individuals belong to households which are accustomed both to inherited and kingship-based privilege. Several members of the faction also represent Shimshal officially and formally to the outside world. Azizullah Beg, a leading personality in the conservative faction, belongs to one of the leading families of the Bachtikator clan, and represents Shimshal on the Union Council in Gilgit. Involvement in the Union Council is the closest a Shimshali can come to participating formally in the federal government of Pakistan. The Union Council sits in Gilgit, and is chaired by the District Commissioner, who reports to the Minister for the Northern Areas in Islamabad. Shambi Khan, through his lineage position as the *lumbardar's* son, also has some informal access to the formal external political process: *lumbardar* Khan may seek official direction from the Assistant Commissioner of Hunza.

Shambi Khan, Azizullah Beg and several other elders of the Bachtikator clan argue that the relationship between foreign (non-Hunza) visitors to Shimshal and their Shimshali porters should be regulated by a special semi-formal institution. Specifically, they maintain that, according to tradition **they** (Shambi and Azizullah) should mediate all interaction between Shimshal and visitors from the outside, just as the *lumbardar* did during colonial times²¹. They claim the right to select porters, regulate food purchases, act as paid guides, establish porter wages, mediate all personal relationships between Shimshalis and visitors, and authorise routes and itineraries. This is an extraordinary amount of control for a small group of individuals to exert in Shimshal without

²¹ See Chapters Four and Five for descriptions of the *lumbardar's* role as the Tham's representative.

the explicit and ongoing intervention of council. To the extent that their authority is accepted as legitimate, Shambi and Azizullah can (and do) direct portering jobs and food supply contracts to their kin or themselves. They can also prevent other Shimshalis from offering hospitality to foreigners (lodging while in Shimshal, etc), so that they and their followers have almost exclusive access to any benefits that may derive from interacting with foreign visitors (ie. wages, equipment, gratuities, future remittances, social and political contacts, etc). In addition, by selecting porters and establishing set routes and itineraries Shambi and Azizullah are able to selectively create an image of Shimshal for external consumption. These various types of control, when successfully exercised, benefit the conservative faction financially, and perpetuate and strengthen the traditional pattern of privilege. These benefits to a minority of Shimshalis occur at the expense of most households, and at the expense of visitors. Two brief examples illustrate how Shambi and Azizullah's control of portering benefits them and their constituents.

In 1988 several academics from a Japanese university visited Shimshal and arranged to hold a field camp in the community the following summer. During the summer of 1989 students and professors visited and travelled in Shimshal for short periods, under the auspices of "The Japanese-Shimshal Friendship Programme". Up to a dozen participants stayed in Shimshal territory at any one time. For the duration of their stay participants in the field camp interacted almost solely with members of four or five households close to the leading Bachtikator lineage. Their porters, food and lodgings were hired and purchased from the same households. All contact with other villagers was mediated by elders from within these households. As a result a minimum of households received direct material benefit from the Japanese visit. According to Daulat Amin, leader of the liberal group, "only a few people are benefitting from the friendship programme... [the Japanese] are being used to advantage by a few families and people who are their guides... the villagers are not getting the benefit of good opportunities".

In the summer of 1989 a Swiss climber hiked into Shimshal and enquired about making some difficult treks beyond Shimshal Pass. Villagers referred him to Shambi and Azizullah.

Azizullah was portering for me, so he was unavailable. Shambi made it clear that he must accompany the visitor on his trek to guide him and to ensure that the visitor did not venture across the Chinese border. Shambi received extra wages for acting as guide. He carried no pack, selected the other porter from among his friends, arranged the purchase of food from his household, and rented his own yaks for transport. Again, the benefits of portering were restricted to a few privileged individuals from the conservative clique.

The many Shimshalis with whom I talked (except for those immediately connected with the conservative clique) expressed their dissatisfaction with the privilege-based arrangement perpetuated by Shambi and Azizullah. At the same time, they recognise certain of these individuals' validity claims as legitimate. Most villagers agree (often against their best interests) that the semi-formal institution represented by Shambi and Azizullah is politically valid, in the absence of an alternative. Even Daulat Amin, who vehemently opposes the inequity that the traditional leading clique represents, admits that Azizullah and Shambi are supposed "to look after the foreigners". That Shimshalis have been willing to accept the authority (albeit reluctantly) of this conservative clique, even against their own technical (economic gain) and practical (the ideal of equity) interests, suggests a lack of communicative action in (political) decision making relating to the economic activity of portering. It seems that Azizullah and Shambi have cast themselves as an "expert culture" which is immune to the outcome of discourse by non-experts. I want to explore that proposition as I outline the basis for their validity as portering authorities.

The conservative faction led by Shambi and Azizullah validate their authority over portering with a combination of claims relating to technical efficacy (truth) and normative appropriateness. Both men are experienced and respected climbers within Shimshal. Shambi Khan is renowned outside Shimshal as a high altitude porter and climber. Although he is about a decade past his prime, he is acknowledged by Shimshalis as the most talented and most experienced climber in the community. Both men have participated in expeditions, speak some English, and understand the logistics of climbing expeditions. In addition, they are respected for their knowledge of routes,

landscape, and weather conditions throughout Shimshal territory. All of these characteristics qualify Azizullah and Shambi as technically legitimate guides and advisors for difficult routes and organised climbs. Most visitors, however, travel in small and informal groups, and stick to main trails at low altitudes. Almost all Shimshali men know these routes in detail, and travel upon them regularly (the Japanese visitors, for example, ventured only along paths that most eight year old children had travelled). At least two hundred Shimshali men know enough English to guide trekkers through Shimshal, and virtually all are capable of serving as second or third porter to a small group.

The conservative clique has created a sub-system which relies to a degree which is technically unnecessary on expedition-style climbing expertise and familiarity with the tourist world²². Shambi, Azizullah and a few others (some of whom are not members of the conservative faction) are the only persons possessing that expertise. Others are effectively separated from decision making, and rely on the favour of these few experts.

Shambi and Azizullah are leading personalities in the traditional leadership clan, and political leaders in their own right. These characteristics lend them normative and technical validity. Azizullah is a member of the Union Council. As such, he is one of the persons responsible for representing the Northern Areas government to Shimshal. *Lumbardar* Khan holds a similar position at a smaller scale (*Gulmit Tehsil*). The *lumbardar* concentrates on his internal traditional role, and informally passes many of his external responsibilities on to Shambi. On certain occasions Shambi presents himself as Shimshal's representative to the Assistant Commissioner, a role which he has justified to outsiders by claiming that he will succeed his father as *lumbardar*. This latter claim is a fabrication on Shambi's part²³.

²² Note that Shambi and Azizullah have transformed their climbing proficiency, which is a social and economic characteristic, into political advantage. Their skills qualify them as excellent porters, but lend no real technical advantage to their capability as leaders who control portering.

²³ He will only become *lumbardar* if, on his father's retirement, he is the most senior household head of his clan. Several Bachtikatoris precede him.

Shambi and Azizullah offer their (assumed) official political roles as justifications for their authority and for the way in which they attempt to exercise that authority. They say that as government representatives they are responsible for the safety and well-being of visitors, as well as for the best interests of the government. That means that whenever possible they, or their representatives, must accompany visitors to ensure that visitors do not cross the border into China, do not wander onto unsafe trails or climb dangerous slopes, do not get mauled by wild beasts, and do not get cheated by villagers. These claims have relatively little credence with Shimshalis²⁴. They consider these concerns to be erroneous, especially when Shambi advocates higher porter wages and more adventurous routes than most porters²⁵. However, most visitors are convinced by the argument (especially because many visitors feel that they should deal only with the headman), and that is often what counts. Again, Shambi and Azizullah have reproduced themselves as sub-systemic experts, although in this sense with more effect on outsiders than other Shimshalis.

Community members accept that Shambi and Azizullah's positions as *akabirting* and high-status Bachtikatoris give them some normative legitimacy: it is appropriate that they assume leadership roles because of their lifeworld-based position within Shimshal's social hierarchy. Such normative legitimacy to be leaders in general terms combined with the technical abilities outlined above makes them appropriate portering leaders to most Shimshalis. But, as I mention in the introduction to the chapter, what **makes** individuals valid leaders and what allows them to **keep** their validity are often different. Many Shimshalis feel that Shambi and Azizullah do not represent the values, attitudes and best interests of their constituents in their portering decisions. Nor do they make decisions within a normatively acceptable process (ie. consensual, and within the general

²⁴ Shimshal porters are happy to acquiesce to Shambi when visitors want to attempt very difficult treks or technical climbs.

²⁵ In addition, by far the worst accident in Shimshal's trekking and climbing history occurred under Azizullah's leadership. Three Spanish climbers died.

ideal of equity). The residents of Shimshal find themselves in an ambiguous position. They are validating leadership according to lifeworld-based convictions which the leaders themselves are willing to put forth as validity claims but not willing to accept. Attached to the traditional (lifeworld-based) lineage right to lead are certain (lifeworld-based) responsibilities, associated with attitudes of equity and solidarity. Shambi and Azizullah have accepted the right to lead without the responsibilities. Rather, their own lifeworld convictions (relating to this issue) have been colonised by sub-systemic media -both economic and bureaucratic- which cause them to constitute themselves as "experts". They are agents of a process of modernisation. The claim of **authenticity** (traditional prerogative to lead) cannot be backed up by a complementary claim of **sincerity** (belief in the responsibilities of leadership). This separation of sincerity from authenticity suggests a more general separation of some sub-systemic elements from the lifeworld.

I think it is evident that the validity of the conservative position toward regulating portering is tenuous. Certainly Shambi and Azizullah enjoy several sources of validity, but they are all problematic to other Shimshalis, because the **sincerity** or **truthfulness** with which these men engage in decision making is doubted. Shimshalis continue to recognise certain elements which form the basis for a shared lifeworld: solidarity, equity, and an overall conviction that the community as a whole can benefit from increasing interaction with the outside. Recent developments, especially the creation of village organisations, have strengthened the community's commitment to these lifeworld elements. Shimshalis see little evidence from the conservative clique that its members share these lifeworld ideals. In Habermas' terms, what community members perceive is that Shambi and Azizullah are allowing their systemic interests (primarily economic) to colonise their normative lifeworld convictions.

In order to understand why most Shimshalis are suspicious of the sincerity or truthfulness of the position represented by Shambi and Azizullah, it is necessary to look beyond just the porter issue. It seems that in many instances this small group uses its social, economic, political or ecological standing to increase the privilege of its member households **at the expense** of the larger

community. Several examples demonstrate what I mean.

First, I was told by Shambi that his household has surplus wheat flour, and that many poorer households are short of flour. Shortages are most keenly felt at Pamir pasture, because herders are required to carry supplies over a difficult route. Shambi and Azizullah take some of their surplus flour to Pamir, and sell it to the households in need. This sounds like a generous gesture until it becomes evident that the flour is sold for the Pasu market price, plus the market shipping price (porter rates for foreigners) from Pasu to Pamir²⁶. Wheat poor villagers at Pamir are charged 30 Rs/kg plus eleven stages shipping (the wheat only comes six stages from Shimshal). The total cost is about 85 Rs/kg, about 60 Rs more than the price in Shimshal. Since this is an individual economic interaction between households it falls outside of the *kuyotch's* official jurisdiction. Still, several Shimshalis (rich and poor) expressed regret that this was occurring, and questioned the overall validity of those engaged in it.

Second, Shambi and Azizullah, in their role as porter authorities, have encouraged porters to charge the rate for foreigners whenever they carry loads for a villager from outside of their own household. Although only a few porters initially agreed to this, it has resulted in a general lack of cooperation in hauling supplies to and from the community. The Shimshali medical dispenser, for instance, has to pay villagers to carry medicine to Shimshal, which he is then required to distribute free.

Third, Azizullah sent his small son to Karachi for primary education. No one questions his right to do that, but many feel that it displays a lack of commitment to the developing education system in Shimshal, a lack of regard for his son's moral development, and a desire to give his son an inappropriate social and educational advantage when he returns to Shimshal.

Similarly, several years ago Azizullah culled his yak herd from over thirty to under five, and invested correspondingly in sheep and goats. He told me that he made the decision because

²⁶ Passu is the village closest to Shimshal on the Karakoram Highway. Unlike Shimshal it has an overall wheat deficit, so prices are inflated relative to Shimshal prices.

sheep and goats are a less hazardous investment, which they doubtless are. But again other villagers feel that the move away from yaks demonstrates a lack of commitment to the ideals of a shared lifeworld.

Finally, I was told by several people that they doubt Azizullah's judgement as well as his sincerity. One of the examples they provided was as follows. In the fall of 1988 Azizullah guided an employee of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) around Shimshal territory. Much of Shimshal territory is scheduled to become part of Khunjerab National Park, a proposed wildlife sanctuary (see Chapter Ten). The status of Shimshal pastures within the park depended to some extent on Azizullah's commentary to the wildlife expert. In an attempt to impress the expert, he told stories of the existence of great herds of Tibetan wild ass and other endangered species, which according to other Shimshalis have not been seen for generations. Some Shimshalis believe that a proposed initiative by IUCN to restrict herding and hunting by Shimshalis is a direct result of the misinformation provided by Azizullah.

What comes out of all of this is that Shambi and Azizullah are doubted as valid political leaders by much of the Shimshali population. Villagers feel that they do not represent the values and interests of the majority of their constituents, despite their credentials. One Shimshali man told me that "Shambi and Aziz, one is uncle one is nephew, they are the same, they are against themselves. If they are against themselves, how can they be with the people of Shimshal?"

That sentiment has resulted in the development, over the past few years, of a liberal position toward portering and related issues. The liberal group within Shimshal centres around Daulat Amin's lineage, and the AKRSP leaders in general. It is less consolidated than the conservative group, with more widespread but less ardent support. Its principal proponent is Daulat Amin himself. Other main actors include Fermanullah the dispenser, other AKRSP leaders and several of Shimshal's school teachers. Typically, the liberal position's leaders are more educated and wealthier than most Shimshalis. They also tend to come from leading lineages of the Grazikator and Baquikator clans, and be *akabirting* (great ones) in their own right. If members of

the conservative faction are the most important individuals in the traditional leadership clan, then proponents of the liberal faction are some of the most important individuals of the other two clans. The conservative group has less formal education and greater formal political authority. The liberal group has more diverse authority, and more formal education. Shimshalis on the whole favour the liberal position, but are reluctant to challenge the traditional authority of the political leadership clan. That a liberal group has emerged, whose attributes and claims to legitimacy differ from those of a traditional group, symptomises a gradual transition from what Weber would call traditional leadership to rational, and perhaps partly charismatic, leadership. The claims to legitimacy of Shambi's group are becoming less valid to the community's changing lifeworld, as validity claims of Daulat Amin's group are becoming more valid.

There is little open animosity between the two groups. Most Shimshalis lean toward one or the other position in their approach to portering and social control in general, but they may switch sides depending on the issue.²⁷ Only a few individuals on either side may be said to comprise a faction at all, and many of these leading members are on close terms with one another. That is why I prefer to use the term "position" or "group". Indeed, Daulat Amin's lineage is closely linked, socially and genealogically, with Shambi Khan's lineage²⁸. As clan elders and *akabirting* the two men often work together and seek one another's advice concerning community matters. Finally, Daulat Amin and Shambi Khan understand and recognise each other's validity claims better than most Shimshalis. Each man is careful not to deprive the other of what each considers the other's rightful authority²⁹.

The liberal position, as expressed by its main proponents, corresponds with the conservative position in requiring that portering be regulated. The purpose of that control, however,

²⁷ A lot depends on who gets chosen to porter when.

²⁸ Daulat Amin is Shambi's maternal uncle. Daulat Amin's maternal grandfather was *Lumbardar Khan's* paternal grandfather.

²⁹ In long conversations with each man I sensed strong rivalry and considerable differences of opinion, but nothing I would characterise as animosity.

should be to ensure that all households have **relatively equal access to portering jobs**, at least within Shimshal territory. Moreover, the allocation of portering jobs should be integrated with other communal concerns, such as road building, the agricultural cycle, carrying supplies for Shimshalis back and forth, and overall equity. There is no need for a special formal or semi-formal political institution to enforce control. Rather, existing institutions including the village organisations and *kuyotch*, whose validity is established, should incorporate portering regulation into their other responsibilities. Shambi Khan and Azizullah (as well as several other men) whose expertise as climbers is acknowledged, could participate in a leadership role within those established fora. Indeed, the liberal group would willingly defer to their expertise, and endorse them as guides, when visitors arrived in large parties or planned climbs or arduous treks, provided other porters were chosen according to some acceptable schedule. The liberal group's objective is to remove what they perceive to be the perpetuation of privilege from the realm of portering.

Many Shimshalis offered their opinions on how portering employment should be restructured. Some individuals feel that Shambi and Azizullah should not be formally involved at all, and porters should take opportunities when they present themselves. Others felt that a strict rota should be enforced by *kuyotch*. Most Shimshalis shared the view that each of these alternatives had serious problems, and favoured some version of a third scheme³⁰.

The third scenario, as explained by Daulat Amin, involves a prioritisation of activities which occupy men's time during the portering season. The prioritisation which his group suggests is as follows: agricultural work, herding, road work, and other economic activities including portering. This prioritisation ranks conventional farming labour highest, then communal work (AKRSP work), then individual economic activities. The men of each household would be divided according those

³⁰ The first alternative encourages individuals to hang about in Passu waiting for potential trekkers. Only the wealthiest households can afford to wait, so a system of privilege would be perpetuated. The second option leaves no room for the availability and suitability of individuals at any one time and for any specific job. Both alternatives would interfere with the smooth operation of the agricultural system which is acknowledged as first priority.

priorities. Everyone agrees that the agricultural and herding responsibilities of a household are most important, so that a household with only two men could devote their labour to farming, and not be required to work on the road. However, if the household could arrange it they could porter. A third man in those households which have three men would be required to work occasional stretches on the road³¹. Any additional male members could porter or engage in other activities. A flexible taking of turns according to household membership would govern the allocation of portering jobs among the remaining men³².

Road workers are closest to Pasu where portering opportunities originate. As an added incentive to work on the road, road workers would have an internal schedule which allows some of them to porter for visitors on their way to Shimshal village. Once there, these porters could return to the road, or attempt to negotiate the opportunity to continue to porter (ie. send another household member to work on the road, and offer to trade portering opportunities with another household).

Just such a scheme was attempted in 1989 at the suggestion of the AKRSP village organisation. Villagers discovered that it worked fairly well, although it encountered a number of problems. For example, individuals who chanced upon portering opportunities were reluctant to abide by the schedule, and it was difficult to keep road workers on site³³. In addition, the prioritisation favoured households with more than three grown men³⁴. What allowed the liberal

³¹ The length of those work terms and the space between them would depend on how many persons could labour efficiently on a given stretch of road.

³² But such a schedule would be less important because the scenario reduces porter supply at any one time so that it is fairly close to demand.

³³ Inadvertently, I complicated this attempt at regulation. My field work depended on establishing close relations with several individuals who would be my porters and comrades. I wanted one or two of the same porters for the whole summer. In the end it was possible, because I was very flexible in my own schedule and because my porters were able to trade responsibilities.

³⁴ Two factors lessened the advantage enjoyed by large households. First, AKRSP pays individuals to work on the road, although at a lower rate than portering pays. Second, the composition of the road crew changes fairly frequently.

group to succeed in implementing the scheme, and what allowed the community to work through these problems without having to rely on some absolute authority was the absorption of portering concerns into the more general concerns of the *kuyotch* and village organisation. I think that inasmuch as this shift is indicative of a longer term trend in Shimshal, it is a move toward greater political validity and greater community sustainability. The AKRSP village organisation plays a central role in all of this.

Daulat Amin and his supporters used the village organisation as a vehicle for implementing their notion of a more equitable portering agenda. The AKRSP village organisation is directly responsible for progress on the AKRSP funded link road from Pasu to Shimshal. During the summers of 1988 and 1989 the road progressed haltingly, because road workers were continually distracted by other opportunities (including portering).³⁵ In June 1989 the village organisation held a joint meeting with the *kuyotch* to discuss solutions to the problem. Its main objective was to establish a priority for road work that was acceptable to the community at large. Council reached a consensus that agricultural activities were most important, followed by the community-level road project, followed by other individual or household-based economic activities. The implicit corollary of that consensus is that individual economic enterprise should not interfere with the larger aspirations of the community. This means that portering cannot be perceived as an activity whose operation is removed from the interplay of systemic and lifeworld concerns of the larger congregation. By effectively validating their arguments that activities which may threaten communal aspirations should be regulated by the community, the liberal group opened portering regulation to practical discourse approaching communicative action within the fora of *kuyotch* and village organisation.

The authority of an institution whose procedure for making decisions is based on communicative discourse is likely to be more flexible and more responsive to a range of individuals'

³⁵ Road workers get paid much less than porters. In addition, road workers, but not porters, are expected to return some of their pay to the village organisation.

circumstances, than is the authority of an independent leadership group which is nevertheless expected to represent its constituents (ie. the larger the ratio of active participants to constituents, the greater the chance that each constituent's concerns are represented)³⁶. This is especially the situation in a community like Shimshal where the fora for communicative discourse, a combined village organisation and *kuyotch*, is responsible for a wide range of systemic and lifeworld concerns. In that case flexibility in decision making can occur **among** spheres of activity so that comprehensive goals are respected. Thus, many of the problems which the new porter scheme raised could be overcome not only by alterations in the scheme itself, but by shifts to other related activities. For example, those households with too few men to take advantage of portering opportunities could negotiate, in council, some arrangement whereby they too could earn some portering money. This might mean invoking traditional institutions of mutual obligation (see Chapter Five), or altering the road crew rota; but the *kuyotch* has that authority. Similarly, the arrival of a large trekking party (or the approach of an important festival, or harvest), might induce the VO to halt work on the road altogether, so that households could exploit the opportunity. Again, Shambi and Azizullah's claims that they deserve some special consideration as government representatives, as *akabirting*, as exemplary porters, and as the men who put Shimshal on the trekking map, can and are recognised in communicative discourse and in subsequent alterations to the portering scheme. They are still "big men" from several directions: Shimshalis are unlikely to discard Shambi and Azizullah's traditional claim to normative legitimacy, because, in their context, these sources of validity continue to comprise a portion of an increasingly rationalised lifeworld.

³⁶ Political leaders, at least in a political system that attempts to be representative, are merely substitutes for more precise ways to legitimate social control (ie. procedures that allow constituents to represent themselves). A system which does away with leaders altogether, and legitimates social control according to communicative discourse in an ideal speech situation, is the most precise and the most representative in technical terms. This is not to say that leaders may not have tremendous practical value, if they essentialise or symbolise shared lifeworld elements, and thus represent their constituents by what they are, rather than by what they do.

The position of the liberal group is strengthened somewhat by the personal validity of its leading proponents, but unlike the conservative group, its main validity derives from invoking certain lifeworld-based convictions intrinsic to the ritual congregation, which then relate to a number of technically-based validity claims. Azizullah and Shambi had to invoke their personal validity (truth, appropriateness and sincerity), because they were constituting themselves as the individuals who should control portering. The liberal group has no such ambitions (at least not explicitly). They are proposing a strategy for regulating portering, and not a bid for leadership. Their leadership role (in the portering issue) will end when the strategy is accepted. Thus, the validity of the **argument** is most important (truth and appropriateness), although it is bolstered by the personal validity (*sincerity and appropriateness*) of its proponents.

The personal claims to validity of Daulat Amin and his supporters in the AKRSP were discussed in detail in Chapter 6.2. Suffice it to say here that Daulat Amin has considerable traditional and contemporary personal validity, which derives from his position as elder of the senior Grazikator lineage, grandson of a *lumbardar* and of the "milk mother" to the *tham* of Hunza, foremost scholar in Shimshal, headmaster and school founder, wealthy householder, Ismaili authority and leader of the Ismaili *Tariqah* board, and village organisation president. Neither he nor his main supporters have exceptional portering or climbing credentials. These characteristics qualify the liberal group as experts on and representatives of the set of convictions that govern the conduct of the ritual congregation, and its recent technical manifestations (ie. village organisation initiatives), and give them authority to argue their case convincingly in *kuyotch*.

The validity of the liberal argument may be summarised as follows. First, the position appeals to the normative appropriateness of a strategy emphasising equity and solidarity, both in the ranking of priorities and in the subsequent portering schedule. Equity and solidarity, as discussed in Chapters Five and Seven, are central elements of a shared Shimshali lifeworld.

Second, the liberal group validates its argument according to the normative appropriateness of a communicative form of decision making. This relates back to the previous

point, because intersubjective understanding reached communicatively in *kuyotch* is a principal symbol of the ritual congregation's solidarity, as well as an important mechanism for ensuring a degree of equity within the community. Although Shimshalis have historically been subject to both communicative and autocratic decision making (see Chapter Five), autocratic authority never gained prominence within the lifeworld.

The arguments of the liberal position have also been accepted as valid on the basis of technical efficacy (truth). The revised system for regulating portering facilitates the completion of the road, a technical "generalisable interest" that has been identified through an appropriate communicative process. It also allows individual households to take advantage of a growing economic opportunity, and thus increase their technical involvement in the regional (even international) economic sub-system, without betraying their lifeworld-based norms and values.

The last point introduces an issue that is central to my conception of community sustainability. The liberal position toward portering regulation offers an opportunity to couple elements of a rationalised lifeworld with newly rationalised elements of the social system. The position incorporates portering, primarily a technical activity of the economic sub-system, into a comprehensive set of lifeworld ideals and convictions. In so doing it rationalises portering, because portering becomes an activity that aids in the realisation of lifeworld ideals. Already the liberal proponents of this change have used their initial success to propose other related shifts toward a social system which couples with the shared Shimshali lifeworld and its recent emphasis on communal ideals³⁷.

It is important to avoid the impression that the process of modernity has been complete,

³⁷ For example, when I left Shimshal in 1989 Daulat Amin was advocating a scheme to arrange the communal transport of consumer necessities (salt, fertiliser, sugar, tea, etc) from Passu to Ziarat (a stopping place about eight hours walk from Passu) throughout the summer, so that in late autumn (when the river was low) Shimshali yaks could cart the goods the rest of the way to Shimshal. He maintains that this would decrease both the cost and the effort of importing goods to Shimshal. In its collective emphasis this scheme has the potential to increase the equity and solidarity interests of community members, but only if certain sub-systemic elements are rationalised into line with the rationalised elements of lifeworld.

even as it relates to portering, or without costs. What I describe in the example are the early stages in this process. Authority is transferred slowly and haltingly, because it is influenced by validity claims which resist change, as well as those that initiate it. The liberal position's success is not certain. The conservative group continues to lobby for the previous system of portering regulation, because they represent those elements of the lifeworld that stand to lose by the change: kingship and clan-based political privilege³⁸. As discussed earlier, Shambi and Azizullah offer some justification for their own authority, which villagers accept as valid in terms of a non-rationalised lifeworld and its accompanying social system (in terms of truth and normative appropriateness, but not sincerity), in the absence of a better alternative. But, Shimshal's shared lifeworld has become increasingly rationalised, and privilege-based authority has not been effectively rationalised into the lifeworld, except in terms of a claim to sincerity (ie. the normative appropriateness of a leader relies to some extent on his or her sincerity). For the present, the liberal position seems like a better alternative to most Shimshalis, but it is likely to retain its advantage only if it continues to offer technical benefits to the economic sub-system, which benefits complement shared lifeworld ideals. That relies on continued intersubjective understanding based on communicative discourse, so that the scheme maintains its flexibility in the face of changes to other systemic circumstances. Only communicative discourse ensures the continued rationality of Shimshal's lifeworld.

8.2.3: Summary

The AKRSP village organisation plays a pivotal role in the transition from a traditional to more modern political leadership, because it provides important institutional links between social system and lifeworld. Shimshalis have developed the village organisation as an institution to

³⁸ Recall from Chapters Five and Seven that kingship and community have long vied for validity within the lifeworld of Shimshalis.

represent technical activity at the collective or communal level. By associating the new village organisation with the traditional *kuyotch*, the village organisation gained validity in lifeworld terms. It became an institution which could implement technical collective initiatives (technical validity) that also had lifeworld legitimacy (normative validity). This coupling of system and lifeworld corresponded to a rationalisation of both, and an overall move toward modernity. As soon as the ritual congregation was satisfied that the technical initiatives of the village organisation did indeed manifest the convictions of a shared lifeworld, then the VO leader's arguments in council gained an additional technical validity. But more importantly, they gained an overall validity in terms of sincerity or truthfulness. In other words the sincerity (commitment to the lifeworld) with which VO leaders proposed initiatives became accepted³⁹.

The liberal group benefited from its close association with the village organisation. Concerns about the road, the VO's principal initiative in Shimshal, provided a technical justification for changes in portering control. The VO's official concern with collective development allowed the liberal group to express the issue in terms of lifeworld ideals, and integrate technical with normative arguments in defense of their portering scheme. Finally, being identified with the VO added to the liberal group's overall claim to sincerity, a claim which was lacking in the arguments of the conservative group. I suspect that the liberal group's bid to revise the regulation of portering would not have been even initially successful without the existence of something like a VO. Prior to the creation of the village organisation the *kuyotch* did not have the technically-based authority to interfere with non-traditional individual or household level economic activities.

There is some concern, particularly within other leadership institutions, that village organisation leadership is gaining too much decision-making authority; that it is becoming too powerful a political force. That is a danger, especially if AKRSP leaders exploit their status as "experts" in any of the four organisational sub-systems, to deny others from participating in communicative discourse. This danger and concern are addressed in the chapter's conclusion,

³⁹ Azizullah and Shambi do not possess that validity, as it relates to their porter dealings.

which discusses political validity based on external representation of Shimshal.

8.3: Externally-based Political Authority and Sustainability in Shimshal

8.3.1: Introduction

In the previous section I provide a glimpse of how, and how well, leaders represent the "general attitudes and values of the community as a whole" to the community itself (Matthews, 1983:159). A second way that political leaders are able to validate their decisions regarding social control is to effectively represent their community to the outside world. A community whose political leaders can justify, to community members, the way that they portray the community to the outside world, in terms of Habermas' three validity claims (objective truth, normative appropriateness, and sincerity) may be considered to be functioning sustainably in a political sense.

Relatively few Shimshalis institutions represent Shimshal politically to the outside world. This is due partly to the disintegration of the royal bureaucracy in Hunza over the past half century, and partly to Shimshal's relative isolation from the rest of Hunza⁴⁰. Matthews suggests that "while we habitually think of political leadership in terms of elected office holders, those who speak on behalf of many communities are its merchants, clergymen [sic], and teachers" (1983:160). Unlike the outport communities that Matthews describes Shimshal has no merchants and no official clergy. The community's lay clergy and its teachers are among those who speak on behalf of the community, but they speak mainly within the fora of formal political institutions. Four such

⁴⁰ For example, clan leaders, lumbardars and household heads in Central Hunza traditionally travelled among villages for a variety of quasi-political purposes (funerals, clan meetings, visiting rounds), which amounted to political representation of the home community (see Chapter Five). Shimshalis never participated much in this process, because of their geographical and social isolation. All of this occurs *within* the three Shimshal sub-clans, but amounts to **Internal** political activity.

institutions relate Shimshal to its wider political context: the Union Council, the *Tehsil* Council, the Local Council, and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme.

The first two of these, the Union Council and the *Tehsil* Council are explicitly political bodies. The Union Council sits in Gilgit and comprises the elected (or appointed) representatives of all villages within Gilgit Administrative District. Three Shimshalis sit on the council, including Azizullah Beg, who represents Shimshal Centre. The District Commissioner of Gilgit District chairs the Union Council. He is appointed by the Minister for the Northern Areas, and reports directly to that ministry⁴¹. The *Tehsil* Council meets in Gulmit Village and consists of *lumbardars* of all villages located within Gulmit *Tehsil*. This council reports to the Assistant Commissioner of Hunza sub-district, who is responsible to the District Commissioner of Gilgit. *Lumbardar* Khan (and sometimes Shambi) represents Shimshal to Gulmit *Tehsil*.

The Local Council and AKRSP are not overtly political bodies, but they do exercise considerable political influence. The Local Council, formally the Ismaili Local Council, includes representatives from all Ismaili *jamaats* in Hunza. Each *jamaat* (including Shimshal) has a steward (*mukhi*) and an accountant or treasurer (*kamadia*) who may or may not be some of the individuals who represent the *jamaat* on the Local Council. Shimshal *jamaat* also supports a *Tariqah* Board for Religious Education (chaired by Daulat Amin), a *jamaat* secretary, and a number of elders who have special informal status as religious authorities. Local Council members represent Shimshal on the Federal Council in Karachi, which comprises all Local Councils in Pakistan. The ultimate and absolute authority is the Aga Khan, Imam to Ismailis. According to Clarke (1976:485) the function of Local Councils, and their representatives within a community, "is to carry out routine administration according to the policy laid down by the Imam, to promote the welfare of the community and to maintain uniformity in customs and religious practices". Implicit in that function

⁴¹ The current administration of the Northern Areas emulates the British Colonial administration. District Commissioners (DCs) and Assistant Commissioners (ACs) are not usually selected from among the local population. They are lowland Pakistanis appointed by the government. The councils they chair consist of indigenous persons.

is a claim to formal social order. In Shimshal, where the community as *jamaat* coincides with other aspects of community, the authority of local council members is partly exercised through the *kuyotch* and village organisations. Indeed, as a political institution, Local Council membership is overshadowed by village organisation leadership. Therefore, I do not discuss Local Council representation apart from VO representation.

The organisational structure of the AKRSP, and the role of village organisations within that larger structure, is discussed in detail in Chapter Six. Suffice it to say here that village organisation leadership represents Shimshal to the AKRSP in Gilgit, primarily through divisional social organisers (SOs), but also directly. The VO leaders whose representation of the community to AKRSP is most influential are Daulat Amin and Fermanullah, president and manager respectively of Shimshal Centre VO. While the AKRSP sees its role as primarily economic, social and ecological, it is also political to the extent that its institutions regulate economic, social and ecological behaviour. The portering case exemplifies such social control by an AKRSP institution.

Several less important fora for representing Shimshal to the outside exist in addition to these four main sets of institutions. As with internal representation, their leaders derive validity from a variety of sources (see Table 8.3).

It is evident from Table 8.3 that internal and external political representation relate closely. Leaders and leadership institutions often borrow validity at the external level of representation from the internal level. This is to be expected, because individuals are not likely to represent the community (to constituents' satisfaction) to the outside world without also reflecting the values and attitudes of the community. Perhaps this notion can be expressed most clearly as a sequence of necessary conditions for external political representation. First, a leader or leadership institution must represent a community to itself. Only then (second) can it attempt to represent the community to the outside world. Then (third) it can attempt to persuade the outside world to accept that representation. Valid external leadership has to represent a community to itself, express that representation within some sort of forum that links the community to the outside, and convince

Table 8.3: Sources of Validity for some of Shimshal's External Political Leaders and Leadership Institutions

LEADER OR LEADERSHIP INSTITUTION	SUB-SYSTEMIC SOURCE OF POLITICAL VALIDITY (ranked)	LEVEL OF VALIDITY	FORMALITY OF VALIDITY
Union Council Members	political, social, ecological	external political and social, internal ecological	formal political, informal social, ecological
Lumbardar	political, social, ecological, economic (as an individual)	external as <i>Tehsil</i> Council member, internal	formal political, social, ecological, informal economic
Jamaat Executive	social, political, economic	external through local and federal councils, internal	formal social and political, informal economic and ecological
VO Executive	social, economic, ecological, political	external through link with AKRSP bureaucracy, internal	formal social, economic, less formal ecological, political
Kuyotch	political, social, ecological	external through influence on <i>lumbardar</i> , internal	formal, but benefitting from informal validity of key members
High Altitude Porters	economic, social, political	external political through access to foreigners, internal social and economic	informal economic, social, political
Students	social, political	external and internal	informal social, political
Army Personnel	economic, social, political	possible external political through link with martial law administrators	informal economic, social. semi-formal political
Teachers	social, political, perhaps economic (as individuals)	external as influential members of AKRSP and <i>jamaat</i> (perhaps through link with educational bureaucracy), internal	formal social, less formal political, informal economic
Akabirting	social, political, economic and ecological (as individuals)	external (historically and perhaps as individuals), internal	a loosely defined group with semi-formal validity in all spheres.
Clan Elders	ecological, social, political	external social and political (esp. historically), and as influential <i>kuyotch</i> members, internal	formal
Lineage Elders	social, ecological, economic, political	perhaps external through social and economic ties, internal	informal economic and ecological, formal social and political (partly derived from position in <i>kuyotch</i>)

the relevant outside institutions to accept the representation. There are also fourth and fifth steps which make this representation a circular sequence. Fourth, leaders and leadership institutions have to return to the community with the outside's expectations of its relationship with community members. Fifth, they must successfully incorporate the most unavoidable (or most necessary) of these expectations into a renewed representation of the community to itself. Thus, for example, VO leaders must faithfully represent the community to itself and to the AKRSP in Gilgit so that the AKRSP recognises the context of the community, but they must also represent AKRSP requirements (weekly meetings, savings deposits, collective work, etc) to the community in such a way that the community accepts those conditions as part of its own self-conception. If these stages of interpretation (from Shimshal to Gilgit, or Gilgit to Shimshal) break down, then representation fails to occur, and political validity diminishes.

The external political representative has a difficult task, because he or she has to participate in separate sets of discourse, and has always to be legitimised from two directions. The outcome of each discourse determines his or her validity in the other. A leader who represents the interests of the outside more effectively than the interests of the community becomes a compradore, who assists in the underdevelopment of his or her community. Conversely, a leader who fails to represent the interests of the outside (eg. government regulations or development agency conditions), will cease to be accepted as valid by outside institutions, and will soon lose technical validity within the community.

The case provided in 8.3.2 below interprets how this sequence of representation occurs within and among the four main externally-motivated political leadership institutions in Shimshal. The example relates closely to that offered in the last section, because the four institutions split into two types which coincide with the two positions on the portering issue. Union Council and *Tehsil* Council representation aligns roughly with what I have termed the conservative position; Ismaili Local Council and AKRSP village organisation leadership aligns with the liberal position. Just as the liberal position on portering is slowly replacing the conservative position, so are the local

council and VO leaders increasing their external political validity at the expense of Union and *Tehsil* Council members. What this represents is the latest stages in a more general long-term drift from kingship to community-based authority. Part of the reason for this shift is an alteration in the lifeworld-based criteria for internal validation (as discussed in 8.2). Partly it is due to the relationship of leaders to the externally-based institutions within which they attempt to represent Shimshal.

8.3.2: Representing Shimshal to the Outside: The Increasing Political Role of AKRSP Village Organisations

Like the last case, this one is a story of competition between two approaches to controlling social (including economic, political and ecological) activity in Shimshal; that is, competition for validity within the Shimshal community. The two approaches align similarly in this example as in the last. Indeed, the main proponents include several of the same individuals. Thus, the case I present here is a continuation of the last, and an enlargement of it from the specific internal problem of portering to a more general issue of external political representation.

In the introduction to this section I developed what I termed a sequence of representation: steps that leaders or leadership institutions have to fulfil to maintain political validity. A concise summary of this iterative process helps to understand the interpretation I want to develop in this section:

1. Establish validity by representing a community's norms, values and convictions to itself.
2. Transfer the community's self-representation to relevant outside institutions.
3. Establish validity (internally and externally) by negotiating a (partial) affirmation of that self conception by the outside institutions.
4. Transfer that (partial) external affirmation back to the home community.
5. Negotiate a (partial) incorporation of the conditions for external affirmation into the community's self conception.
1. Establish validity by representing the community's revised norms, values and convictions to itself ...etc.

The validity of leaders and leadership institutions is reproduced and challenged primarily in discourse which occurs during the first, third and fifth steps. The second and fourth steps merely express a translation of each party's (inside, outside) self conception into language that can be understood by the other party. Certainly, some technical validity accrues from achieving this translation, but its benefits are realised in steps one, three and five.

The first discourse pertains both to internally-focused political representation and to that which is externally-focused⁴². In this section I am more concerned with steps three and five. Step three incorporates the process of representing the community to the outside, so that outside institutions accept the representation (and the representative) as valid. Step five involves representing outside institutions to the community in a way that persuades community members to accept the representation (and again, the representative) as valid. Unlike step one, these two steps involve internal **and** external validity claims, and (especially step five) the integration of these two sets of validity claims. In other words, intersubjective understanding and consensus in each discourse relies to some extent on the conviction that the position represented by a political representative (from the community) has been validated by the group he or she represents. Internally-focused validity facilitates externally-based validity which facilitates internally-based validity, so that most leaders enjoy both or none. Indeed, they cannot possess strong externally-based validity within the community without also having strong internally-based validity.

Over the past eight years the overall validity of leadership institutions like the *Tehsil* Council and the Union Council has diminished. The decline of these institutions in the minds of Shimshalis is explained partly by the internal validity of their leaders (see 8.2), and partly by the nature of relations between Shimshali representatives and the external political institutions themselves. The leaders, the institutions, and the relations between them are losing validity as Shimshal's lifeworld and social system become more rationalised. I explain in previous examples that the AKRSP

⁴² "Discourse" as I use the term here, connotes a wide-ranging set of relations and interactions; not just a conversation in some sort of council.

village organisations in Shimshal have helped to facilitate rationalisation. They and their leaders are also important beneficiaries of rationalisation in that AKRSP representatives in Shimshal, together with *jamaat* representatives (a closely related group), are replacing Union Council and *Tehsil* Council representatives as valid political representatives for and of Shimshal. The following paragraphs interpret this process of change in terms of external representation, with particular emphasis on steps three and five in the "sequence of representation".

Several circumstances limit the validity of the *Tehsil* Council and its representatives in Shimshal. To begin, *lumbardar* Khan, its official representative in Shimshal, has little interest in supra-village political dealings. Those aspects of the Shimshal social system which he claims as his responsibility or prerogative are dealt with internally: the agricultural cycles, ritual performances, relations among households and lineages, resource utilisation. The *lumbardar* himself does not seem to value the opportunity to participate in a larger council, so the *Tehsil* Council's validity to Shimshalis is undermined from the start. This is compounded by the ambiguous position of Shambi as an alternative unofficial representative to the *Tehsil*. Shambi claims some authority, but has no formal standing within the *Tehsil*, so that his claims are lacking in authenticity. In addition, Shambi's ambiguous position within the *Tehsil* Council limits his ability to achieve any technical gains or concessions on behalf of Shimshal, so that technical validity (truth) is lacking.

Lumbardar Khan's disenchantment with the *Tehsil* Council is more than just the response of an inward-looking old man. It also reflects his conviction (and the conviction of other community members) that the *Tehsil* Council is lacking in pertinent technical authority, normative procedural validity, and sincerity or authenticity (each of the three validity claims).

In terms of technical authority, the *Tehsil* Council deals primarily with matters of civil and criminal law, relations among communities, and to a small extent government-sponsored development. It appears that since the abolition of the monarchy Shimshal has never had an internal civil or criminal dispute which was not settled internally. The community has little to do, as a community, with other communities in the *Tehsil*, because of its location far from other settled

territories; strife between Shimshal and other communities is not a common problem.⁴³ In addition, the *Tehsil* has little decision making authority even over the issues that lie within its jurisdiction. Important decisions reached in *Tehsil* have to be referred to the Assistant Commissioner in Hunza, who is himself under the larger authority of the District Commissioner in Gilgit. Furthermore, the *Tehsil* Council meets infrequently and at short notice, so that participation by representatives from Shimshal is problematic. In short, Shimshal's delegate to the *Tehsil* Council is representing the community to a relatively impotent institution, a circumstance that undermines steps three and five above. If the *lumbardar* or Shambi want to achieve some technical benefits for Shimshal (eg. settlement of a dispute, or money for some development initiative), they are required to petition a higher authority directly.

This last point raises the issue of normative procedural validity. Shimshalis have high regard for the process of communicative decision making, which stems from venerable lifeworld convictions. The idea of their *lumbardar* (an important man within the community) going hat in hand, so to speak, to petition an outsider reflects poorly on the normative validity of the *Tehsil* Council as an institution, and of the *lumbardar* as a political leader. That a representative (and *akabirting*) of Shimshal is being treated poorly shames the community in its own eyes, and calls into question the validity of the *lumbardar* himself as an external political representative. Shimshal is an unimportant and out-of-the-way village in the larger political scheme, so outside politicians are likely to be fairly abrupt with its representatives. Many Shimshalis expressed their dissatisfaction with the government in terms of the shoddy way they perceive that *Tehsil* and Union Council members are treated. I suspect that *lumbardar* Khan disassociates himself from the *Tehsil* Council in an effort to preserve the validity he derives from other sources within the community.

The necessity to petition higher authority and a consequent emphasis on personal favour, together with unequal power relations, a lack of communicative discourse, and an organisational

⁴³ But, I have learned that in the past several months some strife has developed between Shimshal and Passu over the rights of Passu porters to enter Shimshal territory.

hierarchy that derives from the colonial past, all remind villagers of a history of royal authority and its excesses. Shimshalis are suspicious of the sincerity of any contemporary institution that reproduces the characteristics of royal prerogative, especially when their *lumbardar*, who is accepted and respected as a valid leader within Shimshal, fails to negotiate a favourable position for Shimshal within the institution (step three). Even as embedded a leader as *lumbardar* Khan must be wary in his representation of external institutional conditions if he hopes to retain his own sincerity claim to validity.

The position of Union Council members is similar to that of *Tehsil* Council members, although they have certain other advantages and disadvantages. The Union Council is closer to real political authority, because it is chaired by the District Commissioner (DC), who directly represents the Minister for the Northern Areas. Therefore, the potential exists for council members to participate toward some meaningful technical end. In addition, the issues which fall within the jurisdiction of the Union Council are important to Shimshalis: border control, martial law, transportation, initiatives of the Northern Areas Public Works Department, education, health, federal government jurisdiction. However, the disparity in power between the central government and villages represented on the Union Council is so great that there is little effort to engage in sincere communicative discourse. Rather, the institution functions mainly as a mechanism for disseminating government constraints and initiatives, with little opportunity for members to represent their constituents to the government. Shimshal, because of its location and population, has received much in the way of government constraint and regulation (for example, Pakistani law, constraints on relations with tourists, possible loss of hunting and grazing territory) but little in the way of initiatives. It is difficult under these circumstances for representatives to reproduce their validity within the community through either step three or five. The District Commissioner (DC) has little incentive to reach intersubjective understanding with representatives from a place like Shimshal, and villagers tire quickly of listening to the unilateral messages carried from Gilgit by their Union Council members.

Representatives to the Union Council may attempt to petition the DC on behalf of the community, but that involves them in a process which is normatively invalid (ie. reminiscent of the invalidated relationship between community members and kingship representatives) and which may still not yield technical benefits. For example, Azizullah Beg (a Union Council member) petitioned the DC for funds to begin the link road to Pasu. After a series of interviews, which Azizullah described as "humiliating", the DC offered to resettle the community nearer to Gilgit on a plot of land adjacent to the Karakoram Highway. That was a generous enough offer, but it demonstrates Azizullah's failure to represent the norms, values and attitudes of Shimshal to the outside (step three).⁴⁴ When he returned his message was greeted with derision, and both he and the Union Council suffered a loss of validity (step five).

Whereas *lumbardar* Khan's role in the internal political structure is clear, Union Council members occupy an ambiguous position internally. The *lumbardar* is head of the *kuyotch*, so he has direct and immediate access to Shimshal's communicative political process. Indeed, his role as *Tehsil* Council member necessarily coincides with his status as *lumbardar* and *kuyotch* chair. Azizullah and his colleagues also have access to the *kuyotch* (as household heads and *akabirting*), but their position as **Union Council members**, is uncertain. They could make this position more certain by establishing the validity of their interaction with the Union Council. As we have seen, this has been difficult because of their inability to engage in sincere, normatively appropriate, and technically viable discourse within that external political institution.

To sum up, neither Union Council members nor *Tehsil* Council members have derived much validity within Shimshal from their positions on these external councils. This is because, on the whole, they have been unable to transfer whatever validity they enjoy at home into acceptable representation of the community to the outside world. Political institutions of the outside have not engaged Shimshali representatives in sincere communicative discourse. There is little that

⁴⁴ Or, of course, the DC's failure to understand the lifeworld conditions of Shimshal. In either case the burden falls on Azizullah.

Shimshali members can do to alleviate the situation⁴⁵. As a result, Shimshalis participate in these external councils reluctantly. The community of Shimshal has been able to avoid continuous intimate interaction with Pakistani government institutions for two reasons. First, Shimshal is not yet fully integrated into the federal political system. The government has been satisfied to leave Shimshal more or less to its own devices⁴⁶. Second, Shimshalis are increasingly able to participate in other external institutions that have achieved results which are more acceptable to the ideals of a shared Shimshali lifeworld, as well as to Shimshalis' technical aspirations. The most important of these institutions are the AKRSP and the Ismaili Local Council.

Shimshal's experience with the AKRSP, since the programme's introduction to the community in 1983, has differed substantially from its experience with government institutions. From the initial dialogues (see Chapter Six) AKRSP personnel have demonstrated a willingness to engage in communicative discourse toward intersubjective understanding. In other words, village organisation leaders have been able to establish validity by negotiating a partial affirmation of the community's self conception with AKRSP personnel (step three). That is not to say that AKRSP has not imposed some of its own conditions. But agency conditions (ie. its own self conception) have also been negotiated through discourse, so that both sides have been respectful of the rules of communicative action⁴⁷. The sincerity with which Shimshalis perceive AKRSP personnel to be participating has allowed VO leaders to return to Shimshal and negotiate an incorporation of the conditions for external affirmation into the community's self conception (step five). From the start,

⁴⁵ This very circumstance manifests a fundamental failing in Habermas' theory of communicative action as a programme for political action (but not, I think, as a framework for interpreting social change). Modernity requires communicative action, which can only occur in something approaching an ideal speech situation. There is little a small community can do to induce institutions of the larger social system to engage in communicative discourse. And few such institutions will develop an ideal speech situation of their own accord.

⁴⁶ That is changing with the international initiative to create a national park, which includes much of Shimshal's pasture land (see Chapter Ten).

⁴⁷ That is, within limits. For many reasons the AKRSP remains a more powerful participant than Shimshal in communicative discourse. But, in my experience AKRSP personnel have sincerely attempted to play down those disparities in power.

then, VO leaders' validity has been enhanced by the parent institution's apparent willingness to engage them in meaningful and relatively equal conversation. Specifically, VO leaders validate their claims to technical efficacy (truth) by successfully negotiating with AKRSP. In addition, the AKRSP's own claims to sincerity and normative appropriateness are validated by its participation in genuine bilateral discourse. Successful validation by the parent institution reflects favourably on Shimshali representatives.

Of course, the process that AKRSP used in establishing village organisations, and then in maintaining dialogue with them, has garnered the institution **normative** validity. AKRSP has relied heavily on discourse approximating communicative action. You will recall from Chapter Six that the three initial dialogues were communicative in nature. So was the process of establishing VO membership and leadership. The agency also offers a variety of fora for ongoing communicative action. The Gilgit office holds regular VO president and VO manager conferences (and woman's organisation president conferences). District Social Organisers (SOs) meet with the assembled membership of individual village organisations about once a month.⁴⁸ Other meetings and training sessions for VO executives (secretaries, treasurers, model farmers, crop specialists, veterinary specialists) are not specifically communicative, but they too facilitate discourse among villages and between the agency and VO members. These attempts at intersubjective understanding and consensual decision making emulate the combined ideals of equity and solidarity that are central to Shimshal's collective lifeworld. In so doing, they allow an easy integration of traditional (*kuyotch*) and contemporary (VO) forms of political legitimation, both of which are becoming increasingly rationalised. This contrasts with the case of government-based political institutions, which integrate poorly with a rationalised *kuyotch*.

The procedure for conversation and decision making that the AKRSP follows also lends

⁴⁸ To the dismay of Shimshalis, the SO has never visited Shimshal, although meetings have been held at the end of the road. This fact offends Shimshalis (who consider the walk from Passu to be fairly minor), and has cost the SO, if not the agency as a whole, some validity. Still, Shimshalis have been able to use this as an additional justification to build the road.

it (and its representatives) a **sincerity** claim to validity. Agency personnel attempt to visit communities on occasion to meet with community members in their own setting⁴⁹. These visits give VO members other than the leaders an opportunity to interact directly with the parent organisation. In addition, the variety of meetings and training sessions that AKRSP holds in Gilgit allows a fairly large number of Shimshalis to participate in internal/external relations. Such steps diminish, but by no means dispel, the threat of privilege-based authority⁵⁰. When VO representatives do interact with the parent organisation they are treated with courtesy and consideration. I heard this many times from Shimshalis, who contrasted government institutions with the AKRSP. To translate and paraphrase Azizullah:

When I petitioned the District Commissioner [about the road] I was made to return for three days and wait for several hours each day. There was no chair. I was required to talk to many assistants and secretaries. Finally, I had a brief interview with the DC, who told me rudely that if we were dissatisfied he would have us resettled nearer Gilgit... When Daulat Amin visits AKRSP in Gilgit he is given a place to sleep and eat, he is toured around the office, and drinks tea with the General Manager and other administrators. They discuss his concerns, and suggest alternative solutions. Yet I am a big man and Daulat Amin is a small man⁵¹.

Daulat Amin substantiates Azizullah's complaint from the other direction. AKRSP administration is aware that VO members often come from a long distance, may be short of cash, and rely on good treatment for their credibility back home. So it houses and feeds VO leaders when they are in Gilgit. This treatment has two effects. First, it establishes AKRSP's normative validity and sincerity as partners in community development. Second, it effectively turns "little men" into "big men", and

⁴⁹ Even Shimshal, which has never been visited by a social organiser, has had visits from other AKRSP administrators who arrived in an AKRSP helicopter.

⁵⁰ It has to be up to the community itself to insist on an internal forum where they can challenge their leaders' validity.

⁵¹ These terms "big man" and "small man" are often used by Shimshalis. Big men are those who have (or had) connections of favour or privilege with the kingdom or central government. Small men are those who do not. I think that a certain amount of pique and rivalry underlies Azizullah's use of the term here. Most Shimshalis would not refer to Daulat Amin as a small man.

diminishes the stature of "big men" like Azizullah, Shambi, and even *lumbardar* Khan, who do not command the same respect in their external political roles.

The AKRSP derives an important claim to sincerity from another direction: its association with the Aga Khan. Shimshalis have no doubt that the AKRSP represents the will of their beloved Imam. It is partially funded by the Aga Khan Foundation, and the Aga Khan has visited Hunza to endorse its work in person. To virtually all Shimshalis this fact is immediate proof that AKRSP is working sincerely on behalf of Shimshal and other communities. The fact that AKRSP procedure accords with Shimshal's conception of appropriate, and ritually acceptable, decision-making only strengthens the conviction that the agency represents the Aga Khan's divine will. Shimshali villagers who serve as representatives to the AKRSP derive a degree of sanctity from this association⁵². On the other hand, the Aga Khan and the entire Ismaili religious structure has gained validity from associating with the AKRSP. The AKRSP is further proof of the Aga Khan's sincere concern for his people, and of the technical efficacy of being Ismaili. Shimshalis claim to be more devout than in former times, and they cite as an expression of this devotion their involvement in the AKRSP village organisations. In fact, community members identify their Ismaili religion with two institutions: the local council (internally the *jamaat*), and the AKRSP (internally the VO). That the formal part of *Salgarah*, a holiday in honour of the Aga Khan, is celebrated as a joint AKRSP/*jamaat* festival demonstrates that identification (see Chapter Seven). It also demonstrates that a close link exists between Local Council representation in Shimshal and VO leadership. This is a physical link as well as a conceptual link. Daulat Amin is VO president and Local Council member and chair of the *Tariqah* Board for Ismaili Education. Other Local Council members are also VO executive. As a result the village organisation generally (and Daulat Amin specifically) derives normative validity and a claim to sincerity from the Local Council, not least because Local Council members converse directly with representatives of the Aga Khan. By the same token, the

⁵² This has aided the cause of education in Shimshal (see Chapter Seven). Not only does the Imam recommend formal education, but educated Shimshalis who have established themselves as AKRSP leaders are demonstrating the efficacy of education in religious terms.

Local Council gains technical validity from the AKRSP. In essence, the Local Council's political role is as an additional source of legitimacy for the AKRSP village organisation.

Finally, an important source of legitimacy for the AKRSP and its local leaders is a claim to truth or **technical** efficacy. The village organisation, VO leaders and the parent agency have together delivered technical results to Shimshal which facilitate the community's attainment of generalisable interests. One of these technical results has been a return to a more communicative way of internal decision making. Others are discussed in other chapters. This contrasts with the community's experience of government institutions. These technical results strengthen the link between Shimshal's increasingly rationalised lifeworld and a rationalised social system. Indeed, they have provided the impetus for much of the rationalisation that has occurred.

8.3.3: Summary

I have attempted to provide an understanding of how Shimshalis represent their community to the outside world. I suggest that there are two important steps to valid external representation of the community that are not relevant to internal representation. These are to establish validity (internally and externally) by negotiating a (partial) affirmation of the community's self conception by the outside institutions (step three), and to negotiate a (partial) incorporation of the conditions for external affirmation into the community's self conception (step five). Both of these activities require a prior communicatively-established validity within the community. They also require the sincere participation of relevant outside institutions in a genuine communicative discourse. Failing that second condition even the most legitimate internal leader is in a difficult position, because no forum exists for representing the community. At that point two options are available to leaders and leadership institutions: they can become compradores in their community's underdevelopment and alienation (and modernisation) by feigning the existence of a discourse at step three, and

engaging insincerely in step five, or they can attempt to disassociate themselves from the process of external representation.

Shimshal's representatives to the Union Council and *Tehsil* Council find themselves in such a difficult position. Their response has been an ambiguous mixture of the two strategies outlined above. For the most part they have removed themselves as much as they can from interacting with the institutions they represent. At the same time they exploit whatever internal influence and stature they can from their membership on these councils; witness Azizullah's assertion that he is a "big man" and Daulat Amin is a "small man", and Shambi and Azizullah's justification of their portering agenda in terms of "government duties"⁵³. To the extent that they disassociate themselves from government institutions they avoid a process of modernisation whereby the media of bureaucratic expertise colonises Shimshal's shared lifeworld. Shimshal is fortunate that the government is uninterested enough to tolerate a strategy of avoidance. The time may come when the community has to employ a less comfortable option⁵⁴.

The void that is left by what are essentially invalid government institutions (from Shimshalis' point of view) has been filled recently by the AKRSP. As described above, the AKRSP has facilitated communicative action between its representatives and representatives from Shimshal. In addition, it has provided enough different fora for interaction to make the development of a small expert culture less likely, especially given the internal decision making process of the village organisations. Still, there is some concern in Shimshal, especially among the conservative group,

⁵³ To be fair to Shimshali representatives to government agencies, they probably end up sacrificing their own interests for the good of the community (despite their initial intentions). The government requires representatives in each village, and these people threaten their validity by affiliating themselves with institutions for which Shimshalis have little use.

⁵⁴ Contributors to the last two AKRSP annual reports, and the latest World Bank evaluation, support a move toward more interaction between the AKRSP and government institutions. Such a move may have the effect of decreasing AKRSP validity in villagers' eyes without reaping any benefits. However, the AKRSP may be a powerful enough organisation (especially with the backing of the Aga Khan Foundation and Aga Khan) to entice government institutions into sincere dialogue. The hope is that such a partnership would facilitate a meaningful and modern interaction between local communities and Northern Areas government agencies.

that a new elite may be emerging around the leadership of Shimshal Centre's village organisation, specifically around Daulat Amin. That concern is discussed below.

8.4 Conclusion: Political Validity and Sustainability in Shimshal

Material presented in Chapter Seven interprets relations among three sets of issues: specific empirical expressions of political organisation, the AKRSP village organisations and political validity. These sets of issues inform the larger issue of community sustainability. Two detailed examples, one devoted to internal political representation and the other devoted to external political representation, comprise specific empirical expressions of political organisation. They provide a context for interpreting political validity and its role in Shimshal's community sustainability, and for evaluating the influence of VOs on political validity and the broader issue of community sustainability.

I defined internal political validity as **the ability of leaders to represent the general attitudes and values of the community as a whole**. Further, a community whose political leaders can justify their decisions regarding internal social control communicatively in terms of Habermas' three validity claims may be considered to be functioning sustainably in a political sense. The task of internal political authorities, then, is to **represent the community to itself**: that is, in a way that corresponds to technical, practical and emancipatory convictions of a shared lifeworld. An important characteristic of valid internal political representation, as I define it, is its integration with other spheres of social organisation, either explicitly or implicitly, formally or informally. In other words, valid political leaders are likely to derive some (or even most) of their validity from activities in social, economic or ecological spheres: that is what gives them their rootedness in the community.

The portering example reveals the existence of two political "groups" in Shimshal: one devoted to maintaining a traditional (in the Weberian sense) system of patronage and privilege in

certain spheres of decision making, and the other concerned with replacing that system of decision making with another, based on equally venerable ideals of communal equity and solidarity. In essence, the competition between these groups replays an ancient internal political struggle (described in Chapter Five) between kingship and community.

The preliminary outcome of this struggle, as it relates specifically to portering, but also as it relates to decision making more generally, is that the systemic process whereby internal political decisions are made has been rationalised. Traditional political authority (exemplified by the traditional leadership group) is losing its ability to validate itself **on the basis of tradition alone**. The liberal leadership group, which bases its validity on a combination of traditional normative and sincerity claims, new normative claims, and new technical claims, has been accepted as a more legitimate arbitrator of portering jobs: its validity claims correspond with contemporary lifeworld elements, both technical and practical. That this is the case is largely due to the close integration among the traditional *kuyotch*, the newly formed AKRSP village organisations, and liberal group leadership. The link road to Pasu is an important variable in this process, especially as it relates to the portering issue, because its completion is a priority that unites all forms of internal political authority. Indeed, the desire to ensure labour for building the road (and for maintaining subsistence agricultural activities) was an important technical incentive to accept a new scheme for regulating portering opportunities. The dynamics of internal political leadership may shift when the road is completed, in ways that cannot be predicted.⁵⁵ For now, however, political validity has increased with an increasingly communicative and rationalised political discourse within the community of Shimshal.

External political validity may be defined as the ability of political leaders to **effectively represent their community to the outside world**. Thus, a community whose political leaders can justify, to community members, the way they portray the community to the outside world, in terms

⁵⁵ Indeed, important aspects of all spheres of organisation will change when the road is finally completed (see Chapter Ten and Eleven).

of Habermas' three validity claims, may be considered to be functioning sustainably in a political sense. The task of external political leaders, whether their role is implicit or explicit, formal or informal, is more difficult than that of political leaders whose representation is purely internal. Not only do external leaders have to achieve communion of interests with community members (as do internal leaders), but they also have to negotiate a degree of intersubjective (communicative) understanding and consensus between an internal perspective and the perspective of external decision making bodies. In short, it is their responsibility to **make** the interests of local residents and outsiders coincide (Matthews, 1983:161).

This necessity to negotiate a coincidence of interests between local residents and outsiders is problematic, both in empirical terms and for Habermas' theory of communicative action. Modernity as Habermas conceives it, and sustainability as I conceive it, require communicative action, which can only occur within the context of a sincere desire, by all participants, to achieve intersubjective understanding. There is almost nothing that a small community like Shimshal can do to induce institutions of the larger social system to engage in communicative discourse. And few such institutions will strive for intersubjective understanding with a small community, on their own initiative. In essence, empowering the powerless in their relations **with the outside** still requires the complicity of powerful outside institutions (see Friedmann, 1992). AKRSP administrators, whatever their faults, have demonstrated a willingness to strive for intersubjective understanding with Shimshalis. Much of the agency's success in Shimshal may be attributed to that willingness.

Four sets of formal institutions relate Shimshal to its wider political context. They are the Union Council, the *Tehsil* Council, the Local Council and the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme. Two of these, the Union Council and the *Tehsil* Council, are explicitly political bodies that link Shimshali leadership to central Pakistani government. The Local Council and the AKRSP, while *not directly related to government bodies*, do exercise considerable political influence. The liberal faction mentioned above corresponds roughly to Local Council and AKRSP leadership in Shimshal. Similarly, Shimshali members of the Union Council and *Tehsil* Council belong to the conservative

group discussed above.

Since 1983, when the first Shimshal AKRSP VO was formed, Shimshalis have increasingly accepted the validity of VO and local council leadership at the expense of the validity of the two other more formal political institutions. This tendency relates to all three of Habermas' validity claims. First, VO leaders have demonstrated a technical validity: they can get good things done, which indicates that they have successfully represented Shimshal to the outside. Traditional leaders, in their roles as government council representatives, have had less technical success.

Second, VO leaders have developed a normative validity. They have whatever normative validity that their traditional status affords them, and that is considerable for individuals like Daulat Amin and Fermanullah. In addition, however, they have the normative validity that comes with participating in a process that (especially in the practical integration of *kuyotch* and VO) emulates the lifeworld ideals of equity and solidarity. AKRSP administrators have contributed to this normative validity by treating VO leaders respectfully, and by willingly participating in a communicative decision making process. Traditional leaders find their normative legitimacy eroded by participating in what is perceived as a fruitless, humiliating, and privilege-based political process. Certain traditional leaders have distanced themselves from this external political process in an effort to maintain their internal legitimacy.

Third, some members of the traditional leadership group have engaged in activities that erode their claim to sincerely or authentically represent Shimshal's ritual congregation. VO leadership, especially because it is closely associated with the Local Council, has absorbed some of the sanctity of the Aga Khan, whose authentic concern for the people of Shimshal Shimshalis are unlikely to question. In addition, leaders like Daulat Amin and Fermanullah (the dispenser) have spent a lifetime demonstrating their commitment to Shimshal's shared lifeworld ideals.

The shift in legitimacy summarised above has had the effect of merging two types of authority: traditional authority based in the *kuyotch*, and a new form of authority base primarily in the village organisations. This integration has strengthened the legitimacy and technical efficacy

of both groups. Both groups are rooted in the ideals of communicative decision making, equity and solidarity, so a secondary effect has been to increase communicative action in the political sphere in general. And it is a form of communicative decision making that includes more active participants than previously, because village organisations have facilitated the participation of both household heads and junior members who had not previously had an influential voice in community affairs.

There is a potential for the new leadership group, focused around VO leaders and especially Daulat Amin, to develop into a new elite that may manage to constitute itself as an expert culture in a colonised lifeworld. This, of course, would represent a move toward modernisation. It is no accident that Daulat Amin's name keeps surfacing in my interpretations. Nor is it coincidental that the changes of the last decade reflect his stated agenda for Shimshal. He is the one individual who links together the Local Council, the AKRSP VOs, the educational system, the *jamaat*, and the newly empowered *kuyotch*. I do not think, however, that he is a threat to Shimshal's communicative decision making process. Except for his position as headmaster, all the formal institutions that he leads focus on consensual decision making. More than any other leader his authority has been developed through communicative action, and can be checked the same way. Certainly, his leadership is attracting an increasing number of followers who support his utterances in council, but that does not suggest that he represents a medium that is colonising the lifeworld; it merely suggests that Shimshal's collective lifeworld is shifting. Indeed, Daulat Amin can take much of the credit for strengthening the lifeworld ideals and systemic structures which make it increasingly difficult for him to hoard executive authority. He and other liberal group leaders are a threat to the traditional leadership group to the extent that their initiatives curtail that group's executive authority. It does not seem, however, that the changes that are presently occurring disenfranchise the traditional leadership group, nor is that the intention of the liberal leadership group. This is because traditional leaders, like other citizens of Shimshal, are free to participate in intersubjective decision making on the basis of whatever validity claim (including a traditional normative claim) they choose. As discussed above, the traditional group has considerable validity,

even within a rationalised lifeworld. They also possess talents, contacts and resources that are essential to Shimshal's increasing modernity.

In Chapter Two I argue that a community is sustainable if its norms, and supporting institutions, are established consensually through a process of communicative action, and where those norms and institutions, and changes in them, are supported through time by the material (systemic) substrata of that community. The examples developed in this chapter indicate that in the past several years Shimshal's political sphere of organisation has become increasingly oriented to communicative decision making. This tendency symptomises a convergence of system and lifeworld in Shimshal, and a convergence of symbolic norms and technical results. That Shimshal has moved toward greater political validity is closely linked to the development, over the past nine years, of a rooted, indigenous, and technically efficacious AKRSP village organisation. The way that the VO has situated itself in Shimshal, in the political sphere at least, has contributed to the community's sustainability.

Chapter Nine: Economic Viability and Community Sustainability in Shimshal

9.1: Economic Viability

Most development studies have conceptualised sustainability in terms of viability, and have defined viability as primarily economic. Matthews' framework retains economic viability as an important dimension of community sustainability, but one which integrates with, and is contingent upon, social vitality and political validity (and, I would add, ecological volition).

To the extent that "economy" describes production and exchange, it is influenced by those lifeworld-embedded norms, ideals and convictions that inform the negotiation of what constitutes efficacious, appropriate and sincere production and exchange. Thus, economic viability, while concerned fundamentally with **technical** and **material** interests, is nevertheless also intimately integrated with **practical** interests. Just as community sustainability in general depends on a process of communicative rationality, so does economic viability rest on that process: technical and material economic interests have to be validated practically (symbolically, culturally). Economic **viability** is not an instrumental process that is separate from or prior to concerns of the lifeworld. It is the outcome of a communicative process toward modernity in which system and lifeworld are coupled.

The need to link economic organisation with the other spheres and communicative interests requires that economic viability be conceptualised as something more subtle and more complicated than economic self-sufficiency. The recognition of a social dimension to economic viability suggests that a community is as viable economically as its members think it is: economic viability stems as much from lifeworld characteristics as from elements of the social system. At the same time, lifeworld-based economic expectations have to be sustained within an ecological context, either through primary extraction of ecological resources, or through some arrangement that provides

access to ecological resources extracted elsewhere. The characteristics and dimensions of that ecological context contribute to the nature of economic viability in a community.

Economic viability is defined for my purposes as **the ability of a community to satisfy its members' lifeworld-defined material requirements through a combination of production and exchange within the available ecological context**¹. This definition recognises that economic viability is grounded in the technical and material tasks of production and exchange. It also recognises that these systemic economic activities are constrained and encouraged not only by technical concerns of the social system, but also by practical lifeworld-based issues.

Table 9.1a: Formal and Informal Relational Structures of Community Economic Organisation

	Formal Economic Organisation	Informal Economic Organisation
Economic Viability	Basic economic organisations of a community or society, including all forms of formally organised production and exchange such as fishing and farming groups, stores, produce markets, factories and processors, unions, banks and welfare organisations.	Informal production and exchange organisations of a community, many of which are non-market processes, especially (a) the hidden economy of reciprocal mutual exchange of goods and services among kin and neighbours, (b) the subsistence economy for home consumption, and (c) the supplemental use of welfare and other transfer payments from the cash economy which make this economy viable.

Source: Matthews, 1983:162.

The details of economic organisation (mode of production, means of production, relations of production, production) are established, in part, through practical discourse toward intersubjective understanding (communicative action). Economic organisation that results more from the negotiations of communicative action, and less from uncontested acceptance of systemic media,

¹ All other things being equal, a community which relies solely on subsistence is likely to utilise a smaller ecological environment than does one that participates in exchange with other communities.

is more likely to achieve a degree of economic viability, whatever the material form it takes. But no specific set of activities can be accepted as sustainable of itself; only as the outcome of a process of sustainability.²

Matthews divides economic organisation into formal and informal categories: "the economic organisations of any society comprise all the formal and informal organisations involved in material production and exchange" (1983:155) (see Table 9.1a). As with social and political organisation, these categories are interpretive devices that represent the empirical situation crudely. It may be more useful to conceptualise them as two end points of a continuum, along which economically-oriented institutions and activities are situated. Little economic activity manifests itself completely within the sphere of formal organisation. By the same token, not much economic activity exists totally without links to the formal economy. Most economic institutions and activities exist partly in both the formal and informal spheres, although many lean to one end or the other of the continuum.

Matthews suggests that in small communities such as those in Newfoundland "it is difficult to discern much formal organisational structure for production and distribution", so that most economic activity leans toward the "variety of informal organisational structures that facilitate production and exchange" (1983:156). These he categorises into three groups: the hidden economy, subsistence, and informal use of formal social assistance (transfer economy). The **hidden economy** constitutes:

...the informal exchange of goods and services in which residents of all societies engage. ...In many small communities this exchange is substantial. Indeed, one reason why people chose to remain in such communities appeared to be the long-term benefits received from this informal (non-market) type of exchange. Another important element of this informal economy is its production for **subsistence** (again a non-market activity), a point frequently overlooked by outside economic

² None of this is to say that there are not basic ecological requirements and basic ecological constraints that have very little to do with communicatively negotiated expectations and contexts. I can think of few situations, however, where other criteria for viability and sustainability have not been abandoned long before these thresholds were reached. One of those rare situations involves the plight of the Ik, documented by Colin Turnbull in The Mountain People (1972).

planners who focus on formal economic viability. Indeed, it was on this basis that residents of Small Harbour and other similar communities concluded that they were "self-sufficient". A third element of the informal economic viability of a community is the way in which it uses available **welfare and other formal assistance** to supplement its formal economic activity. For example, many rural fishermen, farmers, and loggers require varying amounts of seasonal assistance in the form of unemployment insurance or welfare in order to make their formal economic activity viable. Though it might be argued that the need for such assistance demonstrates a lack of economic viability, in many cases relatively small amounts of assistance can create an economically viable community. Thus, from the perspective of many residents of such communities, assistance such as this comes to be seen as an integral element in the economic viability of their community... (Matthews, 1983:156; emphasis added)

It is important to interpret the use of the word "informal" in this quotation and elsewhere with care. In Shimshal at least, all three informal categories identified by Matthews -hidden economy, subsistence economy, and what could be called transfer economy- display some formalised characteristics, just as what Matthews identifies as formal -the market economy- has informal elements.

First, formalised characteristics may accrue from outside the economic sub-system. That is, an economically-relevant structure may be formal (in one or more of the other spheres) **without being formally economic**. Second, some structures are economically formal. They derive their formality from within the economic sphere, through the validity claims offered in their defence. An economic activity may be a more or less formal expression of a more or less formal arrangement within another organisational sphere.³ To say, for example, that the subsistence economy is **only** an informal economic structure is to avoid the larger organisational context within which it is situated. In order to understand how economic structures, institutions and activities are situated along a formal/informal continuum, it may be helpful first to define "formal" and "informal" economic activity more precisely, and second to relate those definitions to the validity claims that legitimise economic activities.

Despite the ostensible implication in The Creation of Regional Dependency that the market

³ By the same token, activities within other spheres may be expressions of formal or informal economic arrangements.

economy is the formal economy, and all other economies (hidden, subsistence and transfer) are informal, a careful reading suggests Matthews would concur that formality must be defined more subtly. For my purposes **formal economic activity is activity that contributes to production or distribution of cash or commodities which occurs within institutions or structures that are expressly organised to facilitate that production or distribution.** Conversely, **informal economic activity is activity that contributes to production or distribution of cash or commodities which occurs within institutions or structures that are organised for some other social, political or ecological reason.**

Cast in the light of these definitions formality may be understood as a function of the validity claims offered (and accepted) in support of an institution or activity, and not as a function of mode of production. A formal economic institution or activity is one whose existence or performance is legitimised according to a technical claim that it does indeed facilitate material production or distribution, and/or a normative claim that material production or exchange is an appropriate justification for its existence or performance. An institution or activity which is informally economic is also one which technically facilitates production or exchange, but whose existence or performance is justified through claims relating to spheres other than the economic. A non-economic activity, structure or institution does not relate to material production or exchange. According to this conceptualisation the designation "economic" is instrumental; the designation "formal" is communicative (see Table 9.1b).

The possibility of purely formal or completely informal economic structures is remote in a place like Shimshal, because almost all structures are validated simultaneously from several directions, and in relation to several spheres of activity. A structure, like a person (see the discussion about Daulat Amin in Chapter 8.2), gains acceptance in communicative action for its "goodness of fit" from many directions, rather than exclusively for its utility in a single role. Indeed, the existence of a structure that is validated *only in technical economic terms* would suggest that the lifeworld, from whence validation stems, had been colonised by economic media, and would

be symptomatic of a process of modernisation. The following paragraphs briefly interpret the formality/informality of the three categories of informal organisation identified by Matthews -the hidden economy, subsistence economy and transfer economy- as they pertain to Shimshal.

Structures of the **hidden economy**, which includes "the informal exchange of goods and services in which residents of all societies engage" (Matthews, 1983:156), claim formal and informal economic validation. For example, certain egocentric and sociocentric networks of mutual aid in Shimshal are geared primarily toward facilitating the exchange of material goods (see

Table 9.1b: Formality of Economic Activities

		SYSTEMIC CLASSIFICATION (Instrumental Action)	
		Facilitates Production and Exchange	Does not Facilitate Production and Exchange
LIFEWORLD CLASSIFICATION (Communicative Action)	Economic Validity Claim	1) <u>formally economic</u> structure, action or institution	3) <u>non-economic</u> structure, action or institution
	Non-Economic Validity Claim	2) <u>informally economic</u> structure, action or institution	

Appendix 5), and as such are formally economic (eg. *batikush*).⁴ At the same time, they all gain validity from the social and political domains to the extent that they facilitate effective and appropriate social control, sociation, communication or socialisation. Other egocentric or sociocentric networks are more explicitly social or political, but also derive legitimacy by effectively

⁴ Remember, from Chapter Five, that egocentric networks consist of person to person ties of kinship, marriage, friendship, individual contract and institutionalised exchange. Sociocentric networks consist of structures which exist independent of individual households and household members, but which serve in some capacity to bring households together in cooperation. They include structures of descent and locality, including village and neighbourhood, true lineage, localised lineage, and consensual groupings.

facilitating material production and distribution (eg. consensual groupings, or true lineage relations). Despite the explicit or implicit economic efficacy of their existence, the membership of all of these networks of mutual aid is decided according to non-economic criteria.

Subsistence structures benefit from considerable formal economic validity. In Shimshal, as in many other non-capitalist communities, households are the basic subsistence units. Participation in the household system is (or can be) validated by Shimshalis in a variety of ways relating to technical efficacy, normative appropriateness and sincerity, and it is unlikely that any Shimshali would validate the household system as a whole primarily in terms of economic criteria. Still, Shimshalis acknowledge that economic viability is an explicit goal of every household, and every household employs strategies whose main functions are economic: to facilitate material production and exchange. Often the very composition of a household (whether brothers partition or not, the pooling of resources, contractual membership) is decided partly according to economic criteria. Certainly in Shimshal, households which are engaged in subsistence activities can claim some status as formal economic structures, but their *raison d'être* is not essentially economic. As subsistence economy breaks down, and household participation in the market economy increases, individual households' roles in the formal economy shift. 9.3 interprets some shifts of this sort that have occurred in Shimshal.

The **transfer economy** in Shimshal consists primarily of contributions by government and non-government development agencies to the community's material well-being. Shimshal's participation in this transfer economy is legitimised in economic terms (technical efficacy of receiving contributions) and in social and political terms (utilising remittances to further the lifeworld ideals of equity and solidarity). Institutions that participate directly in the transfer economy have at once formal and informal economic validity. The best and most important example of such an institution is the village organisation, whose increasing control of Shimshal's participation in the cash economy has allowed it to become the community's single most significant formal economic structure. This process, and its influence on Shimshal's sustainability, is interpreted in 9.2 on formal

political organisation.⁵

In this section I have made a brief attempt to introduce two related issues that are *important to understanding economic viability as a component of community sustainability*. The first issue deals with the ambiguous distinction between formal and informal economic organisation, and the tendency for evaluations of economic viability to consider only formal structures. Formal economic organisation is commonly associated with the so-called market economy; all other economic activity being considered informal. Such a distinction **may** have some legitimacy in societies where a capitalist mode of production is dominant, but not elsewhere. The associated problems of defining formality simplistically, and then ignoring activity that does not fit into the simplistic definition, often leads to a poor interpretation of economic viability, and a *poorly informed* conclusion that communities are not viable. I argue that the formality of an economic organisation or structure is contingent upon validity claims that participants propose, discuss and accept in communicative discourse. This means that it is more difficult, if not impossible, to categorise a structure or activity as unequivocally formal or informal: most structures display greater or lesser *elements of both*. The result, however, is a framework that bears some resemblance to the lived experience of community members, while retaining analytic utility (see Table 9.1b). It is according to this more subtle conception that I divide empirical material in the next two sections into (relatively) formal and (relatively) informal categories.

The second issue I introduced in this section relates to the practical dimension of economic organisation. Economic activity is frequently portrayed theoretically as manifesting only instrumental (technical) interests: those related to increasing the material base of society. Consequently, economically-oriented development studies tend to focus on technical elements of social change within the economic sub-system. To be sure, technical efficacy is an important dimension of

⁵ Note that the distinctions between these three categories are also somewhat forced. Those networks that make up the hidden economy are integral mechanisms for increasing the viability of the households that underlie subsistence. Transfer payments enter the hidden economy at several points, and from there also find their way into subsistence production and exchange.

economic organisation. But that does not mean that the practical concerns of the lifeworld are less important to economic viability than they are to sustainability within other organisational spheres. I think it is important to emphasise the changing links between economic organisation and other spheres of systemic organisation, as well as links between the economic subsystem and Shimshal's shared lifeworld. My interpretation of Shimshal's economic viability concentrates more on how the community understands and negotiates its economy -how individuals validate economic structures, identify with them, and commit to them- than it does on the technical specifics of material input and output. In particular, I am interested in how the introduction of AKRSP collective organisations has influenced Shimshalis' understandings and definitions of their economy. The following sections contribute to my overall aim of evaluating the potential for agency development to enhance or inhibit community sustainability.

9.2: (Relatively) Formal Economic Organisation and Sustainability in Shimshal

9.2.1: Introduction

The viability of any economic institution or activity derives from the validity claims which community members use to justify the existence or performance of the institution or activity. Thus, I am interested in interpreting the source and nature of community members' identification of, and commitment to, economic structures. It is in relation to this conception of economic viability within the broader framework of sustainability that the distinction and connection between formal and informal economic organisation is important: formal economic organisation is that which is validated in terms of material production and exchange; informal economic organisation is validated according to some other criteria. The designation "economic" is technical (what a structure achieves materially) and systemic; the designation "formal" or "informal" is practical (how

community members interpret the meaning of an economic structure). A formal economic structure is one which is validated according to its technical contributions toward material production and exchange.

This conceptualisation raises two important points for economic viability, the understanding of which depends on bringing together the two designations (economic/technical and formal/practical) identified above. First, the technical components of a **viable** economy need to be practically mediated; any systemic element of production and exchange has to be validated practically according to lifeworld norms and convictions that accept it as *technically efficacious*. These terms are all negotiated intersubjectively. Second, the designation of formality is always *ambiguous*; in a modern (as opposed to modernised) society individuals are likely to validate their commitment to structures and institutions with claims to truth (technical efficacy) together with other claims (that demonstrate the links between system and lifeworld), so that economic structures and institutions are partly formal and partly informal. A designation of formality rests on a judgement that the technical claim is accepted as more essential to validity than claims to appropriateness or sincerity.

Just as community sustainability is an ideal beyond absolute attainment, so is its component part -economic viability- an (absolutely) unattainable goal. Therefore, it is tautological that most economic systems are not viable because they are not negotiated communicatively. Habermas devotes much effort to demonstrating that capitalist systems, for example, are **non-viable economies**, because certain of their mechanisms -economic media- have infiltrated the lifeworld, and taken away the potential for lifeworld convictions (*rationalised or not*) to form the basis of intersubjectively accepted validation. In a process of inner colonisation of the lifeworld, economic structures (and social, political and ecological structures) are reproduced or abandoned according to their technical (instrumental) ability to reproduce the capitalist system itself.⁶ This is

⁶ In essence, economic media challenge and may eventually destroy (colonise) those convictions that they initially required for their own validity.

modernisation.

Within modernised societies, then, the market economy is indeed the formal economy: it is the economy that is validated primarily or exclusively according to the demands of the economic sub-system itself. Other economies, for example the hidden economy (perhaps more accurately termed the ritual economy in Shimshal) and the subsistence economy, are informal because their validation comes from convictions and norms that continue to emanate from an embedded lifeworld. Within societies that can demonstrate some connection between a rationalised system and a rationalised lifeworld, such a clear-cut distinction between a formal (instrumental) market economy and an informal (communicatively-motivated) secondary economy is untenable, as are interpretations that assess even instrumental viability strictly on the basis of market economy.

Matthews recognises the danger implicit in evaluations that employ this untenable logic:

One problem in assessing the economic viability of a community is that, although evidence of the viability of its formal [ie. market-oriented] economic organisation is difficult to obtain and evidence of its informal economic viability difficult to assess, it is easy to obtain economic indicators suggesting that a community is not economically viable. Statistics are usually readily available to document low levels of income, high rates of unemployment, and high levels of welfare and other subsistence payments. It is relatively easy to adopt an input-output perspective which often seems designed to establish that small communities are not viable. The costs of government services to a community can easily be added and compared with data on the income generated in a community and the value of produce shipped from it. It is only a short step from this to a form of cost-benefit analysis which shows that the cost of maintaining a community is greater than the benefits derived. A great deal of regional planning is done on this basis and there is considerable danger in it. The fact that much of the product of such communities goes for home consumption and never enters the market or provides a cash income is ignored in such a calculation. In some sense the community is its own product... (Matthews, 1983:157)

Matthews' point, of course, is that small communities may be more economically viable than they appear when only monetary (market-oriented) outputs and monetary (transfer payment) inputs are considered. This viability stems from the successful production and exchange functions of other non-market, and economically informal, structures and institutions.

Shimshal's economy has traditionally been dominated by these "other" informal structures and institutions, so that formal (or relatively formal) economic activities have had relatively little

importance. I cannot think of a single Shimshali structure, past or present, that has been validated solely in instrumental economic terms, and only a few whose primary validation has been to facilitate material production and exchange.⁷ Among those few relatively formal structures are certain traditional institutions of mutual support and exchange, certain land and water allocation schedules, and certain economic relations between villagers and the *tham*. All of these have significant social, political or economic validity that stems from other lifeworld convictions, and not from prior economic validity (see Chapter Five).⁸ Household itself is described, in part, as a set of economic structures. But no Shimshali would suggest that its **primary** meaning or function is to facilitate material production and exchange.

In the past decade Shimshal has increased its links with a monetary market economy (a systemic shift). One result has been a growing perception among Shimshalis of an economic subsystem (a lifeworld shift). Shimshalis have come to accept, as part of their lifeworld, the potential validity of the idea that people do certain things mainly to earn money. For example, young men maintain that they join the army mainly to earn money, and household heads state that they ship yaks to Pasu mainly to acquire money. As money becomes a more common, and a more valid, reason for engaging in certain sets of practices more structures and institutions become economically formal (relatively) and fewer remain economically informal (relatively).⁹

Shimshali economic structures which have been affected by this trend fall into two

⁷ This circumstance is not unique to Shimshal, and may be true of all times and places.

⁸ As would be the case if lifeworld had been colonised by economic media.

⁹ It is important to note that the growing formality of parts of Shimshal's economy does not necessarily symptomise a process of inner colonisation by economic media, although it may facilitate that process. Inner colonisation of the lifeworld occurs only if lifeworld-embedded norms, values and background convictions lose their validity in favour of an instrumental economic legitimisation. Still, some activities by certain Shimshalis demonstrate that inner colonisation by economic media is a continual possibility. The example from Chapter Eight of Azizullah culling his yak herd to buy sheep and goats, shows the rejection of certain important lifeworld convictions in favour of the systemic demands of economy. Azizullah validated his denial of lifeworld with mediated claims, but other Shimshalis did not accept his argument. To them it lacked normative validity and sincerity.

categories: those institutions and activities that have existed for a long time, but which have recently come to be validated increasingly in instrumental economic terms, and those that have been established recently as links to the wider market economy. Among the former are almost all economically-relevant institutions in Shimshal, from the household system itself to specific structures of ritual obligation. Most of these retain their intrinsic connection with symbolic lifeworld elements, with an added (or subtracted) instrumental economic validity (or lack thereof), and still fall into the relatively informal category. Others have shifted farther along the continuum toward formality, without losing non-economic validity; for example the structures associated with portering. In addition, certain new formal economic structures and practices have been established. The most important of these are waged labour outside of the community, waged labour inside Shimshal (primarily portering; see Chapter Eight), and economic interventions by the AKRSP. In the following interpretation I focus on the third of these, specifically on the role of AKRSP village organisations as formal economic institutions. In keeping with one of my initial objectives -how can an appreciation of community sustainability inform development practice?- I am concerned with demonstrating the influence of VOs on the economic viability of Shimshal, and on the community's overall sustainability.

9.2.2: AKRSP Village Organisations as (Relatively) Formal Economic Institutions

Two sets of agents have participated in the introduction of AKRSP village organisations to Shimshal: AKRSP administrators and members of Shimshal. Each of these parties accepts the village organisations (VOs) as formal economic institutions. That is, they both use economic criteria to validate the existence of village organisations in Shimshal. In dialogue with villagers (and with the rest of the world) AKRSP personnel validate their VO initiative almost exclusively in instrumental economic terms: as a mechanism for facilitating material production and exchange

within participating communities. Shimshalis have accepted and reproduced those formal economic validations, and have added to them their own non-economic validity claims.

For AKRSP personnel the agency's initiatives, including village organisations, exist to improve the material well being of Karakoram small holders (economic problem), by increasing their capability for material production and exchange (economic solution). Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain describe the problem facing mountain farmers in northern Pakistan as follows:

...the small farmer is handicapped in exploiting available opportunities because, by himself, he [sic] cannot do so profitably. In other words he is constrained by the scale of his operations in acquiring resources, as well as in marketing the output. Having stated the problem in this way, one's attention is immediately drawn to questions of economies of scale and indivisibilities in inputs. (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:2)

For the AKRSP then:

...there exist opportunities which small farmers can exploit to their own advantage only by cooperative behaviour and cost-sharing. The same opportunities could be profitable for individual farmers with much bigger scales of operation. Thus the problem of smallholder development is one of transferring the advantages of large holdings to settings in which there are mostly smallholders" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:3).

These quotations from the leading article to AKRSP's First Annual Review, 1983 clearly indicate that agency administrators validate their interventions in economic terms, specifically in terms of increasing the scale of material production and exchange.¹⁰

Emerging out of the AKRSP's interpretation of the problems of scale in smallholder agricultural production are three principles for small farmer development, each of which is formally economic. First, "small farmers in isolated communities require a village organisation to overcome the disadvantages of small scale" (World Bank, 1987:3). AKRSP defines a village organisation as a coalition "all those residents of a village whose continuing economic interests are best served by organising as an interest group" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:4). Second, "villagers can be most effectively organised initially around economic, rather than social, sector

¹⁰ For a more detailed interpretation of the AKRSP's assessment of smallholder's economic problems, and potential solutions, refer to Chapter Six.

activities... a PPI [productive physical infrastructure] project is an effective entry point and catalyst for the organisation of villagers" (World Bank, 1987:3). According to AKRSP policy makers PPI projects are effective because "farmers often experience large increases in income as a result of improvements in the stock of their productive physical infrastructure" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:5). Third, village organisations need to be supported by an administrative infrastructure that specialises in extension and supplies, and that goes down to the village level. Such an infrastructure would ensure that "members of a village organisation can acquire the necessary organisational and technical skills to serve themselves and their community, and for which other villagers are prepared to pay" (World Bank, 1987:3).

Clearly, AKRSP administrators perceive and defend their village organisation programme in terms of formal economic validity. To the extent that village organisations have been established (instrumentally) and accepted (communicatively) in Shimshal according to the AKRSP's three principles of small farmer development, this programme has altered the community's economic sub-system and its lifeworld.

The direct and intentional systemic economic changes associated with Shimshal's village organisations are as follows:

- a) the payment of wages to individuals for working on the PPI project (the road),
- b) the construction of the road itself, a physical structure that would facilitate production and exchange,
- c) the creation of a structure for collectively marketing produce outside of the community, and a corresponding emphasis on cash crop production,
- d) the mandatory collective accumulation of cash savings for the purpose of deficit financing,
- e) the creation of agricultural experts who are paid cash for their services, and
- f) the introduction of agricultural resources such as fertiliser, non-indigenous seeds,

implements and exotic livestock that need to be purchased with cash.¹¹

In their initial conversations with Shimshalis AKRSP personnel explained their assessment of "the problem", they outlined the three principles of small farmer development, and they described the mechanisms listed above, except for the second one, which arose after community members decided on a PPI project.¹² Shimshalis agreed to form a village organisation, according to the AKRSP's regulations, primarily on the basis of the sequence of arguments offered by AKRSP personnel. In other words the Shimshal community, in *kuyotch*, accepted the legitimacy of the AKRSP's technical validity claims. Therefore, village organisations and other associated initiatives were accepted by Shimshalis as formal economic structures.

Communicative acceptance of AKRSP's technical economic validity claim (to the effect that its initiatives would facilitate Shimshal's successful integration into a market economy) is significant, because, to my knowledge, it is the first time a formal (in the social sense) Shimshali institution had been explicitly validated according to the efficacy of its technical links with a market economy. In my conversations with participants in the decision to "join" AKRSP, I was told that, at that time, the community in *kuyotch* felt that the AKRSP offered access to economic opportunities that the community could not exploit on its own. As Shimshalis enumerated these opportunities to me, they centred around the road, and a VO's potential to organise collective labour on the road.¹³ The community was initially less interested in the requirement to save money (as a group or otherwise) and the potential to market produce collectively. Still, I was told that these requirements, together with the AKRSP's communicative mode of decision making, meshed well with some of Shimshal's

¹¹ Each of these mechanisms facilitates Shimshal's rapid integration into a cash-based market economy.

¹² For a description of the initial dialogues between Shimshal residents and AKRSP administrators see Chapter Six.

¹³ AKRSP was willing to assist in building a road to Shimshal, which community members considered necessary to attract tourists, to ease the transportation of agricultural resources (eg. fertiliser) and consumer goods to the community, and to allow the export of agricultural produce from the community. In addition, AKRSP would pay Shimshalis to work on the road. Villagers would in that way accumulate cash to pay for the commodities that would be transported into Shimshal.

traditional values. This concern for traditional values like equity and solidarity and collective decision making allayed the doubts of many Shimshalis, who did not initially trust the motives of any external development organisation. Informants also implied to me that the AKRSP's connection with the Aga Khan himself made Shimshali's much more responsive to all of the agency's conditions.

It seems that community members validated their initial decision to develop a village organisation according to a variety of claims. The anticipated technical ability of the VOs to facilitate material production and exchange was central to this validation. The centrality of truth-based validity claims indicates that Shimshalis saw the VOs as formal economic institutions from the start. It also suggests that the decision to develop VOs was a manifestation of recent changes in the lifeworld: shifts in background convictions that included participation in the market economy as a normatively appropriate (as well as technically efficacious) way to augment a living. Indeed, the creation of the VOs represented the collective decision to formalise, at the community level, integration into the cash economy. At the same time, community members considered other validation necessary. It is important that the process was associated with the Aga Khan, because that validated the AKRSP's claim to authenticity. It is also important that the procedure and some of the conditions of organisation supported Shimshal's ritual ideals of equity, solidarity and collective decision making. Both of these circumstances vested the VOs with some symbolic meaning apart from their technical potential, and lent them (and the AKRSP) normative appropriateness.

It is tempting to perceive any movement of a subsistence-oriented community toward participation in a market economy as the beginnings of inner colonisation of that community's shared lifeworld. The potential, perhaps even probability, exists for the same rationale that enabled movement toward a market economy to occur to infiltrate other norms and values, the normative and sincerity bases for validation, and to colonise the decision making process itself. In that event, the set of instrumental rules governing material production and exchange would become the basis

for assessing what is right and what is wrong, what is sincere and what is appropriate. Two circumstances suggest that Shimshal's development of AKRSP village organisations did not lead to such a process of inner colonisation.

First, if I am appropriately interpreting what my Shimshali informants told me, they validated their involvement with the AKRSP in instrumental terms ("it can improve my material quality of life"), but they validated the form that involvement would take (the specific rules of village organisation) in practical terms that recalled the embedded norms, values and convictions of the lifeworld.¹⁴ Shimshalis maintain that they would not have committed themselves **sincerely** to the AKRSP had a link to the Aga Khan not existed, and had the AKRSP not stimulated their (largely dormant; see Chapter Five) ritual commitment to solidarity and equity.

Second, since 1984, formal economic validation of the village organisations has become less important. Far from acting as a mechanism to colonise the lifeworld, it seems that village organisations have been infiltrated with social and political meanings that were initially less significant. Examples from the previous two chapters, especially the interpretations of the social roles of formal education and the *kuyotch*, and the formal political role of the VOs, demonstrate how village organisations have come to acquire validity from a number of sources and according to all three types of validity claim. In addition, some of the VOs' economic validity has accrued to affiliated individuals and structures (eg. Daulat Amin, the Aga Khan and the Ismaili Local Council). In the following paragraphs I hope to show that the increasingly non-economic validation of AKRSP village organisations by Shimshalis has strengthened the position of these institutions within the community, made them more effective at satisfying Shimshalis' lifeworld embedded material expectations, and increased the economic viability of Shimshal within a more general framework of sustainability.

¹⁴ As with other categories, this one is not absolute. Shimshalis did cite connections with their *Imam* as a reason for involving themselves with AKRSP. Likewise, they said that part of the reason they set up the VOs as they did was because AKRSP required it as a condition of material support.

As Shimshal becomes more closely linked with the outside world its economy and society inevitably integrate with the economies and societies around it. The process of Shimshal's integration into a larger market economy and associated social and political spheres began long before the AKRSP was conceived; certain aspects of this ongoing process are described in Chapters Four and Five. Village Organisations were intended by AKRSP administrators to create a set of circumstances that would allow villagers to channel that escalating involvement in a regional economy to their own material advantage (ie. involvement without dependency or underdevelopment). Villagers from Shimshal, at least, accepted the AKRSP's claims that this material advantage would be the outcome of organising. By the summer of 1989 most Shimshalis were convinced that their involvement in the VO programme did indeed benefit community members materially, but not only, or even primarily, in the ways predicted by AKRSP. Rather, the creation of VOs had effected the unexpected outcome of reviving certain dormant lifeworld ideals (eg. equity, ritual solidarity) and linking them with instrumental activities associated with material production and exchange, and in so doing also facilitated market-based economic activities that had little to do with AKRSP.

Of course the AKRSP has had some direct instrumental effects on Shimshal's economy, but these have been modest, gradual and only partly successful. The potential to construct a **road** from Pasu to Shimshal was, by all accounts, an important incentive for Shimshalis to develop village organisations. AKRSP personnel did not initially agree to the road as a PPI project. They preferred to support a more modest project (eg. land development, irrigation channel) that could be completed quickly and funded more liberally. Leaders from Shimshal eventually convinced AKRSP administrators that AKRSP contributions to Shimshal's development would largely be wasted without a road, because any other projects would cost much more and be more difficult due to transportation problems. Shimshalis have long perceived a road to be the key to further market-oriented development and any substantial improvement in material quality of life. Indeed, they

perceive it as something of a panacea for all their economic problems.¹⁵ However, in 1989, five years after AKRSP funding began, the road was less than half finished.¹⁶ The AKRSP has donated about 150,000 Rs (\$8,500) in monetary grants and supplies. While this sum is fairly close to the average PPI cost of Rs. 162,567 (World Bank, 1990, Table 3-6:112-113), it has not been enough to cover the costs of work so far, and villagers feel that additional AKRSP funding (for the rest of construction) may be scarce.¹⁷ Villagers have themselves contributed approximately Rs. 50,000 in supplies toward the effort to construct a road.¹⁸ In short, the AKRSP PPI project has resulted in few technical economic benefits for the community so far.

The possibility of earning **wages** for labour on the PPI project was another incentive to organise. However, the high cost of construction itself, and the need to supply food to labourers on the road crew (the road camp is three days walk from Shimshal), has meant that labourers have received meagre and intermittent wages.¹⁹ Shimshalis with whom I talked could not estimate the total sum of road wages, but assured me it is far below the Rs. 50,000 that the community contributed toward supplies.

¹⁵ I was assured, on many occasions, that a road was necessary to reduce the cost of consumer goods, to induce more tourists to visit Shimshal, to transport supplies to build flood protection bunds, to facilitate medical care, to export livestock and seed potatoes to market, to import fertiliser and pesticides, to import grass seeds appropriate for high pastures, to facilitate education, to reduce the necessity for "big men" to carry loads from Pasu, to build a hydro-electric project, to import a threshing machine, to initiate various household-level economic schemes (tourist hotel, taxi service), etc., etc. At the same time, many of the more astute Shimshalis are concerned about the negative ramifications of increased accessibility to and from the outside world.

¹⁶ And on August 1st 1989 a single night of hard rain caused landslides and slumping that necessitated at least a year's worth of repairs to the section already complete.

¹⁷ Currently Shimshalis have some hope of procuring up to Rs. 150,000 from the Northern Areas Public Works Department.

¹⁸ I was told that sum includes only those supplies and contributions that have a tangible monetary value.

¹⁹ AKRSP administrators stipulated that they would support Shimshal's particularly difficult and expensive PPI only if villagers agreed to forego the regular payment of wages.

A third instrumental incentive for Shimshalis to organise was the opportunity to establish collective **savings**, and then borrow from the AKRSP (either collectively or individually) against those savings. In 1989 the Shimshal village organisations had banked savings of Rs. 182,000 spread between two accounts. In addition, the women's organisation had saved Rs. 20,000 in a third account. Shimshalis with whom I spoke considered this an impressive amount of savings, especially since contributions did not derive from wages earned on the PPI project.²⁰ These savings have been used as collateral to negotiate several short and medium term loans with AKRSP. For each of the past several years Shimshal's village organisations have borrowed money for fertilizer and new varieties of seed. Together these short term loans have been in the order of Rs. 350 per beneficiary, and were paid off at harvest. In addition, Shimshal Centre VO purchased a tractor with AKRSP medium term credit. The tractor and a driver are currently for hire in Gilgit. VO members have several other medium term borrowing schemes in mind, all of which require the completion of the road. To my knowledge no individual households have borrowed against VO collateral. Shimshali members expressed that they were pleased with the savings and loan programme, although they had not yet seen much benefit from the potential to borrow.

The development of village organisations in Shimshal has not yet led to **collective marketing** of agricultural produce. For generations Shimshal has exported small quantities of grain, meat and rock salt. The amount of meat and grain has increased gradually, but remains an individual household activity that accounts for little of the community's cash income. VO members have decided in council that the community should shift its agricultural economy toward collective marketing of produce in anticipation of easy transport after the road is finished. Village organisation leadership has used its influence with AKRSP, and its expertise in a variety of agricultural endeavours, to assist households to shift toward production for the market. Village organisation

²⁰ In fact, savings per household were almost exactly the same as the average of Rs. 1,460 for all VO households in Gilgit District. However, Shimshal is considerably less integrated into the monetary economy than most other villages in Gilgit District, so their achievement is remarkable.

members feel that yaks, cattle, and seed potatoes, and perhaps apples and wheat are the agricultural commodities most likely to succeed in the marketplace.

The final direct instrumental benefit that Shimshalis anticipated when they formed VOs was easy and inexpensive access to agricultural **expertise and supplies**. Both of these benefits have borne fruit. Several Shimshalis have received training from AKRSP in skills ranging from accounting, marketing and explosives (for the road), to vegetable and fruit cultivation, crops, and animal health. Not all Shimshalis feel they have ready access to the services of these "experts", and some householders are reluctant to pay for services rendered (eg. the cost of animal vaccines), but all of my acquaintances in Shimshal acknowledge that the community has received satisfactory results from this additional training. In addition, AKRSP has supplied free or subsidised fertiliser, potato and grain seeds, saplings, vegetable seeds, and breeding stock to the village organisation. Shimshalis are quick to point out that they could take better advantage of these opportunities if the road was complete.

After five years the immediate instrumental economic results anticipated by Shimshalis when they decided to join the AKRSP have been only partly realised. In particular, villagers are dismayed that they have not benefited fully from the expected opportunities to receive AKRSP-sponsored supplies, market surplus produce outside the community, and borrow funds for income generating ventures. Many are especially disappointed that the road has not progressed more rapidly. They feel that a road would allow them to exploit many of the opportunities they anticipated. They also feel that AKRSP administrators have not sincerely supported the community's efforts to construct a road.²¹ In short, the technical truth claims accepted in support

²¹ I have had several conversations with AKRSP personnel who acknowledged that the organisation was indeed reluctant to support Shimshal's decision to build a road as their PPI project (they stated that to Shimshalis at the outset). They felt that such a road was too ambitious an undertaking for a small community to attempt without government help. They also felt that a collective preoccupation with the road was interfering with other development-related initiatives, and they worried that the community would lose morale before the project was complete. It was even implied that Shimshal would have been designated a model village organisation were it not for their slow progress on a cumbersome PPI project. As it turned out Shimshal was a thorn in the side for

of the AKRSP are no longer completely valid in communicative terms. It is important therefore, that Shimshal VOs, and the AKRSP in general, have since 1984 developed validity beyond the instrumental economic validity initially anticipated.²² This additional validity has taken several interrelated forms.

The most important accomplishment of village organisations, as expressed by Shimshalis, has been their role in recalling a more collective and communicative way of life. The decline of *thamkushi* over the past half century had caused Shimshal's traditional forum for collective decision making, the *kuyotch*, to lose its capability for instrumental action (see Chapter Five). The *kuyotch* developed into an institution which reproduced lifeworld convictions and ideals, but which had no authority to translate those ideals into collective activity. It was a lifeworld-based institution with little connection to the changing social system. Households, individuals and exclusive groupings of households undertook ventures to exploit systemic changes to their own advantage, without regard for other members of the ritual congregation. Wealthier households were able to increase their relative advantage at the expense of other villagers. These ventures were not seen to relate to lifeworld convictions expressed in *kuyotch*. The result was a loss of equity, solidarity and collectivity; ideals which remained prominent in an impotent (or perhaps dormant) lifeworld. I was told by Shimshalis on many occasions in 1988 and 1989 that for a long time "the people were not cooperating with the village". Everyone was "working for himself", and no one had time "to gather in the evening to talk of past things". The AKRSP, they say, reminded the community of its obligations to solidarity, equity and collectivity, and provided an opportunity to utilise those ideals instrumentally.

The village organisations developed as sort of instrumental branches to the *kuyotch*. The

AKRSP personnel, who agreed with my assessment that Shimshalis were too ready to blame all their development disappointments on the lack of a road.

²² Had the last five years manifested a process of inner colonisation and modernisation, then VO's would probably have been abandoned as non-efficacious for the economic sub-system. As it is, considerations of a rationalised lifeworld have redeemed VOs.

practical amalgamation of the two institutions, one traditional and one new, and both oriented to communicative decision making, had three important outcomes. First, the *kuyotch* became associated with what looked to be a "high powered" instrumental initiative: the PPI project.²³ This meant that the ideals manifested in the *kuyotch* became VO ideals, and vice versa. Second, and subsequent to this, collective ventures became more common, because the VO/*kuyotch* institution existed as a structure (with the organisation, expertise, technical validity, normative validity) to initiate and undertake collective ventures. Third, more and more instrumental activity became oriented toward equity and solidarity, as these ideals became more practicable in technical terms. The process toward these outcomes is discussed in detail in Chapters Seven and Eight. Two recent initiatives described in Chapter Eight, to regulate portering communicatively and to organise collective transportation of supplies to Shimshal (both initiated from within the VO), exemplify these outcomes, and demonstrate the social, political and economic impact of village organisations beyond their initial instrumental mandate. Economic viability has been enhanced by this new connection between the instrumental activities of the social system and the practical ideals of the lifeworld. Currently, more than in the past, economic activities are satisfying lifeworld convictions.

A second, and related, accomplishment of AKRSP VOs has been to establish normatively valid and technically efficacious links between Shimshal's ritual congregation and a formal market economy. The character of the ritual congregation has always been manifested materially in a traditional subsistence agro-pastoral way of life, so that in a sense I am talking about links between two modes of production. Village organisations have, as described above, a basis in both the communicative realm of lifeworld and the instrumental realm of social system, so they are well situated to mediate a process of rationalisation between the two realms. Shimshalis had long perceived a need to involve themselves in the market economy, and did so by undertaking a variety of individual or household-based ventures. Many of these ventures succeeded in involving

²³ The AKRSP wanted to deal with the whole community. In Shimshal the *kuyotch* is equivalent to the whole community, so the *kuyotch*, despite its degenerate state, was necessarily involved in deciding to organise, choosing leaders, and selecting a PPI project.

households rapidly in the regional economy, but usually at the expense of subsistence goals and ritual involvement in village affairs. Villagers were dismayed that their initiatives undermined *lifeworld* ideals, but saw no way around it: the choice seemed to be either equity, solidarity and the low material quality of life associated with subsistence, or symbolic poverty and a higher standard of living. As symbolic requirements receded before technical material requirements (equally the product of *lifeworld*) individuals experienced a loss of meaning and perceived a loss of freedom to decide their course of agency (modernisation). Shimshalis of course use a different language to express their predicament. They say things like "we had no choice, we have to earn money to buy the things we need", or "it harmed us to neglect our obligations to the village, to miss weddings and funerals and celebrations, but our household needed to buy things", or "we had to work for ourselves, who else could help us". Remnants of these attitudes and fears remained in 1989, but comments of this sort were usually made in the past tense. Shimshalis expressed confidence that the village organisations had begun to provide a basis for ventures that would allow them to increase their material involvement in the market economy without sacrificing those elements of their traditional way of life that they valued.

Shimshalis' new-found confidence was the outcome of a two way shift: a rationalisation of *lifeworld* and system. The creation of village organisations was itself a rationalisation of the social system. It represented, at long last, a formal institution that reproduced certain basic *lifeworld* ideals, whose purpose was to facilitate involvement with the regional economy according to the dictates of those ideals. At the same time the technical success of VOs (in administering grant money, in organising road crews, in collecting savings, in providing a variety of other services) allowed Shimshalis to rationally validate some of the *lifeworld* ideals that they had previously accepted passively. A whole host of circumstances as diverse as the hospitable treatment of Daulat Amin by AKRSP administrators, the success of the VO-sponsored portering scheme, the universal accessibility of collateral for fertiliser loans, the re-emergence of collective labour for terrace-building and the planning of celebrations, and the explicit compliments of the Aga Khan for their

road-building efforts, convinced villagers that their normative ideals of equity, solidarity and communicative decision-making were appropriate to the community's new experiences. Community members are going through a process whereby subsistence as a valued and meaningful way of life can incorporate market-oriented activities. New structures are being formed that regulate market participation toward the end of protecting subsistence, or at least an agricultural economy centred around home-consumption. For example, the new portering/roadwork scheme attempts to ensure that subsistence and ritual-based obligations have priority over market activities. Similarly, many of the VOs' formal economic activities focus on marketing agricultural surplus, rather than marketing labour itself. In addition, VO savings are perceived partly as a collective way to safeguard against risk, and partly as a mechanism for facilitating equity. Finally, just as the *kuyotch* goes beyond representing (and comes to manifest or essentialise) certain norms of the ritual congregation (see Chapters Four and Five), so do certain structures of the VO go beyond facilitating certain technical aspirations or normative ideals. The savings account, for instance, does not just facilitate equity, it also symbolises an embedded commitment to solidarity and collectivity.

9.2.3: Summary

It is apparent that the creation of VOs in Shimshal has had an economic significance beyond the direct instrumental influences anticipated by AKRSP personnel and Shimshalis in 1984. The village organisations, as they have developed in Shimshal, have contributed crucially to the rationalisation of certain elements of Shimshal's shared lifeworld, and they have facilitated the initiation of many activities that attempt to exploit the market economy to the advantage of Shimshalis, and within the constraints of a rationalised lifeworld. These new activities symptomise the partial rationalisation of the economic sub-system itself. The coupling of a rationalised social system and a rationalised lifeworld allows Shimshalis to coordinate their material expectations with

the mechanisms and resources that exist to satisfy them, and with the norms and convictions that influence the expectations, mechanisms and resources. This capacity is conducive to the viability of an economic sub-system.

I find it ironic that AKRSP administrators consider a village organisation legitimate only "if it does not compromise existing social and political institutions" (Shoaib Sultan Khan and Tariq Hussain, 1984:5). That is a naive statement given the AKRSP's apparent ignorance of "existing social and political institutions", and given the wide-ranging functions that AKRSP intends VOs to fulfil. But the VOs in Shimshal would have had a smaller and less positive influence on the community had they not managed to interfere with existing institutions like the *kuyotch*. They were allowed to interfere because of the "goodness of fit" between AKRSP and Shimshal at the level of ideals. Because the village organisations did infiltrate the *kuyotch*, and in so doing helped to redefine its meaning, Shimshal has been able to pursue market-oriented economic ends within a more rationalised system of meaning.

Shimshal's ability to smoothly integrate changing **indigenous** lifeworld convictions with a social system increasingly influenced by the outside has been facilitated by the anticipated existence of "the road": the link road from Pasu to Shimshal. In essence, Shimshalis use the road, or their anticipation of its beneficial effects, as a way to close "gaps" or inconsistencies between the technical and practical expectations of a rationalised lifeworld, and the social system's ability to satisfy those expectations. The road provides a way to validate (accept) disparities between the lifestyle, or at least economic benefits, Shimshalis want (from participating with an outside economy), and the somewhat disappointing market-oriented economic sub-system the community currently experiences. The common refrains, "when the road is complete we will have/do/sell/buy...", and "...will be solved when the road is complete" indicate that Shimshalis' hopes concerning the influence of the completed road serve to dispel current dissatisfaction. In Habermas' terms the anticipated impacts of the road are offered as technical validity claims concerning the community's economic activity: current inefficacy is validated by the anticipation of

future efficacy. To the extent that this particular validity claim has become a standard response to a variety of challenges (an excuse), it may have become a way to avoid validation rather than a form of communicative validation.

AKRSP administrators in Gilgit seems to recognise this problem in their assertion that Shimshalis blame too many of their problems on the lack of a completed road, and that prevents the community from confronting what AKRSP perceives to be the community's economic problems directly. AKRSP personnel think that Shimshalis have allowed too much integration of *kuyotch* and village organisation, and this has led the community to neglect the specifically development-oriented technical functions of the VOs. The perception at AKRSP in Gilgit that Shimshal has somehow "hijacked" an AKRSP village organisation by concentration on building a road at the expense of other economic ventures has created a certain tension between the agency and the community. The tension is exacerbated by Shimshalis' own dissatisfaction with AKRSP's reluctance to send personnel to visit Shimshal (a normative failing), and its reluctance to supply more money for work on the road (a technical failing). As other chapters indicate this tension seems not to spread beyond these particular issues: on the whole community members seem satisfied with their involvement with AKRSP, and AKRSP administrators are satisfied, on the whole, with Shimshal's progress to date. The integration of *kuyotch* and VO, and the communicative technical and practical priorities that have emerged from that integration, contribute significantly to Shimshal's satisfaction with the AKRSP.

While I agree that Shimshalis inaccurately perceive the road as a cure-all, I am convinced that community members' tendency to "blame the road" is conducive to the community's sustainability in the long run, because it allows community members to work out the lifestyle implications of a rationalised (and regionalised) system/lifeworld realignment without dealing immediately with large technical shifts.²⁴ When the road is finally finished in a decade or so the

²⁴ This is apart from the other functions of the road project, which have been to serve as a catalyst for the formation of community, and as an incentive to organise toward other technical ends (as a VO). AKRSP personnel's mild disgruntlement with Shimshal results from the community

community may be ready to deal with the technical economic changes (and social changes) it anticipates from the road's completion. Seriously imagining the impacts of the road allows Shimshalis to prepare for those impacts in some detail.²⁵

So far my interpretation has concentrated on the influences of village organisations on Shimshal's formal economy, primarily at the community level. That entailed an examination of the formal economic roles of the VOs themselves, and of the village-level ramifications of those roles. In the following section I discuss how the development of VOs in Shimshal has influenced informal economic organisation, particularly that which is directly associated with one of Shimshal's most salient institutions: the household.

9.3: (Relatively) Informal Economic Organisation and Sustainability in Shimshal

9.3.1: Introduction

I have defined informal economic structures as those that fulfil systemic economic roles, but which are validated according to criteria other than (or in addition to) their technical contributions to material production and exchange. Since any economic structure is likely to be validated from several directions (at least in a society that is not fully mediated) the term "informal" is always relative. A designation of informality rests on a judgement that a claim to technical economic efficacy is accepted as less essential to validity than other claims.

Shimshal's economy consists of four types of organisation: the market economy, the

performing those functions too successfully.

²⁵ That, of course, involves imagining the negative impacts of the road as well. Shimshali elders demonstrated to me that they are preparing for negative influences with the same diligence as they are anticipating positive influences. Daulat Amin, in particular, had several long conversations with me about reaping the benefits of the road while avoiding the loss of autonomy, tradition and so on that a direct and easy link with the outside threatens.

transfer economy, the subsistence economy, and the ritual economy. The four types are closely entwined. The market economy is supplied partly by surplus from the subsistence economy. The ritual economy involves the exchange of products accumulated through subsistence and market involvement. Resources remitted from transfer institutions contribute to the commodities exchanged in the other three sets of structures. The market and transfer economies are most obviously formal, because they include the structures that link Shimshal economically to a larger regional economy, the logic of which is explicitly instrumental: the accumulation of capital. At the same time, these structures are not exclusively formal. Shimshal's most important market-oriented institutions (and presently its most important transfer-oriented institution), the AKRSP VOs, derive considerable validity from the social and political realms, as well as from technical economic truth claims.

Subsistence and ritual economic structures are less formal, because they are still part of a symbolic world that tends not to attribute meaning primarily according to economic function. Certainly, villagers grow crops and herd animals (ie. engage in subsistence) because they need the material products. But the structures and institutions associated with cultivating and herding - such as gendered division of labour, tenure regulations, household organisation, lineage privileges, sacred and profane activities and spaces- are not, in the first instance, technically validated (see 9.3.2 and Chapters Five and Ten). To suggest that they are is to take an overly functional view of Shimshal's lifeworld. Structures which regulate instrumental subsistence activity are validated in normative terms, which norms and values are reinforced by the technical success of the structures. Rationalised lifeworlds are functionally-based to the extent that norms and values have to allow a degree of technical efficacy. This is especially apparent in terms of the subsistence economy, which forms the basis for Shimshalis' material existence.²⁶

The ritual economy is even further removed from formal economic validation than the subsistence economy, although the two relate closely. Ritual institutions are primarily associated

²⁶ See Chapter Five, and the appendices to Chapter Five, for an enumeration of institutions associated with the subsistence economy.

with material exchange (and not production). They are validated explicitly in terms of normative appropriateness and the sincerity of participants. Technical efficacy may be important, but it is geared toward the accumulation of spiritual possessions, rather than material commodities. Ritual institutions are economic, because they often significantly redistribute wealth within the community, alleviate economic risk, or even lead to a reduction in the material well being of Shimshal as a community (as in the case of certain *khudai* rituals). But these economic outcomes are secondary; their significance is that they symbolise the ideals and convictions which give the ritual congregation meaning.²⁷

In his discussion of economic viability in outport communities Matthews suggests that informal economic organisation is often more important (although less obvious) to economic viability than are formal economic structures. This is certainly true in Shimshal, where the bulk of the community's economic activity occurs within ritual structures and especially subsistence structures. All resident Shimshalis older than about five are involved in subsistence production to some extent. Half of them -women- are occupied almost exclusively with subsistence. Despite the variety of market-oriented activities with which households are involved, these are, and are considered, secondary to subsistence self-sufficiency, which is the ideal. No household head would willingly relinquish the means of subsistence: land, stewardship rights, ritual blessing or labour. In terms of actual production, Shimshal remains essentially self-sufficient in meeting its basic needs. Villagers claim that until 1963 (when the army camped upstream; see Chapter Four) the community was entirely subsistent: it consumed only what it produced, without starvation.²⁸ Since that time, according to Shimshalis, production has increased more than population. They draw the conclusion that market-involvement is required only because of rising expectations. Both instrumentally and practically market-oriented activities have been necessary, but secondary, ventures.

²⁷ See Chapter Five, particularly the appendices to Chapter Five, for an enumeration of institutions associated with the ritual economy.

²⁸ I doubt if this is strictly correct; certainly the caravan raids of the 18th and 19th centuries involved Shimshal in a sort of trading relationship with the outside (see Chapters Four and Five).

AKRSP village organisations, since 1984, have been instrumental in changing Shimshalis' conceptions of market versus subsistence activity, as well as redefining the general relationship between formal and informal structures. The previous section describes how market-oriented structures associated with the village organisations have gained prominence, both for their technical efficacy, and for their normative significance. These structures have also infiltrated subsistence and ritual economic organisation, with the result that all economic structures have become somewhat more formal. What exists today in Shimshal is not a dual economy consisting of a formal market-oriented economy centred around AKRSP, superimposed on informal structures of the hidden (subsistence and ritual) economy. Rather, what exists is a composite economy in which AKRSP institutions have become increasingly informal, and in that process have lent formality to existing subsistence and ritual structures. In short, the designations "formal" and "informal" are becoming less precise as time passes.

In the following section I describe and interpret how the household system, which is central to both subsistence and ritual structures, manifests the increasing formality of Shimshal's previously informal economy. The changes which are occurring in household economic organisation relate closely to the AKRSP VOs, and have important ramifications for the viability of Shimshal's economic sphere of organisation.

9.3.2: Households as (Relatively) Informal Economic Institutions

Households are central to Shimshalis' conception of their community, both symbolically and in terms of material existence. The centrality of household has social, political, ecological and economic manifestations, which are interpreted in detail in Chapter Five. Table 9.3 summarises that discussion of the traditional significance of households.

Table 9.3: The Centrality of Shimshali Households Prior to AKRSP Involvement

	HOUSEHOLD
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -primary informal forum for socialisation, sociation and communication. -important determinant of who belongs where, and who is responsible for whom. -the ritual congregation is conceived as a group of households. -ritual obligations are fulfilled by households. -citizenship and community membership are contingent on household membership. -social relations among individuals are mediated by household membership. -households containing a full complement of members symbolise the ideal for all Shimshali social groupings. -households should cultivate and display a degree of social integrity; a variety of attributes such as honour, shame and pride attach to a household according to its members reputations. Thus individuals suffer or benefit according to their household's reputation, and also contribute to that reputation.
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -households are the smallest recognised formal political units, represented by the household head. -household heads form the membership of <i>kuyotch</i>. -status as household head is necessary for any formal political authority. -supra-village political organisations deal only with household heads. -households contain an internal political hierarchy, among individuals, among age groups and between the sexes.
Ecological	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -households are the most prevalent instrumental representations of lineage, which is an ecological unit. -tenure, inheritance, and usufruct of ecological resources are determined according to lineage, but accrue to households. -households are seen as the smallest relevant ecological units (ie. population is conceived as number of households, not number of individuals).
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -households are unequivocally considered to be the basic unit of production, consumption and exchange (both of material and non-material phenomena). -nothing can be bought, sold or owned by individuals, except as they represent a household. -subsistence is organised around households. -household resources are internally impartible. Wealth may be distributed among households, but not within households (although access to household resources varies among members). -access to the means of production (even one's own labour) is contingent on household membership. -households comprise the basic operational unit in all of the market, transfer, subsistence and ritual economies.

In this section I am most interested in Shimshali households as economic structures. I want to describe and interpret how AKRSP village organisations have affected the previous economic roles of households, how the validity of households as institutions linking system and lifeworld has changed with the development of village organisations, and how these related shifts have influenced Shimshal's economic viability.

Prior to 1984, and the introduction of AKRSP initiatives, households were the fundamental units of social, political, ecological and economic organisation. As we learned in previous chapters, events of the past half century had undermined the technical validity of both kinship and kingship, especially as they influenced activity geared toward material production and exchange. Collective ventures at the supra-household level had declined in importance because neither kinship (above medial lineage) structures nor kingship (village) structures possessed the rich mixture of technical, normative and sincerity-based validity needed to attract commitment and identity from community members. The *kuyotch* and other kin and king-based institutions reproduced themselves over time as largely symbolic entities which were uncoupled from the technical business of material production and exchange. Technical economic affairs became the business of the next smallest organisational unit, the household, and any combination of households that could be assembled for specific instrumental purposes.

During the period after the decline of *thamkushi* households came to occupy a uniquely significant position in Shimshal. Through attrition they had become the only units capable of technically manifesting the symbolic ideals that remained from a previous time. Equity, solidarity, honour, and social integrity, for example, came to be seen as ideals of the ritual congregation that were manifested mainly at the household level. During this period households gained symbolic significance as microcosms of a set of norms and convictions that would ideally be realised at the community level. At the same time households were the only institutions capable of organising individuals for new ventures associated with material production and exchange.

Shimshal's current elders tell stories from their childhood that demonstrate the central

importance of household-level organisation at that time. A common theme is the efforts of specific households (and sometimes medial lineages) to improve their own lot (and sometimes the lot of Shimshal as a community) without the assistance of supra-household collective institutions. Households were undertaking activities that had previously been undertaken, at a larger scale, by collective institutions of kingship and kinship.

Daulat Amin tells of how his father's household and Fermanullah's father's household joined together in 1967 to construct the *jamaat khana* (Ismaili meeting place). Basically, two wealthy households fulfilled a responsibility that, in terms of lifeworld norms, belonged to the ritual congregation.

The story that Shimshalis tell of Daulat Amin's education and subsequent development of a boys' school is a tale of the ambitions of one household to improve its own resource base, and also opportunities for other villagers, through formal schooling (see 7.3). By all accounts, Daulat Amin graduated and founded a school because of his own household's efforts, and despite the opposition of the ritual congregation as a whole. Again, the responsibilities of the community fell onto an individual household.

Shimshalis point out several large plots of land (5 to 10 hectares) that lie outside of the main cultivated village, which were settled during the 1960s and 1970s by individual households at their own initiative, and which remain in their possession. Earlier settlement schemes had been undertaken collectively under the authority of kingship institutions. Clearly, households took it upon themselves to engage in land settlement when it became apparent that collective institutions had lost the ability to organise labour.

As access to a market economy increased the ventures of individual households became more varied. In the early 1980s two households joined together to buy a jeep and run a taxi service from Pasu to Gilgit. Another household grouping opened a store in Gilgit bazaar. At least three households attempted to specialise in high altitude portering. Other households sponsored members' army careers or college education.

Each of these examples describes attempts to satisfy material expectations, or symbolic responsibilities, at the household level in the absence of collective structures for technical activity. Lifeworld ideals, such as honour, ritual integrity, equity and solidarity, which had previously been expressed through the activities of collective institutions, gradually accrued to the only technically efficacious institutions left: households. The overall effect of reproducing lifeworld ideals in technical terms at the household level was to reduce their reproduction at the community level. As households increasingly relied on their own resources and talents to satisfy their own requirements, the distribution of wealth and resources became less equitable, and the ritual congregation less cohesive. Households increased their own level of subsistence where they could, often with little regard for other community members' interests.

The result of households gaining symbolic significance as microcosms of a set of norms and convictions that would ideally be realised at the community level (but which were no longer realised at that level) was that households were able to justify, in normative terms, a self-centred and inward looking attitude that further harmed the ritual community's ability to satisfy the ideals of communicative decision making and collective orientation. The viability of one's household became the most important objective, so that in order to preserve lifeworld ideals at the household level it was necessary to discard them at the community level. Economic expediency had come to distort lifeworld elements, in a process of inner colonisation of the lifeworld. The explicitly economic activities of the household were seldom recognised as formally economic because they were primarily validated in normative terms. Those normative terms, however, had been mediated by the economic sub-system. Since 1984, AKRSP village organisations have caused shifts in the systemic and lifeworld orientations of households which have made certain household activities more formally economic, but which have also placed them within a rationalised set of lifeworld ideals. These two outcomes, at the household level, are integrally related.

Village organisations in Shimshal are closely related to the household system. They were conceived and developed as groups of households with shared economic interests. Members

expect material benefits of village organisation initiatives to accrue to participating households. Membership in village organisations is by household, not by individual. All individuals in a member household are encouraged to participate, but they participate on behalf of their household. Rights and obligations are calculated according to household membership and not individual membership. Ideally, one household member represents his (it is always a he) household formally on the village organisation. Unlike the *kuyotch*, that member need not be the household head; often an adult son or younger brother with more cosmopolitan experience is a household's leading representative on the village organisation.

At the same time that VOs are household-based, in Shimshal they have also come to represent the larger community -the ritual congregation.²⁹ The three Shimshal VOs are, in effect, three branches of the same institution, which focuses around Shimshal Centre leadership. The two subsidiary branches were formed so that more Shimshalis could be trained, and more projects initiated. All households in Shimshal belong to at least one of the three village organisations, so that VO membership coincides with community membership, and with *kuyotch* membership (although household representatives to *kuyotch* may be different than representatives to VOs). Because everyone in Shimshal is a VO member, Shimshalis no longer consider VOs to be **just** groups of households with shared economic interests. Together, they **also** represent the economic interests of the community as an indivisible unit. That all households in Shimshal joined the village organisation to benefit their individual economic interests, and in so doing chose mutually acceptable leadership and a mutually acceptable PPI project, is a recognition of shared economic interests -of generalisable interests that are common to all members. Households have been relieved of a certain responsibility for satisfying community norms, and that responsibility has come to rest with the village organisations. Presently, Shimshalis maintain that VOs exist not just to

²⁹ Women's organisations (WOs), as discussed later in this section, have not achieved the same degree of identity with the ritual congregation, partly because they are associated less with households and more with individuals.

benefit the interests of individual households, but are needed to fulfil generalisable interests that cannot be effectively realised if households consider their viability in isolation.

The generalisable interests that VOs help fulfil are both technical and practical. A variety of collective technical projects (eg. the road, the new portering scheme, collective fertiliser purchasing) have been initiated by village organisations. None of these could have occurred at the individual household level. Associated with these technical interests, and manifested in them, are a number of normative ideals: collective decision making toward technical action, material equity at the community level, and solidarity among households. These ideals were not realised in a system in which the household was the largest effective unit of organisation. Village organisations evolved as community level units of organisation that were effective vehicles toward technical and practical interests. Their effectiveness in this capacity increased as Shimshalis came to identify them as technical arms of the *kuyotch*.

I describe above how VOs became less formally economic, or at least less exclusively economic, with the passage of time. Associated with that trend was a tendency for households to be perceived in more formally economic terms. As the community reappeared as a practicable unit of organisation several important lifeworld ideals were renewed at that level. What I mean is that community-based lifeworld ideals that had been forced to the household level as systemic circumstances changed (ie. community fell apart), now reappeared in a rationalised form at the community level when community once again became an effective level of organisation (through village organisations). But it was not strictly a system-driven process. It was lifeworld ideals (especially solidarity, and communicative decision making) that facilitated the systemic shift toward efficacious community-level activity (ie. that validated the creation of VOs). The ritual congregation (with its technical branches: *kuyotch* and VO) once again became the entity responsible for shared lifeworld convictions, and households took on smaller roles of feeding their members, and duplicating (but no longer exclusively representing) lifeworld ideals within the home. To an extent, the burden of equity, solidarity, communicative decision making, collective action, etc. has been

taken off the household as an internal unit, and placed on its participation with other households in the ritual congregation. As a result, certain economic activities at the household level now tend to be validated economically, and that validation is reinforced as normatively appropriate.

Now that I have interpreted the process through which the village organisations allowed certain normative functions to shift from the household to the village, and so reproduce household agency as more formally economic, it is possible for me to enumerate the more specific influences that the creation of VOs as economic (and then social) institutions has had on household organisation. First, and most closely related to the discussion above, the creation of village organisations gave additional meaning to structures that link households to the village. Indeed, the village organisations themselves became such linking structures. But more than that, the VOs lent vitality to the *kuyotch*, which institution itself became more meaningful (as a crucial link between a rationalised system and a rationalised lifeworld; see Chapters Seven and 9.2). Household members currently perceive an essential connection between their household and their community through each of *kuyotch*, VO, and ritual congregation. That household heads are concerned that their household be recognised as "cooperating with the villagers" and "helping the reputation of Shimshal" is evidence of this perceived connection between individual households and a larger polity. Another indication is villagers' claims that communal ritual celebrations are more enthusiastically performed than in the recent past (see Chapter Seven). Additional evidence is provided by households' willingness to participate in VO projects.

A second influence is the emergence of a new set of economic opportunities and resources, which opportunities and resources are recognised as having normative validity because of the process by which they were made available (see 9.2). Households always had access to traditional subsistence activities, structures of the ritual economy, and individual market-oriented ventures. With the creation of VOs they could participate in collective activity geared toward participation in the market. Savings deposits in a collective account, labour on the road, participation in a new portering scheme, credit for fertilizer and a tractor, access to professionally-

trained specialists, and the collective management of test plots are some of the new economic opportunities which became open to households.

Like structures of the ritual economy, these activities reduce economic risk from the scale of individual households and concentrate it at the community level. Collective savings deposits, for example, remove some of the risks of borrowing money.³⁰ Other VO ventures distribute the risks of failure over a large number of households.³¹

Also like ritual structures, the village organisations serve to increase equity, both materially and in terms of authority. Households contribute different amounts to the savings accounts, and wealthy households generally contribute more than poor households. But all households have equal access to the collateral that savings provide (and no individual household has access to the capital). Similarly, large and/or wealthy households contribute more labour to the roads than smaller, poorer ones (see 9.2). Yet, the road will be accessible to all Shimshalis. The portering scheme (see Chapter 8.2) provides another example of a VO-initiated move toward equity.³² Village organisations have created, or at least increased the legitimacy, of certain types of non-traditional authority, which are based on contributions of time and resources to the VO, newly acquired technical skills (animal health care, crop management, accounting, etc.) and so on. This means that more individuals can claim some level of normatively and technically legitimate status and authority, so that the leadership base becomes broader, both within the village and within individual households. Because household heads are not necessarily the main representatives to

³⁰ It is safe to say that without the collective savings deposits very few Shimshalis would have risked borrowing money (or been allowed to) from banking institutions outside of Shimshal, even for a few hundred rupees worth of fertilizer.

³¹ This is not to say that the total risk to the community is necessarily diminished, although it may be to the extent that the AKRSP continues its practice of absorbing the losses of individual villages.

³² This argument should not be taken too far. Wealthy households probably will benefit more than poor families from the road, and from the opportunity to borrow. But not, I think, proportionate to their current wealth, or their current contributions. Certainly Shimshalis see the VOs as structures that can help to increase equity. That is why poorer villagers support it more ardently than wealthy ones.

the VO, or the ones whose contributions have been most significant, the basis for participation in communicative action at the community level increases. Similarly, heads of households are sharing their internal authority with other household members, so that communicative decision making within the household is facilitated.

My interpretation would be simplistic if it did not consider the tensions created by these changes in economic authority at the household level. A brief discussion of the nature of age and gender relations within households, as they relate to economic decision making, helps reveal the character of some of these tensions. In the past economic legitimacy accrued to the household unit as a whole, and specifically to the household head, who was responsible for making internal economic decisions, and who represented a household's economic interests to the wider community. With the exception of the woman-in-charge, who had some dwelling-based responsibility, junior members had no autonomous economic authority. Since the formation of AKRSP VOs junior household members have taken a more active role in economic decision making, because their normative and technical legitimacy to participate in economic decision making has increased.

As community members participate more in an outside-oriented market economy younger men with experience and expertise in the outside world become more **technically** legitimate economic representatives for the household. Household heads seldom have these characteristics because they belong to an older, less cosmopolitan generation, and because their domestic responsibilities have prevented them from travelling, studying and working outside the community. AKRSP has facilitated the involvement of younger men in economic decision making by providing a legitimate forum for younger men to express their cosmopolitan expertise (see Chapter Seven on education). The technical economic validity of household heads becomes relatively less important as subsistence agricultural activities become less important.

The **normative** legitimacy of household heads to make economic decisions is more difficult to erode, based as it is in the legitimacy of the *kuyotch*, clan and lineage membership, tenure and

inheritance rules, and the ethic of subsistence self-sufficiency. In addition to these factors, household heads have traditionally been those members most closely associated with service, good deeds and neighbourly behaviour: those formal and informal activities that demonstrate a desire to contribute to economic and social equity among households in an appropriate manner. Increasingly, however, junior household members have been able to accumulate wealth and expertise that is, at least to a degree, individual. Thus, they are able to engage in good deeds and service **in their own right**. Ali Rahman, for example, has used some of his wages as a soldier to build several bridges and travelling huts to the memory of his ancestors. This use of individual wealth contributes to Ali Rahman's normative and sincerity-based legitimacy to engage in economic decision making, even though he is not a household head.

These shifts do not sit well with some household heads who perceive that the heightened validity of junior members has undermined their own individual technical validity and individual normative validity to make economic decisions for the entire household. Patriarchs no longer have the degree of patriarchal authority they had in the past. That patriarchal authority is threatened, usually not explicitly or overtly, but by changing circumstances of the economic sub-system (the need for certain types of expertise and representation that many household heads no longer provide), and changing lifeworld circumstances (more complete participation by more people in communicative discourse). The authority of individual household heads has diminished somewhat, in the same way that the authority of individual leaders at all levels has diminished. In Habermas' terms household heads' legitimacy claims have become more open to challenge, and that challenge has revealed a lack of validity in certain spheres of activity. Households have responded by shifting some economic authority to members whose validity in those spheres can be accepted.

So far I have talked only of relationships among the VOs, junior men and household heads. This says nothing of how women and women's organisations (WOs) relate to decision making at the household level. Women's organisations provide women with an opportunity to participate directly in community affairs, rather than solely through the mediation of their household heads.

The participation afforded by WOs is primarily economic, but also relates to other sub-systemic spheres of organisation. The direct (as opposed to mediated) participation of individual women through WOs is facilitated by the tendency for WOs in Shimshal to be less household oriented than VOs: women participate on their own behalf rather than just on behalf of their household. This is possible because women, despite the constraints placed on them by household membership, are less directly identified with households than are household heads or even junior men. Women, unlike men, are members of a household which (after marriage) is separate from their lineage, and may be separate from their sub-clan. Because they represent a variety of separate groups, but are the primary representatives of none of them, women are less-explicitly identified with any of them. WO's, therefore, have provided women with a level of autonomy from household (at least at certain times: during meetings, when engaged in WO business) that is uncommon for junior men.

The autonomy of WO participation from households has the negative impact (for women) of decreasing the legitimacy of the WO as an organisation, at least from a male perspective. The household is recognised as the fundamental unit for production and consumption among Shimshalis. Any economic organisation that is not household-oriented (as the VOs are) cannot be accepted as completely legitimate in normative terms. The normative legitimacy of WOs is further hampered by (a) the relatively minor role AKRSP administrators have conceived for them (see Chapter Six), (b) its lack of integration with traditional fora for community decision making (*kuyotch*), and (c) the fundamentally patriarchal character of Shimshali society and AKRSP. For all of these reasons the participation of women in the women's organisation does less to disrupt the traditional hierarchy of households than does the participation of junior men in the village organisations. In other words, the changes initiated by AKRSP seem to do more to enhance the participation of junior men than women in a process of communicative action within households.

At the same time the surprising (to men) accomplishments of women's organisations have

not been ignored.³³ They indicate to men, and particularly to household heads, that women can contribute to household and community economy in a role that is public, formal and market-oriented. Men have responded to this realisation in two ways. The first response has been a reactionary one: women are perceived as participating in activities that are normatively inappropriate for them. This claim is effectively countered by women and other men by referring to the instructions of the Aga Khan that men should ensure that their women share in the opportunities and responsibilities of development. The second response has been one of renewed respect for women, or at least a new source of respect for women. The legitimacy of women as a group has increased. More specifically, the technical (they can make us richer!) and normative (they are contributing to appropriate economic relations among community members) legitimacy of women to participate in economic decision making has increased. To some extent at least, women participate in household decision making more than before, especially those women who are active in the women's organisations. This participation takes two forms: their opinions are heeded more by household heads, and they have access to a new venue for participation that circumvents household heads. Both forms of participation in communicative action could be enhanced if AKRSP conceived a more central role for WOs.

Unlike more junior women, the woman-in-charge of a household may find her influence diminished by the trends outlined above. Ideally, and usually in practice, a special working relationship exists between a household head and the woman-in-charge (most often they are husband and wife or son and mother): they are joint custodians of the household, despite the formal authority of the household head. The woman-in-charge has traditionally had considerable influence with the household head. As the household head loses his patriarchal authority the influence of the woman-in-charge on household affairs and on the way the household is represented to the outside may also diminish. Some of the privilege of her position may be lost,

³³ These include savings, small scale agricultural (vegetable) and pastoral ventures, small scale marketing, and training programmes.

and if it is lost her ability to effectively represent junior women's interests to the household head is also reduced. At the same time, junior women are increasingly able to establish a more direct link with the household head. In essence, the security that a traditional hierarchy provides women is lost, or at least recreated according to more vulnerable validity claims. Women have lost some indirect influence and gained a more direct validity; the quality of that new-found validity is enhanced (in terms of communicative action), but the quantity or impact of women's influence may be less than previously. There are indications that the lifeworld of Shimshali women is changing more rapidly than the social system, and more rapidly than the lifeworlds of many men. This disequilibrium manifests itself in a tension and dissatisfaction among some women. So far I have seen only superficial expressions of that dissatisfaction. One married adolescent woman, for example, has taken to wearing men's clothes, including an imitation leather bomber jacket. Another young woman told me she speaks only Urdu and English because she does not want to speak the language that men assume women will speak. Neither of these women are particularly rebellious in other ways: neither their husbands, their fathers, nor their household heads expressed dissatisfaction with their behaviour, although they found it odd.

9.3.3: Summary

From the 1940s onward collective technical activity at the community level in Shimshal became less practicable. Collective structures, primarily associated with supra-medial lineage and clan, and with kingship, broke down. Lifeworld ideals remained, and were represented in traditional subsistence activities governed by the *kuyotch*. But these ideals and convictions were not manifested in any collective activity geared to a response to changing systemic experiences: the introduction of a market economy, the disintegration of many built structures, rising material expectations, increasing population. In the absence of effective collective structures, it fell on

households to respond to systemic changes while protecting lifeworld ideals. The household came to be viewed as a microcosm of normatively-appropriate existence which would ideally exist at the *community level*.

In 1984 village organisations were established. They provided the impetus for a renewed commitment to a shared lifeworld, represented and nurtured by the ritual congregation. Households resumed their previous role as *structures whose responsibility it was to provide material support to their members, and to the ritual congregation*. Shimshalis began to see the activities of the household as more formally economic: material production and exchange within the lifeworld ideals of the ritual congregation.

Village organisations facilitated this shift toward a more formal economic role for households, first by removing many lifeworld responsibilities to the village level, and second by providing a variety of structures oriented to efficacious participation by households in the formal market economy. In addition to increasing the economic opportunities available to households, these structures of the VO reduced economic risks to individual households and facilitated equity among households. Moreover, they provided fora for demonstrating commitment to the ritual congregation and its ideals of solidarity, equity and communicative decision making.

The various structures of the village organisations also enlarged the pool of individuals with sufficient authority to participate in meaningful communicative action. These new sources of authority challenged the power of privilege-based authority associated with lineage and kingship. Possessors of traditional forms of authority were obliged to share legitimacy with possessors of rationalised forms, and broaden their own claims to decision-making authority. Traditional authority remains legitimate, but only if utilised in ways that are pertinent to new experiences and circumstances (see the discussion in Chapter 8.3). Thus, household heads are relinquishing some of their control over households, in favour of a more communicative decision making process, which includes the participation of other household members who may enjoy greater authority on certain issues.

Through this combination of circumstances, the village organisations have made households more viable as economic units by (a) facilitating more communicative action within households so that the utilisation of household resources can be challenged and validated, (b) providing more ways for households to achieve their technical interests, within the constraints of a shared lifeworld, and (c) creating more meaningful and more effective links between households and the larger ritual and technical polity. Today, more than in the recent past, households decide their objectives communicatively, and fulfil them within a context wherein a rationalised system can satisfy a rationalised lifeworld. That is conducive to the economic viability, and more general sustainability, of households.

The situation outlined here also contributes to the economic viability of the larger community, because households (despite a tendency within a capitalist economy to compete) are working increasingly toward the satisfaction of communicatively-decided generalisable interests which are shared at the community level; witness the solidarity with which householders labour on the road, and contribute to collective savings.

9.4 Conclusion: Economic Viability and Sustainability in Shimshal

I have attempted in this chapter to interpret relations among four sets of issues: AKRSP village organisations, economic viability as a sphere of social organisation, specific empirical dimensions of economic viability, and community sustainability. Two detailed examples, which comprise the specific empirical expressions of economic organisation, provide a context for interpreting economic viability and its role in Shimshal's sustainability, and for evaluating the influence of AKRSP's village organisation initiative on economic viability and the broader issue of community sustainability.

In 9.1 I defined economic viability as the ability of a community to satisfy its members'

lifeworld-defined material requirements through a combination of production and exchange within the available ecological context. Thus, economic viability derives from a combination of technical and practical circumstances. The technical economic requirements of a community and the dimensions of the available ecological context within which these requirements can be met are established practically, within a cultural milieu of norms, values and background convictions: lifeworld. To incorporate the language used by Habermas, the details of economic organisation are established, in part, through practical discourse toward intersubjective understanding. The greater the role of communicative action in this process, and the less the uncontested acceptance of economic systemic media, the more conducive is the process to community sustainability... regardless of the specific activities and structures that result.

We begin to understand the contribution of economic viability to the more general conception of community sustainability by realising that the designation **economic** contains both *instrumental and communicative elements*. The term economic refers to an instrumental category: activities and structures are economic if they contribute to material production or exchange. However, economic structures and activities can be relatively more or less **formal**, and a designation of formality stems from the practical realm of lifeworld: a phenomenon is formally economic if its existence or performance is legitimised according to a technical claim that it facilitates material production or distribution, and/or a normative claim that material production or exchange is an appropriate justification for its existence or performance. In a community with some claim to sustainability certain structures and activities will be explicitly legitimised as economic, but few if any will be **solely** legitimised as economic. A salient characteristic of sustainability is the priority of a rationalised lifeworld over systemic spheres, and, as lifeworld is indivisible, systemic structures (economic or otherwise) that are legitimised within a shared lifeworld are necessarily validated comprehensively.

The two examples provided in the chapter demonstrate that recent changes in Shimshal's (relatively) formal and (relatively) informal economic organisation contribute to the community's

economic viability, and also contribute to community sustainability more generally. The Aga Khan Rural Support Programme village organisations, as they have developed in Shimshal, contribute to the rationalisation of certain elements of Shimshal's shared lifeworld, and they have facilitated the initiation of many activities that attempt to exploit the market economy to the advantage of Shimshalis, and within the constraints of a rationalised lifeworld. These new activities symptomise the partial rationalisation of the economic sub-system itself. The VOs have achieved this principally because they have established a normative and sincerity-based validity beyond the technical validity anticipated by AKRSP administrators. In this instance, as in most other instances in Shimshal, economic viability and community sustainability are closely integrated with one another and with the multiple lifeworld-based validities of specific economic structures and activities.

The emergence of AKRSP village organisations -relatively formal economic institutions- has influenced another important, but less formal, set of economic institutions: households. Specifically VOs have provided the impetus for a renewed commitment to a shared set of generalisable interests, represented and nurtured by the ritual congregation. This renewed commitment has freed households to resume their previous role as institutions geared toward materially supporting sub-medial lineage groupings and contributing to the material well being of the larger community. In essence, the emergence of village organisations has allowed households to become more formal and more viable economic units by (a) facilitating more communicative action within households so that the utilisation of household resources can be challenged and validated, (b) providing more ways for households to achieve their technical interests, within the constraints of a shared lifeworld, and (c) creating more meaningful and more effective links between households and the larger ritual and technical polity. As a result current households, more than in the recent past, decide their objectives communicatively, and fulfil them within a context wherein a rationalised system can satisfy a rationalised lifeworld. This integration of a rationalised system and a rationalised lifeworld through a process of communicative decision making is the foundation of community sustainability. The chapter that follows, on ecological volition, explores this theme further and in a different

context.

Chapter Ten: Ecological Volition and Community Sustainability in Shimshal

10.1: Ecological Volition

Matthews (1983) speaks of three spheres of organisational focal points that are important within societies or communities: social vitality, political validity and economic viability. In the present chapter I am concerned with conceptualising and describing a fourth organisational focal point which also seems to be essential for the persistence of all communities, large and small. I have labelled this fourth sphere of organisation **ecological volition**.

It is a truism that all social groupings rely, in the end, on an ecological resource base. The characteristics of that dependence on ecological resources, and the way they are manifested in human agency, are often conceptualised in economic terms, as elements in the process of material production and exchange (see the literature on sustainable development, for example Barbier, 1987; Bartelmas, 1986; Bryant, 1992; Manning, 1990).¹ An economic conceptualisation of ecologically-oriented organisation is useful, and may be sufficient to explain human/ecological interaction in urban industrial or post-industrial societies which encounter ecological artifacts only after they have been manipulated by economic mechanisms.²

Conceptualising ecology as just part of economic organisation obscures a significant aspect of sustainability in small communities (like Shimshal or Small Harbour) where material existence

¹ Ecological resources are one of the **means** of production. Indeed, the very term "ecological resource" is an economic one.

² The reliance of social groupings on an ecological resource base is, of course, mediated by technology. Considerable theoretical and empirical work has focused on the relationships among resource base, technology and quality of life. Much of this work, like other work on the use of ecological resources, is framed economically (see, for example, Ashby, 1982; Bachman, 1983; Boserup, 1965; Conway, 1985; Crosson, 1983; Freeman, 1982; Messerschmidt, 1990; and Shaw, 1987). Goulet (1977) and Michalos (1989) offer a critique of viewing indigenous technology (at least) in purely economic terms. Mumford (1952, 1970) offers a broader framework within which to understand the importance of technology in society.

relies on primary production, and where individuals' daily activities and routines are situated within an ostensibly natural environment. In rural communities interaction with the physical environment is not strictly economic. Nor can ecological activities and meanings be interpreted just as combinations of social, political and economic organisations. Of course, ecological organisation relates to those three spheres, but also to activities and meanings that are more directly ecological. The addition of a fourth organizational sphere -**ecological volition**- to Matthews' framework incorporates specifically human/environment relationships as a central element of sustainable community organisation. Community sustainability relies, in part, on a combination of formal and/or informal structures that ensure a sustainable utilisation of the natural environment, or that circumvent the immediate natural environment through some form of exchange.

My use of the word **volition** to describe the ecological focus of some social organisation suggests an emphasis on the control, sovereignty and autonomy of indigenous communities to regulate their own relations with their environment. Such an emphasis continues a theme which runs through the other organisational focal points, and which underlies my conception of community sustainability as an outcome of communicative action. Community sustainability, as I have defined it, requires an iterative process whereby participants come to communicative (intersubjective) understanding of the norms, values and convictions that underlie their existence as a community in a particular environment, and then undertake instrumental action that satisfies those norms, values and convictions. The requirement for community members to achieve intersubjective agreement which then regulates instrumental activity implies a degree of indigenous or community-based control and autonomy. Lifeworld elements are negotiated and reproduced internally; they cannot be imposed from outside.³ This is as true of those lifeworld elements that inform relations

³ That is not to say that certain norms, values and convictions are not imported from outside a community. But communicative acceptance of them by community members is an internal, autonomous process, as is the process whereby lifeworld elements are reproduced within the context of social system and physical surroundings. It is this communicative acceptance that deflects the colonising influence of imported phenomena.

between inhabitants and their physical environment as it is of more conventionally social, political or economic norms and convictions. To the extent that sustainable human/ecological interaction requires validity within the lifeworld, and to the extent that the physical environment can nurture lifeworld-embedded meaning and identity, ecological relations need to be controlled by participants: hence, the term **ecological volition**. I define **ecological volition** as (a) the ability of a community to utilise material ecological resources in a way that sustains the (i) lifeworld-defined ecological resource base itself together with (ii) lifeworld-defined material requirements, and (b) the further ability to interact with the environment in a way that reproduces the shared meanings that community members give to place, locale, ecological artifact, and strategies of resource utilisation.⁴

As I define it, ecological volition has material and symbolic components which correspond to material and symbolic ecological resources. The first clause in the definition expresses a need for communities to maintain their material resource base while, at the same time, satisfying demands on ecological resources. A tension exists between the two parts of that first clause: the need to conserve and the impetus toward consumption. Each requirement constrains, and is constrained by, the other. In some societies increasing population and/or material requirements have allowed the need to consume to overpower the requirement to conserve, with a corresponding decline in ecological sustainability.⁵ That tension may be resolved by the shared reproduction of **symbolic** ecological resources, as elucidated in the second clause. In perceiving ecological phenomena as symbolic resources which give meaning and identity to the community set amidst them (and surviving from them), members of communities necessitate and validate a balance between consumption and conservation. What I am suggesting is that certain ecological

⁴ This definition is at odds, at least in terms of emphasis, with a radical eco-perspective which argues the inherent integrity of the natural environment.

⁵ This has occurred particularly in societies where lifeworld has been colonised and mediated by economic mechanisms that provide their own rationale for consuming at the expense of ecological conservation: the production of capital.

resources need to be conserved (materially) to be consumed (symbolically).

Ecological resources confer meaning and identity by their existence in specific combinations (validation for conservation), and by their utilisation in certain ways and for specific purposes (the validation for consumption). In a sustainable community the ways resources are used reproduce specific meaningful combinations of ecological phenomena in the environment, and affirm the meanings of those combinations through the continuing technical efficacy with which they can be utilised. Thus, sustainable human/environment relations may be facilitated by a coupling and integration of material (systemic: consumption) and symbolic (lifeworld: conservation) demands on environment, because that coupling facilitates the balance between consumption and conservation necessary to sustain a community reliant on a finite material resource base.

I do not mean to suggest that local or indigenous communities **necessarily** utilise their environments according to the dictates of a coupled social system and lifeworld which together negotiate a balance between consumption and conservation; the plight of many indigenous communities (and of the global ecological system) indicates that such a balance may be uncommon. However, in a modern (not modernised) community supported by a communicative decision making process something approximating that outcome is likely, and would manifest ecological volition. Much ethnographic and cultural ecological literature describes indigenous communities that ascribe special meaning and symbolic significance to their environments, and which support structures and institutions whose agents attempt to attain a balance, and an integration, between those symbolic requirements and material demands (see Cole and Wolf, 1974; de Poncins, 1941; Hewitt, 1989; Lopez, 1986; Ott, 1981). A brief example from Shimshal shows what I mean.

The story of Mamu Shah related in Chapter Four establishes, for Shimshalis, a symbolic ecological context for the community of Shimshal (see also Mock, 1990, and 10.3.2). Various places within Shimshal territory gain special meaning according to the events of the history/myth. In particular, Shuwart pasture accrues significance as a sacred place, associated with saints,

miracles and yaks. Yaks themselves are venerated beasts, partly because of the story, and partly because they occupy Shuwart pasture. Shuwart gains significance because it supports most of Shimshal's yaks. Shimshalis consider all of these things when they arrange their pasturing cycles, and when they decide how many of which animals to herd. Specifically, herders validate their careful stewardship of Shuwart and of yaks in terms of their responsibility to maintain these symbolic resources in optimum condition.⁶ Symbolic requirements to conserve and material requirements to consume achieve a balance in the stewardship of Shuwart pasture. That balance is facilitated when ceremonies are held at Shuwart during which herders consume yaks to ensure divine aid in conserving Shuwart pasture and the community's utilisation of its resources. Note that optimum condition is **not** natural condition, but rather some lifeworld-embedded ideal of what a pasture (or a yak herd) should be. That ideal, of course, incorporates considerable indigenous knowledge of ecological conditions, carrying capacity etc.

The distinction between **material** ecological resources and **symbolic** ecological resources is a conceptual one which is blurred in reality. For the people of Shimshal the two are often the same. Shuwart pasture, for example, is either or both, depending on validity claims offered and accepted in defence of activity relating to it. Changes in the pasture's technical exploitation are likely to be approved only if they are validated as normatively appropriate. Thus, symbolic considerations constrain material exploitation. Similarly symbolic meanings surrounding the pasture relate to its historical ability to benefit Shimshalis materially. In the same way, ecological structures such as the annual pasture cycle are perceived as having both instrumental and symbolic significance: instrumental significance as a strategy to optimise the utilisation of pasture land, and symbolic significance as an integral part of a larger ritual cycle. Both of these types of significance relate intimately with other spheres of organisation. For example, the annual pasture cycle is, at the instrumental level, an economic structure (it facilitates material production) as well as an

⁶ Hence, Shimshalis' disenchantment with Azizullah Beg when he culled his yak herd in favour of more profitable sheep and goats (see Chapter Eight).

ecological one (it sustains the viability of the resource base). At the symbolic level it integrates with social and political organisation. It is a manifestation of the continuing authority of the *lumbardar* and his *kuyotch*, as well as a representation of the continuing pertinence of sub-clan affiliation.⁷ The schedule of who and what goes where and when contains much subtle social and political significance.

In his discussion of social vitality, political validity and economic viability Matthews (1983) speaks of formal and informal structures and institutions. The distinction between formal and informal structures and institutions is useful for understanding the links between sustainability and social organisation in communities, not because it accurately represents how members conceptualise their community, but because it facilitates an understanding of how community members identify with, commit to, and validate their structures and institution, and by extension their community (see Table 10.1). As with social, political and economic organisation, ecological structures and institutions are unlikely to be completely formal or totally informal. Ecological practices in indigenous communities, and the structures which regulate them, are usually validated in several ways, and in relation to several spheres of activity. Some structures which are formally economic or social or political are informally ecological: they fulfil ecological functions but are legitimised primarily according to non-ecological validity claims. The *Salgarah* ceremony and certain elements of portering regulation exemplify structures which fulfil ecological functions, but which are not validated primarily in ecological terms (see Chapters Seven and Nine). Other structures and institutions are validated primarily in ecological terms, but also serve informal social, political or economic purposes; for example, the herding cycle, the practice of vertical agricultural zonation, and certain pasture and crop-oriented rituals. Many relate formally and informally to several spheres simultaneously. The *kuyotch*, for example, is an institution with formal and informal

⁷ Pastures are "owned" by subclans, or sections and combinations of subclans.

Table 10.1: Formal and Informal Relational Structures
of Community Ecological Organisation

	Formal Ecological Organisation	Informal Ecological Organisation
Ecological Volition	All structures and institutions with a formal and explicit responsibility to mediate community members' use of material and symbolic resources provided by the physical/ ecological environment. Annual herding and cropping cycles, water allocation schedules, hunting quotas, and government-initiated environmental protection schemes are examples of formal organisations for regulating use of material resources. Formal organisations for regulating use of symbolic resources include certain ceremonial feasts, dance ceremonies, and ritual offerings.	All structures and institutions which are not formally organised to regulate human/environment interaction, but which nevertheless mediate community members' use of material and symbolic ecological resources. Informal organisation includes fora for relating local (and imported) environmental knowledge and attitudes, and for relating and interpreting indigenous history. It also includes routine social, political and economic activities that provide inhabitants with a sense of place and belonging.

ecological, social and political validity (see Chapter Seven).⁸

Ecological organisation geared toward material resources tends toward formality, and is closely linked with formal economic organisation. Structures like the annual herding cycle are formally ecological (validated according to their ability to sustain the ecological environment) and formally economic (validated according to their ability to facilitate material production and exchange). The two types of technical validity claim (economic and ecological) are closely related in the need to facilitate adequate levels of both consumption and conservation.

Conversely, ecological organisation geared to symbolic resources is typically less formal, and often intimately related to formal and informal social structures and institutions. Feelings of place, and place-oriented identity, belonging and stewardship are reproduced through the entwined activities of sociation, socialisation and communication. Sometimes these are formally validated,

⁸ See Table 9.1b for a representation of the basis for formality and informality. As with economic organisation, potentially ecological organisation can tend toward one of three poles: informally ecological, formally ecological and non-ecological.

as in specific rituals or school teachers' attempts to develop students' pride in their community and environment. More often, however, shared or individual senses of what their surroundings mean to community members are absorbed in the course of other social activities, or simply through living and subsisting in the environment.⁹

The two types of ecological organisation -primarily formal material, and primarily informal symbolic- come together in the activities of community members, who attempt to utilise physical resources in a way that satisfies and reproduces the significance that the environment holds for them. These activities manifest a coupling of system and lifeworld: an integration of efficacy and meaning.

I have introduced four related issues that are important for understanding ecological volition as a component of *community sustainability*. The first issue deals with the value of conceptualising ecological organisation as something integrated with, yet separate from, the social, political and economic systemic spheres. Such a recognition of specifically environmental and ecological meanings and motives approximates the lived experience of community members better than a conceptualisation that conceives environmentally-oriented activity as just part of economic, or social, or political organisation. The addition of this fourth systemic sphere to the framework for sustainability is particularly important in communities like Shimshal where members are engaged in primary production, and live lives that are rooted in a natural environment, and where, as a result, they are likely to attribute special significance to their ecological context. Moreover, as development theorists and practitioners become more cognisant of the importance of ecological concerns, sustainability within an ecological context, and local ecological knowledge and stewardship practices, the value of a framework that distinguishes an ecological sphere, and interprets the links between it and the other organisational spheres, increases.

The second issue surrounds the use of the word *volition*. According to my

⁹ The relevance of "sense of place" and associated symbolic phenomena to ecological volition is discussed in detail in 10.3.1.

conceptualisation a community is ecologically sustainable only if its members have control and authority over the management of their own ecological resource base; control which allows them to utilise resources for the satisfaction of shared social, political and economic interests (and which, conversely, enables them to utilise non-ecological structures and institutions for the satisfaction of ecological interests).¹⁰ Therefore, sustainability in an ecological sense is well described in terms of **volltion**: the autonomy of a community to negotiate ecological functions, meanings and activities through communicative discourse.

Third, the categorisation of ecological resources emphasises the importance of the autonomy or volition of local communities to develop and practice their own human/environment interaction. The ecological context of communities can be divided conceptually into two categories: material resources and symbolic resources. Material resources are those tangible things that contribute to material production and exchange. Symbolic resources are those things which provide identity, meaning, feelings of place and belonging, to inhabitants of a community. They may be tangible, like a mountain peak, or particularly renowned vista, or intangible, like myths relating to particular places, or histories of a community's existence in a setting. Material resources relate to technical interests, instrumental action, and systemic activity. Symbolic resources relate to practical interests, communicative action and lifeworld norms, values and convictions. In a sustainable community the two sets of resources entwine to produce an overall approach to human/environment interaction which attempts to satisfy technical and practical interests. To the extent that the coupling of technical uses and symbolic meanings facilitates community sustainability ecological **volltion** is essential, because a rational coupling can only occur within a

¹⁰ This point is an important one to make, because national and international agencies (eg. International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), World Wildlife Fund (WWF)) commonly attempt to regulate indigenous communities' use of ecological resources without considering possible linkages with other systemic spheres of organisation and sustainability. A number of international agencies, including IUCN and WWF are proposing that most of Shimshal's pastures be incorporated into the Khunjerab National Park. If that occurred Shimshal would be denied access to and sovereignty over many of its material ecological resources, and certain of its most symbolically meaningful environments.

circumstance of autonomy, where a community is able to engage in communicative action toward ecological decision making. My interpretation of Shimshal's ecological volition, in the sections that follow, concentrates on these two types of ecological resources, and shows how the introduction of AKRSP collective organisation has affected their sustainable utilisation within Shimshal's overall social organisation.

The final issue addresses the formality of ecological organisation. The formality of an economic organisation or structure is contingent upon validity claims that participants propose, discuss and accept in communicative discourse: an organisation is formally ecological if the validity claims offered in its defence are ecologically-oriented. The designation of (relatively) formal or (relatively) informal is useful primarily as a way to gain insight into how community members validate their ecologically-oriented structures and activities.

10.2: Ecological Volition and Shimshal's Sustainability as a Material Community

10.2.1: Introduction

Central to the issue of ecological volition is the existence of a balance between sustaining the ecological resource base (conservation) and satisfying material requirements (consumption). The problem of balance is resolved partly in the specific instrumental strategies that community members use to exploit their environment sustainably, and partly through the lifeworld-embedded validity of shared meanings of the environment, and individuals' places in it, which community members nurture. Neither element in this quest for resolution between consumption and conservation exists effectively without the other, because they represent the systemic (strategy) and lifeworld (symbolic meaning) elements of the same issue.

In the present section I am concerned with the first clause in my definition of ecological

volition: interpreting the strategies that Shimshalis use to conserve and utilise material ecological resources. That concern can be phrased another way: a concern for how Shimshalis use ecological resources to sustain their economy. The background for interpreting Shimshalis' instrumental use of their ecological resource base is well developed in a body of literature which deals with the cultural ecology of indigenous mountain communities. In the remainder of this section and in the example that follows I rely heavily on insights provided by that literature.¹¹

Two sets of models dominate cultural ecological interpretations of indigenous mountain land use at the local scale. Included in the first set are frameworks that emphasise the tendency of mountain dwellers to differentiate among sets of resources at different altitudes, and to exploit as many altitudinal zones as possible. Geographer Nigel Allan developed a second type of model in response to criticisms of altitudinal zonation models. Allan's accessibility model proposes that as mountain communities become less isolated, altitudinal zones become less important than zones of accessibility (Allan, 1984, 1986, 1989). I intend, for the remainder of this section, to summarise these two sets of models, and argue that a combination of them describes the instrumental human/environment interaction in which Shimshal community engages.

The first set of models is based on a single well-developed conception of indigenous mountain land use, in which societies satisfy their subsistence needs through the utilisation of several altitudinally-controlled ecological zones. This conception, variously described as *almwirtschaft*, mixed-mountain agriculture, and verticality derives principally from Carl Troll's *staffelsysteme* model (developed throughout his career, but expressed most succinctly in Troll (1943)) and subsequent modifications by Peattie (1936), Murra (1972), and Brush (1976). It has

¹¹ Cultural ecology literature comprises one of four general categories of geographically-relevant literature dealing with human/environment interaction by indigenous mountain communities. In another study I have identified the other three as traditional geographical area studies, mountain ecosystem fragility studies, and agricultural development studies (Butz, 1987:184-205). A more general review of mountain cultural ecology literature than that provided in the chapter is presented in Appendix 9. Appendix 10 summarises the geophysical environment of the Karakoram mountain system, of which Shimshal is a part, to provide a context for discussions on ecological resource use.

geographical antecedents in the environmental determinism of von Humboldt (Bromme, 1851) and Ratzel (1889). Recently, the model has been applied to populations in all major mountain regions, especially the Andes, Alps and Himalayas.¹²

Stated very briefly, vertical zonation models postulate that no single altitudinal zone possesses the range of climatic, vegetative and topographic characteristics necessary for subsistence. As a result, indigenous communities are constrained to adapt a variety of production techniques, each of which exploits the combination of environmental characteristics specific to a particular zone. A number of variants of the model have been proposed which concentrate variously on vegetative zones, agricultural zones and socio-economic zones (see Figure 10.2a and

¹² Strictly speaking, verticality and mixed mountain agriculture (*almwirtschaft*) are two different models. However, the difference between them is one of emphasis more than content. The verticality model was developed initially by Murra (1972) to describe subsistence production among Andean populations (see also Guillet, 1981, 1983; Lynch, 1983; Orlove, 1977; Stadel, 1989). Orlove summarises Murra's verticality model:

According to Murra's model of verticality, Andean populations attempt to control the largest possible number of ecological zones at different elevations in an effort to achieve their ideal of self-sufficiency. The internal organisation of these economies is based on reciprocity and redistribution: intergroup trading is peripheral or wholly lacking. (Orlove, 1977:87)

Emphasis clearly rests on the strong influence of altitude in determining production strategies. *Almwirtschaft* models, on the other hand, concentrate on describing a more comprehensive production strategy composed of a mixture of farming activities, usually within defined vertical zones. Literature typically draws examples from the Alps (see Burns, 1963; Cole, 1972; Netting, 1972; Wolf, 1962). According to Allan:

Traditional *Almwirtschaft* livelihoods focused on the self-sufficient farm with a cropping system based on wheat, rye, barley, potatoes, and in the southern Alpine areas, maize, integrated via rotation with intensive hay pastures (Penz, 1978). In winter and summer periodic movement took place between the main farmhouse and steading and the alp -the summer pasture above the timber line. In addition to the local pastoralist movement from the winter steading to the *mayan* or summer grazing grounds, transhumants from outside the mountain region grazed their sheep and goats on the high pastures during the summer (Hofmeister, 1971; Rinschede, 1979). Land use corresponded to the von Humboldt-type model [vertical ecological zones]. (Allan, 1986:186; emphasis added).

In essence *almwirtschaft* describes how Alpine communities exploit vertical ecological zones, without emphasising their constraining influence.

Plate Sixteen). The ideal type, in agricultural terms, consists of permanent settlements and terraced cereal cultivation on the lowest slopes and valley bottoms, some combination of tuber and fodder crops further up slope, and alpine pastures with seasonally occupied dwellings in the highest occupied zones.¹³ These few main altitudinal zones may be subdivided into more precise sub-zones. Of course aspect, slope, range of altitude, presence or absence of forest, political boundaries, and any combination of socio-cultural variables can complicate the form which a system of vertical control may take.

Almwirtschaft/verticality models contribute substantially to our understanding of how indigenous mountain communities perceive and utilise ecological resources. They typically provide detailed information on the types, quality and quantity of resources available in each zone. Moreover, studies within this framework often recognise indigenous categories and indigenous inventories of material resources. Implicit in them, and sometimes explicitly stated, is an understanding that indigenous communities recognise a limit to the carrying capacity of the resources of any particular zone, and so incorporate a concern for sustainability into their resource-use strategies. *Almwirtschaft*/verticality models postulate that it is precisely because community members realise that their material requirements cannot be satisfied by just irrigated agriculture, or just tuber production, or just high altitude grazing, that they attempt to utilise various zones. Communities gain sustainability from altitudinal diversification by increasing the quantity and variety of potential resources, and by decreasing the hazard implicit in the failure of any of those resources. The *almwirtschaft*/verticality model provides a framework for understanding how mountain farmers attain a balance between the ecological resources at their disposal and their lifeworld-derived requirements.

¹³ Although Murra's original model describes Andean communities in which "intergroup trading is peripheral or wholly lacking" (Orlove, 1977:87), other empirical research describes situations in which any particular community utilises only a couple of zones directly, and exchanges with other communities for the fruits of the remaining zones. In Hunza, for example, few communities have direct access to all zones ranging from the double-cropped main valley floor through the highest pasture zones. But combinations of villages have traditional arrangements whereby resources and produce are exchanged to effectively achieve access to all vertical zones.

At the same time, *almwirtschaft*/verticality has been justly criticised for being too environmentalist. Indigenous mountain farmers are given credit for recognising and effectively adapting to the constraints of their ecological context. But the range of activities related to indigenous communities' utilisation of their environment is seen as little more than adaption to environmental constraints (especially vertical climatic or biotic zones). Culture, economy, social structure and political structure are afforded little causal autonomy; they stem from adaption to the environment, and are not conceptualised as influencing it.¹⁴ Certainly, feelings of place and other symbolic meanings, while well-explored in mountain literature, are given little credence in research on indigenous mountain resource use (see Price, 1981).

One geographer who has challenged the propositions of *almwirtschaft*/verticality is Nigel Allan. In so doing he recognises the (increasing, as he sees it) influence of other non-ecological contexts, including social structure, political structure and economy. As a geographer he conceives **accessibility** (in purely spatial/locational terms) as the salient spatial indicator of those other systemic forces. Allan (1984, 1986, 1989) does not deny the existence of altitudinal environmental zones. Rather, he maintains that the determining influence of vertical zones on land use diminishes as the influence of accessibility (mainly to markets, but also to new ideas and technologies, external social control, etc) increases. Specifically, he states:

...there is enough evidence from the mid-twentieth century to indicate that as roads are built through mountain territory, land use reverts to a type portrayed by the common distance-decay model. This accessibility model for mountain habitat appears to be the driving force behind the changes in mountain land use in the South Asian mountain rimland. (Allan, 1989:130)

In short, "with the construction of rapid transportation routes into mountains in the latter part of the twentieth century, mountain land use became a function of access to nearby roads"

¹⁴ That is not to say that empirical studies employing an *almwirtschaft*/verticality framework do not recognise the importance of other systemic forces. Many do (see, for example Cole and Wolf's (1974) excellent study of the influence of ethnicity on land use in the Tyrol), but typically they fail to incorporate non-ecological causation into their conceptual framework.

VEGETATION	AGRICULTURAL		SOCIO-ECONOMIC
Nival	permanent snow		ski, pasture
Alpine	temporary snow		
Sub-Alpine	pasture	pasture	
Montane	forestry, pasture	tubers	pasture, forest
Lower Montane	pasture, agriculture, forestry	wet agriculture	
Sub-Tropical Forest	intensive agriculture & forestry	dry agriculture	agriculture
		irrigated agriculture	intensive agriculture
			vacation homes, commuters
HUMBOLDT	PEATTIE	BRUSH	SOFFER
Latin America	Alps, General	Latin America	U.S., Alps

Figure 10.2a: Vertical Zonation Models of Mountain Land Use¹⁵¹⁵ After Allan, 1986.

Plate Sixteen: Vertical Zones in Hunza

(From bottom to top: river flood plain, irrigated cropping zone, irrigated orchard and forestry zone, irrigated pasture zone, non-irrigated grazing zone, alpine pasture zone, permanent snow and ice. These are zones controlled by a single village.)

(Allan, 1989:130). Allan perceives that the importance of accessibility is becoming increasingly manifest both locally and regionally. However, within communities, especially relatively remote communities, altitude may continue to exert an important influence. Allan has formulated several 'types' which show the link between accessibility, verticality, and degrees to which land use has been modernised (see Figure 10.2b). Allan's types (which are meant to provide examples, and are not necessarily exhaustive) include (Allan, 1986:191):

- a) traditional, limited access, subsistence-oriented villages practising *almwirtschaft*,
- b) modernising, accessible market-oriented agricultural villages with potential for tourism and recreation,
- c) high-production oriented villages with rapid access to urban markets and services,
- d) growing urban markets and service centres, and
- e) subsistence, valley bottom villages hampered by the absence of a bridge or road accessibility.

These types are sequential; type (a) is expected at some time to become at least type (b) and then (c), if not necessarily (d). Thus, while *almwirtschaft*/verticality models describe indigenous utilisation of ecological zones, the accessibility model chronicles a reduction in those zones' importance.

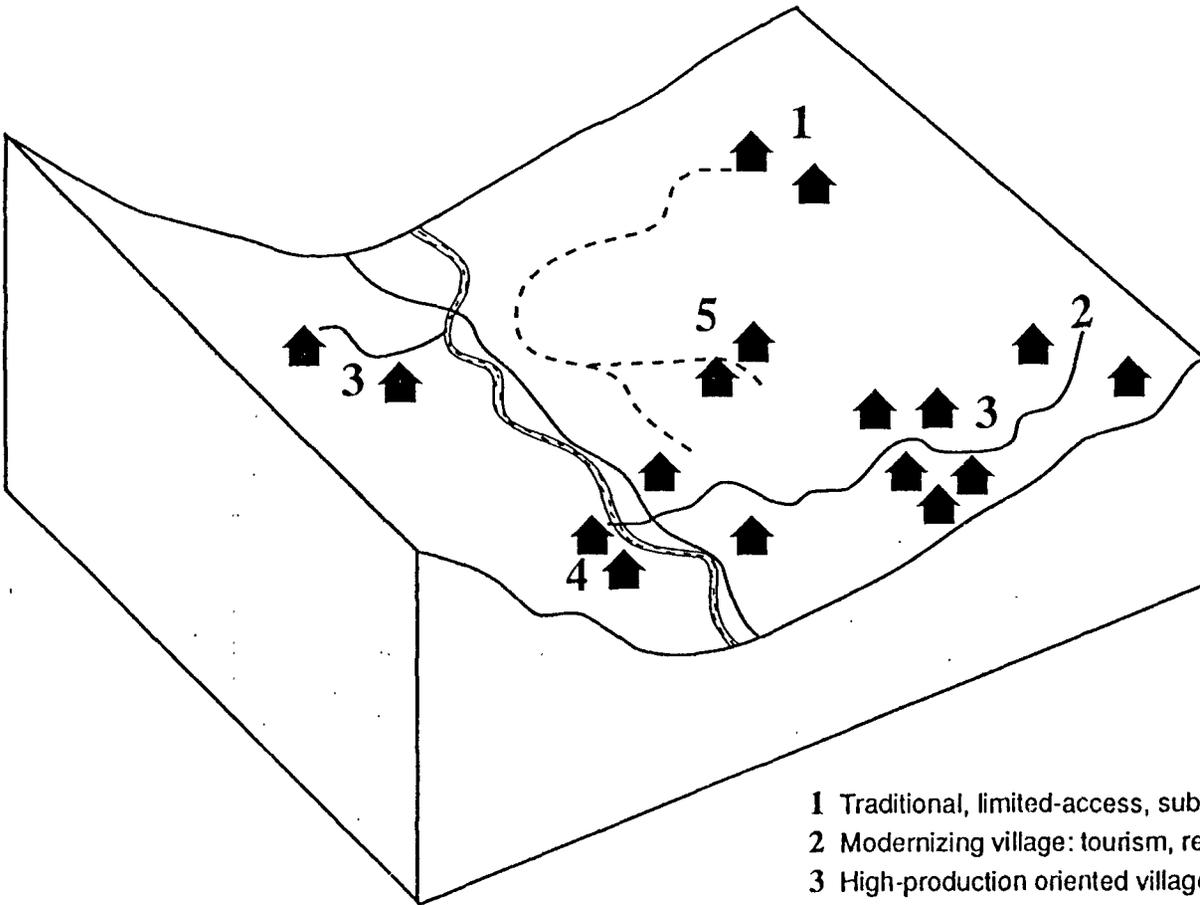
Unlike verticality and *almwirtschaft* Allan's accessibility model was developed for what he calls the "South Asian mountain rimland", and his main example interprets the influence of the recently completed Karakoram Highway on land use in northern Pakistan. It is designed to describe change in the region within which Shimshal is situated, and it does so well, but with two small problems of emphasis, which arise out of my particular objectives of understanding community sustainability and ecological volition.¹⁶

¹⁶ I do not intend a harsh criticism of the accessibility model on the basis of these problems, which are small and not directly related to Allan's objective to create a more socially-sensitive alternative to *almwirtschaft*/verticality models.

First, Allan fails to incorporate symbolic resources -feelings of place, belonging, place-based mythology, etc- into his framework. Individuals' attitudes, values and beliefs regarding their environment have certainly changed, as evidenced by their changing use of the land. By folding those symbolic changes into his primary interest for shifts in instrumental action, Allan could provide a more comprehensive explanation of how indigenous approaches to utilising environments have changed. An incorporation of symbolic meanings into his framework (such as I attempt in 10.3) would also offer some insight into how indigenous, how rational, how communicative the changes he describes are. Moreover, it would decrease the essentially deterministic role that Allan attributes to access (distance decay), and broaden his strictly spatial view of access to include other media of accessibility.

Second, Allan's accessibility model could go further in linking verticality with accessibility. Part of the reason the resources of different vertical zones are utilised differently is because some zones, specifically higher ones, are less accessible than others. This is true at the community level, and at the regional level. Shimshalis, for example, attribute certain symbolic resources to Shuwart pasture, and utilise its material resources in a specific way, partly because of the nature of those resources, partly because the pasture is high, and also partly because it is difficult to access due to distance, terrain and elevation. By the same token, Shimshal community's remote and lofty situation combine to influence the utilisation of its symbolic and material resources within Hunza. The construction of the Karakoram Highway and other roads has made all elevation zones more accessible, but has decreased the **relative** accessibility of the highest villages (like Shimshal) and the highest ecological resources (like the true alpine pastures).¹⁷ Ecological resource use in Shimshal has changed recently, partly because the community has become more accessible, and partly because it has become relatively less accessible than most other Hunza communities (eg.

¹⁷ As most places become accessible by road, and as people become accustomed to the comforts of road travel, those places that cannot be reached by road seem especially remote, despite the fact that they too can be reached more easily than before roads were built.



- 1 Traditional, limited-access, subsistence village
- 2 Modernizing village: tourism, recreation, agriculture
- 3 High-production oriented village: access to markets
- 4 Growing urban market and service centre
- 5 Subsistence valley-bottom village: poor access

Figure 10.2b: Accessibility Model of Mountain Land Use¹⁸

¹⁸ After Allan, 1986.

it attracts certain types of tourists that avoid more accessible places). The example of Shimshal indicates that land use cannot be explained just in terms of vertical zonation until access to roads and down country markets overwhelms the influence of altitude. Rather, altitude and access have always been closely related in influencing land use. They remain closely related, although the recent construction of roads has changed the nature of that relationship. Allan's accessibility model would be enhanced by a recognition that local strategies to use (or overcome) zones of accessibility and zones of verticality often go hand in hand. In the example that follows it becomes apparent that the importance of access is not necessarily a recent phenomenon associated with roads, motor vehicle traffic and modernised economies. In Shimshal accessibility is a truly indigenous influence that relates with altitude in influencing resource utilisation.

These issues of accessibility and *almwirtschaft*/verticality relate to ecological volition and community sustainability as follows. Traditional indigenous strategies of ecological resource use typically follow a pattern of vertical zonation, into which considerations of accessibility (within and among villages) figure. These systemic strategies are lifeworld-embedded; they incorporate and represent shared norms, ideals and background convictions. Lifeworld and the ecological subsystem are coupled, although not necessarily rationalised.¹⁹ Increases in access at the regional scale (to technologies, innovations, wages, markets, consumer goods, imported expectations, etc) disrupt that traditional pattern of lifeworld embedded land use as social system and lifeworld change. At this stage, some combination of two scenarios is possible. Communities can engage in a process of modernity by rationalising lifeworld according to new convictions and experiences, by subsequently rationalising social system, and by coupling the two through communicative decision making. The outcome would likely be a continued concern for long term sustainability and normatively appropriate ecological stewardship. Conversely, communities can take a path of modernisation, in which economic opportunities offered by accessible markets and bureaucratic

¹⁹ I am assuming here, according to the logic of Chapter Two, that traditional ecological systems incorporate and satisfy a concern for sustainability, within a traditional social, economic and political context.

opportunities offered by access to central government colonise lifeworld, and lead to a destruction of the communicative norms and convictions that inform appropriate stewardship of the environment. The first scenario enhances ecological volition by increasing the potential for community members to participate in ecological decision making. The second hinders ecological volition, by limiting the freedom of individuals to participate in communicative action, and by destroying the meanings that their ecological context holds for them.

In Shimshal the traditional pattern of material resource use is still largely intact, and still intimately coupled with lifeworld, although certain changes are occurring. Instrumental in those changes, and instrumental in local responses to them, are AKRSP village organisations. The following section offers the example of Shimshal's high pasture cycle in an effort to interpret how the community traditionally utilises its high pasture resources, how that utilisation has changed recently, and how AKRSP village organisations have influenced the pattern of high altitude ecological resource use.

10.2.2: Utilising Material Ecological Resources through an Annual Pastoral Cycle

The bulk of Shimshal's ecological resource use occurs via two related annual cycles: the pastoral cycle and the agricultural cycle. The two combine to comprise Shimshal's agro-pastoral subsistence base. Most other economic activity by resident Shimshalis (ie. portering, market production) interlocks with the agro-pastoral cycles in its complementary use of labour and time, and utilises ecological resources whose main utility for Shimshalis is for subsistence agricultural or pastoral production. Portering, for example, uses surplus labour from agro-pastoral activities to guide trekkers along pastoral routes, and in so doing allows porters to carry goods among

pastures, which goods help agricultural and pastoral cycles to interact and work effectively.²⁰ As well as relating to the economic sphere, the agro-pastoral cycles integrate closely with the symbolic ecological sphere, and with social and political organisation. Major events in both cycles are eagerly anticipated and celebrated in ritual observances that tie instrumental resource utility with symbolic resource significance. In addition, the specific functions of different resources and different places in the cycles are explained and validated through symbolic as well as instrumental rationale. The agro-pastoral cycles integrate with social and political organisation from several directions: through the *kuyotch* which regulates the cycles; through the lineage system that determines each individual's position in each cycle; through the Ismaili *jamaat* which controls interaction with certain resources; through institutions of socialisation according to which ecological beliefs, knowledge and practices are learned; through the generalisable interests of collectivity, solidarity and equity, and so on.

In this section I am concerned mainly with interpreting the pastoral cycle. However, because the two cycles are closely related, I begin with an overview of Shimshal's combined agro-pastoral system. I then provide a fairly detailed description of Shimshal's instrumental use of its material ecological resources, which leads into a more interpretive discussion of the organisation that underlies herding activity, and the effect of AKRSP village organisations on both instrumental activities and the structure underlying those activities.

All 108 households (about 1300 people) in Shimshal are directly involved in both cultivated agriculture and herding.²¹ There are no landless households in Shimshal, and all households have

²⁰ As discussed earlier, portering also sometimes removes labour from other pursuits.

²¹ According to Daulat Amin there are 120-123 houses in Shimshal, but only 108 households. The meaning of these figures is confused by the fact that there are perhaps thirty more dwellings than houses. A household is a social, economic, political and ecological unit. A house is a group of people living in one dwelling (ie. "great" households have more than one house). In addition, some households have dwellings that stand empty for part of the year. Daulat Amin's household, for example, moves to a dwelling near some of their fields for part of the harvest season. It has become fashionable in the past few years for households to build extra dwellings (what we would call houses). Butz (1990), Kreutzmann (1986) and Mock (1990), all offer slightly different estimates

access to pastures through sub-clan membership. Although certain households are not self-sufficient in staple agricultural requirements, Shimshalis claim that their community as a whole is.²² This level of self-sufficiency is exceptional for northern Pakistan, and may be attributed to a remarkable abundance of arable land, water and pasture. Shimshal's terraced and cultivated area occupies about 150 hectares on two large alluvial fans. Cultivation is increasing, through settlement and terracing, by a hectare or more each year. The community's main terraced area is fed by two meltwater *nalas* (streams), each of which contributes about ten cubic metres per second at peak flow. Villagers told me that flow from these streams is sufficiently abundant and reliable to meet their irrigation requirements. In addition, small, less consistent streams provide water for five other recently-terraced annexes to the main village area.²³ At least another 100 hectares of alluvial land which is not presently terraced, but which is accessible to water, exists within an hour or two's walk from land presently terraced. Community members have plans for that land's improvement when the road is finished (and markets become more accessible), or when subsistence needs

of population size and household number.

²² I have no reason to doubt this claim to self-sufficiency. I visited many households whose cheese, wheat, barley and potato stores were abundant just days before the beginning of harvest for each of those commodities. Mock (1990:46) claims that Shimshal is the only village of upper Hunza (Ghojal) that is self-sufficient in grain production. Villagers told him that "some people produce so much grain that they need to cultivate only every other year" (Mock, 1990:46). However, neither he nor I noticed unworked fallow terraces. In addition, Shimshal tends more livestock per capita than any other Ghojal community, and probably any other agro-pastoral community in northern Pakistan, and often exports livestock to central Hunza (AKRSP, 1986; Butz, 1990:7; Mock, 1990).

²³ Shimshal's arable land holdings per capita are larger than for most Karakoram communities, and its water supply is more abundant. Hopar, a Nagyri community at about the same elevation, attempts, for example, to support 4000 inhabitants on 260 hectares of terraced land (Butz, 1987). Large scale slumping is decreasing Hopar's cultivated land by more than a hectare each year. Hopar's main constraint to cultivation, however, is water. A single stream, the maximum discharge of which is 11 cubic metres per second, provides irrigation water for the entire community (see Butz, 1987 for a detailed analysis of Hopar's meltwater resource, and the community's irrigation system).

increase.²⁴ No other communities hold legitimate claims to lands bordering Shimshal's cultivated lands, so the community is able to develop its peripheral area according to its own demand, and within the constraints of its own lifeworld-embedded convictions toward ecological stewardship.

Currently, villagers grow hardy cereals (wheat, barley and buckwheat), potatoes, peas, beans, lucerne and vetch (the latter two for fodder). Most households maintain private wood lots of lombardy poplar and willow, and small apricot orchards. Vegetable plots, including some combination of cabbage, kale, turnips, onions, carrots, and lettuce are tended by some households. Staple crops have changed little from when Shipton visited the community in 1937 (Shipton, 1938). According to villagers, less barley, buckwheat, peas and beans, and more wheat (some of it imported varieties) and potatoes (Canadian seeds) are grown today. Poplar and willow cultivation is increasing, and the few apple trees that once existed have died.²⁵ Vegetable gardens are an innovation of the last twenty years, which have become increasingly important in the last five years as Shimshali palates have developed a taste for vegetable dishes eaten in lowland Pakistan.²⁶ Shimshal is located between about 3,000 and 3,300 metres above sea level, at the upper threshold of single crop cultivation. This means that growing season is too short for maize, and for all but the hardiest varieties of those crops that are cultivated (see Plate Seventeen).

Cultivated agriculture is still geared mainly toward subsistence. Villagers, with the encouragement of AKRSP, want to change that, and think that their opportunity to market cultivated produce effectively and collectively will come when the road is finished (see Chapter Nine). Presently the burden of transporting produce from Shimshal to Pasu constrains market orientation,

²⁴ Many households in Shimshal are terracing new lands, trying new crops, building additional dwellings, and increasing their breeding stock in response to recent increases in material prosperity, and in anticipation of future opportunities.

²⁵ Daulat Amin maintains that the new *jamaat khana*, built in 1967, is the first building constructed with poplar timber. Since that time most dwellings have been framed with poplars, and villagers consider the tree a valuable resource.

²⁶ Daulat Amin claims he introduced vegetables to Shimshal when he returned from school in 1967, and also convinced villagers to grow more potatoes (see Chapter 8.2).

although a few potatoes and some wheat makes its way out of the community. These are the two crops that Shimshalis hope to export in quantity within the next few years. In addition, some produce (mainly lumber and wheat) is bought and sold within the community. This internally-based cash cropping is less significant than the non-cash ritual exchange of produce discussed in Chapters Five and Nine.

Shimshal is similarly blessed with abundant grazing. The community enjoys exclusive control of vast areas of high altitude land, including sole grazing rights to the over 2700 square kilometres of the Central Karakoram that lie within their boundaries.²⁷ Within that area villagers maintain over three dozen individual pastures, including three large and highly productive alpine areas: Pamir, Lupgar and Ghujerab. Shimshalis tend more livestock per capita than any other Ghojal community (Abidi, 1987, see Table 10.2.a). A conservative estimate of livestock holdings based on 1988 and 1989 field research is approximately 6800 sheep and goats, 460 yaks and 300 cattle.²⁸

Herding has always been somewhat more market-oriented than cultivated agriculture, for

²⁷ That exclusive control is currently threatened. Several Pakistani and international organisations involved in Khunjerab National Park (that lies just north of Shimshal) have proposed that the park be enlarged to include most of Shimshal's pastures. If their proposals are approved, community members may lose the right to hunt and herd animals on their hereditary pastures. Such a development would be devastating to the community's ecological sustainability, in terms both of material ecological resources and symbolic ecological resources. Much of Shimshal's identity resides in the community's relationship with its high pastures (see 10.3).

²⁸ For a comparison with other recent estimates see Table 10.2a. Knudson's 1990 figures for sheep and goats seem improbably high, but match the more extravagant estimates that some Shimshalis gave me. They may derive from Wegge's (1988:15) report, which claims that Shimshalis herd 10,000 sheep and goats and 1,500 cattle. Wegge's estimates are extremely generous. Shimshalis laughed when I suggested they might herd 1500 cattle. My figures are based on a combination of estimates by many individuals, and head counts at some pastures. Knudson's estimate of total yaks is also considerably higher than mine. Mock (1990:47) reports that in the winter of 1989-90 several villages, including Morkhun, Pasu and Shimshal purchased yaks from Kirghis herders across the Chinese border. This may account for some of the discrepancy between my 1989 figures and Knudson's 1990 estimate. I doubt, however, that Shimshalis purchased 240 yaks. According to Mock (1990:32) each yak cost Rs. 3,000 (about \$180 Cdn), considerably cheaper than the Shimshali selling price, but still a lot of money for Shimshali households. It seems unlikely that the community would spend Rs. 720,000 (\$43,200 Cdn) on yaks in a single season. This is the first time Shimshal has supplemented their breeding stock from the outside since 1970. It indicates that the community anticipates opportunities to market yaks when the road is finished.

Plate Seventeen: Crops in Shimshal
(From foreground to background: barley, wheat, mixed peas and beans.)

two reasons. First, animals are more mobile than cultivated produce: they can be transported on the hoof. Second, Shimshalis can attain more profitable sums for their surplus animals than for surplus staple crops.²⁹ Livestock dealers (often agents for army quartermasters) from Hunza visit Shimshal during the fall, after animals have returned from summer pastures, to buy sheep and goats in lots of 50 to 100 (Mock, 1990:47).³⁰ In 1990 they paid about Rs. 800 per animal, or a "wholesale liveweight price of Rs. 20 per kilogram" (Mock 1990:47) (see Table 10.2b for 1990 prices for Shimshal livestock). Later in the fall, when river flow reaches its minimum, these sheep and goats, together with some yaks, are driven along the river valleys to the Karakoram Highway. Considerable buying and selling of livestock also occurs within the community; livestock represents the most portable of traditional material assets, and is considered a more appropriate medium of exchange than grain, which is considered more essential for subsistence.³¹ Indeed, Shimshalis consider livestock, and especially yaks, to be a vehicle for storing and utilising wealth. Daulat Amin told me that "Shimshal depends on livestock at Pamir for anything beyond a lifestyle of meagre subsistence". Mock suggests that the words of one villager represent a general attitude toward yaks, and livestock in general:

...today we are eating butter and fresh cream on our bread. we are sitting on thick rugs in a comfortable well made room. My son studies in Karachi. All these things come from keeping yaks. Five years ago I had no yaks and I had none of these things. (Mock, 1990:10)

²⁹ This is especially true since subsidised Punjabi wheat has been transported to communities along the Karakoram Highway.

³⁰ John Mock, whom I cite frequently in this chapter, is a linguist and sociologist who spent two months in the Khunjerab area of northern Pakistan as a consultant for the World Wide Fund for Nature. He collected information from several villages, including Shimshal, on indigenous utilisation of resources within areas under consideration for inclusion in Khunjerab National Park. He concluded that Shimshal, at least, is utilising its pastures sustainably and without threatening the existing ecosystem, so that there is no need to include Shimshal territory within park boundaries.

³¹ I find it interesting that although Shimshalis seem to prefer herding to cultivated agriculture, and seem to view their herds as an altogether more rewarding commodity (spiritually and materially) than their terraces, they have a more serious and more cautious attitude toward cereal production. Households frequently speculate on their herds and flocks, try new breeds, trade, buy and sell animals. But they are reluctant to risk or sell any grain, and would never risk their terraces. The attitude is that herds represent wealth and luxury, but terraces and grain represent survival.

Table 10.2a: Shimshal Livestock Holdings

LIVESTOCK PER HOUSEHOLD			
Source	Cattle	Sheep and Goats	Yaks
AKRSP 1985 (Abidi, 1987)	1.9	60.7	4.1
Butz, 1989 ³²	2.8	63.0	4.3
Knudson, 1990 (Mock, 1990)	NA	75	5.8
TOTAL LIVESTOCK			
Source	Cattle	Sheep and Goats	Yaks
AKRSP 1985 (Abidi, 1987)	222	7240	492
Butz, 1989	300	6800	460
Knudson, 1990 (Mock, 1990)	NA	9000	700

Renewable animal products, especially cloth and dairy produce, constitute part of the wealth derived from animals. Indeed, these products provide most of livestock's subsistence value, because Shimshalis eat little meat. According to Mock (1990:48) the average household in Shimshal produces *pattu* cloth and yak and goat hair rugs worth about Rs. 7800 per year. Most of this cloth is used within Shimshal, so its monetary value is not realised. The surplus is sold, or stored as a safeguard against future monetary need. *Ghee* (clarified butter), milk, curd, cream and cheese are produced during the summer. Of these, *ghee* and cheese have the greatest exchange value. Mock claims that the annual average *ghee* production per household is about Rs. 3800. Little of that is actually sold, although households exchange or donate much of their *ghee* and cheese according to a variety of ritual obligations. For example, the first few weeks of cheeses produced each year at Shuwart are pledged to the *jamaat*.

The abundance of ecological resources relative to population and market-oriented demand,

³² These figures per household are slightly higher than those cited in Butz (1989, 1990), because I shifted my estimate of total households to match Mock (1990).

combined with careful stewardship, allows Shimshalis to surpass their subsistence needs with little evidence of environmental degradation. Although no detailed studies have been undertaken to assess the ecological health of the community's cultivated agricultural resources, my cursory investigations revealed no signs of stress. The four main potential problems are slope instability, water erosion, leaching of nutrients from irrigation, and soil fatigue due to overcropping. Terracing greatly reduces slope instability, so that cultivated slopes are considerably more stable than adjacent areas. Irrigation water is carefully allocated and controlled, so that the danger of human-induced water erosion or nutrient-leaching is small.³³ Certainly, heavy rainfalls cause mud flows, slumping, and rill erosion, but mainly on un-terraced or newly terraced lands. Well-established terraces reduce these hazards, and the irrigation system itself dissipates the potential for swollen *nalas* to erode terraces.³⁴ I collected and analysed soil samples from throughout Shimshal's cultivated area. All necessary micro and macro-nutrients exist in abundance, except nitrogen.³⁵ Farmers apply manure to fields, which boosts nitrogen somewhat, and increasingly legumes are rotated into the cropping cycle. Chemical fertilisers are also becoming more available and more acceptable, although transportation remains a problem. That Karakoram farmers have sustained some of the world's highest yields for generations, and continue to increase their land's productivity, suggests that terraced soils are not over-stressed.³⁶

³³ See Butz (1987, 1989) for descriptions of indigenous irrigation water management in Hopar, a community in Nagyr with similar ecological and resource management contexts to Shimshal. Parts of Butz (1989) are reproduced in Appendix 11, to exemplify how communities in the high Karakoram utilise their cultivated agricultural resources.

³⁴ Certainly, some fluvial hazards, like glacier dam-burst flooding on the Shimshal River, are beyond the capability of Shimshalis to control, except to the extent they can predict a flood and protect themselves and some of their possessions. But these events are not human-induced. In 1964 some 40 houses were destroyed, and 20 hectares of terraced land was washed away, by flood waters.

³⁵ The application of silt-laden irrigation water continually replenishes soil nutrients. See Appendix 11.

³⁶ Whiteman (1985) claims that potato yields in Yasin, a community about 100 kilometres from Shimshal, are 85 tonnes per hectare, the highest in the world. Numerous studies conducted throughout the Karakoram provide evidence that Karakoram farmers have utilised their cultivated

Table 10.2b: Livestock Prices in Shimshal, 1990

Type	Description	Price Rs.	Price Rs./kg
Cattle	fallow cow	3,000	
	cow in calf	4,000	
	bull	4,000	
Sheep	ewe	500	30 live
	ram	800-1,000	30 live
Goats	nanny	600-800	35 live
	billy	1,500	35 live
Yaks	cow	5,000	
	bull	8,000-9,000	

Source: Mock, 1990:47.

Since 1988 several preliminary studies have evaluated the ecological health of pastoral lands throughout Ghojal, including those lands within Shimshal territory. These studies test the position of Khunjerab National Park administrators that indigenous communities overgraze their pastures, and that the outcome is erosion, and a depletion of wildlife and vegetation.³⁷ The

agricultural resources carefully and sustainably (see Butz, 1987, 1989; Saunders, 1984; Whiteman, 1985).

³⁷ Khunjerab National Park (KNP) was officially established in 1974, with the principal objective of conserving endangered populations of Marco Polo sheep and snow leopards in the Karakoram Region of northeastern Pakistan adjacent to the Chinese border, and with the more general purpose of preserving a high mountain environment in a near undisturbed state (Mock, 1990:2). Lack of funds and initiative prohibited the development of park infrastructure or a management strategy until 1986, when a Directorate of Khunjerab National Park was created as a semi-autonomous organisation within the Forestry Department of the Administration of Northern Areas (Wegge, 1988:2). While Khunjerab National Park is an organisation within the Pakistani government, considerable funding, technical support and impetus for conservation comes from international non-governmental organisations. The most important of these are the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), its parent organisation the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), and the World Wide Fund for Nature. Indeed, the two reports (Mock, 1990; Wegge, 1988) on the state of wildlife and wild landscape in the Khunjerab region that I cite in this chapter were commissioned by the World Wide Fund for Nature and IUCN respectively. Some of the organisations involved in the administration of Khunjerab National Park are lobbying

position of these organisations derives from other studies which indicate that several species of wild animals, which share the habitat of domestic livestock, have recently become endangered, especially snow leopard, Marco Polo sheep and blue sheep. Ibex numbers have also diminished (see Schaller, 1980, 1989; Wegge, 1988). Both Wegge (1988) and Mock (1990) conclude that, for the most part, Ghojal communities do not overgraze their pastures, although some overgrazing may occur locally. These authors cite Shimshal as a community that employs particularly sound grazing practices. According to Wegge, who was commissioned to assess Khunjerab National Park and environs by the International Union of Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources:

Extensive grazing by domestic stock in the northern (Khunjerab) and southeastern (Pamir) parts of the park may locally have led to some range degradation, **but negative effects on wildlife are probably insignificant.** (Wegge, 1988:i; emphasis added)

Mock, in a report to the World Wide Fund for Nature, summarises recent trends, and Shimshal's place in them, in more detail:

There had been, then, prior to 1975, a pattern of several centuries of shared grazing in the Khunjerab pastures between domestic stock (sheep, goats and yaks) and wild ungulates. I found no historical evidence that would support the hypothesis that the presence of livestock is directly responsible for the decrease in Marco Polo sheep, ie, that domestic stock have invaded the habitat of Marco Polo sheep and are responsible for expelling them from their Pakistan habitat... There has been "an enormous **decrease** in livestock numbers" from the colonial (British) time to the present (Kreutzmann, 1986). This trend continues even today... The decline in both domestic and wild ungulate numbers appears to derive from the same circumstance.

Increased pressure on the ecosystem has resulted from increased access made possible by the construction of the Karakoram Highway (KKH), which was opened in 1978. It has resulted in increased access to the Khunjerab region as a whole and to Khunjerab Pass specifically. Reports of Marco Polo sheep before and after the opening of KKH support this. In 1975-76, 300 sheep were reported, whereas in December 1979, the population had declined to 120 and 100 in March 1980 (Ghulam Rasul in Wegge, 1988).

The KKH has also brought about a decrease in grazing pressure on the ecosystem. Non farm employment opportunities have arisen for local people (as drivers, shop keepers or through out migration). This has had the effect of reducing the available labour for herding activities and with it, of reducing livestock numbers. Children and women, who typically carried out pasture duties, have had

to include large parts of Shimshal territory within park boundaries.

to take up the duties of those men who have taken other, non farm jobs or have gone outside for work. In addition, increased participation in education for girls as well as boys has further reduced the available labour for herding (Kreutzmann, 1986).³⁸

This decline in livestock numbers has occurred in the Wakhi villages along the KKH. It does not seem to have occurred in Shimshal village. Because Shimshal village is a difficult three day walk from the KKH, the above mentioned factors responsible for the decrease in livestock in villages along the KKH have not arisen in Shimshal. Shimshal has sufficient land and labour. Increased education participation has been adapted to the herding needs through an adjustment of school scheduling. Livestock numbers appear to be holding steady or perhaps slightly increasing, as the appearance of China yaks on the market allows herders to obtain new stock. However, the extensive grassland resources in Shimshal appear to be sustaining both livestock and healthy wildlife populations (Wegge, 1988). (Mock, 1990:6; emphasis in original)

Mock attributes the recent decline in wild ungulates to the construction of the Karakoram Highway. First, large numbers of animals were shot to feed road construction crews, and then, when the highway made the Khunjerab accessible to townspeople, intensive hunting was practised by government officials, army personnel and visiting dignitaries (Mock, 1990:6-7). He concludes his overview of the decline of wildlife in Khunjerab pastures by stating:

The pressure on this previously relatively balanced grassland ecosystem, which supported healthy populations of wild ungulates, domestic livestock, and, in turn, local people, derives from development and its accompanying social and economic change, over which local people have no control. The perception that the problem in the Khunjerab is the local people assumes a negative relationship between people and the environment, a view that is not supported by a several hundred year history of grazing practice. (Mock, 1990:7)

My own investigations support the conclusions of Mock and Wegge. In 1988 and 1989 I

³⁸ Mock does not mention a progression of circumstances that has led to degradation of pastures in other Karakoram communities, and may also cause some pastures to be overgrazed in the Khunjerab area. In Hopar community, for example, a reduction in labour available for herding (for the same reasons as those cited by Mock) led communities to abandon their highest and most remote (and often most productive) pastures, and graze livestock exclusively on those lower pastures close to the community (see Butz, 1987). This strategy reduced the amount of labour needed to herd livestock, but also meant that lower pastures were overgrazed, and high pastures were lost as a material ecological resource.

visited and evaluated 19 of Shimshal's pastures.³⁹ Although many existed in a biotically and geomorphologically fragile landscape, there was little evidence that grazing had stressed ecological conditions; it seemed that overgrazing was not a problem despite the vulnerability of these pastures (many of which are cold, arid, and geomorphically unstable) to overgrazing.⁴⁰ That pastures are not overgrazed indicates that Shimshalis are aware of ecological limitations, and respect those limitations effectively in their herding practices. The salient aspects of Shimshal's herding strategy are encompassed in the community's annual herding cycle, which is comprised of several smaller spatial and temporal cycles.

Livestock in Shimshal is herded in seven distinct transhumant cycles which manifest Shimshalis' responses to a number of concerns: the social imperatives of herding (sub-clan and lineage-based rights to use pastures), symbolic ecological convictions (meanings and identities associated with pasture lands), the labour-efficiency of herding (accessibility, terrain, quality of grazing, water supply), the production of thrifty livestock (quality of grazing, altitude, terrain, water supply), the ecological sustainability of pastures (altitude, quality of grazing, terrain, water supply), and the opportunity to engage in other activities at the same time as herding (hunting, fuel collection, tourism, cultivation, all of which relate to altitude, water supply, terrain, accessibility). These concerns, and their component elements, are related: accessibility relates to altitude and terrain; quality of grazing relates with altitude, terrain and water supply; meaning and identity relate to altitude, accessibility, water supply, terrain and quality of grazing; and so on. In the discussion that follows I interpret Shimshal's seven transhumant cycles, with special emphasis on altitude and accessibility. The influence of other concerns, perhaps better described as contexts, becomes clear in relation to altitude and accessibility. Figure 10.2c provides a general overview of Shimshal's

³⁹ The exact number of pastures utilised by Shimshalis is difficult to discern, because community members themselves distinguish both among and within individual pastures. Shuwart pasture, for example, is divided into more than a dozen specific grazing areas. Suffice it to say that I visited all distinct pasture areas in Shimshal.

⁴⁰ I compiled my findings in a report to the AKRSP. Parts of that report are reproduced in Appendix 12.

seven cycles and their integration. The square boxes represent summer movements of the seven herding cycles, and their location on the page represents their altitude ranges. The oval box represents winter grazing at Shimshal village and Shagdi, downstream along the Shimshal River. Words inside the boxes are pasture names, and letters outside the boxes represent the types of livestock herded in the cycle (y,c, and s for yaks, cattle, and sheep and goats). Thick arrows show that six of the seven cycles include wintering of at least some stock in Shimshal. Arrows within the boxes illustrate animal movement throughout the summer season.

Spordin cycle accounts for the care of all 300 cattle. The three pastures involved are low, sheltered and accessible to the villages (see Figures 10.2d and 10.2e). These qualities are important since cattle are perceived to be poorly suited to mountain terrain and climate. They are not tended continuously, which means that they have to be visited periodically from the village, so that accessibility to Shimshal is a priority. Accessibility is also important because oxen must be driven to the villages when their draught power is required (for ploughing and harvest). Each of Spordin, Zartgar Bin and Molonguti provide a regular water supply, but sparse vegetation. Only Molonguti has a small area of dense vegetation. Cattle spend the winter, from early September to early May, in Shimshal, and return to pasture after ploughing. Animals migrate to Molonguti (3200m) in May, Spordin (4200m) in June and Zartgar Bin in July (3950m), making a short cycle up slope and then down slope again. No cattle pasture is grazed for more than a month and a half each season. The three cattle pastures are shared by all Shimshalis, without regard for sub-clan membership (which suggests that cattle herding has come only recently to Shimshal).⁴¹

Cattle (as opposed to livestock in general) have never been an important resource in Shimshal, and they have little symbolic value for Shimshalis. Indeed, over half of Shimshali

⁴¹ During the period they are at Spordin, about 100 cattle cross Boesim Pir Pass and graze briefly at Pitchard Wask.

households have no cattle, although all households tend sheep and goats, and most herd yaks.⁴² They are tended indifferently, and tend to be in poor condition. Shimshalis claim that they keep cattle only because they could become an important source of revenue in the future, especially with the prospect of an easy route to Pasu. Pakistani army quartermasters, who purchase meat from Karakoram villagers, prefer beef to lamb. Several villagers expressed an interest in breeding their cows with bulls from an AKRSP-sponsored breeding project in Kaiber (north of Pasu along the Karakoram Highway). Their aim is to produce a herd of hardy dual purpose cattle. In addition, those households who are most committed to beef production have, at the instigation of the AKRSP, gradually shifted toward stall feeding cattle all year round, because of cattle's sensitivity to harsh environmental conditions (see Plate Eighteen).

The likelihood of developing viable market production of cattle based on stall feeding is small. Shimshalis have no lifeworld-based affinity toward cattle. They are reluctant to devote labour or resources toward cattle that could be devoted to sheep, goats and yaks, which are regarded as more productive, more worthy and more "Shimshali". Stall feeding requires more labour, and the diversion of more terraced and irrigated vegetation, than pasturing.⁴³ Some households keep a single cow or goat in the village for daily milk, and feed it on thinnings and scraps, without much trouble. But to build large stables, and devote irrigated land to fodder production would significantly alter Shimshal's lifeworld-embedded disposition of ecological resources, and would probably stress ecological resources near the village. In addition, large scale cattle production would mean that more women would have to spend their summers in the village, with a corresponding decrease in female labour available for herding in high pastures. Male labour for subsistence pursuits (including cattle husbandry) is already short. Shimshalis, both male and female, seem reluctant to rearrange

⁴² This is not to say that all households contribute labour to the pastoral cycle. About 80 households engage actively in herding. The rest, typically those with the fewest animals, entrust their animals to the care of other households within their maximal lineage group.

⁴³ Because hay making, on terraced land, replaces grazing.

Plate Eighteen: A Low Altitude Cattle Pasture

the spatial allocation of labour in this manner, since the summer migration of women to high pastures is a salient aspect of Shimshal's relationship with its revered high altitude areas.

The herding of cattle relates closely to both altitudinal zones and accessibility to villages. Because cattle are needed periodically for draught, because they do not travel well, and because they are not tended continuously, they are kept at pastures close to permanent settlements. On the other hand, since cattle are not well adapted to environmental extremes, they must be herded in areas of gentle terrain, shelter and consistent water supply. Those conditions occur in the lowest elevation zones, and seasonally in the highest. However, the highest pastures are too far from the village, and too cold to efficiently support cattle.

Yaks are herded in four cycles: Pamir, Ghujerab, Luggar and Yukshin Gardan. They are kept at high altitudes for the entire year, except for a few days during ploughing and threshing when they descend to Shimshal villages. Their minimum summer grazing elevation is about 3900m. However, since yaks usually occupy the upper elevations of goat and sheep pastures, it is unlikely that they commonly graze below 4400m in summer. In winter they may descend to 3400m, but usually forage above 4000m. Yaks are hardy animals specifically adapted to a cold, snowy environment. Villagers are careful not to expose them to the intense heat of lower altitudes for long. Yak cows are milked for several months after giving birth in spring, so they are tended carefully. Women and children herd female yaks and their small calves during the day, and drive them to paddocks in the summer pasture village at night. They are milked in the paddocks by their owners every morning and evening. Bulls and young animals are left to roam more or less at will unless they are needed for draught or riding. Both cows and bulls forage freely during the winter, but they tend to stay close to the dwellings of the few men who spend the winter in high pastures protecting yaks from wolves and snow leopards, chopping holes in the ice, and digging for forage through the snow. All animals are captured and enclosed briefly in spring for shearing.

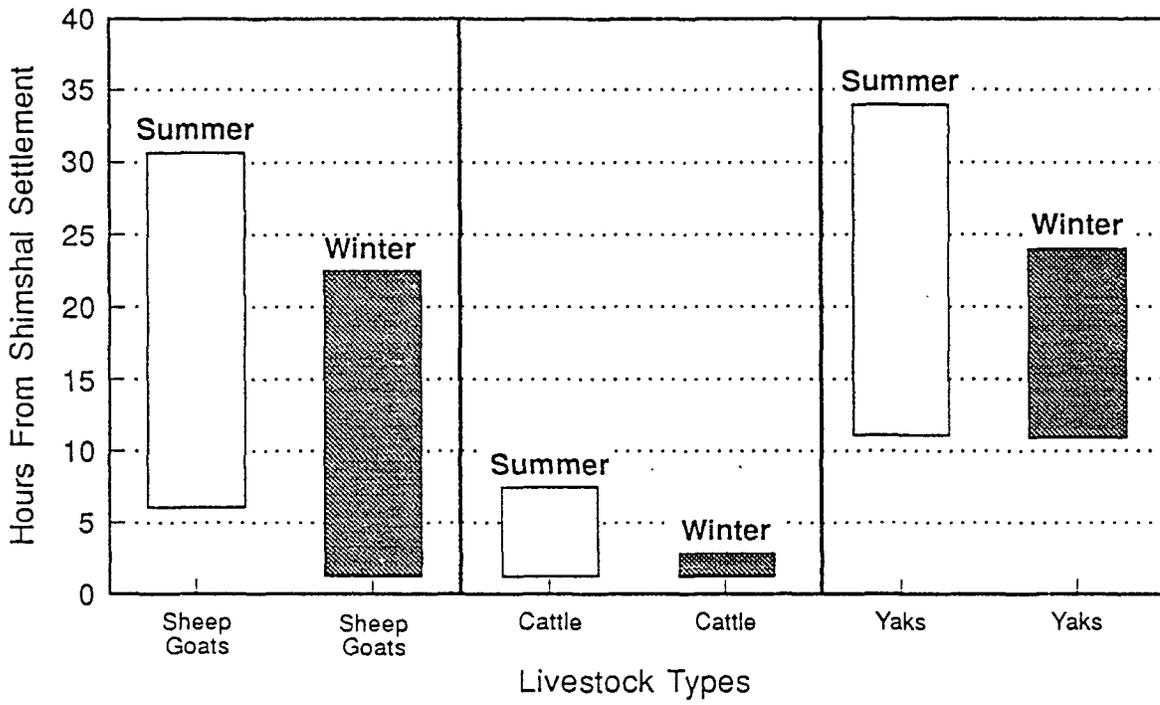


Figure 10.2d: Seasonal Access Ranges for Shimshal's Livestock

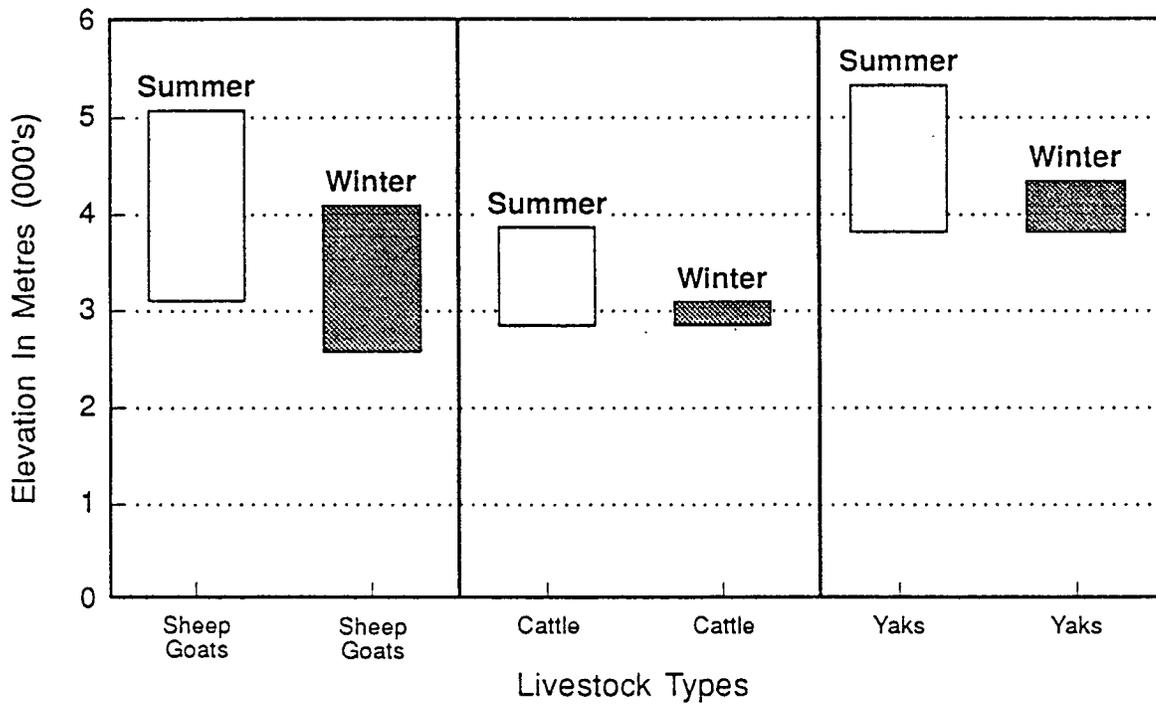


Figure 10.2e: Seasonal Altitude Ranges for Shimshal's Livestock

Pamir cycle accounts for 400 of Shimshal's 460 yaks.⁴⁴ In spring, (early May) all 400 yaks converge for a month on Shujerab, a verdant and sheltered pasture between 4300 and 4500m. During this period female yaks bear their calves, and shearing is done. This is a particularly busy time at the pastures, during which men join women in herding responsibilities. Women herd and milk the animals, and process dairy products. Men do most of the shearing, help with births, assist in the migration of yak herds, and repair whatever damage was done to summer villages by winter weather. Men drive fifty or so animals to Shimshal for spring cultivation. In early June the animals ascend with the snow line to Shuwart, and occupy the highest slopes, mainly above 4700m. They remain in this alpine environment until October, when 100 of the less hardy animals return to the relatively sheltered environment of Shujerab for the winter. The rest forage in the deep snows of winter pastures beyond Shimshal Pass (Shuwart pasture is right at Shimshal Pass, one of the passes separating the Indian sub-continent and Asia). Chikkor, at about 4450m, is the most important of these. Only if snows are particularly deep are animals driven to Furzin or Sheralik, farther down slope.⁴⁵ These pastures are irrigated in a rudimentary way during the summer, so that sufficient vegetation grows to support foraging throughout the winter. Half a dozen men spend the winter with the yaks at this location, completely isolated from Shimshal by the weather. They subsist for six months entirely on dairy products and whatever flour they transported the six day walk from Shimshal in autumn. Villagers claim that before 1986 about 1000 yaks occupied the Pamir cycle. In 1986 a particularly cold and snowy winter killed over half of the animals.^{46,47}

⁴⁴ These are 1989 figures. According to Mock (1990) Shimshalis herd some 720 yaks now. As I discuss elsewhere in this section, I find Mock's estimate doubtful.

⁴⁵ Occasionally the Indian summer monsoon brings inclement weather to Shimshal's high pastures, in the event of which herders drive animals at Shuwart to Chikkor. On July 31st and August 1st 1989, Shimshal experienced a severe storm, which buried Shuwart in snow. Herders drove all stock to Chikkor for a period of several days, until the snow cover melted at Shuwart.

⁴⁶ This winter campaign, locally called *shpoon*, takes on legendary dimensions in Shimshal. Those men who care for the yaks well, without many losses, are treated as heroes by other villagers. In 1988, when I was travelling from Shimshal to Shuwart with a group of men, I met two of the *shpoon* herders at a resting place. They were travelling back to Shimshal after their winter rigours. Wherever they stopped they were feasted and treated with special respect. One of my

The yak pastures in the Pamir cycle comprise the best grazing lands in Shimshal. At about 4000m the steep and unstable river valley slopes blend into rolling uplands, some of which extend up to about 5500m. These "pamirs" receive surplus moisture throughout the year, so grassy vegetation is verdant, and drinking water plentiful. Above 4800m climate begins to get too extreme for sheep and goats, so yak herds have no competition for vegetation. Indeed, yaks allow Shimshalis to exploit an altitudinal zone of abundant pastoral resources, which would otherwise remain unused except for hunting, and now for trekking (see Plate Nineteen).

Pastures included in the Ghujerab (the main ones are Waraband, Hafdiji, Mandikshula) and Lupgar (Lupgar, Momhil) cycles share common characteristics with Pamir -high altitude, broad and open topography, verdant vegetation, and abundant water- although the Ghujerab pastures are somewhat lower and less abundant. In winter they are cold and snowy with little topographic shelter from the elements.

closest companions, Laili Shah, went on *shpoon* in 1989 and 1991. Only one of the yaks in his care died during the winter of 1989, despite a hard winter. To show their gratitude, other village households gave Laili's household six yaks, worth a small fortune. Despite being the quiet younger son of a relatively unimportant household, Laili now enjoys considerable status and authority. I was told many times that Laili represented the ideal Shimshali man. (see 10.3.3).

⁴⁷ Mock describes the winter *shpoon* as follows:

The principle *shpoon* is the Pamir *shpoon*. Six or seven men who own yaks leave Shimshal within one week of the arrival of the autumn *kooch* (*kooch* is the seasonal migration to and from the pastures). Those families owning three or more yaks are obligated to send a person on *shpoon*. This currently results in a rotation of about six years; that is, a family which owns three or more yaks will be obligated to send one male member on *shpoon* about every six years... The community of yak owners provide the *shpoon* with their food and supplies. It is interesting to note that the family of the Mir of Hunza, which still keeps yaks in the Pamir, is also obligated to give provisions to the *shpoon*, although not obligated to send a member on *shpoon*. In the autumn, the yaks do not return to Shimshal with the *kooch*. instead, they stay in the Pamir until the *shpoon* arrives. Before the winter snows become too deep, the *shpoon* take the yaks across the Shimshal Pass and spend the cold months at the relatively warmer pastures along the Braldu River and the Oprang River. These pastures are reserved exclusively for this purpose. In the spring, the *shpoon* recrosses the Shimshal Pass and meets the *kooch* when it returns to Shuijerab in May. There, the men of the *shpoon* return the yaks to the care of their owners and give an accounting. They may be obliged to compensate the owners if there have been too many losses of yaks during the winter. (Mock, 1990:49)

The 25 yaks at Lupgar spend the summer months above 5300m; in winter they descend to 4300m. They bear their young and are shorn before ascending to summer grazing areas. From early November to December they graze briefly on the fresh vegetation at Momhil in a last effort to fatten up for winter, before returning to Lupgar.⁴⁸

Another 25 yaks graze at the Ghujerab pastures during the summer, migrating from Mandikshula (4400m) through Waraband (4200m) to Hafdiji (3800m) and back again. These are the main Ghujerab pastures, located in the Ghujerab River valley. Yaks are herded and tended in alpine grazing areas far up slope from the main pastures (Spe Spyngo, Dih, Chafchingal). In October they migrate to Pamir and spend the coldest months with the *shpoon*.

Approximately 12 rare "blue" yaks spend the year at Yukshin Gardan. This cycle is anomalous because the pasture is much smaller, lower (mean altitude 4000m) and sparser than the other yak pastures, and because no migration of animals occurs. Indeed, I hesitate to call this area a pasture; it may be more accurately described as a preserve. The yaks here are neither tended nor domesticated. For the most part they are left alone, and occasionally shot for food.⁴⁹

Yaks are an important resource to Shimshal, both symbolically and materially. Yak hair is used to manufacture rugs and ropes and a variety of heavy garments. Yak milk is highly valued as a sweet thick drink, and to make yogurt, buttermilk, *ghee* (clarified butter) and cheese.⁵⁰ In

⁴⁸ That was the information given unequivocally by Shimshalis in 1988 and 1989. According to Mock (1990:49), however, "beyond Yazgil are pasture areas along the Virjerab and Khurdopin Glaciers where some yaks are kept, especially during the winter months". I can only imagine that these are Lupgar yaks, driven to winter among the forests along these glaciers, although they may be Shuwart cycle yaks driven there by some circuitous route beyond Shimshal Pass. I was told that there are no pastures as such in the moraine valleys adjacent to Khurdopin and Virjerab Glaciers, so Mock's statement remains something of a mystery until I can talk to Shimshalis.

⁴⁹ This is the one pasture area I have not visited. I suspect, however, that what the Shimshalis call "blue" yaks are wild yaks (*bos mutus*), which are a different genus from domestic yaks (*bos grunniens*) (see Mock, 1990:9-10). This may explain why the "blue" yaks at Yukshin Gardan are never herded, only hunted.

⁵⁰ Mock (1990:48) provides an estimate the value of yak products:
From the yak's hair is also woven *palos* carpet. One *palos* of 15m length and 1m width can be produced from the hair of five yaks. the average [Shimshal] household would produce 1 *palos* annually. The average price for one such *palos*

Plate Nineteen: A High Altitude Yak Pasture

is Rs. 5000.

...10 yaks are said to produce 80kg of *ghee* [clarified butter] annually... If the average household has 2.5 female yaks, the average annual *ghee* production would be 20 kg [the equivalent of 25 sheep or goats], with a value of Rs. 2200. (Mock, 1990:48)

addition, the animals provide Shimshal's only transportation, and most of its draught power. Since the alpine sheep, goat and yak pastures are at least a day's journey above the tree line, Shimshalis rely completely on yak droppings for fuel for cooking and processing dairy products. Neither sheep or goats, nor yaks, could be herded in the high alpine areas without this fuel source. They would "have to be kept lower, close to tree line, from where they would be taken for grazing on a daily basis" (Mock, 1990:49). Yaks also have an important role in Shimshal's community identity and consciousness (see 10.3). Villagers are proud that they have one of the last large herds in the Karakoram, and perceive this fact as evidence of their uniqueness. Many of the legends about the formation and history of Shimshal involve yaks (eg. battles and polo games on yak back). Yak pastures, particularly the higher slopes of Pamir and Lupgar, are spoken of reverentially, and community members consider it an honour to tend yaks. According to Mock:

Tending yaks is considered a particular privilege. Those who spend the summers in high pastures with the yaks are regarded as fortunate. These herders demonstrate a rich knowledge of the environment. They take into consideration numerous factors necessary to provide optimum sustainable grazing for the yaks, even identifying which species of flowering herbs provide optimal nutrition. Even those who tend yaks periodically during the harsh winters acquire considerable prestige from this work. (Mock, 1990:10)

Yaks are admired for their size and strength; villagers gain considerable prestige from riding and racing the largest bulls. Each yak has a name and an identity. From a purely ecological perspective, these animals allow the community to exploit a resource which could not be utilized otherwise: the highest alpine meadows.

Accessibility to permanent cultivated lands is not an important concern for the herding of yaks (see Figure 10.2d). The animals are needed in the villages briefly, but they travel well. In addition, they are considered to be important enough both as a material resource and as a source of identity, to be tended continuously at high altitudes. That villagers perceive their stay in high pastures as something of a holiday (at least in summer) contributes to their solicitous attitude toward yaks. The breeding of yaks is a good example of the utilization of vertical zones (see Figure 10.2e). Shimshalis are able to exploit an extremely high zone that is ideally suited to yak herding,

but virtually useless for anything else but hunting. In addition, the verdant beauty (as perceived by Shimshalis) of the highest pastures together with the effort required for yakherds to live permanently at those elevations, fits well with the almost reverential attitude Shimshalis have toward yaks.

Despite Shimshalis' affinity toward yaks, sheep and goats are unquestionably the community's most important pastoral resources. Sheep and goats are herded together, but separated into different paddies for milking and shearing. Shimshal's 6800 sheep and goats provide the community with most of its wool, most of its dairy produce including *ghee*, cheese, buttermilk, yogurt and milk, much manure for fertilizer, and virtually all meat consumed by villagers.⁵¹ During summer, and parts of spring and fall sheep and goats share the same pastures as yaks, and can be tended with them. However, they graze the lower slopes of the high pastures, whereas yaks graze the highest slopes. For the remainder of the year sheep and goats utilise pasture areas that are too sparse for yaks and too harsh for cattle. They are able to survive on pastures characterised by low vegetation density, few species, intermittent water, and precipitous slopes (Mock, 1990:12). At the same time as they survive poorer ecological resources, sheep and goats require more care than yaks. In addition, they are susceptible to depredation by wild animals. This means sheep and

⁵¹ Mock provides an estimate of the value of sheep and goat products for Shimshali households:

From the sheep wool is woven *pattu* cloth. One 15 metre *pattu*, 30 cm. wide can be produced from the wool of 25 sheep. The average household would produce 1.8 *pattu* annually. The average price for one *pattu* is Rs. 800. Therefore, the annual average household *pattu* production opportunity cost is Rs. 1440.

From the goats' hair is woven *palos* carpet. One *palos* of 15m length and 1m width can be produced from the hair of 65 goats. The average household would produce .69 *palos* annually. The average price for one such *palos* is Rs. 2000. The annual average *palos* production opportunity cost is Rs. 1380.

...The most valuable dairy product is *ghee*, termed *rogan* in Wakhi. *Ghee* is valued at Rs. 110 per kg. 250 sheep/goats are said to produce 2 maunds or 80 kg. of *ghee* annually... If the average household has 45 female sheep/goats, the annual average *ghee* production would be 14.4 kg., with a value of Rs. 1584. (Mock, 1990:48)

goats need more labour, which labour is provided mainly by children whose time is considered less valuable than adults, and who require less food (which must be transported from the village).

Goat and sheep herding is guided by five migratory cycles: Luggar, Pamir, Ghujerab, Maidor, and Yazgil. The pastures are of three main types: low, medium and high. The low pastures, Shimshal and Shagdi (between 2900 and 3200m), are utilized by all five cycles, but only in winter. Their main qualities are accessibility to winter settlements, and moderate winter climates associated with lower zones. Some 2600 of the least hardy sheep and goats spend from September to April between these two pastures. The high intensities of use to which they are subjected can be sustained only because the animals are fed fodder collected during summer. A small amount of their sustenance comes from foraging in meadows or harvested fields. Only a few animals are milked in winter. The most important characteristics of these winter pastures are access to water, shelter and care. An additional 700 sheep and goats spend the winter at Shujerab, and 1000 spend the winter at Hafdiji in Ghujerab. According to Mock (1990:50) these animals return briefly to Shimshal for fall shearing, and for possible sale to livestock agents, before heading back up slope.

Medium altitude pastures tend to be steep, unsheltered, poorly vegetated, and supplied by intermittent or poorly accessible streams. As such they have a low carrying capacity. In the Pamir cycle these pastures include Peryan Sar (4150m) and Arbob Peryan (4100m), as well as a few small areas in between. These areas are grazed briefly but intensively during spring and/or fall, during *kooch* when animals are on their way to and from Pamir. They are then left to regenerate for most of the year. Maidor (4250m), Yazgil (4200m) and Lower Yazgil (3400m) are grazed for longer periods, but by a small number of animals. These pastures are located in medium altitude zones which have neither the shelter and shallow slope of low pastures, nor the abundance of water and vegetation of the higher pastures. Their main advantage is proximity to both permanent settlements and high pastures. As such they act as accessibility-oriented transitional stages in the pastoral cycle. Herders realise that the carrying capacity of these pastures

is low, so they are careful to expose them to grazing only briefly (see Plate Twenty).

The true alpine pastures, those broad humid stretches above 4000m include Shujerab, Shuwart, Lupgar and parts of Ghujerab. The characteristics of these pastures are described above in the paragraphs discussing yaks. It is in these pastures that grazing of sheep and goats is most extensive, and where animals thrive. Livestock is at its healthiest and fattest in the high pastures. In addition, most dairying occurs at high altitudes, as well as spring shearing. Lupgar, Shujerab, Shuwart and Ghujerab are grazed very intensively, testifying to the resilience and abundance of vegetation at high altitudes.

The ecological characteristics of altitudinal zones are more important here than is accessibility (see Figures 10.2d and 10.2e). The large flocks of sheep and goats require large, reliable and abundant pastures, which are located only at high altitudes. Because these flocks travel easily, but slowly, access to intermediate short-term pastures is more important than proximity to permanent villages.

Shimshalis value their grazing lands for ecological resources other than just the environment and sustenance they provide for livestock. Cultivation, timber and wood gathering, hunting, and tourism are all instrumental activities which occur, or have occurred, in pasture zones. Historically, Shimshalis have sown barley at Raskam, beyond and downstream from the Pamir winter pastures. They tell of battles with Chinese Kirghis for these barley terraces. In 1963, with the China/Pakistan border agreement, they lost any legal claim to the Raskam terraces, and have not farmed them since. Part of what made Pamir pastures so attractive to Shimshalis was their high altitude combined with access to a supply of grain.⁵²

The highest pastures have never provided timber or fuel wood. In the past mid-altitude pastures, particularly Arbob Peryan, Peryan Sar, and Yazgil were sources of juniper wood for timber, and wild rose, buckthorn and juniper for fuel. These resources have been depleted for at

⁵² Although no Shimshalis have mentioned this to me, it is likely that the *shpoon* originated in the context of these barley fields.

Plate Twenty: A Medium Altitude (Transitional) Pasture
(Notice the corral and huts at right foreground.)

least two generations.⁵³ Now Shimshalis rely for fuel and timber on poplar, willow and thorn grown on irrigated plots in Shimshal, and on the sparse remainders of cedar stands located several day's difficult walk along the sides of the Khurdopin, Virjerab and Yukshin Gardan Glaciers. Mid altitude pastures were more attractive for grazing, both in instrumental and symbolic terms, before these forests were depleted. Shimshalis claim that juniper forests were extensive up until early this century, and speak of them with the type of reverence usually reserved for the alpine pastures. Depletion of forests certainly destabilised mid-altitude pastures, and made them more susceptible to drought, wind and water erosion, and overgrazing. Several of the mid-altitude pastures must have been considerably more productive in the past than they are today. Indeed, despite concern by international agencies for overgrazing, it is safe to say that deforestation, not overgrazing, has contributed most to ecological degradation, at least in Shimshal. Wegge (1988:i) notes that "fuelwood collection, particularly at higher elevations during summer stock herding, has had negative effects on the vegetation...". Fuel is probably Shimshal's most scarce ecological resource, although fuelwood "orchards" and the recent widespread use of metal stoves helps to alleviate the scarcity.

Hunting is an activity which Shimshalis regard highly, but which yields fewer instrumental results as wildlife populations diminish. All pastures, except those adjacent to the villages, are valued for the game they support, despite the fact that Shimshalis kill few wild animals (see Wegge, 1988:17). For example, my companions in 1988 and 1989 always carried guns when we wandered through the pastures (which we did for a total of about four months). During that time only four *chikkor* (grouse) were shot. To my knowledge, the only game killed during the two summers I stayed in Shimshal were two blue sheep, three ibex and a handful of *chikkor*. Even that level of hunting is illegal, and may be stopped completely if parts of Shimshal territory become

⁵³ It seems that the final blow to the last remaining accessible stands of timber was rebuilding which occurred after the destructive glacier dam-burst flood of 1964.

incorporated into Khunjerab Park.⁵⁴

Currently the use of pasture lands for cultivation, fuel and timber collecting, and hunting are all in decline, if not finished. These occupations, which previously complemented herding, have been replaced by tourism (see 8.2). Although the majority of tourism occurs between Shimshal and Pasu, far from the main pasture areas, a small but growing contingent of visitors is trekking to Pamir and Ghujerab. Tourists are attracted to these areas by the elevation, the summer villages, the novelty of crossing a divide between Asia and the Indian sub-continent, the relative inaccessibility of high pastures, and by the encouragement of porters.

It should be evident that both access and altitude are important concerns for Shimshalis in their herding of animals, and in other complementary uses of Shimshal's pasture areas. Certainly Shimshali herders recognise altitude and access as issues which must be considered separately, and in conjunction with other concerns, when deciding where to graze which animals. Ideally, pastures would be close to permanent settlements and at high altitudes where the quality of grazing is best. Unfortunately, these two factors are more or less inversely related. As elevation increases access diminishes. Figure 10.2e indicates that elevation (and the associated pasture quality) seems to be the major factor influencing yak grazing sites in both winter and summer. Yaks are grazed consistently above 4000m. The abundance found in pastures located at high elevations is also important to sheep and goat grazing in summer. In winter the harshness of high altitude climate, together with a desire to keep animals where they are accessible to continual care, causes villagers to drive sheep and goats to lower altitudes near the villages. 400 yaks can be tended

⁵⁴ Shimshal, like other indigenous communities in the vicinity of the park, strongly opposes the intervention of Khunjerab National Park administrators in their ecological activities, and is actively resisting the initiative to include parts of Shimshal territory within prohibited (no grazing or hunting) or protected (no hunting) zones of the park. The community is soliciting aid from a variety of sources (trekkers, various levels of government, AKRSP, visiting naturalists) in their attempt to prevent control of their grazing lands by park administration. Because Shimshal remains outside the park for now Shimshalis have not participated in a legal suit that other communities have brought against the park and the Pakistani government to redress grievances resulting from lack of access to pasture areas within the park (Mock, 1990:1)

throughout the winter by a half dozen herders; 4,000 sheep and goats cannot. The most obvious feature of Figure 10.2d on access ranges is that herders are motivated to keep cattle close to the village throughout the year, because of these animals' perceived frailty, and are willing to trade good quality grazing for accessibility. The highest and least accessible grazing areas for all three livestock types are abandoned for the winter season as animals retreat to sheltered areas which are accessible to herders. Villagers attempt to balance their knowledge of livestock characteristics with the resources available within various altitudinal and accessibility zones, and within labour constraints.

They also try to circulate animals through pastures in a way that sustains the pastures themselves. Table 10.2c shows that the lowest pastures and the highest are used most intensively.⁵⁵ Herders realise that high pastures sustain intensive grazing because of their ecological characteristics: verdant and varied vegetation, abundant moisture, the development of stable soils, and relatively flat topography. The lowest pastures have no such ecological advantages, except moderate climate and sheltered aspects. However, they are able to sustain intensive pastoral use because of their access to the villages, and the labour available there. Throughout the winter Shimshalis feed animals at Shimshal and Shagdi with fodder collected elsewhere, and with vegetation grown in the terraced and irrigated fields. These practices effectively increase the range of ecological resources available for utilisation, but not without cost: storage of fodder can be a problem, and transportation of fodder always requires considerable labour. Mid altitude pastures, between about 4000 and 4300m are the least suitable for livestock and the most fragile. Terrain is steep and unstable, water and vegetation are scarce. Shimshalis typically use these pastures only briefly as stopping places between more important grazing areas, so that vegetation has a chance to regenerate, and animals do not suffer from shortages of fodder. *Summer pastures for cattle are within this middle altitudinal zone; an indication that they are not*

⁵⁵ The figures provided in Table 10.2c should be interpreted as estimates. Still, the pattern is clear.

valued highly in Shimshal.

Table 10.2c: Intensity of Grazing at Shimshal Pastures

Pasture	Mean Alt.(m)	Livestock			Total	Weighted Total*	Rank
		Sheep & Goats	Cattle	Yaks			
Shagdi	3000	47500	4700		52200	71000	1
Shimshal	3100	36857	4300		41157	58357	3
Molonguti	3200		2700		2700	13500	9
Lower Yazgil	3400	8000			8000	8000	11
Zartgar Bin	3950		6000		6000	30000	6
Yukshin Gardan	4000			1460	1460	17520	d 8
Spordin	4100		1500		1500	7500	13
Pitchard Wask	4100		500		500	2500	17
Arbob Peryan	4100	7000			7000	7000	14
Peryan Sar	4150	4375			4375	4375	15
Yazgil	4200	2857			2857	2857	16
Ghujerab**	4200	11142		107	11249	12426	10
Maidor	4250	2500			2500	2500	17
Shujerab	4400	29100		2700	31800	61500	2
Chikkor	4450			3000	3000	36000	5
Momhil	4600	2000		500	2500	8000	11
Shuwart	4750	25600		2000	27600	49600	4
Lupgar	4900	17777		444	18211	23105	7

* Weighted totals are based on the rough estimate that one cow weighs about the same as five goats or sheep, and one yak weighs about the same as 12 goats or sheep.

** Ghujerab figures incorporate all three main areas within Ghujerab: Mandikshula, Waraband and Hafdiji.

10.2.3 Interpretation

I suggested above that ecological volition is manifest as a balance between sustaining the material and symbolic ecological resource base (conservation) and satisfying material and symbolic ecological requirements (consumption). The problem of balance between conservation and consumption is resolved both in the specific instrumental strategies that community members use to exploit their environment sustainably, and in the lifeworld-embedded commitment to and identity with shared meanings of the environment, and individuals' places in it, that community members nurture. The descriptive section above shows how the instrumental strategies that Shimshalis use to utilise their pasture lands sustainably also satisfy lifeworld-determined material requirements. 10.3 examines the role of symbolic ecological resources in this process of ecological sustainability. For the rest of the present section I want to examine the organisational basis for the cycle described above, and situate the AKRSP village organisations within it. It is within this organisational context that the volition of ecological agency may be understood.

Three sets of institutions influence the pastoral cycle: kinship, village and household. Tahir Ali says that in Hunza:

Clans each also possess highland meadows and grazing tracts demarcated and granted them in perpetuity by the *tham*.... All clansmen [sic] have the right to graze their sheep and goats there, to collect wild grass fodder, to set up temporary shelters for use in the summer grazing period and to cultivate whatever they are able to (usually vegetables and a barley crop). For the latter purpose in particular the clan *ter* [pasture] is exhaustively divided into sub-clan, and then again into maximal lineage and, if need be, into medial lineage sections. Clan and lineage elders are the deciding authorities in the event of any disputes over boundaries or usufruct rights. (Tahir Ali, 1983:70)

Shimshal follows the example of Hunza only loosely. First, the community occupied its original pastures without the prior authority of the *tham*, which authority came several generations after the fact. That gave Shimshal considerable autonomy to depart from norms established by the *tham* in Hunza. Second, all of Shimshal belongs to one clan, whose founders were Mamu Shah

and Khodija, so that clan ownership is the same as village ownership. Within an over-arching clan/community ownership different lineage groupings possess rights to use certain pasture cycles. All households have the absolute right to utilise grazing land and build summer dwellings because of their membership in an indigenous sub-clan. The Pamir cycle contains the original pasture area, which was shared by all three sub-clan groupings. Subsequently, specific individuals discovered and improved new pastures for their lineage, or else the clan, certain subclans, or specific lineages received additional grazing lands by the *tham*. Even these "new" pastures are not perceived to belong to specific lineages, rather these lineages have the right to utilise their resources. Very seldom, today, is that right exclusive. Only the smallest pastures (eg. Yazgil, Maidor) are utilised by a single maximal lineage. And many lineage groupings graze animals in more than one cycle. Most pastures have lost whatever sub-clan-exclusivity they once exhibited, because village-based decision making has altered kin-based allocation precedents.⁵⁶

For example, a few years back Ali Rahman's household, together with a few other households, were granted (temporary) exclusive rights to herd sheep and goats at Lupgar, because they wanted to experiment with new breeding and stock raising techniques without the danger of cross breeding. Several of those households were traditional occupants of Lupgar, and several were not. Ali Rahman's maternal grandmother, who was from a different subclan, was a respected occupant of Ghujerab pastures until her old age. In memory of her Ali Rahman built a bridge and a dwelling along the path to Ghujerab. These gestures gave his household a legitimate entrée to Ghujerab grazing as well as Lupgar. This sort of flexibility is common. Pastures in Shimshal are clearly village property before they are lineage property. Certain lineages have greater or lesser rights to specific pastures, but those rights are flexible, and secondary to the authority of the village.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ Certain patterns remain. I know of no lineage that grazes animals, or has dwellings at both Ghujerab and Shuwart, or both Lupgar and Shuwart, although Ghujerab/Lupgar combinations exist.

⁵⁷ You will recognise this flexibility between community and lineage authority as a recurring theme in my interpretations of current social organisation in Shimshal (see Chapter Five).

Lineage continues to be involved at the level of husbandry. Often medial, and even maximal, lineage groupings graze their animals together, under the care of one or two participating households. Sometimes dairy products are pooled, and divided into household shares later, and often summer dwellings are shared among several households of a lineage.

If lineage provides the underlying, if also somewhat undermined, framework upon which the pasture cycles rest, then the actual enactment of the cycle accrues to village level organisation. The decision of how many animals go to which pastures and when is ultimately decided by the village, despite lineage guidelines, because it is the village (as a technical polity and as a ritual congregation) that is responsible for **maintaining** pastures in good condition. In addition, village level authority decides how many men reside at the pastures, and from which lineages they will come. Shimshal, as a village, is responsible for one half of the balance that is anticipated by the concept of ecological volition: **conservation**.

The most important village level institution is the *kuyotch*, under the leadership of the *lumbardar*. Perhaps more than for any other issue, villagers rely on the *lumbardar* and his elders to regulate pastoral and agricultural cycles. Shimshalis perceive the *lumbardar* as the guardian of local knowledge, precedent, sense of place: all those things which inform ecologically sound and normatively appropriate patterns of land use. He, in council, provides the check on tendencies to increase the exploitation of pasture resources through more intense grazing, etc. Of course the *kuyotch* remains a communicative institution in which participants come to some collective decision about ecological resource use. But the lines are more clearly and more formally drawn on this issue than on many others: the *lumbardar* and his closest advisors argue the side of conservation, the majority of householders argue the side of consumption, and some sort of decision is reached based on the validity of those sets of arguments. The current *lumbardar*, despite his reticence on many issues, is respected for his cautious, but not conservative, stewardship of the agricultural and pastoral cycles. He has approved various changes and innovations to improve productivity while conserving resources: for example, the isolation of Lupgar pasture for sheep and goat husbandry

experiments. He is also one of the main proponents of plans to seed high pastures with exotic grass species. The *lumbardar's* concerns for pasture conservation must always balance with the demands of other community activities (eg. the new porter schedule; see chapter 8.2).⁵⁸

Herders are reluctant to introduce any sort of herding innovation without support from the *kuyotch* and *lumbardar*. Acquaintances in Shimshal provided two reasons for that. First, pastures are collective resources, and the animals within herders' care often belong to other households. By gaining approval for innovations from the *kuyotch*, herders are able to shift some of the responsibility for subsequent problems onto a larger institution. Second, approval from the *kuyotch* provides a normative, almost spiritual, legitimacy to herding practices. The *lumbardar* together with *kuyotch* are seen to represent the will of Shimshal's ritual congregation. The close involvement of *kuyotch* lends some authority to the pastoral cycle, a authority which expresses itself in the conviction that the pastures and the cycle should be sustained according to certain lifeworld-based ideals. An occurrence in 1989 provides an example of villagers' reluctance to alter the cycle without instrumental and symbolic support from the *kuyotch*. A sudden and unexpected storm passed through Shimshal territory on July 31st and August 1st 1989. It drenched Shimshal villages with torrential rain, and deposited about 80 cm of snow at Shuwart, where most of Shimshal's sheep, goats and yaks were grazing. Herders at Shuwart took the initiative to drive livestock over Shimshal Pass to the lower and more sheltered slopes of Chikkor. About a week later the animals and herders returned to Shimshal. I learned of this move on August 9th, at which time the group of Shimshalis I was with told me that they approved of the herders' decision, but remarked that such spontaneous innovations, without *kuyotch* approval, are unusual. Several dozen animals died when they fell over a cliff during the move. Although my informants acknowledged that some losses were inevitable and not any person's fault, they maintained that the herders at Shuwart had to take

⁵⁸ I note in Chapter Seven (especially 7.2.2) that *Lumbardar* Khan is careful to limit his claims to represent Shimshal to a selective set of traditional issues. Among those issues are decisions regarding seasonal agricultural and pastoral cycles.

responsibility because they acted without *kuyotch's* approval.⁵⁹

A second village level institution that plays a part in the pastoral cycle is the *jamaat*. Its role is subsidiary and complementary to the role of *kuyotch*. The *jamaat*, as a formal institution of the ritual congregation, strives to include the pastoral cycle and its participants within the religious framework of the community. *Jamaat* authorities send delegates and ritual commodities to the pastures for religious celebrations (most notably *Salgarah*), and organise special festivals in certain pastures (eg. the yak festival at Pamir). In addition, shrines and *jamaat khanas* are maintained at several pastures (again, the most important are at Pamir), at the initiative of *jamaat* leadership. Occupants of pastures owe certain products to the *jamaat*. For example, all milk extracted from all animals during their first two weeks at Shuwart (except for that consumed immediately) is made into cheeses, which cheeses are donated to the *jamaat*. Householders whose own herds are small may then purchase cheeses from the *jamaat*. Surplus cheeses are exported to Hunza (see Plate Twenty-One).

The ideal of conservation is also linked to the *jamaat*, from two directions. First, the *jamaat* is concerned with anything that helps to hold the community together as a ritual congregation. The pastoral cycle is one such catalyst, from a symbolic and material perspective. The *jamaat* provides an indigenous and unquestioned link between what is religiously appropriate and what is ecologically sustainable. Although Shimshalis tend not to express it directly, they acknowledge the authenticity of conservation.⁶⁰ Second, the *jamaat* represents the Aga Khan and the Ismaili faith (a responsibility it shares increasingly with AKRSP VOs). Just as western

⁵⁹ Responsibility in this instance means the burden of some degree of blame. No Shimshalis expected the "responsible" party to materially compensate owners for losses caused by this accident.

⁶⁰ This is not to say that they do not engage in activities that we, or even they, might consider bad for the environment. For example, they have depleted the forests in the knowledge that such depletion would have negative results on their ecological resources. They consider that depredation an evil (literally), but a necessary one. At the same time, we have to remember that conservation is open to interpretation. Shimshalis have little respect for "natural" environments. To them the improvement of an environment is as sacred as its conservation, and they strive to conserve their improved environments, not their natural ones (see 10.3).

Plate Twenty-One: Shuwart *Jamaat Khana*

institutions as diverse as the Lutheran Church and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have embraced sustainable development as a "motherhood" concept, so has the *jamaat* embraced conservation, as an implied tenet of Islam. Over the past few years a fairly concrete but unstated indigenous concern for sustaining ecological resources has been bolstered by an extremely vague but formal imported interest in conservation and sustainability.

Village level organisation in Hunza grew out of kingship. In Shimshal it preceded kingship, was subsequently incorporated into it, and then in the past few decades replaced it. The *lumbardar's* authority over the pastoral and agricultural cycles originally derived from the *tham*; in Shimshal he presided in lieu of the *tham*. Pastures, like water resources, were the gift of the *tham*, and he continued to exercise some control over their use. Although that authority was usually left to the *lumbardar*, the *tham* could intervene or interfere. Indeed, the *tham's* family still has the right to pasture yaks at Pamir. Villagers recognised the *tham's* authority; within limits it was embedded in their lifeworld. However, the alien authority of the *tham* threatened the ecological volition of community members: their prerogative to define and manage their own ecological resources. Now that the *tham's* authority has diminished, Shimshalis have more immediate ecological volition over their pastoral cycle. However, that volition is increasingly threatened by central government. For example, several villages in the Karakoram have lost their pastures because, due to the ultimate tenure of the *thams*, they cannot legitimate their ownership of these lands. The government no longer recognises the *tham's* ownership, nor village ownership, and has expropriated the land.

A much more serious threat in Shimshal is the Khunjerab National Park. The community may lose its access to certain pastures altogether, and will almost certainly be restricted in the activities it undertakes. These restrictions diminish ecological volition, and threaten the sustainability of the community's material resource base and its symbolic resource base. Shimshal's resource base is degraded as surely by restrictions to its use as by ecological degradation. Both circumstances diminish available ecological resources. Currently, the fate of Shimshal's pastoral cycle depends on sincere communicative action between Shimshal and the organisations who are

concerned about the conservation of wildlife in the Khunjerab. Through communicative action with regulating organisations the community can maintain some authority over its use of ecological resources.

As with other spheres of organisation, most day to day technical activity and decision making regarding pastoralism occurs within and between households (see Chapters Five and Nine). Lineage provides the underlying structure, village level institutions regulate activity and develop strategies, and households provide the labour, and make the small decisions. If *kuyotch* is responsible for conservation, households are concerned with consumption: they have to ensure that their members produce what they need. Animals, their produce, and pasture dwellings are household possessions. Decisions regarding which household members go to the pastures and for how long, which lineage members tend whose livestock, and for what payment, how produce is shared and disposed of, what commodities are produced, and what economic strategy is employed, are all negotiated at the household level. These decisions at the household level influence the larger strategies of the *kuyotch*, and are in turn constrained by those larger strategies. No doubt the recent decision to purchase China yaks was reached in *kuyotch*, but only at the instigation of households, and with their commitment to pay for the yaks. *Kuyotch* would not have supported the purchase of yaks had the consensus not been reached that the pastoral cycle could be adapted safely to their presence.

Despite the collective nature of the pastoral system, individuals may accrue special and pivotal roles within it. *Lumbardar Khan*, for example, has established himself as an essential authority over herding. Indeed, he has gained validity as a leader by his competent stewardship of ecological resources. At the same time, he provides a link between the material character of ecological resources and their symbolic character. Through his involvement, and the involvement of *kuyotch*, the pastoral cycle is seen to represent the ideals of the ritual congregation -equity, solidarity, collectivity- and resources utilised in that cycle are perceived as resources which contribute to those ideals. Individuals who serve in some exemplary way in the day to day

operation of pastoralism are also recognised as special, and may be honoured as such. Ali Rahman's grandmother, for whom he built monuments, is an example (see Chapter Seven). Another example is Laili Shah, the man who tended Shimshal's yaks through the harsh winter of 1989. These individuals, by their actions and by their example both derive validity from, and lend validity to, the pastoral cycle. In 10.3.3 I use the example of Laili to argue that certain individuals can enhance the symbolic value of ecological resources, and can become symbolic ecological resources themselves.

Aga Khan Rural Support Program administrators conceive the agency as an economic institution, so they have been more concerned with economy (consumption of resources) than ecology (conservation of resources). In other words, the AKRSP parent organisation has been more interested in opportunities to utilise resources than in constraining their use. Thus, AKRSP is a less serious threat to ecological volition than other, regulating, agencies such as IUCN. In the past three or four years AKRSP has become more involved in conservation, as it (like the rest of the world) converted to sustainable development, and as other ecological organisations began to advocate regulating farmers' resource use. Its role has been a dual one of encouraging villagers to develop strategies that reduce what degradation their practices have caused (and to avoid activities, such as poisoning wolves, that would antagonise environmental organisations) and of persuading environmental organisations that indigenous practices are ecologically sustainable on the whole. To the extent that AKRSP personnel fulfil these roles they have become advocates of indigenous ecological volition. In the past year AKRSP administrators have strongly supported village organisations who have protested the confiscation of their pastures, and have gone so far as to suggest that government actions are more likely to result in the destruction of local people than in their progress (Mock, 1991: personal communication).

While AKRSP has been strong in its support of villagers' volition to control their own ecological resources, it has encouraged a move away from indigenous pastoralism. Agency administrators maintain that labour and capital invested in transhumant pastoralism could be

utilised more productively in other community-based ventures, particularly cash cropping cereals, stall feeding livestock, and tourism. All things being equal, this may be the case. Certainly, carefully bred cattle stall fed on legumes convert vegetation more efficiently than range fed local livestock. But stall feeding and cash cropping rely on ecological resources in the cropping zone that are already scarce. These initiatives ignore the advantage of verticality: the ability to utilise resources of several altitudinal zones. Without pastoral herding, productive high altitude zones would be wasted. Increased tourism would continue to utilise those high altitude zones, but need not do so at the expense of herding, because pastoralism and tourism complement one another (see Chapter 8.2).

Shimshal's village organisations themselves have had the effect of strengthening village level organisation, partly at the expense of household and kin-based organisation. This shifts the level of ecological volition, but does not necessarily strengthen or weaken it as long as the overall shift toward village level communicative and instrumental action is justified from within a shared lifeworld. Interpretations in previous chapters indicate that such shifts have been lifeworld-embedded.

The most important influence of AKRSP village organisations on material ecological resource use has been the reproduction of household level concerns at the community level. I mentioned earlier that village organisation concentrated on conservation, and household organisation concentrated on consumption. The VOs, like their parent organisation, are interested primarily in consumption of resources. The result of that focus has been the gradual reproduction of a joint *kuyotch*/VO institution which deals simultaneously with integrated concerns for conservation and consumption. Whereas conservation was previously a collectively oriented concern and consumption was an individually oriented concern, they are now both more collectively oriented. A surge of recent collective pastoral innovations -purchasing yaks from China, seeding exotic grass varieties, improving breeding techniques, collective marketing of livestock, enlarging cattle herds, inviting me to evaluate their pastoral resources- all indicate a community-level interest

in increasing the pastoral resource base, and utilising pastoral resources more effectively.

This development of village-based consumption-oriented organisation represents a rationalisation of social system in response to new experiences: production for the market, production for an increasing population, available innovations (seed, breeding stock), relative labour scarcity, etc. Attitudes and activities geared to conservation at the community level are also undergoing a process of rationalisation. At the instigation of AKRSP, Shimshalis have begun to acknowledge the relevance of conservation to contexts other than their subsistence-based agricultural and pastoral cycles. Villagers are now confronted with outside agencies who are also interested in conservation, and whose efforts in that direction threaten to undermine Shimshal's own ecological volition. Preserving that volition means conserving ecological resources from expropriation, and that means convincing powerful outside agencies that indigenous methods sustain the environment. AKRSP village organisations are uniquely situated to deal persuasively with outside agencies. Their leaders have the lifeworld embedded validity within the community to represent community interests. They have also developed a vocabulary which enhances their validity to representatives of outside agencies.⁶¹ Perhaps most importantly the village organisations, unlike the *kuyotch*, are connected to a parent organisation whose validity with government agencies and villages alike is well established, and which has committed itself to defending communities' rights to negotiate their own ecologically sustainable practices.

The result of this systemic rationalisation of both conservation and consumption at the community level has been to create a new and more contemporary balance between these two concerns, at least with regard to material resource use. These systemic shifts have not occurred without affecting and relating to lifeworld concerns: belief, meaning, sense of place, belonging, veneration. The following section addresses those concerns with regard to symbolic ecological resources.

⁶¹ Daulat Amin and several other VO leaders can talk about carrying capacity, soil erosion, overgrazing, wildlife stocks, and range management with the best of them. Five years ago these terms were unknown in Shimshal, although the concepts are indigenously practised.

10.3: Ecological Volition and Shimshal's Sustainability as a Meaningful Community

10.3.1: Introduction

The definition of ecological volition presented earlier has two parts. The first **"the ability of a community to utilise material ecological resources in a way that sustains the (I) lifeworld-defined ecological resource base itself together with (II) lifeworld-defined material requirements"** relates to an instrumental objective: achieving a balance between conservation of material ecological resources and their consumption. 10.2 describes and interprets the instrumental use of material ecological resources by the Shimshal community. It also touches briefly on the link between instrumental resource use and communicative decision making through a discussion of the organisational structures which guide Shimshal's pastoral cycle.

But the relationship between the ecological sub-system and lifeworld cannot be adequately understood without considering a second set of ecological resources: symbolic resources. The second part of my definition of ecological volition incorporates the role of symbolic resources by stating that ecological volition within communities also depends on the **"the further ability to interact with the environment in a way that reproduces the shared meanings that community members give to place, locale, ecological artifact, and strategies of resource utilisation"**. These ecologically oriented meanings are products, even elements, of the lifeworld, which inform instrumental ecological activity.

In a modern community the meanings attributed to a community's ecological context are rationalised (negotiated through communicative discourse). These rationalised meanings (symbolic resources), in turn, provide the context for the technical utilisation of environment. In a modernised community symbolic meanings and technical resource use are uncoupled. The environment may be utilised in a way that defies the convictions of the lifeworld. Ecological volition cannot coincide with ecological modernisation, because the loss of meaning (loss of an indigenous symbolic

context) and loss of freedom (to act according to the dictates of lifeworld convictions) associated with modernisation, on the one hand, and the autonomy to control one's own ecological agency, on the other, are mutually exclusive, because any constraints imposed from the outside on a community's use of its ecological resources, that are not validated from within the lifeworld (ie. that do not correspond to or alter community members symbolic conception of their environment), facilitate a loss of freedom and meaning: modernisation.⁶²

For the remainder of the chapter I want to examine the meanings that Shimshalis attribute to their ecological environment, and interpret the role of those meanings in the community's ecological volition. But before I begin to present empirical material I should discuss, in some detail, what I mean by symbolic ecological resources, and link these to the concepts of community and sense of place.

Symbolic ecological resources are of two types. First, they can be material ecological resources that have some special symbolic significance apart from their technical or instrumental significance. Yaks are such resources for Shimshalis: in addition to having numerous technical uses, yaks are venerated as spiritually, historically and mythologically significant to Shimshalis. They contribute to the identity of Shimshalis because of those characteristics as well as because of their material characteristics. Many other such resources exist in Shimshal. Among them are phenomena as diverse as the agricultural and pastoral cycles themselves, specific places (pastures, groups of terraces), and types of animals and vegetation, both wild and domestic. Originally the symbolic value of some of these resources may have derived from their values as material resources, ie. yaks became venerated for their technical use value. But, in every case those two sources of value have become separate, although integrated, validity claims. This first type of symbolic ecological resource is more precisely described as the **symbolic use of material ecological resources**.

⁶² That, along with the destruction of a viable subsistence economy, is the danger of Khunjerab National Park.

Second, symbolic ecological resources can be meanings, beliefs or convictions, or more generally phenomena that relate closely to the environment, but which have no direct material manifestation. Shimshal's folk history/mythology is an example of such a resource. It is a story which gives meaning and identity to the lives of Shimshalis, which situates their lives spatially, temporally and socially, and which relies for its meaning and relevance on an ecological/environmental context. That is, Shimshal's spatial isolation from the rest of Hunza, its rugged terrain, the abundance of grazing at Pamir, the organisation of landscape features within Shimshal territory, the relation of Shimshal village to agricultural variables, the community's spatial proximity to Chinese territory, etc, are all salient features of the story which link Shimshal as a social, economic and political entity to its ecological context. Other such symbolic ecological resources abound in the form of myths, stories, superstitions, metaphors, historical facticities, and ritual observances. This second type of resource is adequately described in the original term: **symbolic ecological resource**.

These two types are closely related to one another and to instrumental material ecological resources (described above in 10.2.2). Material ecological resources act as props for symbolic ecological resources. Yaks, pastures, streams, paths, passes, types of vegetation, wildlife species, boundaries and so on provide the contexts within which symbolic ecological resources are relevant. More than that, they serve as ecological artifacts linking those intangible symbolic resources to contemporary material existence. The relationship between material and symbolic ecological resources is complementary. The stories, spiritual beliefs, metaphors, ritual practices, superstitions and so on give meaning and normative value to the material ecological artifacts which contextualise them spatially. That means that pastures, for example, and their utilisation, become accessible to normative validation and sincerity-based validation, and not just technical validation. They, as material artifacts, become elements of lifeworld as well as social system, and that is the process whereby material ecological resources become used symbolically. At the same time, truly symbolic ecological resources are validated technically through their association with material ecological

resources. For example, the story of Mamu Shah (a symbolic resource) demonstrates to villagers why it is appropriate to revere yaks (a material resource which is reproduced as a symbolic resource) and herd them according to certain standards of care and stewardship (a normative rationale for a material ecological activity), and the subsequent technical rewards which Shimshalis have received from their yak husbandry (which is informed by these symbolic resources) lend some contemporary technical validity to the story of Mamu Shah (a technical rationale for a symbolic ecological phenomenon). This process is the coupling of ecological subsystem and lifeworld.

The conceptualisation of symbolic ecological resources, and their place within the realm of social organisation, is still fairly opaque. It becomes clearer if we think of symbolic ecological resources as elements which contribute to individual's shared sense of community, and more than that, their shared identification of a community located in a particular spatial and ecological context: ie. a shared sense of place.

In his book entitled Senses of Place, John Eyles (1985) addresses the relationship between community and sense of place. Eyles identifies three salient elements of community: "place or area, people and their institutions, and sense of belonging, which helps enrich our notion of place" (1985:63). He suggests that the concept of community, as constituted in its three attendant elements:

...can provide insights into the importance and role of place in social and material life. It is in this respect that the three aspects of community -place, people and mind- are taken and discussed [in terms of] community as ecological structure, social structure and ideological structure respectively. (Eyles, 1985:63-64)

The three "interrelated and irreducible elements of community and place -the ecological, the social, and the ideological" help to "define the nature of place and to shape its significance" (Eyles, 1985:82). Eyles sees the social component as providing "the basic material for everyday life" in a community (Eyles, 1985:83). Community consists, in a large part, of a group of individuals and their relationships with one another. This social life does not necessarily involve place. However, as Eyles maintains "if nothing else, place may locate activities and have meaning as an area for social

activities or for the expression of sentiments. Places are often constituted by the people who live in them: place equals people" (1985:83). He goes on to say that the "conjoining of people and places often leads to the latter becoming matrices of symbols. Places have symbolic content either in their own rights or because of the sentiments they represent" (Eyles, 1985:83). To use the language I have been using, places can become some of what I have termed symbolic ecological resources.

These matrices of symbols, or symbolic ecological resources, manifest the ideological component of community and place. Ideological structure constitutes community "as an expression of collective sentiment and as a device for the protection and promotion of sectional interests" (Eyles, 1985:70). Basically, matrices of symbols pertaining to places can engender a sense of belonging and identity. By this Eyles means that individuals identify with a place, and feel they belong to it, because they share social values and sentiments with other inhabitants. The place comes to represent a set of shared values. He is quick to point out that this place-based sense of community exists "in the mind, but is not a product of the mind alone. The mental representation is based on the environmental, social and material conditions in which the individual is located" (Eyles, 1985:70-71).

Eyles relates the ideological and social components of place and community closely with each other, and attributes considerable importance to each. He does not conceive an important link between either of them and ecological structure. Indeed, he attributes little importance to the ecological component of place and community. He says of ecological structure:

Perhaps the least explicitly important of the three is the ecological. It does however have an important implicit function in reminding us of the enviroing conditions on which the social and ideological elements are based. (Eyles, 1985:82)

At another point in the discussion he says:

This is not to say that ecological analysis provides no insights into the nature and significance of places, eg the importance of common residence in, and physical nature of, a community or neighbourhood, the relationship of place to the struggle for existence, and the relationship of individuals to place... but ecological structure

per se may only be of limited value in conceptualising sense of place and its derivations. (Eyles, 1985:66; emphasis in original)

That seems to me to underemphasise the contributions of ecological conditions to sense of place, perhaps because he conceives the ecological component of place and community more narrowly than do I, and perhaps also because the inhabitants of his study community, Towcester, relate less directly with their natural environment (economically) than do Shimshalis. I think that in Shimshal at least, ecological context (the natural environment *per se*) relates directly with individuals' shared identity and shared membership of a community. At one level, Shimshalis recognise themselves and others as the collective stewards of a particular set of ecological phenomena, which phenomena represent their character and identity (volition: with autonomy comes responsibility). Shimshalis belong to the Shimshal Valley: they have been claimed by the Shimshal Valley. At another level, the economic component of Shimshal's social system is inextricably linked to the community's ecological context, so that technical activity is ecologically oriented. In addition, the social and ideological components of place and community are also closely integrated with ecology. While Eyles' interpretation is at odds with mine in terms of the role of ecology in constituting community and place, it does provide an understanding of the components that comprise place, and it informs his subsequent discussion of sense of place.

Eyles' conception of sense of place contributes to my understanding of Shimshal's ecological volition in three ways. First, it provides a basis for my efforts to encapsulate the significance which symbolic ecological resources have for ecological volition (as an indigenously constituted balance between consumption and conservation) and community sustainability in Shimshal. I do not mean to suggest that sense of place is only, or even primarily, ecologically constituted. However, to the extent that ecological meanings contribute to sense of place, they also contribute to shared feelings of identity and belonging (indeed shared lifeworld), which feelings are salient elements of community sustainability. Second, Eyles identifies a number of ideal types which describe different manifestations of sense of place. These ideal types provide a conceptual

framework within which specific examples of symbolic resource utilisation by Shimshalis can be interpreted. Third, the concept of sense of place, and the types which derive from that concept, help to inform an understanding of links between the ecological sphere and social, economic and political spheres of organisation. Sense of place is by no means the product only of ecological meanings and values.⁶³ Rather it describes meanings and values that derive from, and relate to, all spheres of activity at the level of system and lifeworld; meanings and values that integrate into one part of a shared lifeworld.

Sense of place has been defined as **"the consciousness that people themselves have of places that possess a particular significance for them, either personal or shared"** (Cosgrove, 1986:425). This consciousness may elicit feelings of identity or belonging, which feelings when shared contribute to the constitution of a community. Sense of place involves:

...the notion of 'insiderness', existential belonging where location and human life are fused into centres of human meaning, and are counterposed to 'outsiderness', where one does not belong because of either personal or cultural separateness from the meanings incorporated in the place or because of 'placelessness'. (Cosgrove, 1986:425; see also Relph, 1976, 1981)⁶⁴

According to Eyles, "sense of place is... not merely a phenomenon that exists in the minds of individuals but one that develops from and becomes part of everyday life and experience" (Eyles, 1985:4). He suggests that

Sense of place is... taken to mean more than the (positive or negative) 'feel' for a place or places which is based on the individual's experiences of those places. It is also seen as being derived from the totality of an individual's life. Place and

⁶³ Some of Eyles' types bear little or no relation to an ecological context.

⁶⁴ Cosgrove's definition implies that sense of place is an entirely positive attribute. However, place and one's belonging to it can also be negative: "insiderness" can become entrapment, belonging can become stifling and boring; and intimate involvement with the meanings of places and places' representation to others can be a burdensome responsibility. With identification of and with place comes responsibility. The more "inside" one place we are, the more outside others we are. I have no doubt that Shimshalis' overpowering sense of their community alienates them (to themselves and to others) from the rest of the world... and the distinctive attributes of Shimshal territory as perceived by outsiders (remoteness, wildness, primitiveness) contribute to a sense of social and normative isolation (see Chapter Four).

sense of place are not regarded as independent phenomena divorced from this totality. They are fully implicated within it. (Eyles, 1985:2)

What he means by this is that "the existence and importan[ce] [to sense of place] of structures, mechanisms and forces beyond immediate observation must be accepted" (Eyles, 1985:4-5). In other words, sense of place is a lifeworld element, but it exists within and is informed by social systemic mechanisms. A shared sense of place derives from shared meanings, which meanings inform, and are informed, by shared experiences of the social system: economy, politics, society.

In his interpretation of senses of place in Towcester, a community in Northamptonshire, Eyles identifies and describes ten ideal types, or ten predominant sets of (negative or positive) "attitudes towards a place or places that are regarded as the most important phenomena" in distinguishing an individual's sense of place (1985:123). These ideal types, or dominant senses of place, derive from a distillation of 68 individual senses of place into categories or themes. Eyles notes that although "it is not suggested that the relative importance of the senses of place can or will be replicated elsewhere" the "sense of place categories themselves... may be of wider significance" (1985:123). My own research into Shimshali's attitudes toward their environmental context, based largely on participant observation and anecdotal material presented by a relatively small number of individuals, yielded results that are neither structured enough nor comprehensive enough to suggest ideal types. However, I think my findings are complete enough to be interpreted through, and to an extent inform, Eyles' categories. In undertaking this interpretation I am assuming the "wider significance" of his ideal types. Table 10.3a summarises Eyles' predominant senses of place.

It seems that Shimshalis display all of these senses of place except **commodity** and perhaps **apathy/acquiescence**, but in the absence of my own formal survey I have no way to confidently prioritise the relative importance or commonness of senses of place for Shimshalis. However, I would expect senses of place in Shimshal to be ordered differently than in Towcester, and indeed to be constituted somewhat differently, because the social, political, economic and

ecological contexts of the two communities are radically different. Some important systemic contexts for Shimshali senses of place, which differ from those for an English community, include:

- (a) the existence in Shimshal of a strong clan and lineage system which relates closely with place and ecological control,
- (b) a primarily subsistence mode of production based on local ecological resources,
- (c) collective ownership of certain symbolic and material ecological resources
- (d) continuous occupation, for several centuries, of the community and places within the community by the same subclans, lineages and households,
- (e) a lack of physical accessibility to places outside Shimshal,
- (f) collectively-oriented political organisation, and
- (g) formal collective organisation for the production and marketing of resources (VOs).

Roots, environmental, family and way of life types of sense of place are, I think, more important in Shimshal than in Eyles' study community. A **social** and perhaps an **instrumental** sense of place also remains important. Relatively less common are **platform/stage, nostalgic, commodity, and apathetic/acquiescent** senses of place. Place as **commodity** is a concept foreign to Shimshalis: it is not buyable or sellable (technically or normatively). Nor is Shimshali space perceived to be temporary. Since **apathy/acquiescence** is a passive attitude, in contrast to all the others which are active, I have no way of identifying it without specifically asking for individual's attitudes toward place. Certainly, **apathy toward place** contradicts Shimshalis' stated self-perception: a Shimshali who is apathetic toward his or her 'place' is considered a poor Shimshali. Shimshalis do feel **nostalgic** toward their setting, but that nostalgia is for a long term shared history that may be better expressed within the **roots** sense of place. Similarly, **platform/stage** sense of place, as manifest in Shimshal, is bound up within **way of life**.

The most important element in these differences, for my purposes, is that sense of place is more ecologically-constituted in Shimshal than in Towcester. Not only is the environmental type itself more important, but other types also have important ecological dimensions. Table 10.3b

recasts the most relevant senses of place for Shimshal in a way that highlights the influence on them of Shimshal's ecological context. These altered definitions should not be construed as complete. Nor should they be understood as contradictions of Eyles' original types. Rather, they merely emphasise one formative dimension of senses of place: ecological setting.

Eyles describes senses of place as attitudes toward place. In the language of Habermas, they are meanings, elements of lifeworld that relate to place in two ways. First, they encapsulate the values, norms and convictions that individuals hold about places and about the ecological characteristics of places. Therefore, senses of place are used as validity claims regarding discourse on ecological matters and meanings. Second, they are the links that allow place to influence discourse relating to other spheres of activity. At the level of lifeworld, sense of place allows place to influence norms, values and convictions regarding political, social and economic decision making. In other words, sense of place informs technical relationships between individuals (and communities) and place, and symbolic relationships between place and other organisational issues.

At its most powerful, sense of place gives normative value to ecological context: place is something to be valued for itself (environmental sense of place) as well as for its association with other spheres of organisation. And if it is something to be valued, it is also something to be conserved. All of this relates back to the notion of ecological volition, and the balance between consumption and conservation implicit in that term. Take away the symbolic value (sense of place) that individuals attribute to their environment, and this balance is destroyed. Place becomes something purely instrumental, to be consumed. At the point when instrumental ecological activity does not respond to shared elements of sense of place, ecological volition is lost: the community is no longer basing its ecological activity on communicative action within a shared lifeworld. Loss of sense of place may be part of the loss of freedom and meaning implicit in a process of modernisation.

In the sections that follow I offer three brief examples of Shimshalis' symbolic relationship

Table 10.3a: Senses of Place

Category	%*	Description**
Social	19	A social sense of place is one dominated by the importance attached to social ties and interaction. While it is social ties that dominate, they occur at particular places, which are, in their turn regarded as important because of the social activities that occur at them. Place has social significance and social ties have place significance.
Apathetic-Acquiescent	18	May be regarded as no sense of place at all. The sense was labelled 'apathetic' because the responses demonstrated little interest in, or commitment to, anything, let alone place. It is also labelled acquiescent because apparent apathy may disguise a feeling of powerlessness.
Instrumental	17	One which sees place as a means to an end. The place is significant in the way of what it does or does not provide in terms of goods, services and employment.
Nostalgic	14	One dominated by feelings toward the place at some time other than the present. Feelings are based on the past and in particular these feelings are shaped by particular events that occurred in the past and shape individual's current appreciation of place. Nostalgia is both positive and negative: longing and sadness versus happy memories.
Commodity	7	One dominated by a search for some 'ideal' place in which to live, ie. in terms of a quiet, safe environment, facilities, types of people. Place becomes a commodity: buyable, sellable, usable. Implies a built in obsolescence with regard to any specific place.
Platform/Stage	7	Perception of a place as a platform or stage on which to act out one's life. It may refer to some 'ideal' picture of place but this sense of place is not as commodified as that of the previous category. Place may symbolise their attachment to particular people and activities, although it is important to note that it is the interaction in a particular place rather than the place itself remains dominant.
Family	6	One defined in terms of immediate family connections. Feelings of place are shaped by the nature of family relationships. Family life and how a particular place affects family life are seen as central life concerns. Place is a refuge in so far as it is a place where family is located.
Way of life	6	A place may become a 'locality' in terms of jobs, friends and associational life. A whole way of life was bound up within a place, to which individuals felt they belonged. The social dimension is important.
Roots	4	Like 'way of life' place represents something important in its own right and this phenomenon, whether it is social life, lifestyle or sentiment, is strengthened by being based on or rooted in the past. Rootedness usually takes the form of family ties, so a sense of belonging seen in terms of continuity, of tradition, is added to the familiarity which comes from basing much of one's life in a specific place.
Environmental	1	The importance of place in its own right may also be seen in an 'environmental' sense of place. But place is not important for its social, familial or traditional meanings but as an aesthetic experience. The countryside is not a stage for acting out roles or lifestyle or way of life. Nor was it a commodity to be used, but was something to be lived in itself. That living was done with others, but place was more than a backdrop to social or economic activities.

Source: Eyles, 1985:122-129.

* Percentage of the 162 individuals surveyed. Each individual was allowed only one sense of place.

** Descriptions are, for the most part, direct quotations from the author's longer descriptions of the senses of place.

Table 10.3b: Senses of Place and Ecology In Shimshal

Category	Ecological Connection
Environmental	<p>Towcester: Place is important as an aesthetic experience. Countryside is not a stage for acting out roles, lifestyle, or way of life. Nor is it a commodity to be used, but is something to be lived in itself.</p> <p>Shimshal: Inasmuch as place is ecologically constituted, Shimshal's ecological surroundings are important as aesthetic phenomena, and as something to be lived.</p>
Social	<p>Towcester: While it is social ties that dominate, they occur at particular places, which are in turn regarded as important because of the social activities that occur at them.</p> <p>Shimshal: The character of social ties is influenced by ecological conditions, and is manifest in ecological exchange, eg. ecological imperatives of clan and lineage, isolation, socialisation through ecological metaphors.</p>
Instrumental	<p>Towcester: Place is significant in the way of what it does or does not provide in terms of goods, services and employment.</p> <p>Shimshal: Most of what Shimshal provides in terms of goods, services and employment is ecological, because of the community's subsistence base.</p>
Family	<p>Towcester: Feelings of place are shaped by the nature of family relationships. Family life and how a particular place affects family life are seen as central life concerns.</p> <p>Shimshal: Family is recast as lineage group and household, which is primarily a unit for subsistence production, so that place and ecology affect household directly. Part of the importance of household is as a framework for relating with ecological resources.</p>
Way of Life	<p>Towcester: A whole way of life is bound up within a place, to which individuals feel they belong.</p> <p>Shimshal: All aspects of Shimshalis' shared way of life are bound up in ecological activities and decisions, so that Shimshalis belong partly to their ecological milieu.</p>
Roots	<p>Towcester: The importance of place is strengthened by being based on or rooted in the past, seen in terms of continuity and tradition.</p> <p>Shimshal: Continuity and tradition relates to place in a large measure through the time honoured agricultural and pastoral cycles, and through attitudes toward ancestors' precedents in utilising ecological resources.</p>

with their ecological context. They demonstrate that community members' lives are influenced by their (largely positive) attitudes toward place, and the conception of an appropriate way to relate to ecological elements of place. The types of sense of place developed by Eyles help to link and categorise the disparate symbolic ecological resources recognised by Shimshalis, and in so doing

inform my interpretation of the value of these symbolic resources to sustainability.

10.3.2: The Tale of Mamu Shah: A Story of Place

One of Shimshal's most powerful symbolic resources is the tale or true fictional history of Mamu Shah, founder of Shimshal. This story, told in full in Chapter Four, relates Shimshalis' interpretation of how and why the community came to be (see also Mock, 1990). Throughout the story community is linked with place. The ecological characteristics of Shimshal, together with Shimshal's spatial relation to other communities, contextualises the tale and influences some of its events: the story would be different in another place. In addition, the way that protagonists in the story relate with their environment informs the ecologically-oriented attitudes of Shimshalis today.

The tale of Mamu Shah may be divided into sets of facts, each of which is interpreted in several ways by Shimshalis. Some of the interpretations or facticities are considered to be part of the story. Others are not. I am interested here in those interpretations that create symbolic ecological meanings.

The first set of facts describe Mamu Shah's escape from Hunza during a time of civil war, his journey to Sarikol and subsequent marriage, and the escape of he and his wife, Khodija, to the edges of Shimshal territory. For Shimshalis these events link place, community and larger socio-political context. The community of Shimshal exists because inhabitants of two places fled together to a third place. Shimshal had environmental/ecological characteristics that other places did not have: ruggedness, isolation, inaccessibility. These environmental characteristics allowed Mamu Shah and Khodija to avoid social and political conditions in other places: civil war, assassins, strife. To Shimshalis then, Shimshal's physical isolation, ruggedness and inaccessibility, manifest in a particular landscape, represents qualities of safety, harmony and peace. This quite direct relationship between social characteristics and environment surfaces frequently in Shimshalis'

eloquent comments about features of the landscape. Shimshal is perceived as a refuge in an otherwise dangerous and uncertain world; a refuge facilitated by terrain and location. This sense of refuge corresponds with part of Eyles' conception of a family sense of place. The first set of facts also establishes Shimshal as a unique community; indeed the only community in Hunza in which Wakhi and Burusho were integrated from the start. Shimshalis see a close link between their social uniqueness and their environmental context. They are what they are, in relation to the rest of the world, because of where they are. Therefore, the characteristics of where they live are important for more than technical reasons. I was told on numerous occasions that one could not remain a Shimshali for long, outside of Shimshal. Indeed, I noticed abrupt changes in the behaviour of my companions when we entered Shimshal territory, and when we went from the village to the pastures. They considered themselves to be most Shimshali in the pastures, and least Shimshali outside of Shimshal territory. In addition, I was expected to behave differently at different places, and many people complimented me by saying I was a real Shimshali, after I had visited the highest pastures.

Embedded in the account of Mamu Shah's journey to Shimshal is a description of the pastoral source of his wealth, and his exemplary husbandry of sheep and goats. When I asked people why Mamu Shah ended up in Shimshal they told me that he sought refuge and that he kept finding good grazing farther and farther up the Shimshal Valley. Mamu Shah was the "Milk King". He was able to maintain that claim because of the abundance of Shimshal's pastures. This fact provides an early link between Shimshali identity and ecological resources, and explains why animals themselves are such an important ecological resource. This is an instrumental sense of place in the sense that Shimshal is a setting for technical activity. But it is more than that. Shimshal's ecology sustains that technical activity directly.

After Mamu Shah and Khodija found Shimshal Valley, they spent a few years migrating upstream. The third set of facts relates to their adventures and experiences during this migration. The description of this migration provides places with a symbolic identity almost directly. For

example, Molonguti pasture is significant, and worth caring for, because Mamu Shah did certain things there that are related in the story: grazed his sheep, shot an ibex, argued with Khodija. These specific events (which are remembered, forgotten, invented and reinvented frequently) root Shimshalis to individual places in Shimshal. Every time a Shimshali makes the trip between Pasu and Shimshal, he or she relives the experiences of his or her progenitors. More than that, the facts provide a precedent for current ecological activity, and current ways of living in the environment, that are considered uniquely Shimshali. The way these facts are related also provides an example for attitudes toward ecological resources: "suddenly he rounded on Molonguti, a broad open place that was exceedingly green, with cool breezes fanning glades of shady trees" and "today I have seen a beautiful valley. We must go there".

Next, the story tells of Mamu Shah's discovery of the site of Shimshal village, and amazingly, an existing channel. Now, this was no ordinary discovery that merely satisfied an ecological requirement. Rather it was a discovery that had great symbolic significance. It was a sign (in the form of an ecological resource) that this was the destined site for the community of Shimshal. Current Shimshalis feel a responsibility to this destiny. It was right to settle in Shimshal in the same way that it is right to facilitate equity and solidarity. That Shimshalis speculate that the channel was dug by Kirghis pastoralists does not diminish the awe inspired by the thought of water gushing miraculously from the ground into an irrigation system. The interpretation of these facts suggests senses of place that are partly instrumental, partly root-based, and perhaps partly way of life. But also something more than any of these; something that might be described as a ritual or normatively-ordered sense of place.⁶⁵

The impact of the last set of facts is enhanced by the subsequent appearance of Shah Shams, an Islamic spirit or saint. Shah Shams appeared over the mountain behind a resting place

⁶⁵ While this sort of sense of place may be most common in indigenous communities like Shimshal, I think that something similar may be developing out of the environmental movement. It is almost ritually imperative that we value and identify with certain (especially endangered) natural places. See Cohen (1975, 1982) for a discussion of the notion of symbolic communities, which is similar to my notion of normatively-ordered sense of place.

called Ziarat, and made his way to Mamu Shah and Khodija's household. He presented Khodija with a bowl of milk, and told her his plans to make them the founders of a great community. According to some versions of the story he is the father of Sher, the only child of Khodija and Mamu Shah. None of these occurrences are especially related to ecological resources or even place. Still, Shimshalis can point to the place Shams appeared (and have built a shrine there), and they can link the community as a social entity in a particular spot to Islam. They also consider it significant that Sham's special gift was a bowl of milk. Perhaps most important, the community is called Shimshal, "Place of Shams", unlike most other Hunza communities, which are named after their mortal founders, or after some religious personage who has no special relationship with the place. Inhabitants of Shimshal consider themselves the symbolic children of Shams, which identity is linked closely with place. They belong to Shams, and so they belong to the place of Shams. Again, root-based and way of life senses of place, as ideal types, are evident, along with a ritual sense.

Nine months after the departure of Shah Shams a son, Sher, was born to Khodija and Mamu Shah. The story tells us relatively little about the childhood of Sher, except to relate that he was exceptionally strong, and as a result, remarkably adept at hunting and building terraces. These, of course, are human characteristics, but ones that commend themselves to the ecological tasks associated with building, and living in, the village of Shimshal. The example of Sher does not manifest or create a sense of place as such, but it does offer a sense of identity that relates to environmental setting, as well as an attitude toward living in that setting.

Next we learn that a spouse for Sher is found among the Wakhis of Sarikol; a fact that relates place and society as did the first part of the story: the relationship between us and them, here and there. Shortly after his marriage, Sher goes exploring upstream from Shimshal. He hunts a variety of wild beasts, he discovers new pastures, he finds Pamir and wins it, in a polo match, from some Kirghis. So begin some of the associations that Shimshalis have for their beloved yaks, and their beloved Pamir. First, Sher is astounded by the ecological abundance and beauty of

Pamir. He acknowledges the area's instrumental value and its aesthetic value (instrumental and environmental senses of place). He finds, however, that the area is occupied, and discovers he has to do battle to claim it for Shimshal. Sher engages in a competition and, against all odds, wins the grazing land. The story is quite clear about where these events occur, and just what area he wins. He is aided by two things: the yak he rides, and the intervention of Shams. This event, Shimshalis claim, is the source of their respect for yaks, and although they no longer play polo at Pamir, yaks would be valued for their ancestor's role in winning Pamir even if they had no other instrumental value. On the other hand, Pamir derives symbolic value as an exemplary habitat for yaks. Both yaks and Pamir accrue symbolic value through their association with the divine, and with the community's most important hero. The story contributes, again, to an attachment to place focused on specific ecological resources, which corresponds to a mixture of Eyles' roots-based and way of life ideal types.

Upon Sher's return to Shimshal he and his spouse have six children, three of which become the subclan ancestors. The story concludes with a brief enumeration of social development of the community along lineage lines. While this last part does not in itself tell us much about attitudes toward place, it does link the place and ecology-based events of the account to the present existence of this community in this location. As such it correlates to several of the ideal types of sense of place: social, family, roots, way of life, platform.

The story of Mamu Shah is a geography. It provides a lot of information about where things happened, and it connects (often causally) where things happened to what happened. To the extent that what happened helps to identify Shimshalis to themselves, where things happened also becomes a source of identity. Shimshalis would not be Shimshalis at any other place. The community's sustainability depends on the persistence of place as a source of identity.

The tale related here is the largest and most comprehensive of many related legends and historical facticities that Shimshalis half believe, and which connect them symbolically with their environment. Some of these are unique to Shimshal; many are found, with variations, throughout

northern Pakistan. For example, numerous myths tell of the presence of supernatural entities at high altitudes. Wild sheep and goats -Marco Polo sheep, ibex, blue sheep- are said to be owned by the *peris*, who are "female fairy spirits who dwell in the mountain heights" (Mock, 1990:13). *Peris* ride the ibex, which is why ibex frequently have a worn spot on their back. When village herders vacate pastures each season, they are repossessed by the *peris*. *Peris* are neither benevolent nor malevolent. Others, *deus* (ogres) and *churails* (witches) are decidedly evil. They also occupy specific places, but eat and torture individuals who visit those places. Numerous legends tell of heroes who have succeeded in winning ecological resources from the evil spirits. These legends may be seen as a metaphor for taming the wilderness, and indicate that Shimshalis do not necessarily attribute positive value to wild places. Often, places accrue value as they become tamed, and reproduced according to certain symbolic and instrumental criteria. Shimshalis, as good rational Ismailis, claim not to believe in *peris* and other indigenous spirits. Nevertheless, they know the stories, and relate them to spots within their territory. The stories, whether believed or not, continue to inform people's feelings of place.

10.3.3: The Tale of Lalli Shah: A Living Symbolic Ecological Resource

During my stay in Shimshal I attempted to identify individuals whom others considered to be exemplary Shimshalis. Propriety kept individuals from naming living women (although several dead ones were named), but I was able to assemble a list of four individual men, who were cited frequently as examples of what Shimshalis should be. They are all different, and derive their validity from different sources, so in a sense they represent ideal types of Shimshali.⁶⁶ Daulat Amin and

⁶⁶ No doubt there were others whom I did not discover. There is no suggestion here that these types are unique to Shimshal. I am sure that similar qualities define ideal members of other Karakoram communities. But, Shimshalis perceived the characteristics of these individuals as particularly Shimshali.

Ali Rahman I have already described. Johar Ali is Shimshal's first graduate degree holder. He works as an engineer in Gilgit, but supports a spouse and household in Shimshal. He represents a new type of exemplary Shimshal. The fourth individual is Laili Shah. Laili is many villagers' idea of an ideal Shimshali. And his validity as such is so bound up in his interaction with place and ecology that he has been reproduced as a symbolic ecological resource: by that I mean that he represents those resources by his actions and being. Like Daulat Amin and Ali Rahman I know Laili well. He portered for me both field seasons, and was one of my closest companions.

Laili Shah is recognised as a shy and retiring individual, with a good sense of humour, and an easy going nature. At twenty nine he has two children, both boys, and a healthy spouse. He comes from a respected, but not prestigious, lineage, and a well off, but not wealthy, household. His elder brother is a professional climber with the Pakistani Army. All of these characteristics contribute to Laili's acclaim, but no more than for dozens of other Shimshali men. He is not well educated, nor household head (or even aspiring household head), and he is not considered to be especially bright. No one expects Laili to represent Shimshal's interests to the outside. What makes people respect Laili is his harmony (for lack of a better word) with Shimshal's ecological setting, especially the high pastures. One villager described Laili as a modern day Sher.

Laili's most important quality as an exemplary Shimshali is his stewardship of yaks. He is recognised as Shimshal's best shearer of yaks, and one of its best riders. Despite that, Laili seldom rides. When other men ride loaded yaks, Laili usually walks ahead, so that the animal is not burdened with extra weight. Villagers think that Laili has a special way with yaks that allows him to shear them, and ride them, and milk them without disturbing the animals. Indeed, he is one of the few Shimshalis who helps his spouse milk their female yaks. He is beginning to get a reputation as a weaver of fine yak hair rugs. These attributes manifested themselves most powerfully in 1989, when Laili went on his first winter *shpoon*. The previous winters the community's yak herds had been depleted, because of wolves, snow leopards and deep snows. As villagers tell it, the winter of 1989 was particularly severe, yet only one yak was lost. Every person I spoke with, including

Plate Twenty-Two: Laili With One of His Yaks

Laili's companions, credited Laili with saving Shimshal's yaks. To show their gratitude, six households, independently, gave Laili's household a yak each (see Plate Twenty-Two).

In addition to his affinity for yaks, Laili is very strong, an excellent hunter (he was the only person to kill a wolf in 1989), and an expert porter and trekker.⁶⁷ All of these qualities are highly valued in Shimshal, because they facilitate, and indeed celebrate interaction, with the high altitude environment. They continue a heritage that began with Mamu Shah and Sher, and which provides a sense of identity for Shimshalis. The point here is not whether Laili Shah deserves the credit he receives, or whether other people follow his example. Rather, Laili is important because other Shimshalis think he manifests an ideal way to be, and an ideal way to relate to a valued ecological resource base. The fact that other Shimshalis value Laili's attributes highly testifies that Shimshalis govern their ecological activities, or at least strive to, according to criteria other than just technical efficacy. There is an appropriate, a proper, a fitting way to live life as a Shimshali within an environmental setting. To the extent that Laili symbolises that way, he is a symbolic ecological resource; a representation of the sense of place termed "way of life". Villagers eagerly seek new economic opportunities, agricultural and otherwise. But they do not perceive them as truly Shimshali activities, in the sense that herding and farming according to indigenous cycles are truly Shimshali (an exception might be portering, which requires many of the same qualities). Individuals whose existence affirms (through commitment and expertise) that Shimshali way of life are admired. Development initiatives threaten people like Laili, and the meanings they represent. Stall feeding, restricted pasturing, and so on inhibit the activities that define this type of exemplary Shimshali.

⁶⁷ Each year a shooting competition is held the evening before *Salgarah*. In 1989 Laili did not enter, because it was assumed he would win, so his bullets would be wasted. This sense of thrift, which applies also to genuine hunting, comes from a shortage of bullets, but also from a conviction that ecological resources and opportunities not be wasted. In the time I was in Shimshal I never saw a person shoot and miss an animal. Nor did I ever see a shot that only injured an animal. Whenever Shimshalis shot, which was seldom, they killed their target. Often individuals would stalk an animal for several hours, only to decide it was too small, or not quite close enough for a clean shot.

10.3.4: Portering and Trekking: Shimshali ways to Commune with Nature

Part of the reason Laili's size, strength, agility and endurance are so valued is that these attributes enable him to carry heavy loads over difficult terrain for long distances. Once again, these are qualities that allow Laili to interact in an appropriate way with his natural surroundings; things that allow him to live life as a Shimshali ideally should. But Laili is not unique in this respect. Many other Shimshali young men utilise the activities of trekking and portering to increase their social status within the community, and also to develop their own affinities with the ecological environment of high areas. In those capacities, as opposed to more instrumental capacities of earning money and transporting goods, these activities become symbolic ecological resources.

Trekking and portering provides men an opportunity to visit high pasture areas frequently, something that most men wish to do. Since herding is primarily a woman's occupation, it is often difficult for men to justify (to their household and to *kuyotch*) a trip to Pamir or Ghujerab.⁶⁸ Portering for tourists and for one's household, or less often formalised trekking, may provide the necessary excuse. Once a trek begins its participants attempt to visit areas they have never visited, find new routes, or complete a route in record time. Individuals derive an immediate social status from these feats, and several men (eg Shambi Khan) are especially respected for their familiarity with many areas and many routes within Shimshal territory. In 1989 Laili Shah and I made the trip from Pamir to Shimshal in 18 straight hours, a trip which usually takes three days. I was immediately classified a local hero and a true Shimshali. Laili had previously made the trip alone in less time, so he accrued relatively less honour from the feat. In 1986 Rajib Shah and Shambi Khan accompanied a Canadian trekker up the Biafo Glacier from Baltistan, over Hispar Pass and down the Khurdopin Glacier to Shimshal. This route was reputed to exist, but had not been

⁶⁸ The gendered division of labour is itself very place and ecological-resource oriented. The reasons given why women herd and men cultivate suggest that high areas and low areas have distinct symbolic value which translates into the social, political and economic spheres. Men and women claim that the prerogative to herd honours women. That in itself says something of the symbolic value of place and resource.

attempted in living memory. According to the Canadian who accompanied them these men received a hero's welcome, even though this route has no technical value whatever. Indeed, Shimshalis think highly of many westerners, because of their Shimshali-like interest in mountaineering and exploring. Inhabitants of other villages, and especially lowland Pakistanis, are considered somewhat inferior because of their relative lack of interest and ability in high mountain pursuits.

Trekking and climbing is perceived as a means for socially and materially poor individuals to increase their status (and with tourism, their wealth). This, of course, is a long road, since youths are usually accompanied by wealthier and higher status adults, who exercise their greater validity on the trail as they would at home. Most youths (whether rich or poor) spend many treks carrying heavy loads, cooking, fetching water etc, before they have the opportunity to do anything particularly noteworthy.⁶⁹ Porterage seems to be a favoured way for returning school children to affirm their identity as Shimshalis (see 7.2). These youths may have no other indigenous skills, and no other occupations that require their time. In addition, many speak some English and are generally more familiar with western ways, so they are useful as mediators between porters and their employers. Hasil Shah, one of my porters, fulfilled this role, and in so doing increased his validity and wealth relative to other Shimshalis (see 7.2, on education).

So far I have described porterage and trekking as ways to gain technical access to important symbolic ecological resources. These activities allow individuals to consume (and reproduce) some of the symbolic resources they value most: the recreation of an indigenous place-based lifeworld. The same activities, by linking individuals to special symbolic resources, have the

⁶⁹ I noticed that trekking groups have a much more obvious hierarchy than do larger social groupings in the village or the pastures. But the hierarchy is also more changeable through time. Laili, for example, occupied a higher position in 1989 than in 1988. This was because he had portered for me before, and because of his exploits on *shpoon*. Even though I was paying the porters, and was supposed to be making the decisions, I had no say in this hierarchy, or in my lowly position within it. I found that my relative status rose toward the end of my second field season, because I had made some of the treks faster and more often than had some of my porters.

practical benefit of contributing to the technical (how well a person performs in the mountains) and normative (it is appropriate to interact with high landscapes) legitimacy of those who participate in them. The obvious pleasure and sense of renewal that participants get from these activities suggests that trekking and portering are also expressions of a claim to sincerity-based validity (parallel to an aesthetic environmental sense of place). Within about three hours of leaving Shimshal trekkers begin to act differently. They often change their clothes into more traditional raiment.⁷⁰ They begin to sing songs, which they almost never do in Shimshal, except at formal celebrations. The songs they sing follow two themes: the beauty and abundance of Pamir, and the development of romances between fair shepherdesses at Pamir and stalwart youths visiting the area to hunt wild game. These songs are sung time and again throughout the trek, except if one of the trekkers brings a transistor radio, which device substitutes Indian film songs for indigenous ballads. Most trekkers festoon their caps, and the muzzles of their guns, with wild flowers. On every pass or ridge they build stone cairns (which serve no technical purpose unless the route is poorly known), or repair the ancient cairns, constructed of stone and dozens of ibex horns, that exist at the oldest pastures. Whenever we arrived at Pamir we entered singing and dancing. Mock relates that he was told to "enter singing, for the people who live there take it badly if anyone comes whose heart is not glad" (Mock, 1990:10). On two occasions I visited Pamir when it was uninhabited, and we still sang and danced, out of the joy of being there. When they are at Pamir trekkers act more indulgent, but also more conservative, than in Shimshal. One day we had a large dance that lasted for several hours, for no official reason. That lack of self discipline would never occur in Shimshal. On the other hand, although they were reluctant to acknowledge it, my companions preferred not to speak English, or eat imported food, or allow me too close to women, or permit me to take photos of people, at Pamir (see Plate Twenty-Three).

All of this suggests a relationship between place, activity and attitude. The behaviour of my

⁷⁰ Something they could have done in Shimshal. As it is they have to carry their village clothes with them for the whole trek.

Plate Twenty-Three: Singing Our Way Into Shewart

companions suggests that interaction with high areas is a liberating and renewing experience: an aesthetic experience. However, it is also an experience that has its responsibilities, in terms of appropriate behaviour: a mixture of indulgence and respect. Interaction with symbol-saturated ecological resources reminds Shimshalis of the activities and ideologies that make them authentic, appropriate and technically efficacious Shimshalis. This interaction contributes to the recreation of a shared lifeworld, and poses a challenge to systemic media which threaten the obsolescence of indigenous lifeworld elements. I doubt that it is coincidental that Shimshalis look to the highest, wildest, most remote and least modernised places to provide them with an important ingredient of their rootedness and identity as an indigenous community.

10.3.5: Interpretation

My theoretical and methodological concerns are for community sustainability and its interpretation. My particular empirical concerns are for interpreting the sustainability of the community of Shimshal, and specifically for understanding the influence of AKRSP village organisations on the character of Shimshal's sustainability. This section summarises the role of symbolic ecological resources in Shimshal's sustainability as a community, and offers some insights on the part that AKRSP VOs have played in defining (or redefining) that role.

One component of community sustainability is ecological volition: (a) the ability of a community to utilise material ecological resources in a way that sustains the (i) lifeworld-defined ecological resource base itself together with (ii) lifeworld-defined material requirements, and (b) the further ability to interact with the environment in a way that reproduces the shared meanings that community members give to place, locale, ecological artifact, and strategies of resource utilisation. Symbolic ecological resources relate to ecological volition in two ways. They constitute a set of shared symbolic meanings which relate lifeworld to the ecological systemic sphere. That is, they

facilitate community members' identification with their environment, and through their environment with one another. Second, and stemming from a shared identification of and with place, is a concern for the stewardship of material ecological resources. Inhabitants of Shimshal feel both an obligation and a desire to care for the resources on which they depend, both for instrumental reasons, and for purely normative reasons.

Eyles suggests that shared identity and a shared sense of belonging are encompassed in the ideological component of community (1985:70-82). In Shimshal, a set of shared attitudes toward the environment is an important component of ideology. Community members' identity and sense of belonging is strongly linked with their perception of appropriate human/environment interaction. All of this identity formation occurs within the lifeworld, but in Shimshal place-based identity informs activity within the ecological sub-system. The particular ideology which Shimshalis have created to interpret themselves manifests itself partly as a concern for the conservation of those resources that are such an important part of the Shimshali context.

Shared attitudes toward the environment, manifest in symbolic ecological resources, are important for Shimshal's sustainability. An essential component of sustainability, as the concept is rooted in Habermas' theory of communicative action, is the coupling of social system and lifeworld. Social system orders community members' instrumental existence, and material ecological resources are salient components of social system (ecological organisation is a sub-systemic sphere). Symbolic ecological resources, and symbolic attributes of material ecological resources provide a link between this important systemic component (ecological environment) and the practical considerations of lifeworld. Symbolic resources provide a catalyst for the coupling of system and lifeworld in general, and more specifically for the negotiation of a balance between consumption and conservation of ecological resources.

The examples provided in the last three sections go some way toward uncovering the links between ecology and identity, and identity and conservation/utilisation practices. Unfortunately, no small group of examples demonstrates the pervasiveness of these relationships, because each

example is a small thing in itself. But taken together, the myriad attitudes and beliefs and practices that demonstrate individuals' attitudes toward their environment provide convincing evidence of the strength of relationships among ecology, identity and conservation/utilisation practices. At least four of Eyles' sense of place types emerged as salient within the examples I did provide. They constitute categories of feeling or attitude which link Shimshalis through place to their community.

First, Shimshalis have an **Instrumental** attachment to place, in which place is seen as a means to an end. Place is significant in the way of what it does or does not provide in terms of goods, services and employment. This sense of place relates closely to the example provided in the section interpreting material resource use. Shimshalis perceive their landscape as a provider of the things they need to survive. However, the instrumental value of place is also evident in each of the examples pertaining to symbolic resources. Mamu Shah settled Shimshal because of its instrumental value as a place of refuge, and one in which to rebuild his flocks. Sher recognised the instrumental value of the Pamir. Young men today, who embark on portering and trekking journeys, do so partly because they can increase their status through successfully interacting with Shimshal's high altitude environment. While it is appropriate to use ecological resources instrumentally, this utilisation is governed by normative concerns. Not all types of instrumental action are appropriate. Only those types which conserve the resource, or reproduce it in a more highly valued form, are acceptable. Hence, Shimshalis' cautious hunting practices, their conservative behaviour while in pasture, and their requirement that those who utilise the high pastures do so with a joyful heart.

The emergence of AKRSP village organisations in Shimshal since 1983 has contributed to the present character of an instrumental sense of place in Shimshal. VOs have the explicit purpose of establishing collective production and consumption practices at the community level. This in itself alters the way place is seen by Shimshalis as a means to an end: to the extent that AKRSP intervention has introduced new "ends" for ecological resources (cash cropping, marketing, stall feeding) the instrumental sense of place (the "means") shared by Shimshalis also changes. AKRSP interventions have allowed certain places within Shimshal to become more useful (the

cultivated area) and have made others less useful (pasture area). They have also facilitated the creation of new symbolic ecological resources. Most important among these new symbolic resources is the road, and resting places and work camps associated with the road. The creation of new symbolic resources contributes to greater ecological volition, because it makes Shimshal a richer, more textured, more meaningful place. Conversely, the disintegration of certain elements of an instrumental sense of place is destructive of ecological volition, because it lessens the meaning Shimshalis attribute to their ecological context.

Second, Shimshalis exhibit a sense of place which values place as the context for a way of life. Shimshal's ecological resources constitute a 'locality' in terms of jobs, friends and associational life. A whole way of life is bound up within Shimshal, to which individuals feel they belong. Laili Shah personifies parts of that way of life. Indeed, Laili, by his example, has become something of a mediator between a truly Shimshali way of life in the environment and most Shimshalis. Perhaps he can even be seen as a substitute for less exemplary citizens. Just as political leaders represent Shimshal to the outside, Laili represents Shimshalis to the environmental requisites of the ritual congregation. Laili shares this responsibility with certain other exemplary citizens, past and present (ie. Mamu Shah and Sher), and to an extent with all other Shimshalis. Each person has a responsibility to a shared way of life, which some fulfil more completely or in different ways than others. This way of life includes more than just an ecological component. It includes social, political and economic components as well. Laili's example has an especially ecological significance. Other individuals, like Daulat Amin, exemplify the Shimshali way of life as it pertains to other spheres. Laili's careful stewardship of the high pastures, and of the community's yaks reminds his neighbours that conservation is part of a Shimshali way of life.

The influence of AKRSP has been to devalue the practical value of people like Laili, and enhance the value of people like Daulat Amin (who are less obviously integrated with symbolic ecological resources). Initiatives to stall feed animals, integrate with a market economy, pursue education-oriented occupations and so on (all encouraged by AKRSP, and facilitated by the way

VOs work in Shimshal) threaten to render Laili anachronistic **except** as an ideal; to turn him into a representation of an archaic element of lifeworld that is uncoupled with a changing social system. Certain activities currently associated with Shimshal's place-based way of life are also threatened by circumstances linked with the emergence of village organisations. Porterage, herding, wandering and hunting in the high pastures all clash with the village and road-oriented focus of village organisation collective activity. High altitude pursuits may become less valuable symbolically as the opportunity costs associated with them rise. Among those opportunity costs is the risk of missing some of the increased collective activity and communication in the village and along the road. The road itself will change Shimshal's place-based way of life by allowing increased interaction with the outside. Shimshal's way of life may lose some of its Shimshali-ness, but it will also gain a sense of association and integrity (share more comprehensively in a way of life) with a larger social, political, economic and economic unit, defined by membership in AKRSP, or by links by road, or by new resource trading activities. If Shimshalis perceive that their place-based way of life is shared over a larger area/place, their sphere of potential communicative discourse enlarges to include other communities. One thing that Shimshal has come to share with other communities is the sense that Shimshal (like other communities) is a place where AKRSP ideals are practised.

Third, the **roots** sense of place is important for Shimshal. Place indeed "represents something important in its own right and this phenomenon, whether it is social life, lifestyle or sentiment, is strengthened by being based on or rooted in the past" (Eyles, 1985:126). As Eyles says "rootedness usually takes the form of family [lineage and household] ties, so a sense of belonging seen in terms of continuity, of tradition, is added to the familiarity which comes from basing much of one's life in a specific place" (1985:126). The story of Mamu Shah, and the precedent that Shimshalis feel that story sets, exemplifies this sense of place. Community members perceive that the value they give to their environment is strengthened by the tradition and continuity that value represents. Because of the way Shimshal as a community developed in place, so to speak, it could not exist apart from the context of that place: it **is** that place. It is essential,

therefore, that the salient characteristics of place itself are conserved.

The community-enhancing attributes of continuity, tradition and familiarity are threatened by AKRSP initiatives to the extent that those initiatives encourage Shimshalis to abandon some of the practices that bind the community to its past. The more ecological practices change in Shimshal the less validity many symbolic resources will have, and the less rooted the community will be in the past that defines it. System and lifeworld may become uncoupled unless changes initiated by AKRSP become integrated with those symbols that define the community's rootedness. Village organisations have done that by forging a close link with the *kuyotch* and its ideals of equity, collectivity and solidarity. VOs have helped to return validity to the *kuyotch*, and in so doing have become part of the story of Shimshal's quest to live up to the example of its history, its founders and its roots.

Finally, Shimshalis exhibit a strong **environmental** sense of place. Place is not only important for its social, familial or traditional meanings but as an aesthetic experience. The countryside is not just a stage for acting out roles or lifestyle or way of life. Nor is it primarily a commodity to be used, but something to be lived in itself (Eyles, 1985:126). The antics of trekkers as they make their way from Shimshal to the high pastures evoke this sense of place, as do many of the stories and songs and dances they perform. The mountains, the Pamir, the alpine meadows are, as the metaphor goes, like a breath of fresh air to Shimshalis. I did not meet a single person who did not profess to value the high areas for themselves. These areas have to be sustained, not because they provide a setting, not because they provide material resources, not because they evoke the past, but because being in them and thinking about them makes people happy.

As we have seen, the emergence of AKRSP village organisations threatens to devalue activities that occur in high altitude areas relative to activities that occur in the villages. This has two implications which relate to an environmental sense of place. First, this devaluation may occur because of a technical validity claim that high altitude activities have a low instrumental value in Shimshal's changing social system. The implication is that the aesthetic experience of those places

with the highest aesthetic value is less important than purely instrumental considerations. Second, to the extent that high altitude activities are devalued individual Shimshalis have less access to the aesthetic experiences that contribute to their place-based identity as Shimshalis, and that nurture their commitment to conserving the ecological resources upon which their material well-being and some of their symbolic health is based.

All of these senses of place, as primarily positive associations, contribute to Shimshal's ecological volition. They provide the normative basis for Shimshal's strategies for interacting with the ecological resource base. The AKRSP village organisations can influence ecological volition by affecting sense of place. As I mention earlier the AKRSP parent organisation has been more interested in opportunities to utilise resources than in constraining their use. However, in initiating schemes to change villagers' utilisation of the environment it has also changed their lifeworld-embedded attitudes toward it. It should be evident by now that village organisations have facilitated a process of rationalisation in both the social system and in lifeworld. Rationalisation toward modernity is conducive to community sustainability, but rationalisation always increases the potential for a colonisation of the lifeworld, and a corresponding separation of system and lifeworld. These mechanisms of modernisation are particularly insidious in a context such as that surrounding ecological meanings in Shimshal, because Shimshalis' attitudes and convictions regarding their environment are so contrary to those of contemporary forces for change. In addition, ecological meanings are rooted in a historical context that could mean less and less as Shimshal integrates with a wider social system.

AKRSP village organisations can enable community sustainability if it does some combination of two things: (a) supports the relevance of existing ecologically-oriented senses of place, or (b) facilitates the development of new rationalised senses of place. Either of these strategies would maintain an indigenous link between lifeworld and ecological sub-system. Although I find it difficult to estimate the degree or even direction of change in ecological volition engendered by Shimshal's village organisations, I doubt that changes that VOs have caused in Shimshal's

production, reproduction and utilisation of symbolic ecological resources have improved the community's ecological volition. I think that in this instance the integration of village organisations and *kuyotch* in practice has merely lessened the negative impacts of VO initiated change without reversing those impacts.

10.4 Conclusion: Ecological Volition and Sustainability in Shimshal

At the beginning of this chapter I argued that an assessment of a community's sustainability requires considering a fourth organisational focal point, in addition to the three identified by Matthews (1983). This was **ecological volition**, ie. **(a) the ability of a community to utilise material ecological resources in a way that sustains the (i) lifeworld-defined ecological resource base itself together with (ii) lifeworld-defined material requirements, and (b) the further ability to interact with the environment in a way that reproduces the shared meanings that community members give to place, locale, ecological artifact, and strategies of resource utilisation.**

The use of the word **volition** suggests an emphasis on the control, sovereignty and autonomy of indigenous communities to regulate their own relations with their environment. This emphasis continues a theme that runs through Matthews' framework, and which underlies my conception of community sustainability as an outcome of communicative action.

Ecological volition has material and symbolic components which correspond to material and symbolic ecological resources. Material resources are those tangible things that contribute to material production and exchange. Material resources relate to technical interests, instrumental action, systemic activity, and consumption. They tend to be relatively formally ecological. Symbolic resources are those things that provide identity, meaning, feelings of place and belonging to inhabitants of a community. They may be tangible (a mountain peak) or intangible (myths).

Symbolic resources relate to practical interests, communicative action, lifeworld norms, values and convictions, and conservation. They tend to be relatively informally ecological, but are often formally social, economic, or political.

Ecological resources confer meaning and identity by their existence in specific combinations, and by their utilisation in certain ways and for specific purposes. In a sustainable community the ways and purposes of ecological resource utilisation reproduce specific meaningful combinations of ecological phenomena in the environment, and affirm the meanings of those combinations through the continuing technical efficacy with which they can be utilised. Thus, sustainable human/environment relations may be facilitated by a coupling and integration of material (systemic: consumption) and symbolic (lifeworld: conservation) demands on environment, because that coupling facilitates the balance between consumption and conservation necessary to sustain a community reliant on a finite material resource base.

Four detailed examples provide a context for interpreting ecological volition and its role in Shimshal's community sustainability. In the first example I discuss Shimshal's utilisation of a large set of material ecological resources through an annual pastoral cycle. I emphasise that an ecologically and economically sustainable set of technical practices supported and validated practically is essential to overall sustainability: the volition to validate, communicatively and collectively, a decision regarding an efficacious and appropriate use of resources, and the volition to pursue that decision technically. The second, third and fourth examples relate symbolic ecological resources to Shimshal's sustainability as a meaningful community. Each of these examples interprets one set of symbolic resources as a source of shared place-based identity and commitment: the mythological history of Shimshal, the existence of living "ideal types" within the community, and the pursuit of high altitude activities. Shared symbolic resources such as those described in the three examples need to be nurtured, reproduced, and updated because they provide the context for a shared lifeworld, for shared commitment and identity to a community in place, and for intersubjectively accepted validity claims regarding the utilisation of material

ecological resources. Moreover, symbolic resources provide an important incentive toward conservation, because their symbolic consumption requires their material conservation.

None of these examples say anything definitive about changes in Shimshal's ecological volition, especially as those changes relate to AKRSP village organisations. My interpretations suggest that the development of collective organisations at the community level which are geared toward consumption of resources, and which are integrated closely with the *kuyotch* which is geared toward conservation of resources, facilitates a more comprehensive, productive and communicative management of material ecological resources that integrates well with other shifts in Shimshals' shared lifeworld and social system. Village organisations can be seen as responses to new ecological/economic opportunities, and as responses to new threats to the autonomy of the community to manage its own resources (eg. Khunjerab National Park). Certainly, village organisation administrators, because of their training and connections, are better suited to an advocacy role outside the community than are traditional *kuyotch* leaders (see 8.3).

I am less certain of the influence of village organisations on the contribution of symbolic resources to the community's ecological volition. Village organisations and initiatives stemming from them have facilitated both the creation and destruction of symbolic ecological resources. The symbols which are created are more contemporary and may speak more eloquently to the current systemic experiences of Shimshalis. But the symbols that are destroyed had the weight and significance of a shared history in place. The acid test, so to speak, is whether alterations to Shimshal's set of symbolic ecological resources stem from lifeworld-based shifts, or whether they are responses to systemic changes. Previous chapters indicate that village organisations, and the effects of village organisations, seem to manifest a rationalisation of the lifeworld, and represent system/lifeworld coupling. I am unable to draw a similar, or contradictory, conclusion here.

PART IV:
Community Sustainability and Development

Chapter Eleven: Community Sustainability and Development... A Summary

11.1 Introduction

I began Chapter One by identifying two main questions: how can I conceptualise a new approach to evaluating rural development?, and how can I demonstrate the utility of that conceptualisation in terms of an empirical context? These basic questions lead to more specific ones that define my topic of study, and that underlie the thesis' overall structure. Table 11.1 reproduces Table 1.1 in outlining the more specific research questions I addressed (see also Table 3.2). The bulk of this final chapter summarises my attempts, throughout the thesis, to answer those eight questions.

Table 11.1: Theoretical and Empirical Research Questions

How can I conceptualise a new approach to evaluating development?	How can I demonstrate the utility of that set of concepts?
What is wrong with existing theories of development?	What is wrong with how outsiders have conceived Shimshal?
How can development studies change to address current neglects?	What effect has that outsider interpretation had on the community's development?
What abstract criteria contribute to make an indigenous community sustainable?	What are the characteristics of Shimshal's sustainability?
How can an appreciation of community sustainability inform development practice?	How have Aga Khan Rural Support Programme (AKRSP) village organisations influenced community sustainability in Shimshal?

11.2: Inadequacies with Development Theory and Practice

I argue in Chapter Two that a pair of central problems plagues current development practice. First, agency personnel make decisions according to invalid or inadequate perceptions of indigenous priorities, and second, these flawed perceptions mirror a poor understanding of the complex relationships among the characteristics that comprise indigenous communities. Specifically, development agencies favour an economistic view of problems, solutions and priorities which neglects the integrated roles of social, political and ecological spheres of organisation (together with the economic sphere) in defining development priorities and meeting them.¹ Failure to develop an adequate understanding of indigenous social reality contributes to policies and initiatives that focus on indigenous communities' economic viability to the detriment of indigenous priorities that are likely to also incorporate concerns for social vitality, political validity and ecological volition.

The central problems of development practice relate, of course, to the empirical contexts in which it is undertaken. But I think they stem **primarily** from attributes of dominant development theories. Modernisation theories, dependency theories, theories of intermediate technology and sustainable development theory all share characteristics that help explain why development practice misconceives indigenous social reality, and overlooks the holistic nature of life in indigenous communities. They all, to varying degrees, assume the universality of western historical experience; assume the universality of western urban/industrial priorities; are economistic; operate best within, rather than among, levels of organisation (household, community, region, nation); and operate for the most part within rigid disciplinary boundaries (see Table 2.3).² Contributions of

¹ Matthews' work on regional dependency, which is frequently cited throughout the thesis, develops a detailed critique of economistic development practices (Matthews, 1983).

² That conceptual research adheres to strict disciplinary boundaries inhibits an holistic or integrative view of indigenous experience.

development theories to problems at the level of practice are exacerbated by a tendency for all types of theory to be applied within a modernisation theory-oriented policy framework.

Development, and particularly agency development, is a western invention to facilitate a type of formalised intervention, by the west, in eastern communities. Theories of development describe different ways that intervention does, can, or should work. Development theory has evolved within the constraints of that particular historical context (which is part of a previous colonial one), which context determines how the west conceives the east. The salient aspects of an occidental conception of the orient are captured in Said's notion of **orientalism** (Said, 1978). Orientalism is a way of viewing oriental communities and societies which systematically simplifies and reifies oriental groups, and which conceives them in exclusively western terms (of either similarity or opposition). The concept of orientalism accurately describes the way outsiders have characterised Shimshal and Shimshalis since their "discovery" of the community a century ago (see Chapter Four). In essence, outsiders' accounts simplify the community, and deprive it of its multi-dimensionality: they reduce Shimshal to a caricature. This caricature contrasts with the rich conception of the community that Shimshalis themselves nurture.

While none of the outsiders I cite in Chapter Four were directly involved with formal development in Shimshal their views are characteristic of a western world view in general, and of development theory. The negative attributes of development theories noted earlier represent the reification of oriental communities as a type: they simplify potential development recipients, and describe them as "symmetrical to, and yet diametrically inferior to, a [western] equivalent" (Said, 1978:72). The ignorance of indigenous social reality in development theory and practice resonates with the reifying accounts of visitors to Shimshal. And they both stem from a single historical practical context: orientalism provides the practical underpinnings for the technical activities of development agencies and colonial explorers alike.

AKRSP policy in Shimshal and throughout the Karakoram manifests the problems with (orientalist) development theory. As the discussion in 6.3 indicates the published policy statements

of AKRSP reveal the agency to share many of the same inadequate conceptions identified as characteristic of development theory in general. Certainly the agency takes an economistic view of local communities, their problems and their priorities; a view which precludes an holistic approach to indigenous development. AKRSP policy statements also assume that the world for indigenous populations in the mountains of Pakistan is essentially the same as for populations in Europe and North America. Indeed, much of my interpretation in Part III is devoted to explaining how Shimshalis have overcome the stated policy of AKRSP to develop truly indigenous and multi-dimensional village organisations in the community. To their credit, and despite the organisation's official policies, the sensitivity of AKRSP personnel in dealing with indigenous communities has aided this process.

That leads us into the realm of the second empirical question: what effect has that outsider interpretation had on Shimshal's development? The thesis offers two ways to answer that question.

First, an orientalist interpretation of Shimshal by AKRSP personnel and administrators has had relatively little effect on Shimshal's VO-initiated development. This is because village organisations in Shimshal have evolved as holistic institutions whose decision making processes and technical activities have become integrated into the *kuyotch*, the *jamaat*, the household and kinship systems and the ritual community, all of which infuse village organisations with validity and responsibilities outside of the economic sphere, and among spheres. Shimshal has avoided some of the negative ramifications of participation with an orientalist development agency by transforming what AKRSP administrators envisioned to be a separate economic institution into something which suits a range of indigenous priorities. Certainly, relations between the community and the agency have been strained by Shimshalis' insistence on treating VOs and VO activities as something other, or at least more, than economic.³ Similarly, tensions arise within the community when VO administrators perceive their function in more technically economic terms than do other Shimshalis

³ These tensions become apparent in discussions about the road, its suitability as a PPI project, its progress, its funding, and its likely benefits (see Chapter Eight).

(for example, the issue of payment to dispensers and livestock specialists for services rendered). But these issues are small ones which do not rival the positive influence of AKRSP village organisations as they are manifest in Shimshal.

Second, the influence of orientalist administrators (of the Indian Raj) on Hunza's and Shimshal's development more generally has been significant and detrimental. In Chapter 4.3 I documented the break down of social organisation and community sustainability in the wake of the British/Dogra invasion of Hunza in 1891. The collapse of a largely communicative social organisation stemmed directly from British Indian policy decisions; most importantly, from the decision to provide a puppet *tham* with British Indian military support. That decision upset the balance of power among kinship, kingship, village and household, and facilitated a period of modernisation. Commoners throughout Hunza experienced a loss of freedom and meaning, and an attendant colonisation of lifeworld convictions by imported and orientalist systemic media (absolute political power, bureaucracy, dependency within an external economy). The orientalist accounts of early visitors are closely related to the policy decisions of the Indian government: orientalist writings provide the practical context for instrumental policy decisions. Indeed, Younghusband, Cockerill and Shipton, all of whom are quoted in Chapter Four, were directly involved in British imperial policy in Kashmir and Central Asia.

Outsider interpretations of Shimshal and other oriental communities have had a long term detrimental effect on the way that Shimshal and other communities have developed. Current outsider interpretations of Shimshal reproduce an orientalist discourse which continues to inform the community's development. Community members, aided (perhaps unwittingly) by AKRSP have managed to revive an indigenous discourse which seems to be leading the community through a process toward modernity.

11.3: Framing a Solution

If my first task was to interpret what is wrong, in conceptual and empirical terms, with the way outsiders have conceived indigenous communities and their development, then my second task was to conceive a way to overcome those inadequacies. Existing development meta-theories **assume** that the norms, the social structures, the ambitions and aspirations of the developing world are the same (if somewhat less advanced) as in the west. In other words, western circumstances of social and material change are applied throughout the world. In fact there is no justification of this claim for universality. On the contrary, development theories rely on an **assumption** of the global applicability of a particular set of western contexts, the application of which contexts to non-western contexts is increasingly contested. In other words, western contexts and western world views have been applied **uncritically** to developing communities. What I attempt to provide and justify is an approach to evaluating development that offers a minimal underlying theme that may be practically accepted as a universal goal for development, but which is flexible enough to absorb the instrumental and communicative contexts of individual communities.

A central point of my thesis is that we can construct a better way to conceive indigenous community development on the foundation of Habermas' theory of communicative action. Habermas' social theory has a number of attributes that inform an attempt to develop an approach to conceptualising development that is at once sensitive to indigenous priorities, and to the complexity and integration of indigenous social existence; and which retains the potential to have some substantial beneficial influence.

First, Habermas argues that we can accept a minimal universal for justice -a minimally universal generalisable interest- which he describes as **equality of discourse**. Because international development is a cross-contextual enterprise it can only succeed if it unites parties with different normative contexts. Therefore, development theory requires some purpose, some evaluative criterion, that can be accepted as universal across all contexts in which development

occurs.

Second, Habermas conceives a universally desirable equality of discourse in terms of process rather than outcome: the process of **rational communication**. Thus, decision making bodies in different contexts can strive toward the universally desirable process of rational communication without sacrificing their autonomy to make decisions appropriate to specific contexts. Indigenous priorities and indigenous consciousness are in no way abandoned to outside influences. This attribute of the theory of communicative action allows the creation of a conceptualisation of development that can be sensitive to indigenous consciousness without sacrificing a claim to some more general technical utility: development theory can be sensitive to context without being ineffectual.

The third attribute is closely related to the previous one. Rational communication occurs as participants in discussion reach intersubjective understanding through challenging and eventually accepting the validity of one another's statements. In this way a consensus (not a compromise) is reached. Habermas identifies three fundamental validity claims (which comprise part of his minimal universal): a claim to technical efficacy, a claim to normative appropriateness, and a claim to subjective sincerity. Any statement or prospective decision is legitimate to a group if participants in that group accept it as valid according to one of these claims. Different groups in different situations necessarily have different views on what is technically efficacious, or normatively appropriate, or a sincere expression of subjective experience. Any of these different views must be accepted as valid if the assembled group intersubjectively understands them as valid. Again, communicative action is a universally desirable process that does not assume a universally desirable outcome. Outcomes are necessarily contextual.

Fourth, the theory of communicative action establishes a theoretical link between the priorities/generalisable interests of indigenous communities and specific technically-oriented decisions and activities. Therefore, not only are we able to consider indigenous social reality, but we can also relate that information to systemic spheres of social organisation. The theory of

communicative action links the practical to the technical, lifeworld to system, convictions to instrumental outcomes. And that is conducive to an holistic understanding of indigenous communities.

Fifth, Habermas defines progress/development in terms of a precise conception of modernity, and outlines an historical process that leads societies (and individuals) toward modernity. Specifically he theorises a series of developments (disenchantment, cultural rationalisation, rationalisation of lifeworld, societal rationalisation), and suggests specific circumstances that provide the impetus for those developments. Habermas' comments on the process toward modernity provide a key to interpreting the historical processes that contextualise individual communities (see Chapter Five). Habermas also outlines a series of circumstances that can thwart the process toward modernity and lead to a negative spiral of modernisation. Indeed, he suggests the enlightenment project has a built-in susceptibility to the colonisation of lifeworld by systemic media. Only continued communicative action can prevent this internal colonisation of lifeworld. While Habermas' comments on modernisation are directed specifically at the enlightenment project in western capitalist societies, they too are useful guidelines for interpreting the social history of indigenous communities, as exemplified in Chapters Five and Eight.

Not only do the individual attributes outlined above aid in the conceptualisation of an improved approach to community development; they are united in the theory of communicative action into a single comprehensive and rigorous social theory. However, despite its interpretive utility, the theory of communicative action has several characteristics that present problems for its use as a basis for interpreting development. I want to consider three of these problems here.

The first problem emerges as especially relevant in today's intellectual climate. Habermas' theory is one of modernity, rationality, and universally desirable objectives. This conflicts with the post-modernist claim that "there are no privileged positions". While I agree that there ought not be any privileged positions, I am concerned with the problem of **development**, which is a problem that by its definition requires a cross-contextual, or multi-contextual, solution. To say that there are no

privileged positions does not make relations of power disappear. Only by identifying some minimal universal that we can all accept (and Habermas' very precise conception of modernity/communicative rationality seems a valid one), and striving toward it, can a much larger **assumed** universal perspective be avoided. International development can only occur within some universal context; the only way to avoid that is by abandoning any endeavour to help another social group improve its lot. And that would seem to sacrifice compassion to ontology.

The second problem, and a more serious one, is that communicative action occurs only within an ideal speech situation, and ideal speech situations never occur (unequal relations of power, and unequal competence in speech get in the way). This means that communicative action is an ideal that communities can strive toward, but which they cannot absolutely achieve. That is not in itself especially problematic: we can evaluate decision making in terms of the extent to which it approaches ideal speech, and thus communicative action, without losing explanatory rigour. But the framework I develop from the theory of communicative action is intended also as a programme for political praxis. That programme is doomed to failure if participants in discourse cannot at least approximate conditions of ideal speech. I think that small indigenous communities can approach an ideal speech situation internally; but there is little a small community can do to induce external institutions to engage sincerely in communicative discourse. This is a problem that permeates Habermas' theory of communicative action, and which is especially pertinent to my application of that theory. And I do not see a way to overcome or avoid it, except to encourage external agencies whose sincere aim is to benefit indigenous communities to participate in developing a genuinely intersubjective understanding with their intended beneficiaries. Apart from that, I can only emphasise that autonomy or volition is a crucial component of sustainability in the real world: dependency on institutions whose members are not sincere participants in communicative discourse is destructive of sustainability. I argued in Chapter Eight, on political validity, that Shimshal's sustainability has been enhanced by efforts of leadership to disassociate the community from relations with government agencies whose personnel are not perceived as sincere participants

in a decision making process.

The third problem I want to identify is less a problem of theory than an issue of application. Habermas developed the theory of communicative action as a broad social theory to explain how western industrial society evolved into what it is today. No element of the theory assumes the universality of western attributes, or prohibits the theory's valid application in other parts of the world or at a more local scale. But neither does Habermas provide guidance for using the theory to evaluate, in precise empirical terms, the extent and nature of a community's communicative decision making process, or systemic activities that result from such a process; and few other researchers have endeavoured to apply Habermas' social theory to small-scale empirical situations. The theory of communicative action, as Habermas presents it, is difficult to apply empirically. My notion of community sustainability mediates between the abstractions of Habermas' social theory and the concrete empirical process of social change and agency development in small indigenous communities.

Development theory can overcome its current inadequacies by concentrating less on an assumed set of technical (often economic) priorities and steps toward achieving those priorities, and by concentrating more on facilitating a practical process whereby indigenous communities are able to (or continue to) validate their own systemic, but lifeworld-embedded priorities. Then development agencies can undertake the technical task of helping communities achieve those indigenous priorities. My notion of community sustainability provides a set of guidelines for undertaking the empirical task of evaluating and facilitating the extent to which communicative discourse informs indigenous community priorities, and leads to consensual instrumental activity.

11.4: Community Sustainability In Theory and In Shimshal

The theories associated with communicative action allow me to define community sustainability, and the theories related to modernity and modernisation provide the larger setting within which to evaluate community sustainability. I argued in Chapter Two that a community is sustainable if its norms, and supporting institutions, are established consensually through a process of communicative action, and where those norms and institutions, and changes in them, are supported through time by the material (systemic) substrata of that community. In addition, a community is sustainable to the extent that participants avoid the inner colonisation of their lifeworld by subsystemic media, and retain the intrinsic connection between social system and lifeworld. The first sentence in this definition links increasing sustainability to the enabling processes of modernity, specifically societal and cultural rationalisation. The second sentence recognises the threat of potential constraining aspects of modernity implicit in modernisation as we are familiar with it.

According to this definition a sustainable community is one that possesses three salient and related characteristics: decisions are made in a communicative process and validated according to lifeworld-embedded norms; structures and institutions of the social system reinforce that communicative process; and instrumental components of the social system reflect the lifeworld-based practical understanding achieved through communicative action. These three characteristics stem directly from Habermas' theory of communicative action. They provide a solid basis for a concept of community sustainability, but empirical interpretation of communities' sustainability requires a more precise set of guidelines. Specifically, an assessment of community sustainability requires: (a) identification of important (systemic) spheres of social (instrumental) activity, (b) identification of the (lifeworld) norms and institutions attached to these, (c) evaluation of the degree to which these (lifeworld) norms are supported by consensually (communicatively) accepted validity claims, (d) an understanding of the extent to which these (communicatively) established norms are satisfied (systemically) through (instrumental) action, and (e) an appreciation of change in all these

elements over time.

An empirical interpretation of a community's sustainability begins with the identification of spheres of subsystemic instrumental activity, and the structures related to those spheres. I argue in Chapter Two that four spheres of instrumental organisation are salient to communities' social systems: social, political, economic and ecological. Community members strive for strength or vigour in each of these spheres; for a circumstance of social vitality, political validity, economic viability and ecological volition. A community is sustainable to the extent that members achieve social vitality, political validity, economic viability and ecological volition. The fundamental task, then, of interpreting the sustainability of a community, or interpreting the influence of some set of initiatives on the sustainability of a community, is to evaluate the vitality, etc, of each of these subsystemic spheres.

If sustainability in general relies on communicative action then sustainability within organisational spheres also relies on communicative action. Therefore, after identifying and describing spheres of organisation within communities we need to undertake steps (b) through (d) above: to link organisational structures to their roots in the lifeworld, evaluate the communicative basis for these lifeworld norms and convictions, and to evaluate the extent to which actual instrumental activities within the organisational spheres reflect communicatively validated lifeworld norms. Although community sustainability is achieved only through communicative action it is manifested in the results of instrumental action. That is why the interpretive process focuses initially on instrumental action (within systemic spheres) rather than on communicative action (the practical process of forming and reproducing lifeworld). Neither the intention nor the effect is to undermine the primacy that Habermas affords to lifeworld in his theory of modernity.

It is necessary to divide an interpretation of community sustainability into instrumental categories such as the four spheres of social organisation, because only in small categories can we interpret empirical material manageably. A problem associated with that sort of categorisation is that it dis-integrates an holistic indigenous experience, and exposes the framework to one of my

initial problems with development theory: a neglect of the holistic character of indigenous community existence. The four spheres are, after all, only analytical categories. Social vitality, political validity, economic viability and ecological volition are four essential components of community sustainability, but they do not in themselves equal community sustainability. Community sustainability ultimately relies on the integration of these four spheres technically and practically, in the actions and convictions of residents. It is important to incorporate that integration into a scheme for interpreting community sustainability.

Matthews also makes the point that it is insufficient to assess communities according to these organisational structures alone, because in themselves they do not express the nature of community integration (1983:161). He maintains that community integration is affected by how much and how organisational spheres are tied to one another, and by the strength of commitment residents have to the community as defined by these spheres. In addition, identification of and identification with the community by community members is important. The technical or instrumental aspects of community sustainability are supported and reproduced by practical, lifeworld embedded identification and commitment. Matthews' model does not offer a methodology for understanding or assessing these more complicated issues of integration, identification and commitment. They are practical or communicative problems, which require a consensual understanding by participants in a community. The elements of Habermas' theories which I have included in my conception of community sustainability, specifically communicative ethics and modernity, provide such a framework. Specifically, it is the process of communicative discourse -the process of challenging, validating and rejecting one another's convictions, norms and values intersubjectively- that leads to the development and reproduction of **generalisable interests**. By actively participating in the rational creation of these generalisable interests participants come to identify with them and commit to them, and identify with and commit to the specific structures that enable their technical satisfaction. The examples I develop in Part III of the thesis demonstrate the importance of participation in communicative discourse not only to sustainability within the four

spheres, but to a larger sense of commitment, empowerment and unity of purpose that contributes to sustainability in its own right. This element of integration, which may be adequately described in the parallel concepts of sense of place (Chapter 10.3) and structure of feeling (Williams, 1977:128-35), is ephemeral, and easier to interpret empirically than it is to pin down theoretically or methodologically. I am disappointed that I have been unable to incorporate it more solidly into my framework for interpreting sustainability.

If the fundamental abstract criteria of community sustainability are a communicative basis for decision making in each of the four organisational spheres (according to steps (b) to (d) above), and a more general unity of purpose which stems from contributing to lifeworld-guided communicative decision making, then my empirical task was to identify and interpret the characteristics of Shimshal's sustainability. To undertake that task is to ask what lifeworld elements and what institutional structures function in the community to facilitate a communicative decision making process. I attempted this in detail in the four chapters that comprise Part III, and in much of Part II. I will limit myself to a few synthesising comments here.

Community sustainability begins and ends with a group of people's identity of themselves and each other as members of a community, and their commitment to preserve that social group. Shimshalis have a strong sense of community; a strong sense of what holds them together and what distinguishes them from other people. And the components of that sense are understood similarly and shared among Shimshalis. This aspect of what amounts to a shared lifeworld is manifest in the detailed mythological history of Shimshal discussed in Chapter Four, in the symbolic ecological resources identified in Chapter Ten, in the instrumental agricultural cycles also identified in Chapter Ten, in the details of a clan and lineage structure described in Chapter Five, in the ideals of equity, collectivity and ritual solidarity discussed throughout Parts II and III, and in many other smaller examples discussed throughout. The commitment to community, and specifically to **this community in this place** is an example of what Habermas calls a generalisable interest. That Shimshalis share this generalisable interest facilitates intersubjective understanding. That the

details of this generalisable interest, this sense of community, are so rich and varied contributes to effective argumentation: Shimshalis can easily agree on most validity claims. Events of the past several decades (such as down-country education) have eroded the extent to which all Shimshalis share the same sense of community. One of the roles of AKRSP village organisations has been to shift Shimshalis' conception of community slightly to incorporate the experience of those whose lifeworlds had become alienated from the Shimshali norm.

I mentioned the norms of the ritual congregation in the context of sense of community. These norms are also important for community sustainability in their own right. In Chapter 5.2.4 I state that villagers group together in an important formal capacity as a ritual congregation. They share a set of self-evident, lifeworld, moral axioms which go beyond both the practical and technical interests they might share. These axioms stem from an ethic of equity: "in and of themselves villagers believe they are equal and equally deserving of the same consideration from each other" (Tahir Ali, 1983:178). They also encompass ethics of solidarity (manifest in community commitment and identity, among other things) and collectivity. In addition to being a means of government the community belongs "to the domain of religion, and village relations are also ritual relations" (Tahir Ali, 1983:179). These ideals of the ritual congregation are important to community sustainability as it derives from communicative action. Each of these ideals disposes the community, and specific community members, toward the process implicit in communicative action. Conversely, communicative action in Shimshal is limited by the constraints of these ideals. In a formal sense equity applies only to household heads, although its informal influence is more ubiquitous. AKRSP village organisations have served to broaden the base for equitable participation in decision making, and in so doing have also broadened the scope of collective activity.

The specific ideals of Shimshal's ritual congregation, and villagers' shared attachment to community more generally, are nurtured, reproduced, and enforced through several systemic institutions which comprise important components of Shimshal's sustainability. Most important

among these are the *kuyotch*, the *jamaat*, clan and lineage, household and village organisations. Whether Shimshal develops sustainably depends greatly on the way these institutions operate, and on the decisions that are taken in them. Each of these is discussed at length in Parts II and III, and these discussions indicate that the trend in each of these institutions is to operate more communicatively. I take this to be a sign of increasing sustainability. That all of these important institutions relate closely with each other, and inform activity in each of the four systemic spheres, is also a symptom of sustainability. Both of these trends derive impetus from village organisations as they are conceived in Shimshal.

In Chapter Five I discuss how events after the Hunza/Nagyr campaign of 1891 initiated a long period of modernisation and decline in Hunza and Nagyr. That the negative impact of those events, and more recent ones, on Shimshal's sustainability was less than for many other mountain communities can be attributed in part to the community's relative remoteness. Shimshal is far from the epicentre of those events, and continues to be remote from the harshest and most immediate influences of the outside. Community members have managed to nurture a shared lifeworld undisturbed, and have been able to select innovations and influences more carefully than less remote communities can. We saw in Chapter Eight that the road to Shimshal is proceeding slowly enough that villagers may be able to prepare for potentially detrimental influences that have caught other communities unprepared. Indeed, community leaders are relying on this. A potential problem with the concept of community sustainability I developed is that it favours communities whose context allows them the autonomy implicit in remoteness: small communities with few outside connections are most likely to make decisions under conditions approaching communicative action. This is not to say that Shimshal has ever existed in isolation, or that it has not effectively established communicative relations with institutions of the outside. Interactions with AKRSP provide an example of an ongoing and relatively communicative discourse with an external institution.

Of course these few general points over-simplify what I hope is a thick interpretation of

Shimshal's sustainability. A community's sustainability hinges on myriad instances of system-lifeworld interaction as they occur in daily life. The points summarised above are merely those that seem to recurrently inform those instances of interaction. Another characteristic of recent manifestations of sustainability in Shimshal which has a recurring significance is the influence of AKRSP village organisations. The next section summarises the influence of VOs on Shimshal's sustainability in some detail.

11.5: Community Sustainability and Agency Development

AKRSP village organisations' influence on Shimshal's community sustainability has been positive. I did not expect to reach this conclusion when I began the study, because AKRSP's policy statements reveal the inadequacies of development theory more generally. I thought these inadequacies would outweigh AKRSP's stated attention to sensitive field practice (which is often mainly rhetorical). In addition, while AKRSP's success rate (according to its own objectives) is remarkably high, my experience in other communities and my conversations with other researchers indicated that this success was mainly technical (eg. increasing market participation, collective marketing), and not often conducive to nurturing the criteria of community sustainability. Despite these expectations my interpretations in each of Chapters Five and Seven through Ten indicate that Shimshal is a more sustainable community because of the emergence of village organisations. I think this positive influence stems from several circumstances that are unique to Shimshal, but not singular. They are unique in that they derive from the particular way that Shimshal has developed and utilised AKRSP's village organisation initiative, and not from AKRSP intervention directly. They are not singular, because AKRSP and other development agencies could help other communities to develop some similar circumstances in different contexts. In this section I want to identify the contributions of AKRSP village organisations to Shimshal's sustainability, and use that

interpretation to develop a discussion of the utility of the concept of community sustainability as a framework within which to evaluate rural development.

Village organisations have made three fundamental contributions to community sustainability in Shimshal: they have created new fora for instrumental action in all spheres of systemic organisation; they have emerged as important venues for communicative action within the community and with the outside, and have aided the emergence of more communicative decision making generally; and they have been a catalyst for the coupled rationalisation of system and lifeworld in Shimshal. These are crucial contributions to Shimshal's sustainability. But they are contributions that would go unnoticed in many frameworks for evaluating development because they are not in themselves technical, material gains. Indeed, AKRSP has not recognised these contributions in its own evaluations of VO achievements in Shimshal and elsewhere. I think this potential to interpret communities' ability to develop new instrumental opportunities for itself, and new fora for communicative decision making, in response to changing systemic and lifeworld circumstances is an important part of what makes my framework for community sustainability an appropriate framework within which to evaluate community development. Without an approach similar to the one I take communities are likely to be mis-evaluated by development agencies, incorrectly assessed as unsustainable, and subjected to technical initiatives that miss the point.

Several more specific contributions derive from the three main ones identified above. A discussion of these helps to identify what AKRSP and AKRSP village organisations have done right in Shimshal, and how similar achievements can be realised elsewhere.

Shimshal's village organisations provide an entirely new forum for collective decision making in the community which broadens the base for communicative action. Village organisations open new topics to communicative discourse, and incorporate previously alienated groups into that process. For example, collective decision making geared toward community level economic innovations had not occurred for decades; village organisations introduced that topic to communicative discourse. VOs also provided a venue for the participation of graduates, returning

labourers, cosmopolites, and Shimshalis who are not household heads, in communicative action and collective instrumental action. In so doing the village organisations validated these groups' experience, allowed them to forge a normative link to the community, and enabled the community to benefit technically from their skills. In essence, the village organisations, and particularly Daulat Amin (as VO president), helped to re-socialise disenfranchised individuals into the community, and helped to socialise the rest of the community toward the lifeworld experiences of a growing alienated constituency.

Village organisations, as they developed in Shimshal, did not attempt to redefine existing and indigenous norms. Rather, they evolved to incorporate those norms and identified their main purpose as strengthening those norms. That this occurred can be credited in part to AKRSP administrators' avoidance of rigid practical prescriptions, partly to the diligence of Shimshalis in retaining practical and instrumental control over their own village organisations, and partly to a fortuitous (I think) coincidence of some AKRSP norms and some Shimshali norms (equity, collectivity). What this means is that village organisations are not in competition with other organisational structures in the community.⁴ Village organisations, like the *kuyotch*, *jamaat* and so on, provide different ways for individuals and groups to serve the ritual congregation; to reproduce the norms of a shared lifeworld. This strengthens the community, increases the potential for intersubjective understanding, and provides village organisations with an indigenous normative validity it could not hope to achieve if it represented a different set of norms.

These points are instructive for agency-initiated community development schemes more generally. There is no advantage in duplicating something that already exists, and there is certainly no gain in sustainability to be had from creating a development institution that conflicts with existing structures. Development agencies should strive to develop community-based organisational initiatives that increase the potential for participation, or for some recognised technical gain, which

⁴ The leaders of different institutions are sometimes in competition with one another, but this competition is not perceived as valid beyond the level of individuals.

operates within the indigenous normative context of the community (as manifest in shared lifeworld, or more specifically, ritual congregation). The most useful initiatives may occur when agency personnel introduce an initiative that serves some newly rationalised element of lifeworld that has not been coupled with (served by) a corresponding instrumental innovation. Village organisations have done that in several ways. It is crucial that agencies do not introduce systemic changes with the hope (or intention) of triggering a lifeworld rationalisation; that is prescriptive, and conducive to inner colonisation of the lifeworld. Programmes that scatter technical initiatives without attempting an interpretive endeavour such as the one I suggest do just that.

Much of Shimshal's village organisations' success derives from their ability to exploit and reinforce indigenous and idealised tendencies toward communicative action. This relates closely to the points I made above: VOs built on a normative ideal and a set of institutions for achieving that ideal that already existed. This is most apparent in the integration of village organisations with the *kuyotch*. Shimshal's *kuyotch* existed explicitly and formally as a forum for communicative action (within indigenous constraints) toward nurturing the ritual ideals of equity, solidarity and collectivity, and manifesting them instrumentally. But the *kuyotch* was largely impotent for reasons discussed in Chapter Five. In integrating village organisations (which had obvious technical validity: money, expertise and supplies from AKRSP) closely with the indigenous *kuyotch* Shimshalis vested those village organisations with immediate normative validity, and immeasurably strengthened the *kuyotch* as an instrumental, and by extension, a practical institution. Village organisations became technical branches of an indigenous *kuyotch*. But VOs brought normative as well as technical legitimacy to *kuyotch*, because of their links with other important normative structures: the *jamaat*, the local and federal Ismaili councils, and the Aga Khan himself. The *kuyotch* had never had explicit and formal links to the repository of normative and sincerity-based validity manifest in the Ismaili faith and the person of the Aga Khan. But village organisations had those links, and provided them to the *kuyotch*, and the smaller sets of structures represented in *kuyotch*. This complex integration with a variety of existing institutions means that there is an overlap in the decision making areas of

VOs and other institutions, and also in their sources of validity, leaders and participants. One result is flexibility and comprehensiveness in decision making. Another is the evolution of village organisations as truly indigenous structures: they are an integral part of the indigenous community.

It seems that far from being another isolated institution perched on top of myriad others Shimshal's village organisations have helped to bind the community together. They have linked disparate institutions to one another, and woven a net of validity for many indigenous structures including themselves. Institutions, norms and technical activities derive legitimacy from one another, and AKRSP's village organisation initiative has enhanced that. And that enhances a more comprehensive identity and commitment to Shimshal as a community by residents, a more fully shared lifeworld, and necessarily a richer basis for intersubjective understanding. All of these are practical attributes of community sustainability.

I am not sure that what I have just described is something a development programme can ensure. It may be that to the extent communicative action is a truly universal generalisable interest it is also a universal tendency within communities. If that is the case then a goal of development agencies should be to identify tendencies toward communicative action, discover their normative sources, and work from there. The framework I have developed provides some guidance for this endeavour.

An important component of community sustainability is volition, or the autonomy of community members to forge their own intersubjective understanding, and develop their own instrumental responses to that understanding. It is this volition that prevents a loss of freedom and meaning implicit in a process of modernisation. Village organisations have contributed to Shimshal's autonomy in the sense I use it here by broadening the base and increasing opportunities for communicative action, and also by enhancing a long-term drift from kinship-based authority to community-based authority. In Chapter Eight I describe a variety of circumstances that have enabled village organisation leaders to emerge as political leaders that validly represent the community to itself and to the outside. The whole process of VO formation, and these leaders

specifically, have aligned Shimshal with external groups who are willing to establish intersubjective communication with Shimshal. At the same time, those Shimshalis who represent other institutions, primarily Pakistani government institutions (current equivalent of kingship) have found their authority eroded because Shimshalis are rejecting the normative and technical validity of those institutions. Wherever possible Shimshalis mediate their interaction with agencies they perceive to be insincere participants in communicative action through village organisations or the AKRSP. This is an efficacious move, because a degree of communicative discourse occurs between Shimshalis and AKRSP personnel, and AKRSP administration has the technical validity in the outside world to demand the sincere participation of external institutions that would not recognise the validity of Shimshali leaders themselves. AKRSP's intervention in the Khunjerab National Park dispute on behalf of Shimshal and other Ghojal communities exemplifies this type of mediation. The Khunjerab National Park issue also reveals that Shimshalis are not merely relinquishing autonomy to AKRSP head office. AKRSP initiatives associated with the emergence of VOs have aided in the evolution of a cadre of VO leaders who are effective advocates for Shimshal's interests outside the community. Village organisation leaders have developed as literate, informed, skilled and cosmopolitan representatives for Shimshal. At the same time they have indigenous validity within the community (part of which derives from their role as VO leaders), and normative and technical support from AKRSP in Gilgit.

I think this is an important issue that development agencies should heed. The technical initiatives of development agencies almost always facilitate the incorporation of indigenous economies into larger regional or global economic systems, and typically, indigenous communities support that integration. Certainly, that is AKRSP's goal, and one that is supported by Shimshalis. But without also ensuring some means of volition for indigenous communities within the larger political economy, initiatives toward economic integration abandon communities to colonisation by economic and political media, and facilitate a condition of dependency. What that means in technical terms is that the price of intervention for development agencies is an obligation to

represent indigenous communities to the outside on villagers' own terms, and to help community members develop the savvy to represent themselves to outside agencies. AKRSP administrators have demonstrated a willingness to do that, and have succeeded admirably in Shimshal. That willingness has made village organisations more effective within the community, and that success has helped Shimshal in its attempts to develop sustainable relations with the outside.

The tendency of village organisations toward broadly-based communicative decision making has influenced decision making at all other levels of organisation in Shimshal. Junior household members who have contributed to vital collective decisions at the community level, or who have rendered important services to the village organisations cannot easily be denied participation in household, lineage and clan decision making. Thus, village organisations have, by example (and by creating sources of validity for junior members) contributed to communicative action within households and lineages, as well as among them. Each time an additional member is incorporated into a communicative process the sustainability of the larger community increases.

I have concentrated mainly on the practical benefits of village organisations in Shimshal. VOs have also provided specific technical benefits to the community. These various technical benefits can be expressed simply as a general increase in the indigenously-validated technical options available for Shimshalis to increase their material quality of life. The road, seeds, fertilizer, training, savings programmes, marketing possibilities, and collateral for loans are small examples of these options. More importantly, village organisations have revitalised collective instrumental activity at the community level, so that Shimshalis can consider a greater variety of technical schemes of their own devising. In addition, the re-emergence of effective collective instrumental and communicative action has freed individual households to engage in their own schemes toward material gain. Indeed, village organisations provide a way for household members to exploit new economic opportunities without sacrificing their commitment to the ritual congregation.

Despite some unequivocal technical benefits provided by AKRSP through village organisations I doubt that the programmes' technical initiatives have been as beneficial as its

practical influence. Many of AKRSP's technical initiatives are of dubious merit given the social, political, economic and especially ecological context of Shimshal. I find this ironic because AKRSP's intended benefits are primarily technical economic and ecological ones. For example, I think that initiatives to abandon transhumant pasturing in favour of stall feeding are destructive of sustainability both ecologically and socially: why replace a high altitude resource base ideally suited to transhumant herding with a practice that stresses an altitudinal zone that is already intensely utilised? In addition, so much of Shimshalis' identity of themselves, so much of their commitment to place, resides in the high pastures and in high altitude activities that to abandon them would stress Shimshal's sustainability. Without basing specific initiatives on a firm understanding of sustainability in the larger sense identified in this thesis those specific initiatives are likely to have mixed, and largely unpredictable, results. Some of the technical initiatives proposed by the AKRSP have helped the community of Shimshal; others have hindered it. But AKRSP has allowed Shimshal to develop strong and effective village organisations that integrate with existing indigenous institutions to adopt, adapt and reject initiatives on the basis of communicatively-defined priorities.

In conclusion, village organisations have emerged in Shimshal as an innovation that has explicitly facilitated a rationalisation of social system and lifeworld. Shimshalis have interpreted their village organisations as institutions devoted to instrumental action, but deriving their legitimacy from existing, shared and indigenous practical interests. Village organisations provide a way out of a long cycle of modernisation, and an enduring tendency toward modernisation, by allowing community members to forge a new and rational link between a changing social system and a changing indigenous lifeworld. That is the crucial, and enduring, contribution of AKRSP village organisations as they have evolved in Shimshal. And it is a contribution that would go unrecognised in an evaluation process that followed any of the conventional development theories.

APPENDICES

Appendix One: Two Sample Field Notes and a Methodological Note

Sample Field Notes:

5:20pm, June 16/89. Peryan

[Alde Memoir:] Hasil's watch is not working again. He constantly asks the time.

Activity:[Description:] Hasil Shah's watch is useless. It goes sometimes, and it goes at an erratic speed, so that while he always has a time on his wrist, he can never be sure if it is the right time (the watch is a Casio "Sporty"). As a result, whenever Hasil wants to know the time, about fifteen times a day, he asks us [me or Nancy] and then checks to see if his watch is correct. Usually it is only a few minutes out, but sometimes it can be an hour or two off time. The watch is totally unreliable.

Interpretation: In an earlier entry I said that Hasil is **modernised** and Ghulam Shah is **modern**. This is an example of the seemingly irrational modernisation of Hasil Shah. I suspect that he sees a watch as both a status symbol, and a necessary accessory to the modern man. The actual timekeeping purpose of the watch is secondary. Is this an example of time/space distancing? (read Giddens). It may be. What it does show is that Hasil may feel pressured by the increasing institutionalisation of time, that is "clock time", in a community that previously paid little attention to it. Hasil's wearing of a watch is an example of agency, albeit a warped one, which is catering to this increasingly important structural element of the community. It is interesting to consider how the completion of the road will increase the role of clock time: ie. the [vaguely proposed] hydro station and its kilowatt hour fee; the linking of Shimshal more concretely with transport schedules

outside on the KKH [Karakoram Highway]; the distance between Shimshal and Pasu measured in hours and minutes rather than [porter] stages (which are measures of distance and have no real connection with time). Already, government school regulations institute a clock time dimension into school attendance, but it seems that Daulat Amin, at least, doesn't take it too seriously.

Ghulam Shah and Mohammad Sifaat do not wear watches.

Of course my interpretation of Hasil's motives may be all wrong. He may just be hoping that it will begin working properly again.

12:30pm July 23/89. Shimshal

[Aide Memoir:] Daulat Amin's ideas about schooling in Karachi.

Activity [Description:] A lot of people are sending their children directly from Shimshal to Karachi for education. This must have a variety of effects upon Shimshal and upon those young people. First, this is very hard on those people's parents who have no previous personal or cultural experience with being separated from their children either physically, or in terms of the generation gap which necessarily develops.

Secondly, it is difficult for the students themselves, who go from a very black and white, and morally simple life in Shimshal, directly into a foreign and very complicated atmosphere in Karachi. Indeed, the Aga Khan has recognised this problem, and recommends that villagers have their children finish middle school in Shimshal, matriculation in Gilgit, and then go to Karachi or some other large school in another city for post-matriculation education. He has built a dormitory in Gilgit to serve the purpose of gradually acculturating village boys into the outside world.

Daulat Amin says that he feels that Karachi is a poor place for students to go to school at the present time due to political troubles and violence. Indeed, the schools and universities are

closed much of the time. Mr. Azizullah's son and Daulat Amin's son are the same age and were schoolmates in Shimshal, but Azizullah's son who is in Karachi is only in 6th class, while Daulat Amin's son in Gilgit is in 8th class. The difference is that schools have been closed much of the time in Karachi.

Thirdly, it is difficult for the students to return to Shimshal and the simple, relatively sparse existence, after the urban amenities of Karachi. A particular problem, according to Daulat Amin, is their involvement in politics in Karachi. When they return to Shimshal the students' minds are full of national political matters, and often they argue and fight among themselves in Shimshal, if they disagree in their political preferences.

Interpretation: All of this is a very great stress on the social and political sustainability of Shimshal, for it introduces a whole new area of possible dissention, whole new areas of legitimation, and entirely new possibilities for challenging validity claims. In addition, it results in the formation of a group of young people with experiences and attitudes and expectations different from their parents, and subgroups within that larger group, based on political ideology, which has little direct relevance in Shimshal.

Methodological Note

I use Shimshal's recent experiences with Aga Khan Rural Support Programme development initiatives as a **case study** to explore and develop the themes described in my theory of community sustainability. The empirical material from Shimshal is intended to demonstrate the usefulness of the theory I developed for evaluating community development. I adopted the following procedure to achieve that end:

1. I coded the information I collected into the four general categories of social organisation identified by my theory of community sustainability: social, political, economic and ecological. In the field each entry was labelled as relating to one or more of these categories. Throughout the field seasons, and after my return to Canada, I reviewed and re-categorised field notes several times, but always according to the four theoretically-derived categories.
2. After collecting several weeks worth of information I also began to code field notes according to sets of observations that related narratively or empirically; I began to identify important "stories" of life in Shimshal, which emerged from the things I saw and heard. Whereas the first coding scheme was deductive, this second coding scheme was purely inductive: the categories emerged from the data, and were continuously shifting as I collected more information. As salient categories emerged they became the focus for more directed investigation, and more sophisticated coding.
3. These two primary coding schemes allowed me to develop the information I collected along two dimensions, which entwined to show how the experiences or "stories" of Shimshal life are woven through the theoretical categories of social organisation. I was able to select the richest and most important sets of experience or activity ("stories") as case studies within my four theoretical categories. They became the empirical examples in Chapters Seven through Ten. Particular empirical stories related most closely to certain

spheres of organisation. But because they derive from Shimshais' lived experiences each example also penetrated into the other spheres of organisation. Coding according to theoretical categories allowed me identify the activities and attitudes most relevant to separate spheres of activity. Coding according to narrative categories facilitated my efforts to establish links and overlap among the spheres.

4. I interpreted each example or vignette individually in terms of its contribution to understanding the sustainability of the sphere of organisation to which it pertained most directly. I also interpreted the contribution of each example to our understanding of how spheres of organisation relate empirically.

Thus, I linked data collected in the field using ethnographic methods to theoretical concepts by developing a series of small representative case studies within each organisational sphere. Together these small examples or vignettes comprise a larger case study which demonstrates how one aspect of a community's development can be fruitfully evaluated using the theoretical framework of community sustainability I developed for that purpose.

The methodological procedure of coding from two directions (inductively and theoretically) is common in ethnographic research and other sociological and anthropological research. While what I have done is not grounded theory, the procedures involved are discussed most precisely in publications on grounded theory, most notably Strauss and Corbin (1990), Glaser and Strauss (1967), Glaser (1978) and Strauss (1987).

Appendix 2: Kinship Features Among the Burusho

Table A2.1: Features of Clan Membership¹

Clan Centres

Each clan in Hunza is associated with an ancient territorial centre. Each centre is occupied by segments of its clan, and is recognised as the site of the clan founder's original homestead (Tahir Ali, 1983:69). These centres are the headquarters for each clan in its transactions with the *tham* (see 5.2.3). Clan members have the right to claim ancestral settlements as symbolic properties, but not as economic properties, because land within ancestral centres is owned by households and not by the clan.

High Pastures

Highland meadows and grazing tracts (Burushaski: *ter*) have been granted to clan collectivities in perpetuity by the *tham*. All households within a clan have the right to utilise these areas. Individual tracts may be further divided into sub-tracts according to maximal and medial lineage. This is the closest thing to an economic estate that a clan can claim.

Clan Leadership

Clans are typically dispersed, but they are united under executive councils, which are composed of all men who are heads of medial lineages (and household heads). Authoritative participation, however, is limited to "publicly active, leading elders of the clan's maximal lineages" (Tahir Ali, 19883:71). Again, specific circumstances may permit alterations from the norm, so that in any case certain maximal lineage heads do not participate in council, and certain other household heads may. Usually there is no single clan leader.

Subclan Leadership

Most clan meetings involve only local segments of the larger clan. At this level decision-making authority centres on local maximal lineage heads, but also involves all other adult male clan-mates. Because non-elders participate, local meetings display hierarchical lines of communication and authority. Often a single elder is recognised as leader, followed by maximal lineage elders, then medial lineage elders, and so forth down to unmarried adult males.

Clan Exogamy

Burusho, according to explicitly formulated rule, seldom marry within their clan, despite the norms of cousin-marriage described in the *hadith*. Endogamy is considered a form of illicit sexual relation (Tahir Ali, 1983:74)². The royal family does not adhere to this rule, and is considered somewhat degenerate because of it. The principle of exogamy relates closely to "the special relationship which holds between the clan corporation and its female members" (Tahir Ali, 1983:75). The most common reason why clan councils meet is to protect the honour and physical

¹ Source: Tahir Ali, 1983:69-80

² Presently endogamy is very rare, accounting for well under one percent of marriages. According to Tahir Ali it is still considered "wrongheaded and reprehensible, (but) would elicit no formal intervention by clan authorities" (Tahir Ali, 1983:75).

well-being of female clan members. A woman always remains a member of the clan into which she is born, and can always appeal to clan authorities in the event of maltreatment, even by her own father, brothers or husband. Clan authorities are obligated to address the issue and uphold her honour. This, despite the fact that if she is married she has stopped contributing to the material interests of the clan.

Death

If a married or widowed woman dies after having contributed well to her husband's household, her clan-members are expected to show gratitude for her well-spent life and intact virtue. This involves gathering at her house (within hours of her death) and mourning separately from non-clan mourners until her burial. Her clan members claim her body for burial, because she is no longer the concern of outsiders. Her husband's family contests this, and usually some compromise is reached. Still, she returns to her natal clan in death. Another death-related ceremony occurs after seven days, which again entails special responsibilities for members of the clan of the deceased individual. All clan members (or at least someone from their household) within some considerable distance are expected to make a mourning visit within seven days of death. These visits are important means of keeping in contact with clan members who do not live in the same neighbourhood. The strength of clan obligations related to death and other affairs is directly constrained by distance. Timely participation in clan affairs at the village level is imperative, at the level of the nearest several villages it is judicious, and beyond that participation is appreciated but not expected.

Table A2.2: Features of Maximal Lineage Membership³**Collective Action by Maximal Lineages**

Organisation at the level of maximal lineage is much more vigorous than at the clan level. Unlike clans, maximal lineages engage continually in collective action. Maximal lineage heads have direct and continuous access to the information and resources they need to act effectively. This is due primarily to the intimacy with which maximal lineage members are related, both geneologically, and in terms of property, social interaction etc. Maximal lineage grows and breaks into new units over time, but members tend to consider it as a permanent corporate group. Thus, individuals look upon material resources, labour and other facilities of lineage mates as assets of a corporate estate of which they are a part (Tahir Ali, 1983:83). Lineage heads expect to be supported in prestige-motivated undertakings, and expect to subsidise the affairs of poorer or less influential members. Lineages strive "to acquire a collective reputation of strength, prosperity, honour and influence" which is then upheld through collective endeavor ranging from acquiring jobs and royal favour to ensuring the virtuous comportment of women (Tahir Ali, 1983:83). In addition, the maximal lineage defines the group of people who are intimately and unavoidably involved in the event of some public dispute or confrontation. Lineage leaders become the spokespersons and prosecutors for any member of their lineage who is involved in some contested public affair.

Inheritance

Inheritance is mediated by maximal lineage elders. The maximal lineage group comprises the beneficiary in the event of heirlessness, and formal approval must be granted by the head of this group before any tract of land can be alienated through sale, gift, public offering etc.

Clan Neighbourhoods

Maximal lineage members prefer having their households clustered together into a distinct section of a village, so that the lineage can enjoy the benefits of autonomy, exclusiveness, mutual aid and assistance (Tahir Ali, 1983:84). Only through proximity can members have the freedom of access to each others space, resources and company that is considered desirable.

High Pastures

Usufruct (use of the fruits) of clan pastures is allocated according to maximal lineage.

Death

Lineage mates are expected to take leading roles in the activities surrounding death, including publicly announcing the death, notifying distant relatives, preparing the corpse, burial, leading mourners, providing food etc. (Tahir Ali, 1983:85). This expectation is not obviated by distance, as in the case of clan obligations.

³ Source: Tahir Ali, 1983:80-86

Table A2.3: Features of Medial Lineage Membership⁴

The medial lineage is the "formal unit of action" within Burusho society (Tahir Ali, 1983:86). What that means is that medial lineage heads formally represent their constituents in any intercourse with the clan or the maximal lineage. For example, duties stemming from the death of a maximal lineage mate are considered fulfilled if properly performed by the medial lineage head. The participation of junior members of a lineage in this and other circumstances is conditional upon prior authorisation by lineage heads.

Legal control of all land and household property (except high pastures) is vested in the lineage, specifically in the medial lineage head. His descendents have a right of usufruct, but they cannot alter the estate without his permission.

Medial lineage heads are legal guardians of all their unmarried, divorced or separated female descendents, and their male descendent's spouses. They are responsible for authorising marriages and divorces, and for protecting female virtue and honour.

"Medial lineage headship is the necessary and sufficient condition for the investment of these powers insofar as the descent system *per se* is concerned" (Tahir Ali, 1983:87). However, outside of the descent system, a medial lineage head does not necessarily possess authority or power.

Thus, the medial lineage headship represents "a form of legal potentiality, a category of office socially realisable as and when other organisational conditions permit" (Tahir Ali, 1983:87). This point is exemplified by Tahir Ali (1983:87-89) in the case of ten-year-old Phaqr. Phaqr is a lone male orphan who lives with his father's brother's son. He is about the age of his guardian's grandchildren. Yet Phaqr is the head of a potential medial lineage, and is therefore his guardian's equal in some respects, and unlike the latter's own sons (who are of an age to be Phaqr's father) he can challenge his guardian in some circumstances. He knows the characteristics of his land, he visits senior agnates on his own, he represents his own grievances to council, and he can state geneological reasons why he should have this authority at his age. At the same time he is not recognised, and does not expect to be, as anything but a child and a dependent in the society outside of the lineage. He has authority internal to the lineage as a potential lineage head, but he enjoys no deference outside of the lineage because that potential is not realised.

⁴ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:86-90.

Appendix 3: Kingship Features Among the Burusho

Table A3.1: Features of Kingship before 1891¹

1. Land Tenure

All land in Hunza belongs ultimately to the *tham*. Tenure of land by persons other than the *tham* originated as royal grants, so that in the event of heirlessness land reverts to him. Barren lands are unequivocally the *tham's*. Water to irrigate land is also *tham's* to provide. In addition, he is responsible for building and maintaining channel systems. Finally, only the *tham* can regulate the agricultural calendar. He initiates each stage with ritual observances. Thus, disruption of the kingship results in disruption of the basis for subsistence.

2. Citizenship

Persons become citizens with full jural status within the Hunza kingdom by "establishing domicile under royal jurisdiction" (Tahir Ali, 1983:104). This requires an initial grant of land from the *tham*². Individuals of Burusho, Shina, Wakhi, and Dom ancestry are all eligible for land grants, although grants to Dom speakers have been rare. *thams*, in their quest for increased authority and revenue, encourage settlement of new lands by all culture groups within the kingdom. In this way they are less ethnophobic than the Burusho, who resent the citizenship of other groups.

3. Hierarchy of Citizenship

Just as clan membership is hierarchical, so is citizenship. The two hierarchies may, but need not, coincide. In terms of the kingdom the whole population (except for the royal clan) can be ordered into four ranks. The *uyongko* or *akabirting* (the great) are the leading descent group seniors who comprise the most powerful group of councillors to the *tham*, and his most important state officials. The next group, the *baare siis* (well-to-do people) comprise all the prosperous, politically active, self-standing citizenry. Below these two groups of leading citizens come first the *shadarsho* (servitors) and finally the *baldakuin* (load carriers). The servitor class consists of those individuals who are too poor and politically marginal to be treated in their own right, but who are able to attach themselves to higher-placed clan members. Load carriers are just that: persons so impoverished and disenfranchised that they must perform menial tasks for the *tham* and his officials. The *tham* can raise and lower citizens in rank, because their standing is not hereditary. At the same time citizens' qualifications for high standing tend to be economic, and prosperity is largely hereditary. Persons can petition the *tham* with gifts and services, and he can grant them favours, offices, or land which raise their status within certain limits imposed by the principal councillors, the lineage elders.

4. Rights and Obligations of the *Tham*

The burden of citizenship within the *tham's* kingdom is taxation. Citizen households are regularly taxed by the *tham*. See A3.2 for a summary of taxation. The burden and privilege of kingship over the Hunza moiety consists of personal possession of broad judicial and administrative

¹ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:103-108.

² Sometimes, as in the case of Shimshal, this "initial grant" was an afterthought. It seems that Shimshal was well-established before it came under the immediate jurisdiction of Hunza, so that the *tham* at that time was granting Shimshalis the land they already controlled.

responsibilities. The *tham* is the final authority on all disputes. He is responsible for all matters for which no one else is willing to take responsibility (eg. abandoned or illegitimate children). The construction of irrigation systems, roads and forts, and the colonisation of new lands, pastures and settlements are his responsibility alone. In addition, he possesses sole authority in military matters, and in dealings with foreigners. Finally, he is the one person with the ritual powers to officiate at certain essential festivals, rites and ceremonies.

5. Royal Functionaries

The *tham* is assisted in the responsibilities outlined above by an hierarchy of appointed officials. These officials may be divided into two categories, one concerned with the administration of the kingdom, and the other with running the royal household. Official posts are not hereditary, but tend to coincide with the four strata outlined above. Table A3.3 provides an outline of Hunza's state bureaucracy.

Table A3.2: Taxation in Hunza, Prior to 1891³

What follows is a summary of taxes levied on the Burusho. Other culture groups pay slightly different taxes. In addition, specific villages are required to contribute certain other taxes, depending on their circumstances. For example, Shimshal provide salt and yak hair rugs on a regular basis.

Annual Taxes

- fixed quantities of grain, fodder and firewood.
- rajaiki* (the King's due): the equivalent of one adult male's labour.
- these are levied on the unit of land originally granted, regardless of the number of households currently occupying it.

Infrastructure Taxes

- set taxes are levied on the construction of new water channels, reservoirs, festival grounds, roads and defense works.
- the allocation of arable lands, pastures and offices is taxed.
- the adjudication of disputes is taxed.
- some Burusho claim that these are not taxes which are compulsory, but "kickbacks" which are efficacious.

Ceremonial Taxes

- households are required to pay taxes at the event of marriage, divorce or circumcision.
- shares of ceremonial meals are given in the name of the *tham*. The specified ceremonial meals includes life-cycle events, merit-making sacrifices, religious ceremonies, festivals, and reconciliation meals.

Hospitality Taxes

- the *tham* expects communities to feed and house him and his retinue in an extravagant manner when he journeys through the kingdom.
- he requisitions animals and equipment for these journeys, and for work on his personal holdings.

Manufacturing Taxes

- commercial craftwork, especially weaving.

Military Taxes

- in the event of war, one male can be drafted from each household, and each household is required to provide provisions and supplies.

³ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983.

Gold Tribute

-citizens of each section of the kingdom are collectively held responsible for a portion of the annual gold tribute that the *tham* presents to the rulers of Kashgar and Kashmir.

Table A3.3: Hunza State Bureaucracy Prior to 1891⁴

1. The Administration of the Kingdom

Level of the Kingdom

This level comprises all of Hunza, including non-Burusho areas. The objective of the *tham* is to dissect clans and lineages, and rearrange the component parts into a consistent, centralised administrative system.

1) *tham*

2) *Wazeer* (chief minister): The *wazeer* is the most influential person in the kingdom apart from the *tham* himself. He is the *tham's* constant advisor, first military officer, and head tax collector. Some *wazeers* virtually run the state, undertaking all responsibilities except those specifically requiring the *tham's* personal intervention. Often the *wazeer* is related through blood or marriage to the *tham's* family, and thus bridges a gap between the Ayeshkut clan and commoner Burushos.

3) *Wakeel*: *wakeel* is a plural term which includes all special officers who operate at the level of the kingdom. *Wakeel* include scribes, emissaries who represent Hunza abroad, standard bearers, army officers etc.

Level of the *Maqso* (district)

The Burusho see themselves as comprising three phratries, each linked to the originally inhabited settlements of Altit, Baltit and Ganesh. This conceptualisation does not allow the creation of new supra-clan groups, nor the inclusion of non-Burusho. It is in the *tham's* best interest to downplay the authority of phratries, and emphasise administrative units called *maqso*s. These units include the three original phratries, and also sections composed of non-Burusho settlements, and new Burusho settlements. As more land is settled, more *maqso*s are created, each of which is liable to taxation independent of original phratries. Taxes are assessed to *maqso*s, and then subdivided by village and household.

1) Leading elders and court appointees: It appears that no specific officials are appointed to oversee the administration of the *maqso*. That task, primarily one of apportioning taxes among villages, is undertaken by sundry court officials and leading clan elders who reside in the *maqso*.

Level of the Village

This is the level at which *maqso* obligations are administered. It is the largest (non-descent) scale at which commoners are expected to share intimate interests in one-another's well-being. While members of a *maqso* are connected by a royal administrative prerogative, members of a village are united by an array of common interests, and can be counted upon to act collectively. See Section 5.2.4 for a discussion of village organisation.

⁴ Source: Tahir Ali, 1983.

1) *Lumbardar* (headman): The village headman is a paid appointee of the *tham* who represents the court at the village level, and who represents the village to the *tham*. Sometimes several headmen are appointed for a single village. Commonly, one emerges as senior. While the headmanship is not automatically descent-based, headmen are typically medial lineage elders, and heads of prosperous and populous households. Headmanship tends to be passed on within the holder's lineage, if only because his household is most able to absorb the social obligations incumbent on the headman (ie. hospitality, prestige-based expenditures, travel to the capitol, etc). The headman's official duties are fairly well-defined: supervisor of public works, principal external spokesperson, host to visiting dignitaries, authority on customary law, convener of public meetings, director of feasts, dances and building projects.

2) *Akibirting* (the great): Certain other household heads, recognised as "big men" by the *tham* share the headman's authority and influence in the village, although less officially. While they have no official purpose, these men have to varying degrees made themselves indispensable in the affairs of the village, especially to the *tham*. They frequently confer with and advise the *tham*, they seek places in his court, they "obligate him with prestations", they watch over the headman, they arrive at the scene of public disputes, they monopolise discussion at meetings, they mobilise their lineages, they host important visitors, etc.

3) *Charbu* (beadle): The *charbu* is also a salaried employee of the *tham*. He serves mainly as a functionary who carries messages, announces important events, summons household heads to public meetings, organises work parties, etc. He is the headman's special assistant. Like the headman his job tends to be semi-hereditary, but he need not come from a particularly distinguished family.

4) *Gotsil-ey-yatkuin* (water controller): The final formally designated government official is the water controller. His job entails more hardship and less prestige than the others. It is his responsibility to monitor the upper portions of the village aqueducts, especially those spots that are vulnerable to collapse. During critical watering periods this means a continuous vigil. The water controller is viewed as a servant of the village, and is subject to harsh criticism from other villagers if he does not keep the irrigation system running smoothly. The water controller is appointed by the headman, in council with village elders, not directly by the *tham*. He, like other village officials, is exempt from communal labour obligations and household based taxes. In addition, the water controller receives payment in kind from every household within his jurisdiction.

Level of the *Thall* (neighbourhood)

It seems that this level is recognised, but has little official or unofficial purpose.

Level of the *Hakichin*

Households represents the final level of state administration. Taxes and other obligations levied on *maqso*s are apportioned to villages according to their population of households, and each household head is responsible for providing his household's share of those taxes and obligations. Except in special circumstances the state and the *tham* do not deal with household members other than its head. See Section 5.2.5 for a discussion of household organisation.

2. The Administration of the *tham*'s Household

1) *Farrash* (treasurer/store keeper) of the *tham*'s possessions and provisions.

2) *Yerpa* (foreman) of the royal estates. The *tham* is likely to have several foremen, each of whom oversee the husbandry of a number of royal landholdings.

3) Numerous minor functionaries, servants, assistants and labourers assigned to specific tasks such as herding, fire-wood collection, grooming, watering etc.

Appendix 4: Village-Based Features Among the Burusho

Table A4.1: Village-Based Ritual Activities¹

1. Death Related Ritual Activities

When a household head or grown member of his family dies the entire village is engaged in some of the resulting proceedings. All villagers (household heads) are expected to participate in the burial rites, preferably together with the senior woman of the household. If a household head cannot attend he should send a representative, and offer prayers in person at the house of the deceased within a few days. Every household in the village contributes specific meals to feed the household of the deceased and their visitors for a period of seven days. For a period lasting from a few weeks up to a year all villagers must abide by certain proscriptions on public life. These mainly pertain to open displays of exuberance, such as dance ceremonies. Proscriptions are enforced by the threat of political sanction and mystical retribution in the form of natural disaster.

2. *Niaz* Rituals

These are optional public sacrificial rites which are intended to prevent misfortune and/or gain merit. They may be sponsored by individuals or small groups, or by the village congregation. In each case the sponsor(s) derive the main spiritual benefits, but these and material benefits also spread to the village at large. All villagers are **expected** to attend, all villagers **must** be called to attend, and all households are **entitled** to a share of the sacrificial food offering, whether members of that household attend or not. *Niaz* ceremonies must be approved by the village council. They are allowed only if villagers agree that the community is in a state of material prosperity and interpersonal harmony. When they do occur these events demonstrate publicly that the community is in good health.

3. *Khudai* ("Promised to God")

Niaz is one manifestation of a broader category of ritual activity conceptualised as *khudai* "promised to God". Other manifestations are as follows:

- (a) *nandl*: an auction of donated items, the proceeds of which accrue to the Ismaili treasury. The auction is usually accompanied by a meal.
- (b) *zikr*: collective chanting of hymns accompanied by a meal.
- (c) *abbas*: feeding the local pious or religiously learned man.
- (d) *shukro khudai*: collective food offering in thanks for agricultural products. This is an optional version of another mandatory ceremony.
- (e) material aid to impoverished households
- (f) contributions to the construction of religious facilities.
- (g) gifts to the households of especially pious individuals.
- (h) communal gifts of foodstuffs and clothing to other villages struck by disaster or misfortune.

Many of these gestures are what people in the west would call charity. The difference here is that most of them are communal gestures, and all of them are perceived to reflect merit and increased morality onto the village as a whole. Gestures are made by individuals, sometimes for other individuals or groups, but always on behalf of the village polity.

¹ Source: Tahir Ali, 1983:182-213

4. Compulsary Village Rites:

Optional ritual performances are usually organised by individuals or small groups, but rely on the participation of the entire village. This means that they presume that a high degree of cooperation prevails in the village; otherwise they would not be allowed, or would not work if they were allowed. In this sense optional rites are demonstrations of village solidarity. Conversely, compulsory ritual performances are the communal responsibility of the general group, and demand participation. The relation of individuals to their village is underscored in these events; every villager has ritual obligations which belong to the community, obligations which may be exacted under duress. Compulsary rites are intended not to demonstrate solidarity, but to facilitate it. They do not presume cooperation, but create cooperative effort. If they are neglected the village's existence as a corporate body is considered to be threatened. It is in these compulsory village rites that the "correlation between ritual, jural and material aspects of village status" is most obvious. One festival, "*sahib zamaan-ey-khudai*" (an offering to God for the sake of the earth), demonstrates this particularly well.

Sahib zamaan-ey-khudai is an annual festival held in April to mark the beginning of the growing season. Villagers (ie. household heads) perform this rite in neighbourhood groups, and all village neighbourhoods perform it on the same day. The rite is considered to be a village-based event, which occurs simultaneously in different neighbourhoods. The rite involves preparing porridge, blessing it, praying over it, and dividing it into equal portions for distribution according to a set formula.

It is considered necessary to enhance and protect the land's fertility. Because this is so important no villager may ignore or obstruct it, on pain of formal castigation and/or fines levied in council. Likewise, no villager is excluded if he has any claim to membership in the neighbourhood holding the ceremony. If he is situated on the borderline between two neighbourhoods he is invited to both celebrations. Each household must contribute a bowl of finely ground wheat flour. Any household that experienced the healthy birth of a calf or boy child since the last *sahib zamaan-ey-khudai* festival contributes, in addition, a packet of butter. Flour is given without notice, but the offerings of butter are duly observed and noted as significant symbols of village prosperity. The porridge itself becomes a symbol of prosperity, for the more butter it contains in relation to flour, the better it is thought to taste. Miserly households are fined and chastised for withholding offerings, but they may not be excluded from the ceremony. After each villager has taken a turn at stirring the porridge it is served out, one share to each household. Additional shares from each neighbourhood go to village officials and volunteers (care-takers of the meeting house, learned and pious orators etc.). Each villager must begin to eat his household's portion in the company of the assembly. Most of the meal is taken home, where it must be shared among all household members.

5. Dance Ceremonies

Village status is confirmed and exhibited through the production of ceremonial dances. These may not be held except by an aggregated village group, or by the *tham's* court². The most elaborate ceremonial dances are arranged by the *tham* who provides his court musicians, the Bericho, as a benevolent gesture to his subjects. These are much less common than are village level dances.

Ceremonial dancing is a seasonal activity, which takes place from the beginning of *Shini* (starting with the summer solstice) to the end of *Dattu* (ending with the winter solstice). This comprises the period of subsistence abundance. Dancing is considered an indulgent activity

² Informal dances occur any time (except during mourning) and within groups of any type and size. Usually they express some degree of celebration. For example, when I arrived at Shimshal Pass for the first time my Shimshali travelling party convened an impromptu dancing session.

associated with pride, exuberance and extravagance. It must be constrained to times of abundance, when such attributes are justified. Burusho consider dancing to be a somewhat dangerous activity, which may threaten the stability and harmony of a village if it is not restricted to the appropriate context, and performed in seemly fashion (Tahir Ali, 1983:194). In addition, most dances are followed by a feast for all attending males, so abundant food should be available. The year's first dance celebrates *Ginani* (a harvest festival), and is held at the *tham's* discretion near the beginning of the *Shini* season. It marks the end of a long period of privation (often starvation) and hard agricultural labour, and the beginning of a season of plenty. As such it acts as a turning point between the somber winter existence of Hunzakuts, and their exuberant summer one. Every Burusho tries to return to Hunza for *Ginani*.

Dances are believed to be a sort of corporate property. According to Tahir Ali they "make an issue of the corporateness of the village and the derivative nature of powers that flow from village membership" (1983:195). Like other optional rites they demonstrate a community's solidarity. Indeed, they are viewed as a prized asset of the village holding them, which can be owned, displayed and enjoyed. Not only do formal dances display a community's solidarity, but they map out the nature of that solidarity. They are at once tools for manipulating social relations, and vehicles for affirming the existing social hierarchy.

Formal dances may be held only with the approval of the *kuyotch* of household heads. Approval is given after much pleading and arguing by the young men of a village. Dance music is most often provided by the Bericho musicians. Their melodies are said to be intoxicating, and able to send dancers out of control. The ceremony begins when at least one of the dignitaries of the village (the great ones) situates himself at one end of an open square (usually a threshing floor), where he is joined by other village elders (who become the "governors" of the dance). At this point the waiting crowd becomes a circle of celebrants, surrounded by a larger circle of observers (women and children). Each celebrant (male village members) salutes the most important dignitary, and is acknowledged as a participant. Any non-villager must be sponsored by a villager, and accepted by the governors.

A specific order of dancing is observed. A village "starter", who is usually an unimportant villager but who has been given precedence to start any important event or activity (eg. irrigating, ploughing, harvesting, dancing), leads the first dance. If appropriate the governors bid some villager to perform a special dance in honour of the person for whom the dance is being held (eg. the Aga Khan). The main body of dances is performed under the lead, or in representation of, full household heads. A leading householder who is not in the party of governors pleads the case of each villager. The governors assign an order of precedence based on a combination of social, political and economic characteristics. All independent household heads have the right to dance. Some governors defer their right to junior household members, preferring to remain on the dias and receive the salutes of dancers. Each household head (or a representative) salutes the governors and musicians, and then begins to dance slowly around the enclosed circle. Before he has completed the first circle he is followed in single file, and in a rough order of seniority by a number of other men who possess some tie with the senior dancer. He should be joined by at least all junior able-bodied males of his household. In addition, close friends, other kin, foster children and other closely affiliated persons may join the dance. After these semi-compulsory dances have been completed special requests are entertained, first on behalf of guests of the village, and then for leading men who are not household heads. Finally, requests are entertained on behalf of individual villagers to recognise some noteworthy event, or just to watch a particularly good dancer. Special dances continue until the audience is satisfied, and every legitimate request has been honoured.

The right to dance falls on elders and household heads, but most of the actual dancing is done by junior males. Elders consider the youths' dancing as an indulgence on both their parts, and take care that youths do no commit unseemly excesses. Youths and elders characteristically disagree about dancing styles. Frequently, elders complain that young people are leaping about too energetically, and not displaying proper composure, balance and self-discipline. These latter

elements are considered necessary elements if the dance is to have a salutary spiritual effect on the village. After the dancers and audience are satiated all adult males are treated to a feast, at which the "elders and responsible ones" preside. All male villagers partake fully of the feast, and are invited to offer food to younger male household members.

As noted above, each lead dancer **should** be followed by at least all junior male members of his household. Frequently, other intimates or relations join in as well. Participation in a dance is a formal means of expressing (or even establishing) a tie to the group represented by the lead dancer. In addition, the stuffing of cash "endearments" into a dancer's cap demonstrates or affirms a personal tie with the dancer. These endearments are later donated to the musicians. The refusal of an individual to participate in a dance in honour of a senior household member or other senior relation formally expresses dissatisfaction with the group, intent to insult the group leader, or even a desire to leave the group itself. Refusal to participate is considered in bad taste, but is occasionally employed as a means to put pressure on a household head, or some other senior person. Occasionally, a person will refuse to dance behind one person, but follow some other individual. This signals the creation of a new relationship. According to Tahir Ali "it does happen that a claim to affection, respect or alliance between men is first publicised in and through dancing and endearments" (1983:207). He goes on to say that "when this occurs a new personal or political tie is believed to have arisen between the persons concerned and the village community takes note of the changes in conduct it entails" (1983:207).

Village dance ceremonies are modelled on the *tham's* royal dance ceremonies. Therefore, they reproduce at the village level an idealised recognition of the kingship. Successful dances contribute to villagers' conceptions of the village as a harmonious community under the authority of "elders and responsible ones" who govern the dance and also represent villagers to their *tham*. By not participating or by organising a separate ceremony villagers publicly express their dissatisfaction with the village corporation, and by extension the royal polity. Thus, dances can be a forum for highlighting divisiveness in a community.

Appendix 5: Household Features Among the Burusho

Table A5.1: Rules of Joint Living within Households¹

The household system guarantees household members the right to support from household resources. It also regulates those rights, and assigns and regulates corresponding obligations to contribute to the group's wealth and well being. Rights and obligations are allocated according to rules which distinguish between a core set of household members, and a residual set.

1. Rights to Support

Core Set:

The core set of household members consists of the household head, the woman in charge, male agnates and their wives and children. Core members have an accepted moral claim to a common standard of living. They share equally (prorated according to age, sex and bodily need) in the consumption of food, shelter, clothes, and other goods and services. In addition, adult males have an equal lien on the potential of the household to assist them in endeavors which increase their personal income, prestige, or technical and educational skills. Females have a similar, if lesser, lien among themselves.

Residual Set:

Guests and foster children are more or less assimilated into the consumption pattern of core members. Full-time servants, hired workers (these categories are rare among commoner Burusho) participate in the privileges of joint living to a lesser degree. The general rule among all members is equality of consumption, especially with regard to food.

2. Obligations to Contribute:

Core Set:

The right to support is offset by an obligation to labour on behalf of the household. Failure to work is considered to be harmful to joint standards of consumption, and to the ethics of joint living. Few Burusho are allowed to live in idleness, even if they have the means. Household heads and women in charge are often the busiest because they must oversee the labour of junior members, and set an example for harmonious joint living. Theoretically, the household head has an exclusive right over all individual earnings and material gains. Junior members have individual hoards consisting of knives, jewelry, clothes etc., but ultimate control of these rests with the household as a unit, and finally with the household head. This understanding is implicit, and serves as the basis for all economic decision-making. By the same token, the household, and ultimately the household head, takes full responsibility for all actions of household members.

¹ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:256-258

Residual Set:

Guest residents, servants and hired workers are expected to contribute in a manner comensurate with their individual statuses, and the specific moral or legal understanding that brought them into the households. Guests may have come to help in times of trouble, in which case the household owes them special consideration. Permanent servants bear obligations similar to household members, and hired workers typically owe only the work they were contracted for.

Table A5.2: Rules of Household Recruitment²

Two basic rules inform the recruitment of members into households. They are (1) the inherent rights to membership of filiation, siblingship, marriage and descent; and (2) voluntary and negotiated arrangements between a prospective member and the household head.

1. Inherent Rights

Filiation:

The "house owner's" parents, sons and unmarried daughters have an unequivocal right to membership. Sons and unmarried daughters of the head also have an obligation to serve as members in their father's household. Sons may pass their rights on to their children. Daughters, of course, may not. Daughters must join their husband's household upon marriage, but may return to their father's household if they are divorced, separated or widowed before they have sons old enough to exert influence within the marital household on their behalf.

Siblingship:

The rights of the household head's siblings are more tenuous than the rights of filiation. A woman has the right to dwell as a member of her brother's household until she gets married. If she becomes divorced, separated or widowed she has the right to return. However, she is less likely to be welcomed into her brother's household than she would have been in her father's household (especially if her brother's wife and not her mother is in charge). Upon her death, a woman's "official" memory returns in part to her brother or father's household.

Brothers have a right to household membership until any one of the brothers demands partition. The right to partition is stronger than the right to membership. In that event the household is split evenly among brothers, who each attempt to form their own viable household. Nothing prevents them from reamalgamating at a later date.

Marriage:

Marriage entitles a woman membership in her husband's household, conditional upon the approval of the household head. This approval or disapproval overrides anything her husband might feel. A woman may be allowed to leave her husband's household or be required to stay in the household against her or her husband's wishes. Usually, this works in the woman's favour. If she and her husband are content it is unlikely a household head would disapprove of her. However, if a woman is not content in her new household or with her new husband, a household head is likely to approve her departure, while her husband may not. Similarly, a husband may want to divorce his wife, but a household head must be concerned that the woman is not thrust out into the world without other options.

Descent:

Any male or unmarried, widowed, divorced or separated female who lacks a viable household resides under the authority of a household head who is his or her closest patrilineal kin. Apart from fathers and brothers, this is most commonly the brother of his or her deceased father.

² Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:251-256.

2. Contractual Agreements

Contractual household membership and composition is voluntary, temporary and requires periodic renewal. The most common type of contractual agreement is between adult, married brothers who decide not to divide their father's household after his death. Other forms of contractual household membership, including resident guests, hired hands, domestic servants, and foster children, are less common among commoner Burusho. Two restrictions exist on household membership. No two members of the opposite sex may reside together alone unless married. Parent child combinations are allowed, but not approved. Groups of women may not reside together alone unless they are content to be considered lacking in virtue.

The household head must be the oldest socially active and competent man who has an inherent right to be included in the unit in question. The woman in charge is designated by the household head. It is usually the right of the eldest active in-married woman who is either wife or mother of the head. She may also be the head's daughter-in-law.

Table 5.3: Rules of Devolution³

Apart from household members a household estate includes all livestock, trees, houses, built structures, land, riparian rights, pasture rights, and all durable goods and assets. Only the household head's agnates are entitled heirs to this property. All other household members share roughly equal rights to the property's usufruct, but may not inherit any of it.

Female Agnates:

Daughters and sisters of the household head inherit their share of household property primarily in the form of dowries which consist of personal apparel, jewelry, bedding, chests, and cooking utensils. At the time of partition or death they receive nothing extra, unless a man dies leaving only daughters. He may bequeath to his daughters any property which was added to the household during his tenure as head. The rest devolves back to his closest male agnates. In practice, the property a daughter inherits becomes part of her husband's estate.

Male Agnates:

Ownership in any narrow sense pertains only to male agnates, and strictly only to the household head. However, male agnates possess an absolute equal right to shares of every kind of property. They claim those shares at the time of household partition. The size of each share depends on generational level. For example, if a man died leaving a son and two grandsons by a previously deceased son the son would receive a half share, and each grandson a quarter share. The living son's children would inherit nothing at the time.

When partition occurs the actual division of property is witnessed by local village or lineage elder. They make sure that each of the three types of land (irrigated pasture, arable, and house and garden plots) is divided into the appropriate number of equivalent parcels. If there are three sons the oldest chooses first from among the three parcels of arable land. He is followed by the second and third son. The second son has first choice of pasture land, and the third son chooses first for household plot. Usually, the youngest son ends up with the existing household compound, with the understanding that he will contribute material and labour to the construction of his brothers' houses. The rest of the property is divided equally, according to a lengthy process of negotiation. Modifications to the rule of equity occur according to specific circumstances, but they must be acceptable to all heirs and witnessed by appropriate elders. If the former household head is not dead, but has merely abdicated his position, then he oversees the partition of property without outside assistance.

³ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:259-263.

Table A5.4: Household Membership⁴

Among the Burusho, recruitment to domestic groups is fundamentally and rigidly governed by kinship, marriage and descent criteria. Other permanent inclusions are seldom recognised. Households are, therefore, collectivities of kin and affines. Categories of membership are summarised below:

***Ha-e-daman* ("House owner"):**

The owner of the house or household head is usually the oldest resident male agnate of the senior-most generation. He is considered to be an essential figure, without whom the household would cease to exist. When a domestic unit lacks a recognisable head it is considered as virtually non-existent. No services or goods are expected from it, and no contributions are allocated to it, except through the intervention of the head of another closely affiliated household.

Households without formal leaders exist mainly in the event of a young man dying, and leaving a wife with young children. The survivors are recognised as a temporarily incomplete domestic unit. Such units are pitied as "houses of orphans", who must be represented by the head of another household. This man, and the community at large, attempts to ensure that they receive their share of resources and privileges. Still, domestic units tend to suffer materially from the lack of full-time representation in the form of a household head. These units typically negotiate some arrangement that ensures them a permanent household head.

Much of the household head's authority and indispensability comes from his position as the sole interface between internal and external facets of household. He alone is empowered to act officially on behalf of the household in the community at large.

***Ruli-ey-gur* ("Woman in charge"):**

Ideally, this woman is the wife of the house owner. In practice she may be the owner's wife, mother or daughter-in-law. The *ruli-ey-gur* holds a critical position, mainly because of the gendered division of labour and gendered division of space built into the household system. Just as the household head has jurisdiction over all external dealings, and all tasks related to men's work and men's space, the woman-in-charge is responsible for the efficient management of women's space, women's work, and domestic activity in general. None of these spatial and social domains are wholly accessible to men, even the household head. The head woman also has certain ritual responsibilities, which cannot easily be undertaken by another person (see the sections on death and mourning).

Junior Members:

A household is considered legally and ritually competent if it includes a household head, and a woman in charge. However, without an assortment of headman's sons, unmarried daughters, son's wives, and grandchildren it is pitied as bleak and impoverished. Together, these individuals make up the junior membership of the household. Junior members are primarily executors of decisions and not decision makers. They have no independent claim on their own time, any possessions, or any wages, apart from the claims of the household as a whole. Neither do they commit household resources on their own, or undertake allocation of important tasks on their own. Their position is one of deference to the headman (and to a lesser extent the woman in charge) in all matters, including many matters concerning their own children. Juniors often ameliorate their

⁴ From Tahir Ali, 1983:219-236.

subservient position, usually with and sometimes without the approval of the household head. But in all cases the head's rights and privileges are paramount, if invoked.

Hierarchy:

The hierarchy of authority within the household exists as follows: (1) Senior male; (2) Senior female; (3) Junior males; (4) Junior females. Within that grouping some variability in degree of authority exists. The senior male has paramount authority over all other categories, but he exercises that authority more strongly over junior males than junior females. The senior female exercises very strong control over junior females, and less over junior males. Junior males and junior females have little authority over any but younger members of their own group, but occasionally junior males will claim some authority over junior females and even the senior female. Tasks tend to be allocated to a group more than to an individual, so that chores tend to be completed by the youngest member in the category who is competent for the chore. The retired mother or father of the senior male is considered a junior member, but may be allocated few of the chores appropriate to that group.

Table A5.5: Egocentric Networks of Mutual Aid⁵

Egocentric networks consist of person to person ties of kinship, marriage, friendship, individual contract and institutionalised exchange. Egocentric ties benefit the household group, but are defined primarily with respect to particular individuals.

1. Siblings, Parents and Agnates

Kinship serves as the basis for organisation of households, so it is no surprise that "obligations of kinship and of agnatic kinship in particular are insisted upon as binding, unconditional and without term" (Tahir Ali, 1983:276). The best example of this type of tie occurs among partitioned brothers, who according to Burusho provide the model for kin-based interdependence. Brothers are thought to have a moral obligation to supply reciprocal support, to the extent that they always call on one another's households for assistance before any other party. Very often, due to the nature of partition, two or more brothers will live adjacent one another, share wells, channels, paths, shade trees, and a single entrance to their compounds. This facilitates informal exchange of goods and services without the keeping of strict accounts. Still, separate households do exist, and the transfer of resources and labour among those households is expected to balance out over time. Moreover, support from brothers or other agnatic kin is considered supplemental. If it becomes crucial for more than short periods the weaker household becomes absorbed into the stronger. Brothers' households tend to drift apart over time. Over the span of many years the exchange of goods and services, which remains very important, becomes more formal.

Relationships of mutual aid with other lineage members are similar, although they will be less strong depending on proximity of relatedness. In general, lineage members are constantly assisting one another in informal ways, including advice, task assignment to children, mutual babysitting, butter churning, sewing, cooking, field work etc. For the most part, possessions are borrowed almost at will, visiting occurs without protocol, and individuals share meals without formalities. Individuals tend to maintain stronger than usual egocentric ties with former household members. The most common example of this, apart from brothers, is between a man and his dead brother's son.

Agnatic and sibling ties with and through women are less strong, because of their uncertain position within households. Upon marriage women disperse into the homes of "outside people" where they never really gain control of vital resources. Consequently, they are unable to offer substantial assistance to the households of their kin. Women often maintain strong ties of affection with their kin, but these contribute little material support. A woman's father and brothers often maintain close ties of assistance with her new household, but these are formulated primarily between men. This type of tie is discussed below.

2. Matrikin

From earliest infancy children develop intimate relationships with their matrikin, especially their "grandfathers people", but also uncles, unmarried aunts and married aunts, in that order. Soon after giving birth a mother takes her child to her parents' home for a visit of several weeks. This visit initiates a custom of visiting maternal grandparents that the child continues throughout his or her life.

The Burusho see relations with maternal grandparents as extensions of a mother/child bond. Thus, children can expect to be received with warmth and indulgence, and often visit their grandparents in the hope of finding a refuge from the overbearing authority of their paternal

⁵ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:276-303.

ascendants. In short, the household of maternal grandparents is perceived as an alternate, if temporary, home where an individual can expect to receive sympathy, indulgence, and personal consideration. The same is true to a lesser extent in the homes of maternal uncles. Unmarried maternal aunts dwell with grandparents, so they play an important, if subsidiary, role. Mothers' married sisters play a smaller and less intimate part, because of their primary obligation to the household members, and kin relations, of their husbands.

Household heads are reluctant to marry their sons and daughters outside of their natal village, because that would deny them (and their children) the potential to visit matrikin at leisure.

3. Affines

An individual can claim affinal relationships with a considerable number of people, including spouse's agnates and their families, and children's spouses and their agnates and families. However, the affines that matter in terms of household support are a select few, and as in other cases, are different for men and women.

A man's wife's parents and brothers, and his daughter's husband and children are likely to be his most important affines. In both of these cases the relationship is based on a mutual desire to make the marriage work and prosper. Relations usually begin in an atmosphere of wary mutual helpfulness (which flows primarily from the older to younger generation), but often mature into lasting friendships characterised by companionship, advice and assistance. However, even in its advanced stages the relationship does not exhibit the altruistic atmosphere of the matrikin bond; assistance and friendship is available to a man only to the extent that he is a dutiful and well-intentioned husband and/or father. In this sense affinal relationships stem from the marriage contract itself. A man is likely to have little to do with his son's wife's parents, except through his son.

Women lack the material wherewithall, the authority over resources, and the personal autonomy to activate and reciprocate external support relationships in their own right. A woman's most important affines are her husband's parents, siblings and sibling's wives; persons she lives with or near, and under whose authority she resides.

4. *Batikush*

All Burusho households experience periods of intense demand on their resources. Primary among these are marriage and death events, and to a lesser extent birth and circumcision. Death and marriage involve feeding and hosting a multitude of relatives, friends, neighbours and co-villagers, the number of which is beyond the control of the household in question. In the case of death this responsibility may continue for up to forty days. Of course, prudent household heads and women in charge begin preparing for these events far in advance. Still, very few households, rich or poor, have sufficient means to offer hospitality in a capacity commensurate to their status. *batikush* is an institution which provides the necessary resources for these times of intense demand.

The term "*batikush*" refers to a formalised and strictly regulated form of delayed exchange among households. Items of exchange include the basic ingredients main ceremonial meals, and sometimes fuel, tea, sugar, or small amounts of cash to buy these. Most households have from four to eight *batikush* partners. These tend to be agnates or close maternal relatives, but not all kin are *batikush* partners, and non-kin may be. Whatever *batikush* relations exist, they are based on mutual and formal consent between household heads. Certain close agnates (such as brothers) do not establish *batikush* relations because they would be superfluous, so close is the existing tie.

According to custom the account between *batikush* partners should not be allowed to balance. Debts must always be paid slightly in excess of the balance owing so that partners are perpetually tied by a sense of outstanding obligation. At any one time a household is debtor to some partners and creditor to others. An outstanding debt must not be paid except at the proper occasion of need, and then it must be offered without being asked for. Payment of debts at any other time is perceived as a repudiation of the tie.

When a household head dies his heirs divide *batikush* debts and claims among them, so that relations may be reproduced several times over. Within a short period of time these reproduced ties must be formally affirmed.

5. Individual Contract

Individual contracts for mutual assistance differ from all other forms in that they are legally, not morally, constituted. They are, as the title implies, explicit, limited-term contracts between households and specific individuals, who may include kin, neighbours, friends or strangers. Two types of contract are recognised: loans, and labour agreements. The necessity to arrange the former is viewed as a sign of impoverishment or even incompetence, so loans are avoided if possible, and kept quiet if they cannot be avoided. No such stigma attaches to labour contracts. Certainly, working in another's employ is considered demeaning, but it is viewed as the recourse of those who have inadequate land of their own, through nobody's fault. Labour contracts usually involve co-villagers. They are conducted with a minimum implication of inequality between employer and employed. A labourer is fed, housed if necessary, and usually paid in kind.

Loans and labour contracts help to increase the range and flexibility of household planning. The village government recognises this need when they allow householders to contribute to village projects either (or both) in labour or resources. Still, loans and labour agreements are not considered to add anything to a household's final worth.

Table A5.6: Sociocentric Frameworks of Cooperation and Assistance⁶

Sociocentric frameworks consist of structures which exist independent of individual households and household members, but which serve in some capacity to bring households together in cooperation. They include structures of descent and locality, including village and neighbourhood, true lineage, localised lineage, and consensual groupings.

1. Village and Neighbourhood

In terms of daily routines most tasks of productive labour are undertaken at the household level. This may suggest the existence of a decentralised economy consisting of numerous self sufficient domestic units of production. Actually, economic activities are carried out in tacit coordination by all households in a village. Indeed the legitimacy of the village to villagers (as opposed to the royal court) is in its ability to regulate interests of critical importance for household management.

First, it is not feasible for individual households, or even lineages, to set up and operate subsistence agricultural units. In the **prevailing structural circumstances** village level organisations are involved at every agricultural step, from the initial grant of land, through provision of water, to the rhythm of the agricultural cycle.

Second, the pastoral commons are directly controlled by the village corporation. Households, as members of villages, have free and unlimited access to pastures for grazing and fodder collection. Not all households utilize these rights on a regular basis (unlike the Shimshalis, and Wakhis in general, Burusho people seem to prefer sedentary agriculture to herding). Still, herding is an important option for households who lack sufficient arable land, and for all households in times of crop failure. Among farmers who exist close to the threshold of subsistence the insurance provided by pastures lands can be crucial.

Third, village membership entails a diverse array of other rights, duties and obligations which enter into the decisions of household heads. Among these are formal and centrally regulated activities such as the distribution of royal benevolence, free grazing of livestock in village fields in winter, irrigation scheduling and maintenance, and the agricultural cycle. In addition, there exist dyadic relations between village and neighbourhood households which are characterised by the assumption that intra-village households will assist one another in minor ways in the village, care for one another should they meet outside the village, and generally value the concept of equity among one another. Commensurate with this is the general value of being able to rely on a secure, predictable and honourable social environment, especially for women.

2. True Lineage

In their idealised version of social organisation Burusho regard relations with co-villagers as contingencies of residence. A household can move to another village and legitimately sever all ties with former neighbours. Relations with maximal lineage members are completely different; lineage members are bound by a permanent set of moral rights and obligations. Indeed, maximal lineage is considered to be the most important supra-household unit.

The lineage entity serves as a constant guardian of member household's interests in land, water, property, personal safety, honour and virtue. It is also the final guarantor of member household's viability. This means that lineage elders, who are influential within villages and with the *tham*, are expected to procure some solution to problems of member households' viability.

⁶ Source: Tahir Ali, 1983:303-324.

The lineage framework engenders an informal hierarchy of age and sex which cuts across household boundaries, and unites the entire lineage in a unified scheme of group activities. Within limits (and without formally-imposed authority) lineage elders can assign tasks to their juniors in the lineage. This informal authority stems from the fact that household lineage members spend a great deal of work and leisure time together.

A great deal of value is attributed to living in a village and neighbourhood comprised mainly of fellow lineage members. This proximity is always beneficial, and is considered essential in times of crisis.

3. Localised Lineage

While it is the ideal, few maximal lineages have all of their members in one village, let alone a single neighbourhood. For day to day intents and purposes it is the localised lineage that really counts. Households are most closely attached to those lineage households with whom routine interaction is possible. In practical terms this includes those households within shouting distance, or a few minutes walk.

4. Consensual Groupings

Circumstances of death, migration and childlessness inevitably leave certain households without any localised lineage partners. This predicament can be solved in one of two ways. Households can seek to be included in an existing, unrelated localised lineage grouping, or they can attempt to set up an artificial grouping with other households. An appropriate agreement is reached when the households in question declare their resolve to treat one another as true agnatic kin.

Households may belong to several consensual groupings, sometimes in addition to their own true lineage unit. According to Tahir Ali "the proliferation of consensual associations is deliberately intended to approximate, or at any rate to evoke, the ideal of living amidst one's own true lineage" (1983:324). Under no circumstances are householders willing to be without any true or consensual lineage affiliates.

Table A5.7: Contributions of Household to Descent Organisation⁷

The contribution of household to descent-based organisation is manifest primarily through the household head. The conduct of descent group affairs is based on the presumption that the household is coterminous with medial lineage plus in-married women and minus out-married women. Normally, then household heads are also heads of medial lineages. Thus, clan, sub-clan and maximal lineage populations are enumerated according to number of household heads, and distinguished according to heads' names.

All adult heads of medial lineages have a legitimate voice in descent group councils, and serve as vehicles for coordinating and communicating among descent group members. Medial lineage heads who are not household heads are secondary to household heads in these respects.

Descent groups plan enterprises and assign responsibility as a collectivity of households. It could hardly be otherwise, because households have preeminent rights over facilities and resources, and even the right to act within a spatial community. Descent groups have no such materially-based rights. This can be demonstrated in a few examples: death-related obligations are considered fulfilled if a household is represented; ceremonial offerings are donated by households; attendance at descent group council is by household; and descent-based pasture rights are administered by households.

Descent groups have a tendency to drift apart due to spatial dispersion and proliferation. Households act as instruments to create cohesive subgroups within the less manageable descent group. Households have internal reasons for maintaining supra-household kin groupings, which in turn benefit the lineage as a whole (see Table A5.6).

⁷ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:326-342.

Table A5.8: Contributions of Household to the Village (Citizenship)⁸

The *tham* and his functionaries perceive the village as a collection of households represented by household heads. These households are the smallest relevant units of political action. They are at once indivisible, independently run, and solely liable for their own actions. The village polity is defined, in kingship terms, as an assembly of household heads under the direction of a royally-appointed headman. To commoner Burusho the village has some importance as (a) a matrix within which household management occurs, and (b) a ceremonial and ritual entity in its own right. Householders attach relatively little importance to their political role as villagers. Certainly, they recognise the authority of village councils, but for much of their history that authority has been largely imposed, because councils are dominated by headmen and lineage seniors. However, by recognising and working within a ritual and economic/ecological village polity villagers also reinforce the *tham's* political conception of villages.

1. Household In the Economic/Ecological Village

Village membership accrues to those households who have acquired a parcel of irrigated land. The internal organisation of the village may be considered in relation to the vital resources it manages through household heads:

(a) **Water** is provided by the *tham*, administered by the village polity, and cared for by individual households. Safeguarding the agricultural water supply is laid down in terms of specific obligations on the part of member households.

(b) **Arable land** is created by royal schemes to provide irrigation water. It is allocated to individual households who, in return, owe equal shares of labour and material for the development of subsidiary channels. Stewardship of land devolves from *tham* to village, village to household, and finally household to lineage, through descent based rules of devolution.

(c) **Pasture** is granted by the *tham* to clan groupings within villages, who then apportion it by household. Usufruct of pastures belongs to households.

(d) **Labour** obligations toward village projects, and toward royal initiatives, are calculated at the village level, and then assigned to households as shares of the village quota.

2. Household In the Ritual Village Polity

Villagers are joined in common religious observance and belief. They have a shared conception of fundamental religious good that goes beyond political, economic or sectarian differences. In contrast to political village organisation this shared conception is highly dependent on voluntarism, person-to-person involvement, and individual moral conscience. Except for rare instances where religiously-motivated sanctions or fines are imposed by council, the ritual polity is a "politically featureless collection of individuals gathered in a spirit of amicable equality, without dominance or resistance" (Tahir Ali, 1983:357).

The ability of the village ritual polity to function as such depends upon, presumes, and reflects the role of households. In all cases, notions of right, duty and responsibility as they apply to ritual practice refer to the moral character and identity of households, and individuals as members of households. Indeed, who does what for whom, in the ritual domain (as elsewhere), is largely influenced by relevant codes of conduct between households.

⁸ Source: from Tahir Ali, 1983:342-361.

Appendix 6: Formal Education as it Links to Levels and Spheres of Social Organisation Other Than Socialisation

Links between Formal Education In Shimshal, Socation and Communication

Socation

Earlier educating mechanisms blurred the distinction among socialisation, socation and communication. Feasts, dance ceremonies and ritual activities were (and are) primarily sociating activities. People engage in them for the benefits of social activity for its own sake. At the same time they are opportunities to communicate new information about the community, and to socialise community members into prevailing norms and values. Traditional formal social institutions tend to be multi purpose in a social-organisational sense. They fulfil several social functions.

Formal education has a narrower scope. Shimshalis mean it to be a purely socialising structure that deals mainly with technical skills. Schooling is not perceived as an institution within which socation is possible. However, schooling (especially outside of Shimshal) has influenced the types of socation that are acceptable. This is itself a socialising function. Several highly structured and formal service clubs for youths, such as the Boy Scouts, have appeared in Shimshal since formal education has become an important socialising structure.

In addition, formal education has influenced the sociating abilities of other institutions. Formal education has meant the partial breakdown of certain ritual-based forms of socation as certain educated youths become less capable at participating. Returning graduates are often ritually illiterate. They do not know the steps to dances or their significance, they are uncertain of ritual obligations, etc. Perhaps over time ritually literate members of Shimshal will form a second expert culture, this time of "ritual elite" individuals.

Communication

School is responsible for communicating certain technical information, but this tends not to be current information about the community itself or its relation to the outside. Some of the latter type of information is gathered and communicated by students who are away from Shimshal, but not in the context of school itself. Practical information relevant to the indigenous Shimshali lifeworlds is not communicated via formal education. For the most part the new formal education structure has facilitated a separation of socialising, sociating and communication activities.

The *kuyotch* (village council) has always been an important forum for communicating practical and technical information relevant to the community. It practiced a sort of education or socialisation through communication. Currently the VOs link into that process, and recipients of formal schooling participate in the *kuyotch* through the VOs. This circumstance has increased the range of issues about which the *kuyotch* can communicate (to a much larger array of "modern" technical issues), and on which it has some valid socialising influence.

Links between Formal Education In Shimshal and Political Validity, Economic Viability and Ecological Maintenance

Political Validity

Formal education has had a political link from its earliest days. The first Shimshalis with any type of formal education were two subclan leaders who were summoned to Baltit for Ismaili religious instruction. Because of their lineage status these two men were political leaders within Shimshal, and political representatives for the *tham*. Their political authority in Shimshal was enhanced by their new religious education, and the way in which they received it.

Since that time indigenous political authority (according to membership in a lineage or household) has been a source of access to education, and that education has led to increased political authority. The example of Daulat Amin demonstrates this well. He came from a lineage of considerable political authority, used that authority to secure an education, and utilised that education to consolidate his political strength (primarily through the VO and school).

Recently the link between political authority and access to education has weakened somewhat, because more children are receiving schooling than ever before, and the funding process has become more rationalised. In addition, indigenous political authority is giving way to monetary economic power in some types of interactions with the outside.

The nature of the link between education and subsequent political authority is uncertain. Advanced formal education has occurred at the expense of other indigenous forms of socialisation, so that educated youths lose, rather than gain, political credibility within the community. The VOs, however, have provided a means for returning students to re-integrate themselves into the political process, at which time their education allows them to gain considerable political authority, even to the extent of forming an educated political elite. A clique, perhaps even a faction, of educated individuals under the unofficial leadership of Daulat Amin has become a powerful political force in Shimshal.

Formal education has an impact on the nature of political representation and political decision-making in Shimshal. Students are socialised to respect highly structured, formalised, and bureaucratic political structures. As they come to occupy positions of political authority in Shimshal, indigenous political structures begin to take on those characteristics. The AKRSP VOs both facilitate and benefit from that trend. Despite their broad community support, VOs are formal hierarchical institutions of political and economic decision making which tie into a larger bureaucracy. The increasing authority of VOs and particularly VO executives relates to the return of students who are socialised into that type of political structure. To the extent that the *kuyotch* has become integrated with VOs, it too is taking on those characteristics.

Formal education affects political representation at the household level, as educated youth increasingly bypass the traditional indigenous hierarchy of authority. Certain young men participate more fully in the *kuyotch* and VO than do their household heads or lineage elders.

Economic Viability

Many of the links I established between formal education and political validity also pertain to economic viability. Wealthy households were able to spare their children for education, and their educated children returned to enhance the economic position of the household. Recently, this link has weakened (but not disappeared) as access to moderate amounts of cash has become more important for many things than great agricultural wealth, and as the community as a whole has taken responsibility for some of the costs of education.

Students are socialised into "ways to earn a living" which are based on interaction with a larger monetary economy. They bring this socialisation back to Shimshal, thus increasing the rate at which Shimshal's subsistence economy is transformed to a monetary one. Returning students are among the Shimshalis who are most capable of using this transformation to advantage.

Formal education, along with the whole trend toward a monetary economy, has recently had a moderately equalising impact on Shimshal's economy. Economic wealth has become partly disengaged from political authority and control of ecological resources, so that more types of prosperity exist, and more households have access to at least one of these types of authority. Of course, by separating the four spheres of organisation, and emphasising the technical efficacy of down country economic skills, formal education has facilitated the colonisation of political, social and ecological spheres by economic media. As economically competent individuals, such as returning students, gain increasing authority they have the potential to increase their control over the political, social and ecological spheres, and the equalising impact of formal education may be

undermined.

Formal education has altered the nature of economic viability at the household level. It has created both a new use for cash, and a new source of monetary resources. It gives households who can convert their means of production into cash an advantage over those which cannot. It involves the diversion of household resources outside of the community, and disproportionately to one or two junior household members. Both of these diversions challenge the ideals of equity within the community and within the household. When a junior member completes his education, his contribution to household economy may be disproportionately high or low, so that he is unable to fulfill his household obligations, or usurps the economic position of senior members. This may lead to a restructuring of economic hierarchy within a household.

Ecological Volition

The ecological ramifications of formal education are sixfold. First, participation in formal education and the subsequent socialisation of participants prevents some individuals from engaging in agricultural labour. This has a variety of impacts relating to the age and gender division of labour, the agricultural cycle, the utilisation of pastures, the intensity of production, and the ecological capability of households. Second, education must be funded by cash and not subsistence produce. Households who wish to educate their children need to engage in non-agricultural activity (which has its own opportunity costs similar to those listed above), or produce food which is marketable. Both strategies affect the nature of ecological relations, and the second facilitates the commodification of ecological relations. Third, returning students are likely to encourage the transition of ecological activities from practices geared to subsistence to practices geared to the market. The AKRSP shares that objective. Fourth, students learn specific technical practices which help to modify agricultural strategies. New types of vegetable seeds, stock-keeping

techniques, and the use of chemical fertilisers all provide examples of individual technical innovations which affect the maintenance of Shimshal's ecological environment. Fifth, participation in advanced education represents a temporary or permanent migration away from the community. Absent Shimshalis do not directly burden the ecological capability of the community, although they may do so indirectly by financial demands. Finally, formal education socialises individuals into a symbolic interpretation of the environment that differs from that implicit in the indigenous lifeworld. Formal education commodifies the environment, at the same time as absence from Shimshal diminishes students' sense of place.

The Relationship of Formal Education to Levels of Social Organisation In Shimshal

Education has facilitated the interaction of all internal levels of organisation (individual, household, lineage, village) with supra-village levels. This occurs as individuals and groups of individuals become more familiar and more competent with social organisation outside the community.

Individuals have become more important at the expense of all other levels of organisation. The benefits and costs of education can be shared, but education itself is an individual possession. The skills of education and the norms and values produced by education help to provide individuals with identities outside of household, lineage or community. To an extent households bear the cost of education and individuals accrue the benefits.

The financial costs of education are borne at the household and village levels. Initially, households payed for their members education. Now the community, through VOs, bears some of the cost of advanced schooling.

Opportunity costs are borne primarily by households, although through households they affect the entire community. By the same token financial benefits accrue first to individuals, then

to households, and finally to the community through VO contributions and good works. Due to the nature of household level communalism, the household remains the primary financial beneficiary of formal education. Other technical benefits accrue to both household and community. The VO in particular has utilised the technical skills of educated community members.

It is not clear what costs and benefits relate to lineage level organisation. It seems that in terms of formal education lineages participate through their involvement in household and village level organisation, not on their own behalf. It is clear, however, that lineages plan economic ventures that rely on the education and technical expertise of certain lineage members. As noted throughout this section, formal education has facilitated a social and political restructuring at the household and village levels.

Appendix 7: Shimshal *Kuyotch* as it Links to Spheres and Levels of Social Organisation Other Than Communication

Links between the Shimshal *Kuyotch*, Sociation and Socialisation

Sociation

Communication and sociation are closely related in that most forms of formal and informal sociation in Shimshal are focused on communication. By the same token, communication and especially practical communication is an outcome of sociation. The example of *Salgarah* festival in Chapter Seven demonstrates that acts of sociation may also be efficient ways of communicating information.

Other institutions whose primary purpose is communication provide opportunities for communication. The *kuyotch* is an example of this in two ways. First, the *kuyotch* sponsors and organises all formal community level occasions for sociation. Again, the *Salgarah* festival provides an example. Second, the *kuyotch* is itself a venue for sociation, and an important one for some villagers. Certain of the older generation of *kuyotch* members, including the *lumbardar* and several lineage and sub-clan elders meet frequently to discuss village affairs. These meetings are low key, casual and leisurely. There is no sense of urgency and no specific agenda or objective. It is merely an opportunity for old colleagues to get together to mull over the state of the world; in other words, to engage in social interaction for the sake of interaction itself. Now, because the participants in this sub-council are all highly placed *kuyotch* members, and representatives of large lifeworld-based social groupings, this form of sociation engenders communication and intersubjective understanding which is important to the complete *kuyotch*. *Kuyotch* meetings themselves are less obviously forms of socialisation, but even there decision making is often a slow, leisurely and

meandering process, which participants enjoy for the pleasure of it.

Those council meetings which debate village organisation business are less "social". Issues tend to be more controversial to *kuyotch* members, and more urgent. They are technical, non-traditional issues for which there is no precedent. In addition, the presence of at least the vestiges of a bureaucratic hierarchy (complete with a secretary who takes minutes), and the use of an expert language of development by some participants, inhibits the purely sociating aspects of communication. While more people attend *kuyotch* meetings now than before the VOs were formed, many people claim to enjoy them less.

Socialisation

Socialisation is the process of receiving and accepting the validity of norms, values and ways to make a living. For socialisation to enhance community social vitality it should encompass norms, values and ways to make a living that are prevalent within a community. In other words, socially vital socialisation is the process of accumulating a lifeworld, the elements of which are shared with other community members.

The *kuyotch* has always been a place where appropriate lifeworld elements are produced and reproduced. It is largely through communication in the *kuyotch* that this reproduction occurs. The *kuyotch* is not an important forum for the socialising process itself, because most community members have established stable lifeworlds by the time they become household heads. Periods of rapid systemic change are exceptions to this. In situations where members of the *kuyotch* are faced with issues for which there is no precedent its activities may socialise members. For example, when the potential for a village organisation was presented to Shimshal, it was largely through the *kuyotch* that a decision to accept it was made. The process by which that decision was made facilitated a change in participants' lifeworlds.

The VO is itself a new socialising institution for adults. Men and women are being socialised into a lifeworld that accepts a degree of bureaucracy, a degree of authority by elite "experts", and a degree of acceptance toward new ways to make a living including production for the market.

Links between Shimshal's *Kuyotch* and Political Validity, Economic Viability and Ecological Maintenance

Political Validity

The Shimshal *kuyotch* is central to political validity. It is the primary formal community level institution for maintaining social control. In a community like Shimshal social control relies on effectively regulating and communicating norms. The *kuyotch* is an important disseminator of appropriate norms and values to be socialised by community members (again the blurred lines between communication and socialisation, and between social and political organisation). In addition, the *kuyotch* has traditionally been the most representative political institution at the village level. All individuals are linked to it from three directions: their membership in the households of *kuyotch* members, their membership in the lineages of household leaders, and their membership in the ritual congregation represented by the *kuyotch*.

The particular way that VOs have developed in Shimshal has enhanced the political validity of the *kuyotch* in both senses of representativeness. The *kuyotch* now represents the general values and attitudes of the community more than in the recent past. It has also incorporated leadership which has considerable experience and legitimacy in dealing with the outside.

Economic Viability

The *kuyotch* serves, in part, as a body which regulates agricultural production and exchange relations among households in the village. In particular, it is the steward of the basic ideals of Shimshal's ritual congregation: equity, impartibility and solidarity. Now these are social ideals, but they also have important economic ramifications, especially within the subsistence mode of production. The *kuyotch* does not, except in extreme cases, interfere with economic relations; these are considered to be lineage and household affairs. It does, however, ensure the symbolic strength of the ritual congregation itself. By doing that it provides the environment in which household and lineage-based rules of joint living, rules of devolution, and ego and sociocentric networks of mutual aid and assistance can operate.

In recent years, since the partial integration of VOs with the *kuyotch*, the body politic represented by the *kuyotch* has become an economic unit in its own right. Collective savings, collective expenditures and collective marketing are the bases for AKRSP's ambitions for village organisations. *Kuyotch* leaders have always derived some of their legitimacy from economic success, in both subsistence and market terms. Now *kuyotch* and VO leaders are actual economic leaders who have the authority to direct collective economic ventures. That sort of leadership did not exist before AKRSP involvement in Shimshal.

The *kuyotch* has changed from an institution with only indirect influence on the subsistence economy, to an institution that also has a direct influence on the market-oriented economy.

Ecological Maintenance

A traditional function of the *kuyotch* (which has receded into the background in the present example) is to regulate the use of the community's resources. Terraces are owned by households,

as are animals, and water mills. Pasture rights are owned by lineages. But water, pastures, paths, and non-terraced lands are all owned by the community. The *kuyotch* regulates the use of these common resources in two great agricultural and pastoral cycles. In so doing, it effectively regulates the use of private property as well. The *kuyotch*, as a body, decides who can irrigate when and how much, what pastures can be grazed when and by how many animals, when sowing begins, when harvest begins, and when householders must relinquish their terraces for common winter grazing.

In Shimshal the *lumbardar* and the most senior lineage elders (all elderly men) possess special authority in these ecological matters, because they are matters which rely greatly on knowledge of precedent. This authority overlaps into other areas, some of which directly concern the VOs. For example, the large agricultural and herding cycles determine what labour will be available at certain times for other collective ventures. Work on VO projects (primarily the road) waxes and wanes according to ecological cycles. Similarly, the success of new crop varieties, fertilisers, fruits and vegetables, herding practices and so on may depend on subtle shifts in the ecological cycles. The *kuyotch* needs to consider the demands of indigenous subsistence practices and new technical opportunities if it hopes to reproduce sustainable ecological cycles. This necessarily close ecological integration between traditional subsistence agriculture and new market-oriented strategies has been instrumental in uniting the *kuyotch* and VOs into a single decision making body.

The Relationship of the Shimshal *Kuyotch* to Levels of Social Organisation

The *kuyotch* is, of course, a village level institution whose primary responsibility is to the village congregation. All other levels relate to the *kuyotch* to the extent that validity within the *kuyotch* derives from kingship (district government), kinship, household and individual levels.

Strictly speaking the *kuyotch* is composed solely of household heads. Heads of large, wealthy or technically proficient households have an added validity within the *kuyotch*. However, members gain status in the *kuyotch* by being members and leaders of lineages and clan groupings, in addition to being household heads. The larger the lineage of which one is leader, the greater one's technical and symbolic authority within the *kuyotch*. The three subclan leaders have a great deal of traditional lifeworld-based validity in the *kuyotch*. Much of the *lumbardar's* authority derives from his clan eldership, and his leadership of a prosperous household.

While the *kuyotch* is a village-based organisation, it has also traditionally been an instrument in the bureaucracy of kingship. The *lumbardar* and *akabirting* (great ones), as well as other functionaries, were formal and informal appointees of the *tham*. Currently, it is an instrument of the district government, and in practice of the AKRSP. *Lumbardar* Mohammad Khan is representative to the district council, and Daulat Amin is representative to AKRSP. Thus, some authority within the *kuyotch* comes from outside the community.

Recently the level of individuals has become more important in terms of the *kuyotch*. Formal education, wage employment and contacts down country have all lent technical efficacy to individual persons apart from their membership in larger groups. Certain persons who do not officially represent anyone but themselves have become valued, if invited, participants in the *kuyotch*. The participation of university graduates in the VO provides an example. The *kuyotch* can itself lend legitimacy to individuals, households and lineages. Individuals or groups of individuals who speak wisely, who contribute generously to VO coffers, who arbitrate competently, and so on, gain status within the *kuyotch*. That status spreads to other areas of Shimshali existence. This is the path that returning graduates have trod in re- establishing their participation in the Shimshali social system and lifeworld.

Appendix 8: *Salgarah* as it Links to Spheres and Levels of Social Organisation

Other Than Sociation

Links between the Shimshal *Salgarah* Festival, Sociation and Communication

Sociation is an activity or an event which is perceived from the perspective of leisure or enjoyment. It is not a process or an outcome in the way that communication or socialisation are. Another way to express this difference is to say that sociation requires the desire to sociate, because it is an end in itself. Socialisation and communication are not necessarily self-motivated in the same way. They can be the outcome of other intentions. One of those other intentions may be sociation.

Salgarah, which is a formal exercise in sociation, also socialises participants into the norms and values which guide the sociating activity. The programme of new *Salgarah* events embedded as they were within the traditional ritual authority of the *kuyotch* helped to create and reproduce a lifeworld that accepted the legitimacy of a variety of non-traditional institutions, and their integration into the impartible ritual communication. Virtually every activity of *Salgarah* helped to socialise community members into the norms, values and ways to make a living prevailing in Shimshal. Many of the events also produced shifts in the details of appropriate norms and values. Examples are provided throughout the text.

By the same token, some of the sociating events of *Salgarah* lead to communication among participants. The various reports, speeches, prayers, skits and songs all relayed information from participants to the audience, in a process of unilateral communication. In the afternoon, the dance ceremony enacted a process of multilateral communication, in which all adult males participated. As I mention in Chapter Five, dancing is a form of rational communication, in which intersubjective understanding is achieved, and a consensus is negotiated.

Not only are sociating activities also socialising or communicating activities. They are both. *Salgarah* is perceived by Shimshalis as an opportunity to recreate collectively and communally, among other things. However, every activity of *Salgarah* also communicates information and, in so doing, socialises individuals into the norms, values and ways to make a living that inform what is communicated.

Links between the Shimshal *Salgarah* Festival and Political Validity, Economic Viability and Ecological Maintenance

Political Validity

Salgarah is fundamentally focused around the community-wide ritual congregation. Many of its activities produce and reproduce spheres and degrees of authority within the community. That means that much of what is communicated to community members, and which they in turn absorb, relates to political representation.

The traditional *Salgarah* events reaffirm *kuyotch*, lineage, household, and remnant kingship representation within the community. New events affirm, and to a minor degree propose, other forms of political representation, mainly through Ismaili-based institutions like the VOs and WOs.

Salgarah facilitates political validity because it provides several mechanisms for members to collectively affirm political leadership. Some of those, such as the dance ceremony, actually negotiate the nature of that leadership in a communicative process. Others, including speech making and communication of reports, merely reinforce the validity of leadership that is already recognised. Both types of activity contribute to intersubjective understanding among members of the ritual congregation.

Lumbardar Khan's stance throughout the ceremony is itself an exercise in social control.

It is important that all community members behave harmoniously during the celebration. As head of the ritual congregation he must attempt to encourage harmony and decorum without compromising his own passive stance. His success confirms his legitimacy in the lifeworlds of community members.

Economic Viability

As far as I can tell *Salgarah* has no direct influence on economic vitality in Shimshal. However, several of the new events communicate information about the economic state of the village organisations, women's organisations, and other formal institutions. Included in speeches are pleas for donations to the various Ismaili institutions that exist in Shimshal. In addition, much of the ceremony emphasises the economic benefits of discipleship to the Aga Khan.

Ecological Volition

Salgarah is the least ecologically-oriented of the Shimshal festivals. However, like other ritual ceremonies, *Salgarah* emphasises and legitimises the ideals of the ritual congregation, principally equity, solidarity and impartibility. These ideals relate directly to a recognition of Shimshal as an ecological whole, the members of which deserve relatively equal access to ecological resources. The sharing of a communal meal, the recognition and reaffirmation of the authority of the *lumbardar* and his lineage elders, and the ritual (dance) enactment of household and lineage hierarchy, all express this recognition.

The Relationship of *Salgarah* to Levels of Social Organisation

Salgarah has traditionally been a celebration of the entire community, the complete ritual congregation. Equity, solidarity and impartiality at the community level are emphasised in traditional *Salgarah* events. The sharing of food at the end of the ceremony represents communal support for Shimshal as a community. Ceremonial dancing reenacts the relationship of lineage and household to that larger collective body. VOs are also village level organisations which have come to represent the entire ritual congregation. As *Salgarah* becomes increasingly geared toward celebrating the relationship between Shimshal and Aga Khani organisations, the VOs become more important to the significance of *Salgarah* as a community undertaking. Other new organisations also operate at the community level, although they cannot claim to represent the ritual community. The Tariqah Board, the Ismaili councils, the scouts, etc. all serve as community-wide organisations with a limited membership. *Salgarah* provides an opportunity for them to relate to the larger ritual congregation.

All of these new institutions are community-level branches of supra-village organisations. Their participation at *Salgarah* establishes new symbolic links between Shimshal and the outside. In former times the *lumbardar's* leadership at *Salgarah* was the only recognition of a symbolic link with a supra-village social system (ie. kingship). Currently, the *lumbardar* represents the ritual community itself, and other participants represent the outside.

The celebration begins and ends at the household level. It begins with each household offering food for the ceremonial feast, and with each household sending representation to the meeting place. *Salgarah* would not occur without those two commitments by households. The festival ends with household members taking portions of the meal home to the household hearth, and sharing them in private with all other household members.

Ceremonial dancing at *Salgarah* provides a formal avenue for explicit lineage participation in community affairs. Indeed, it explicitly establishes linkages between community, lineage and

household. Such avenues for formal participation of large lineage groupings are becoming less common as larger scale VO activities and smaller scale household and individual activities become more important.

The new *Salgarah* programme incorporates the level of individuals. Exemplary contributions by specific persons to the community and on behalf of the Imam are recognised in speeches and presentations. They too are incorporated into the larger ritual congregation. The traditional *Salgarah* programme reserves a few dances for specific persons. Otherwise, individuals are neglected in favour of households and lineages in the traditional celebration.

Appendix 9: Review of Cultural Ecology Literature on Indigenous Mountain Communities¹

Balanced and thorough investigation of human/mountain environment interaction appear throughout publications in cultural ecology. Cultural ecology is described by Orlove as "the subfield of anthropology that examines the interaction between human populations and other features of their ecosystems" (Orlove, 1977). Wagner and Mikesell expand by saying that it "discovers, describes, and analyses actual processes which link culture to the natural environment" (1962:20). Steward speaks of cultural ecology as a method of investigation; "it is a methodological tool for ascertaining how the adaption of culture to its environment may entail certain changes" (Steward, 1976:42).

Cultural ecology's main objective is to identify characterising features of human/environment interaction given a certain set of conditions. Steward states "cultural ecology pays primary attention to those features which empirical analysis shows to be most closely involved in the utilisation of environment in culturally prescribed ways" (Steward, 1976:37). Characterisation may be limited to specific features of an individual community, or generalised to include all communities sharing similar adaptations to similar geophysical habitats. Several cultural ecologists have attempted to uncover common themes of generalisation and characterisation for all mountain communities.

At the time cultural ecology was evolving as a sub-discipline of anthropology, geo-ecology was developing in geography. Like cultural ecology it was developed as an approach to deal with human/environment interaction. Geo-ecologists have traditionally been attracted to mountain regions. This stems from Troll's work in the Himalaya and South America (Troll, 1939, 1968,

¹ From Butz, 1987:11-21.

1972). True to mountain geographical studies, Troll and his early successors presented an environmentalist viewpoint which stressed reaction to natural conditions, rather than interaction. according to Allan "Troll and his English speaking followers reduce man to a position where the unique attribute of humans, culture, is rarely employed in any articulate discussion of the mountain environment" (Allan, 1984:196).

While both cultural ecology and geo-ecology are aware of interaction among peoples and environment, they have developed from different perspectives. Geo-ecology was originally based on a belief that physical habitat has a direct and active determining role in the function of society. Cultural ecology evolved from social and human ecological thinking which stressed the "purely secondary and passive role" of environment (Steward, 1976:35). Since their origins both disciplines have migrated from their respective extremes to a perception that environment has some sort of limiting, but not determining, role in cultural evolution. Still, most studies in cultural ecology deal more competently with culture than physical environment. In mountain areas at least, the influence of environment upon humans is thoroughly explored, but geophysical processes themselves are dealt with inadequately. Geo-ecological studies, on the other hand, are comfortable and competent in their discussion of geophysical variables, sometimes at the expense of thorough research into society.

Despite minor differences in emphasis it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between the work of geo-ecologists and cultural ecologists. This has prompted Wagner and Mikesell to suggest that modern cultural ecology combines aspects of cultural geography and anthropology into a single approach to "problems of the habitat of cultural communities at every stage and condition" (Wagner and Mikesell, 1962:22). Together they present a balanced and perceptive view of human/environment interaction. The discussion below includes geo-ecology as part of cultural ecology.

Cultural ecologists discuss human/environment interaction through one dominant feature which characterises all important relationships. It may be economic, political, historical,

technological, religious and so on. characterisation in mountain areas tends to identify agricultural or pastoral features as crucial links between society and natural environment.

European alpine studies concentrate on this link in terms of economic conditions, supplementary income, tenure, inheritance, and political history (see Berthoud, 1972; Burns, 1961, 1963; Cole, 1969, 1972; Cole and Wolf, 1974; Foster, 1965; Friedl, 1972, 1974; Naroll and Naroll, 1962; Netting, 1972, 1976; Ott, 1981; Puigdefabregas and Fillat, 1986; Weinberg, 1972; Wolf, 1962, 1970). The South Tyrol has inspired excellent studies of culture's influence on ecological adaption (Cole, 1969, 1972; Cole and Wolf, 1974; Naroll and Naroll, 1962; Wolf, 1962, 1970). This literature, particularly Cole and Wolf's (1974) The Hidden Frontier: Ecology and Ethnicity in an Alpine Valley examines divergent ways Italian and German speaking villages have interacted with a single physical habitat throughout economic and social change. The study is an example of thorough and detailed cultural ecological research. It also soundly refutes prevailing environmentalist attitudes to mountain folk. The study is discussed in some detail below.

Both Cole and Wolf are teaching anthropologists at American universities. Between them they spent four years in the Val di Non of the Italian Tyrol studying differing ecological adaptations to change between adjacent villages. The villages, St. Felix and Tret, are similar in size and share a single geophysical environment. They are five kilometres apart in the same valley. Both are currently peripheral satellites to the political economy of lowland Italy. The main difference between Tret and St. Felix is ethnic identity. Residents of St. Felix are all German speaking. This reflects a primarily German political history and cultural identity. All Trettners are romance language speakers. Tret has historically been governed by an Italian state, and villagers affiliate themselves with Italian culture.

Cole and Wolf compare and contrast the political, economic, cultural and agricultural history of both villages. They detail the response of each village to past stresses, and pay special attention to the period of rapid modernisation since WWII. As a result of ethnic differences each village has responded differently to change. These divergent responses have resulted in

remarkably different adaptations to the mountain environment. St. Felix continues to be a viable homestead-oriented farming community which is supplemented by labour in the mainstream economy. Residents of Tret earn most income from labour outside of the valley. Farm land is being abandoned and fragmented rapidly. The Hidden Frontier successfully portrays ethnicity as the characterising features in human/environment interaction in the Val di Non. The book is readable, yet remains scholarly and convincing.

Cole and Wolf do not attempt to generalise beyond their study area. Other European mountain communities have inspired attempts at modelling agro-ecological activity in the alpine zone. Most models incorporate "*Almwirtschaft*", as their central theme (Burns, 1963; Cole, 1972; Netting, 1972; Wolf, 1972). *Almwirtschaft*, or "mixed mountain agriculture" is based on agro-pastoral transhumance, and cooperative and communal relations among members of a village economic unit.

Numerous Andean investigations, such as those by Brush (1976, 1982), Guillet (1981, 1983), Lynch (1983), Murra (1972-Spanish), Orlove (1977) and Stadel (1986) relate ecological interaction with the use of "verticality" in high altitude regions. Verticality has some points in common with *Almwirtschaft*. Orlove summarises the verticality model as follows:

According to Murra's model of verticality, Andean populations attempt to control the largest possible number of ecological zones at different elevations in an effort to achieve their ideal of self-sufficiency. The internal organisation of these economies is based on reciprocity and redistribution: intergroup trading is peripheral or wholly lacking. (Orlove, 1977:87)

Verticality and *Almwirtschaft* models were developed in Europe and South America at a time when Himalayan research was isolated and neglected. They have been applied to populations ranging in size, sophistication and location from remote peasant villages to the Inca empire. The few human-ecological studies that were undertaken in mountain regions of Asia were small-scale and specific to individual communities (Barth, 1956, 1962; Ferdinand, 1962; Troll, 1939, 1963, 1972).

These did not attempt to generalise. Fischer writes of Himalayan anthropology:

In comparison with the Andes, there is very little evidence of any clear-cut onward-and-upward trend in the historical trajectory of Himalayan anthropology. The Himalaya are too vast, culturally complicated, and until very recently, too inconsistently and poorly researched to have developed the kinds of overarching themes and perspectives that have evolved in the Andes over several centuries...overall, accumulated anthropological knowledge in the Himalayas has been, until extremely recently, vague, uneven, and miscellaneous. (Fischer, 1985:109)

In lieu of specifically Himalayan research, scholars attempted to relate European and South American models to Asian mountain communities. They found expected similarities, but also important differences. Recognition among scholars that location specific schools of thought were being developed fostered worries of "ecological particularism" (Rhoades and Thompson, 1975). Since the mid-seventies several comparative articles have addressed the problem of how to generalise among mountain regions (Allan, 1986; Guillet, 1983; Rhoades and Thompson, 1975). The earliest example is Rhoades and Thompson (1975). They identify two major adaptive strategies common to the Alps, Andes, and Himalayas. The first strategy is based on a single population which exploits a series of eco-niches at several altitudes. Subsistence is based on production from these eco-niches. In the second strategy a population itself utilises only one zone, but develops trade relations with specialised producers in other zones (Rhoades and Thompson, 1975:547).

Guillet expands on Rhoades and Thompsons' thesis (Guillet, 1983). He proposes that mountain adaptations have three basic elements:

1) an array of vertical production zones, each characterised by a complex interaction of variables including agricultural regime, social organisation, stratification, land tenure, labour organisation and level of productivity.

2) choice by the population of an overall production strategy for the exploitation of the vertical production zone available to it, a strategy that may involve specialisation in one zone or,

in response to a variety of constraints, the combined exploitation of several zones; and

3) a potential for change in strategy, within the constraints of the mountain environment, under the influence of endogenous and exogenous factors.

The comparative models proposed by Rhoades and Thompson, and Guillet contribute to understanding human/ecological interaction by synthesising themes of high mountain cultural ecology. In addition they offer a starting point from which to examine and analyse human communities in any mountain setting. However, their conclusions are not completely sound, at least in the Karakoram. Villages in Hunza and Nagyr do not control a complete range of ecological zones. Hopar villagers, for example, do not normally own land below 2500 m. Nor do they trade extensively with nearby communities at lower elevations. Interaction with lowland Pakistan through bazaars in Gilgit and government subsidy, is stronger than trade with lower mountain villages. According to Allan this long distance interaction can be attributed to recently constructed jeep roads, the Karakoram Highway, and efforts by central government to access and control mountain areas (Allan, 1986). He has recently formulated a model to incorporate economic and political accessibility into our understanding of mountain human ecological relations. Allan states that "the altitudinal zonation model is no longer suitable for characterising mountain ecosystems. Human activity is directed to new motorised transportation linked to a wider political economy and no longer dependant on altitude" (Allan, 1986:185). This accessibility model has the advantage of being dynamic and predictive. It maintains that what happened last century in the Alps is currently occurring in the Hindu Kush - Himalaya. The Andean region is beginning the same process. In contrast, zonation models relate to the "anthropological present" which may range from two centuries ago in Europe to present day South America.

Comparative models establish excellent theoretical foundations for examining mountain communities. More specific insight into the myriad details of human/ecological interaction come from studies at the community level. Many researchers have devoted careers to particular locales. (Allan, 1984a, 1984b, 1985, 1986; Barth, 1956, 1962; Cole, 1972; Guillet, 1981, 1983). As a result

cultural ecologists often convey a sensitivity to human subjects seldom found in geographical literature. Some scholars present information with such perception and feeling that villagers cease to be subjects, and become individuals and families. Cole and Wolf (1974) and Heliaz (1978) are examples of work which explains far more about human interaction with environment than just physical patterns and activities. Where patterns are important, they tend to be represented efficiently and effectively in diagrams (see Edelberg and Jones, 1979). The main failure of cultural ecology is its neglect of purely physical conditions and processes. Dunlap and Martin note an "entrenched habit of ignoring the physical environment" (Dunlap and Martin, 1983:201). These sentiments are echoed by Rambo (1982) and Preston (1983) with regard to other disciplinary approaches to cultural ecology. Geophysical and climatic variables should be understood both as strictly natural phenomena, and as they relate to human activity, especially since most high altitude human/ecological models are based on geophysical, climatic and spatial zonation. Finally, it is worth noting that cultural ecology has neglected the Karakoram until very recently. In the past half decade Allan (1984, 1985, 1986), and Kreutzmann (1985) have addressed that neglect, but much that has been collected is still unpublished. More research must be undertaken by more scholars if we are to obtain an ecological perspective on Karakoram mountain communities.

Appendix 10: The Physical Geography of the Karakoram Region¹

Introduction

Hunza is a political and social unit, which does not in itself demarcate any geophysical region.² It does lie completely within the Hunza River watershed, and certain of its boundaries coincide with the watershed's limits. It also lies completely within, but does not complete, a larger topographical and geomorphic region: the Karakoram Mountain Range. The Karakoram consists of numerous smaller ranges and mountain groups, which trend in a north-westerly direction from about 34N79W to 37N73E. For much of its distance, the main Karakoram crest line defines the cease fire line between Pakistan and India, and Pakistan's border with China. The specific mountain groups which comprise Hunza's landscape include the Rakaposhi Group, Bagrot Group, Phuparash Group, and Chogo Lungma Group of the Rakaposhi Range; the Koz Group, Yashkuk Group, Kuk Group, Kampire Group, Batura Group, Pasu Group and Atabad Group of the Batura Mustagh; the Lupghar Group; the Chapchingal Group and Karunkuh Group of the Ghujerab Mountains; and finally the Momhil Group, Disteghil Group, Kanjut Group, Yazghil Group, Khurdopin Group, and Virjerab Group of the Hispar Mustagh. Shimshal territory includes parts of all groups which comprise the Ghujerab Mountains and the Hispar Mustagh.

The Karakoram region is topographically complex, and exhibits important local variations in geophysical features. Despite the importance of local conditions, certain macro-level characteristics predominate throughout the Karakoram, including the territory utilised by Shimshal community.

¹ The material presented in this appendix paraphrases parts of Chapter Two in Butz (1987).

² In this chapter the area I describe as Hunza is equivalent to the Feudal Kingdom of Hunza. The current sub-district called Hunza is a much smaller area.

Topography

Karakoram mountain ranges are characterised by deep main river valleys, with steep and unstable gully slopes. Relative relief in main valleys (eg. Hunza Valley) often exceeds 4000m. Tributary valleys (eg. Shimshal Valley) erode more than 2000m from sharp ridges to stream beds. Plateau features are uncommon. However, high valleys (above 4000m a.s.l.) of small tributary streams sometimes exhibit gently rolling terrain, which may resemble plateau topography (eg. Shuwart, a high pasture in Shimshal). The lowest elevation in Hunza, just upstream from Gilgit, is about 1450m. Hunza's highest peak, Disteghil Sar in Shimshal territory, is 7960m.

Perennial snow and ice covers much of the area above about 3500m. Large valley glaciers and small snow and ice patches extend down slope as far as 2700m. Current glaciation is the last of three main periods of glacial advance which scoured the region in the past, leaving thick glacial and glacio-fluvial sediments in main valleys. Smaller deposits of sediment have accumulated in tributary valleys. *Nalas* (meltwater streams) continue to deposit material slowly and continuously, or in occasional major mud flows. Such deposits are the most important geomorphic feature in the Karakoram, for human settlement. They combine relatively flat terrain with arable soils that can be terraced, and accessible water supply. Often sedimentary deposits are protected from major slope failure from above or below. These characteristics combine to make sedimentary land forms suitable for agricultural colonisation.

Agricultural communities are most commonly situated on alluvial fans, where snow melt tributaries meet larger streams, between 1450m and 3000m a.s.l. These form countless relatively flat wedges in an otherwise rugged landscape. Farming villages also settle in flat basins formed of ancient lake sediments. In addition, moraines and kame terraces are occasionally utilised for cultivation.

Three contiguous Shimshal settlements, Sholalashk, Shimshal Centre and Chocort, occupy three such alluvial fans, where small *nalas* (about 10 m³/s maximum discharge) descend from the

northern slopes of the Disteghil Group to Shimshal River. The Shimshal fans meet at their widest points, near the floodplain, to create an arable landscape approximately six kilometres wide, and two to three kilometres deep. These fans have been terraced for several hundred years, and are irrigated by the meltwater *nalas* which formed them, and which currently dissect them. In addition, the lowest terraces are irrigated from the river itself. The cultivated area lies between 3000 and 3300 metres above sea level, at the upper limits of single crop cultivation. Additional fans, above and below the current settlement, are suitable for colonisation. Some Shimshal families are starting to construct terraces and channels on the most accessible of these.

Soils

Most of the Karakoram has no soil cover. Surfaces without soil include rock outcrops; recently deposited alluvium, scree and moraine; water bodies and frequently flooded areas; and regions of permanent snow and ice cover (Mian in Conway, 1985:5). The soil cover in remaining areas varies greatly in quantity and quality. Most soils have adequate supplies of all essential agricultural nutrients except nitrogen. Whiteman attributes generally well-balanced soil composition to deposition of diverse parent material, rather than in-site breakdown of any single type of bedrock (Whiteman, 1985:78). River terraces, alluvial fans, moraines and scree all involve breakdown of aggregate deposits that have been transported by glacial or glacio-fluvial mechanisms.

In Shimshal soil texture ranges from silty loam to sand. Clay percentages are low. Silty, sandy and loamy soils commonly extend to a depth of 30 to 90 cm in the cultivated area. Below that stones and boulders prevail (Whiteman, 1985:26). Soils in pasture areas are usually much shallower than in established terraces. However, several of the highest pastures, especially around Shimshal Pass, have well-developed soils over one metre in depth. Like other areas of the Karakoram, Shimshal soils are moderate to high in components necessary for crop growth, except

for nitrogen and organic matter (see Butz, 1987:26-28). Nitrogen is boosted to some extent by chemical fertilizer and manure. Intensive fodder collection and grazing of terraces in winter prevents the accumulation of organic matter. Continual applications of sediment in irrigation water help to keep other nutrient levels high in the cultivated area. Sediment also exposes topsoil to the hazards of consolidation and compaction, which inhibit root development and increase run off.

Broad Patterns of Climatic Controls

Climatologists have classified the Karakoram, part of the trans-Himalayan portion of the Upper Indus Basin, as "dry continental Mediterranean" (Hamid et al, 1969; Papidakis, 1966; Troll, 1972). This is useful for global-scale generalisation, but it de-emphasises the strong spatial variation in climate throughout the region. Variations result from combined effects of altitudinal gradient, slope, aspect, the influence of relief on orographic precipitation, and topographic shading (Barry, 1981:177). The following discussion of broad climatic controls follows Hewitt (1968:43-45). His description is verified and updated by observations from Barry (1981) and Flohn (1969, 1974).

Mountain climatic systems are usually discussed in terms of the "orographic effect", which is the ability of mountains to obstruct and then lift air masses. However, the mountainous Upper Indus Basin is subject to a variety of thermal effects, is exceptionally high over large areas, and ends abruptly. These conditions combine to magnify the impact of orography, so that the region is effectively isolated from surface weather patterns of adjacent areas. Rather, upper air conditions influence climate directly (Hewitt, 1968:43).

In contrast with climate in the Central and Eastern Himalayas which is controlled in summer by the Indian Monsoon, westerly high level air movement prevails throughout the year in the Upper Indus Basin. Weather is dominated by air masses migrating eastward from the Mediterranean and the Azores pressure system. Other atmospheric systems occasionally disrupt this westerly pattern

of air flow (ie. penetration of the Indian Monsoon, release of latent heat over the Tibetan Plateau, and changes in the distribution of pressure and circulation over mid-latitude Asia).

In winter the westerly jet stream directs Mediterranean-originated depressions toward the Hindu Kush, and into the Upper Indus Basin. These winter westerly disturbances provide most of the region's precipitation. Indeed, winter weather directly depends on the nature of these depressions. Since westerly movement of depressions is erratic, winter weather is variable. In early June the effect of westerly low pressure systems diminishes as the jet stream migrates north and the Indian Monsoon migrates northward in its path (Hewitt, 1968:44). Most summers subsidence from a thermal high over the Tibetan Plateau prevents the monsoon from entering trans-Himalayan regions. Still, the primarily western airflow continues to bring heavy cloud and snowfall to high altitudes. Lower slopes and valleys are insulated by lower altitude, föhn effects, and valley wind systems (Hewitt, 1968:45; Barry, 1981:244). Occasionally the Tibetan anticyclone is weakened by systems to the north, and monsoonal weather does reach the mountains. In the interior trans-Himalayan region heavy monsoon precipitation is usually limited to high elevations, although valleys below 4000m may receive above average rainfall.

In summary, climate in the Upper Indus Basin is influenced primarily by depressions carried by westerly upper air movement. The magnitude and number of these low pressure systems is extremely variable, resulting in strong seasonal, periodic and aperiodic fluctuations in temperature and precipitation. Variability is enhanced by monsoon disruption of westerly patterns combined with fluctuations in thermal highs over the Tibetan Plateau. The effects of these broad climatic regimes are strongly modified by altitude and local topography.

The remainder of this appendix concentrates on specific climatic variables as they relate to agricultural settlement. The discussion here provides background information for Chapter Ten, which explores the ecological basis for Shimshal's social existence and sustainability.

Radiation

Radiation is an important factor in agricultural production because it influences the ability of plants to photosynthesise. It also relates directly to temperature, evaporation and water balance. The Karakoram region receives very high incident radiation due to infrequent cloud cover, and thin atmosphere. The mountain rain shadow reduces cloud cover, except in the highest mountain ridges, especially in summer. In fact, many valley stations receive up to 70% of potential sunshine hours (Whiteman, 1985:20a). Shimshal settlement experiences greater cloud cover than many sites, because of its relatively high elevation, and because of orographic cloud formation in response to the confinement of the valley. Shimshal Valley is less than two kilometres wide at the village, and is confined by steep cliffs over 1500m high on both sides. Indeed, so steep and confined is the valley that inhabitants complain that the settlement receives no direct sunlight from November to March. In contrast to Shimshal, main meteorological stations are almost all in broad open spaces. Skardu, whose station is often a reference for Upper Indus Basin climate, is in a basin over ten kilometres wide. In such locations rain shadowing and arid valley wind systems dramatically reduce cloud cover and precipitation.

Atmospheric density is low at high elevations, causing high transmissivity of radiation. In addition, ultraviolet radiation increases as high elevation reduces water vapour and dust particles in the atmosphere. According to Hewitt over half of global atmospheric dust occurs below 2600m (Hewitt, 1968:47). Although the Karakoram is a relatively dusty environment, due to aridity and windiness, these factors combine to produce high incident radiation, particularly at high elevations.

Incident radiation is modified by the shading effect of topography. Shade is not an agricultural constraint where temperatures are high, but it can be important at the upper limits of single and double cropping areas. For example, Nagyr on the south side of the Hunza River is able to grow only one crop per season at the same elevations where Central Hunza, on the north side, produces two. The difference is that Hunza enjoys a sunnier aspect. Shimshal is in a similar

circumstance to most of Nagyr. It is situated on the south side of a highly shaded valley. Thus, due to topographical shading alone, Shimshal terraces lose over four of a possible 14.5 daily sunshine hours in June. This is an important constraint, because the cultivated area is already situated at the upper limit of single crop cultivation.

High intensity and duration of incoming radiation affect agricultural growth in several ways (see Biswas, 1979; Cusak, 1983; Jackson, 1977; Montleith, 1976; Whiteman, 1985). First, because of its overall abundance, radiation is not a limiting factor to crop growth; only where topographic shading is important does it become a significant constraint. In fact, incident radiation during the growing season throughout Hunza is consistently higher than other lowland agricultural regions at similar latitudes. Plants are able to produce and store high quantities of carbohydrates, so potato yields are high; as much as 85 tonnes per hectare in Yasin, at 2450m (Whiteman, 1985:20). This is twice that of many European and North American potato producing regions. Moreover, orchard crops, especially apricots, are remarkably sweet. In addition, villagers can cut back trees and bushes for fuel and fodder without risk. It is common to see verdant lombardy poplars and willows in July, only two months after losing three quarters of their branches.

The high sunlight conditions of Hunza can result in temperate crop yields approaching their potential maximum (Whiteman, 1985:20). This is especially true since local crop varieties exploit intense sunlight by assimilating radiation more rapidly than down country varieties. High radiation absorption compensates for the inhibiting effect of a growing season that is inhibited by temperature.

Temperature

An important aspect of temperature in temperate mountain regions is its variability. Temperatures in the Upper Indus Basin vary widely with season, altitude, time of day, and

topography. The effects of these components are discussed with reference to Table A10.1, which provides temperature data for several sites in the region.

a) Seasonal temperature variations are extreme for all stations; between 32 and 40 degrees celsius from minimum January mean to maximum July mean. Elevation seems to have no significant effect upon the range of seasonal change. Temperature curves are steep throughout the year, but especially in spring and fall. This means that crops are biologically suited to climatic conditions experienced in only brief periods of the growing season (Whiteman, 1985:21). Farmers must choose optimum sowing dates to avoid high or low temperature stress during critical periods of crop growth and maturity. Timing becomes even more important when water supply and moisture requirements are considered. Villagers are helped by the fact that rapid changes in temperature in spring and fall facilitate the prediction of first and last frost dates (Whiteman, 1985:24). Sowing and harvesting can be determined with little risk of unpredictable frosts.

b) Changes in temperature with altitude are the most significant climatic determinants of crop selection and cropping system at the regional scale. All measures of temperature, except temperature range, decrease with increasing altitude. Whiteman calculated lapse rates between 6.5 and 7.8 degrees celsius per 1000m (Whiteman, 1985:22). He notes however, that local aspect and topography cause sharp departures from these values. Figure A10.2 illustrates changes in cropping patterns with elevation, for the Gilgit District; growing season for temperate grain crops steadily shortens with increasing altitude. Confined as it is to grain cropping patterns, the figure

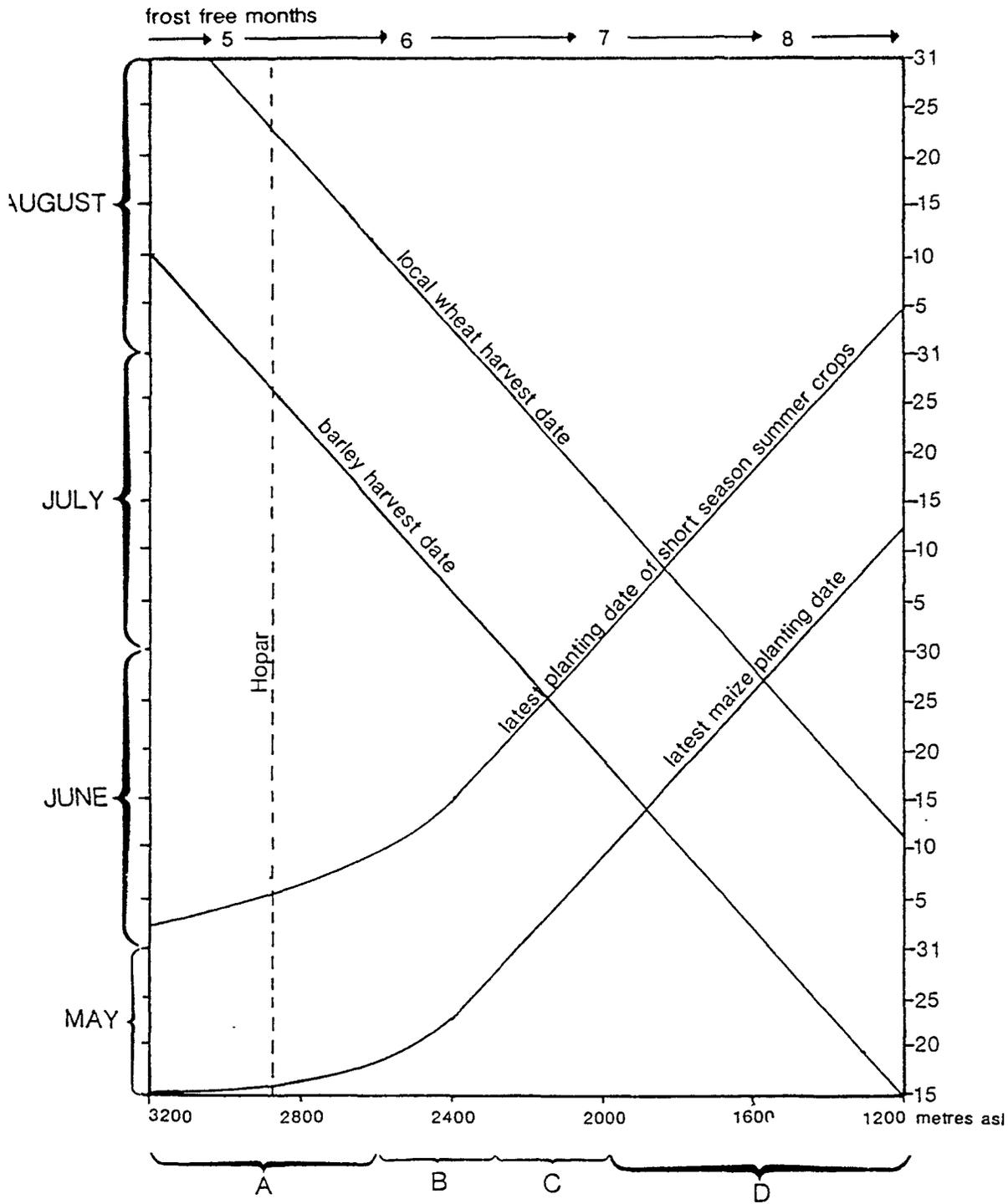
Table A10.1: Mean Monthly Temperatures (°C) for Selected Upper Indus Basin Stations³

Site	Yrs	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	EDV ⁴
Chiles (1260m)	27	0.5 12.1	3.2 14.7	8.5 19.2	13.6 25.2	18.1 31.0	24.3 37.8	27.5 39.8	26.9 38.9	22.8 35.1	14.6 28.6	6.7 20.8	1.8 13.9	-6.7 47.0
Gilgit (1490m)	30	-2.4 9.1	0.6 12.1	5.8 17.8	10.0 23.6	12.0 28.0	15.2 34.0	19.0 35.9	18.4 35.6	13.3 31.7	7.2 26.2	1.2 17.9	-1.4 11.0	-9.5 45.4
Chitral (1500m)	20	-0.7 8.7	0.4 9.8	4.2 14.9	8.6 21.8	12.6 27.1	18.3 34.8	20.3 36.2	19.3 35.0	13.3 31.1	7.7 25.0	3.1 18.4	-0.8 11.4	-12.3 44.8
Gupis (2144m)	26	-4.9 4.0	-2.8 6.6	2.2 12.2	7.6 18.3	11.3 22.9	16.1 29.1	19.2 32.0	17.5 31.1	13.5 26.3	7.2 20.0	1.7 13.5	-3.0 6.0	-11.2 40.3
Astore (2148m)	25	-7.2 2.6	-5.6 4.1	-1.2 8.4	4.0 14.8	7.3 19.6	11.6 25.2	15.0 27.3	15.1 26.9	10.6 23.8	4.5 17.1	-0.6 11.0	-4.7 4.8	-15.7 35.3
Skardu (2197m)	29	-8.0 2.6	-5.2 5.1	1.3 11.4	6.6 17.9	9.6 21.6	13.8 28.3	16.9 31.2	16.6 31.1	12.2 26.6	5.2 20.3	-1.6 11.7	-5.7 5.5	-18.5 40.0
Karim- abad (2405m)	7	-4.0 2.1	-2.6 4.3	2.4 9.0	7.2 16.1	10.6 20.2	13.9 25.8	16.4 28.5	17.2 29.4	11.5 23.8	7.7 18.1	2.6 10.7	-1.8 4.3	-6.7 37.8
Yasin (2450m)	3	-9.7 -0.2	-7.4 2.4	-1.6 8.3	4.2 13.6	7.9 20.3	9.5 24.7	11.4 26.4	12.1 30.1	7.1 22.1	2.6 16.4	-1.9 9.8	-6.6 2.7	-15.0 36.0
Naltar (2880m)	2	-9.7 -2.8	-9.4 -1.4	-4.7 4.0	0.7 9.5	4.1 14.0	8.7 21.0	9.6 27.3	12.1 23.9	9.6 19.8	2.6 14.0	-0.4 7.0	-6.1 1.7	-15.6 32.2
Babusar (3003m)	2	-14.7 -1.6	-10.6 -1.8	-3.0 6.0	3.6 12.6	6.5 15.1	10.7 20.1	14.5 25.4	13.4 23.9	9.4 19.1	0.4 10.1	-5.4 3.4	-12.6 -4.3	
Misghar (3088m)	17	-13.2 -1.1	-9.7 1.7	-5.4 7.2	-0.2 12.3	3.4 16.3	8.0 21.2	11.1 24.6	11.6 25.2	6.6 20.8	-0.1 14.0	-5.8 6.9	-10.6 0.5	-18.9 32.8

does not show that the pastoral component of farming tends to increase as altitude rises. Shimshal, at the upper end of single crop cultivation, greatly supplements its agricultural economy with pastoral herding at high altitudes. Altitudinal gradients are also the basic condition for all meltwater irrigation in the Karakoram. Warm temperatures conducive to crop growth exist below 3000m. At higher elevations temperature is sufficiently low to permit winter accumulations of snow and ice, some of which melt during summer months. Meltwater is used down slope to supply moisture to crops. Without this coincidence of temperature and moisture supply during the growing season irrigated agriculture could not occur. Locally, aspect and topography vie with altitude as climatic determinants of crop selection. Still, elevation zones of crop production are distinguishable in

³ From Whiteman, 1985.

⁴ Extreme Daily Value



- A upper single crop zone
 - B lower single crop zone
 - C marginal double crop zone
 - D reliable double crop zone
- Note: Harvest delayed 5 days per 100m rise.

Figure A10.2: Cropping Pattern in Hunza⁵

⁵ After Whiteman, 1985.

many villages, especially those which control considerable elevation ranges. Shimshal controls crop land between 3000 and 3300m, and irrigated pastures up to 3600m. Within this range vague crop zones are discernable.

c) Diurnal temperature ranges are in the neighbourhood of 15 to 20 degrees celsius. Both altitude and aridity contribute to diurnal variation, since evening temperatures depend upon absorption of radiation by the atmosphere; dry, thin high altitude air is a poor barrier to loss of heat released at night by ground cover. This is particularly true in the Upper Indus Basin, where summer nights are long enough to permit substantial cooling (Whiteman, 1985:23). Diurnal range increases with increasing altitude. Large diurnal temperature variations encourage crop growth, but may inhibit development by protracting plant maturity (Whiteman, 1985). It should be noted that soil temperature is probably more important to crop development than air temperature. They are closely related, but dense crop cover, high foliage albedo, and application of cold irrigation water can dramatically decrease field soil temperature.

d) Topography and aspect significantly modify altitudinal, seasonal and diurnal temperature patterns. Karimabad Hunza, located on a steep south facing slope, is a good example. The southerly aspect causes high daytime temperatures, while cool air drainage raises night time minimums. Minimum and maximum temperatures at Karimabad are approximately three degrees higher than at Yasin, at the same altitude. Most of Shimshal's cultivated area occupies north facing slopes, although significant portions face west and east, in that order. The cropping pattern reflects this circumstance. More important is the moderating effect of the Shimshal River, which flows along the north side of cultivation. Evaporation of water, and down valley cold air drainage originating in a glaciated area upstream, tend to lower temperatures during the growing season.

Precipitation and Water Balance

The distribution and magnitude of precipitation is dominated by orographic conditions both regionally in terms especially of altitudinal gradients, and locally as a function of aspect, direction of moisture bearing winds, and orientation of individual ranges.

Maximum precipitation occurs above 3500m. Below 3500m amounts are insignificant hydrologically, and except briefly in spring, for agriculture. Most precipitation in the cropping zone falls as snow in winter, and is lost in early spring as evaporation or run off. Only in exceptionally cold and cloudy springs are farmers able to utilise moisture from snow which falls within the zone of cultivation. In some villages farmers plough snow into the soil to prevent evaporation and run off.

Throughout the zone of cultivation, growing season rainfall is consistently lower than evapotranspiration, or even potential evaporation. Consequently, crops suffer from a negative water balance. This is reflected in generally low values for relative humidity. I did not conduct humidity measurements in Shimshal. However, in Hopar, a settlement at the same elevation, humidity averaged about 25% in the summer of 1986. Humidity values over irrigated fields were significantly higher, indicating that considerable irrigation water is lost through evaporation. Moreover, even though the summer of 1986 was unusually cold and wet, measurements in Hopar show potential evaporation exceeding precipitation throughout the growing season, at a ratio of 301 to 67. Similar or more extreme ratios occur throughout the Karakoram. Since evaporation increases and precipitation decreases with decreasing elevation, lower villages experience even greater moisture deficits. Southerly and easterly stations of the Upper Indus Basin (outside the Karakoram), such as Besham Qila normally receive monsoon rainfall. This lessens but does not negate the growing season moisture deficit (see Table A10.2).

Records are poor for high altitude conditions, but it is clear that precipitation exceeds potential evapotranspiration roughly from 3500m upwards in the Central Karakoram. Above 3500m

Table A10.2: Precipitation and Water Balance for Selected Upper Indus Basin Stations⁶

Location	Elevation (m)	Total Precipitation (cm)	Yearly Water Balance (cm)	Frost Free Water Balance (cm)
Besham Qila 34°56'72"53'	900	104.3	-23	-23
Kalam 35°32' 72'35'	2408	96.2	+32	+23
Dras 34°30' 75°55'	3066	64.9	+19	-31
Kachura 35°27' 75°25'	2700	19.8	-51	-55
Skardu 35°18' 75°41'	2320	17.3	-53	-58
Gilgit 35°55' 74°20'	1450	12.5	-84	-84
Leh 34°09' 77°34'	3514	8.4	-43	-46

precipitation is in the order of 110 to 160m per year (Hewitt, 1968:49). Certain locations at extreme heights receive much more (Gardner, 1987, personal communication; Wake, 1987; Laili Shah, personal communication, 1989). Most precipitation is in the form of snow (Batura Glacier Investigation Group, 1979). It is high altitude snowfall that sustains agriculture through meltwater irrigation. Thus, crop moisture depends critically upon high altitude accumulation, and melt conditions below the zone of perennial frost, rather than upon precipitation in the crop zone. The main considerations are volume, surface area and aspect of snow and ice accumulations feeding meltwater streams, and the redistribution of snow down slope by avalanches and/or glacier flow. In addition, total moisture release from small basins, such as those feeding Shimshal, may be critically affected by wind movement and trapping of wind-blown snow. Meanwhile, cloudy spring weather, with fresh snow at high altitudes, actually inhibits crop growth by decreasing melting. This occurs even when rain falls in the cultivated area. High level precipitation is variable. Members of

⁶ From Butz and Hewitt, S.I.H.P., 1986.

numerous villages told Whiteman that meltwater shortages occur every four or five years (Whiteman, 1985:23). They attribute these shortages to below average snowfall. In addition, timing of meltwater supply depends upon temporal distribution of snowfall events as well as temperature and sunshine (for a discussion of the relationship between snow accumulation and meltwater see Butz, 1989). Two streams with discharges of up to ten cubic metres per second each supply water for Shimshal's irrigation. This is abundant for the settlement's cropping area. Shimshal is one of few villages in Hunza to enjoy an accessible and adequate water supply throughout the growing season.

Wind

Recording stations across the Karakoram measure wind speeds on the order of 0.9m/s during summer months (Table A10.3). Winter winds are much weaker, about a half to a third of summer speeds. Due to marked local variability these values are at best rough estimates of regional trends. Powerful, persistent wind systems with both up-valley and down-valley winds are a feature of much of the Karakoram Range (Whiteman, 1985:18). Shimshal experiences weak down-valley winds on an almost consistent basis. Only occasionally do these affect crops directly, but they do lower temperatures in the cropping area.

Wind does not seem to be a continuously important agro-climatic variable in the way that radiation, temperature and water balance are. In Shimshal it does cause occasional crop lodging and premature fruit drop. In addition, it probably increases evaporation from fields slightly.

Table A10.3: Wind Measurements (m/s at 2m)
at Selected Stations in the Upper Indus Basin⁷

Site	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
Chilas 1260m	0.2	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.1	1.1	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.2
Gilgit 1490m	0.3	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2
Gupis 2144m	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.2
Astore 2148m	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.2
Skardu 2197m	0.3	0.5	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.6	0.3	0.2
Yasin 2450m	0.6	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	0.9

Conclusion

Climatic information is scanty for the Upper Indus Basin, particularly at high elevations in the Karakoram. Nevertheless, we can summarise those features of Hunza's geophysical environment that are most important for cultivation. Most settlements are located in narrow strips along the main Hunza River, or along tributary valleys. Soils in the alluvial fans which make up the majority of cultivated areas contain adequate agricultural nutrients, except nitrogen. This is the situation in Shimshal, where, as elsewhere, nutritious soils have been developed painstakingly through constant irrigation, manuring, and terracing. The zone in which cultivation is located receives abundant and intense solar radiation during the growing season. In areas where wide spread and continuous cold air drainage or winds are absent, summer temperatures are close to optimum for temperate crops. In Shimshal the duration of growing season is limited by the settlement's high elevation, and by the gorge-like disposition of the Shimshal Valley. Temperatures

⁷ From Whiteman, 1985.

vary greatly diurnally and seasonally. Diurnal variation is beneficial to crop growth during the hottest summer months, but seasonal variation contributes to limiting the length of growing season by decreasing the frost free period. High summer radiation causes high evapotranspiration, which combines with low precipitation to create a highly negative water balance. Hunza villages' most serious environmental constraint is net water deficit in the crop zone. However, it is a constraint which has been largely overcome by effective meltwater irrigation.

Appendix 11: The Agricultural Use of Melt Water in Hopar Settlement, Pakistan¹

Introduction

Farming villages in the Karakoram Ranges of northern Pakistan are currently the focus of numerous agricultural and economic development efforts. The aridity of the agricultural zone in this area determines that these efforts focus on improving irrigation techniques, or on integrating existing irrigation systems with other agricultural modernisations. Successful development requires both a hydrological and a cultural and ecological appreciation of water supply and the pattern of its indigenous utilisation. In the Karakoram Range irrigation water is supplied almost exclusively by melt water from small snow and ice patches. Although melt water irrigation is not unique to this area, it is limited globally to small farming communities in a few poorly studied high mountain regions. As a result melt water irrigation systems are poorly understood by development agency personnel working in the Karakoram area, who rely largely on literature and expertise developed for rain-fed or ground-water-fed systems in other parts of the world. Case studies which describe and relate melt water supply and irrigation use in successful indigenous irrigation systems can help improve understanding.

This appendix offers the example of Hopar settlement, in the Karakoram Himalaya as a step in the right direction. It summarises the Hopar melt water irrigation system in terms of (a) its source above 3600 m (b) the timing, volume and quality characteristics of discharge from that source into the main melt water stream, Hopar *Na/a*, and (c) the adaption of melt water supply by villagers to meet their irrigation requirements. Investigations were conducted during July 1985, and from May to August 1986.

¹ Quoted from Butz, 1989.

Setting

Hopar is a community of five agricultural villages and about 4000 inhabitants, located at 36°N, 75°E in the central Karakoram region of northern Pakistan (Figure A11.1). It is the highest permanent settlement in the former feudal kingdom of Nagyr, and today the 73 villages of Nagyr are a small and remote part of Gilgit Administrative District.

The five villages of Hopar have traditionally survived mainly, if not totally, from subsistent agricultural production. In the past century the community has become less dependent upon what it could produce for itself and more involved in the regional monetary economy. Today, agricultural produce or of total requirements. Despite this, most of the essential food is either grown in the villages or is obtained from other communities in exchange for Hopar produce. Thus the health and wealth of Hopar continues to depend to a large extent upon the ability of villagers, individually and collectively, to interact effectively with the natural environment.

Features of the natural environment which are most important to agricultural adaption in the Karakoram are altitudinally-controlled temperature regimes, local terrain, and water supply. Altitude is primarily a large-scale agricultural control, because as altitude increases the number of potential food crops diminishes. Temperature gradients effectively prevent farming above 3000 m. Hopar, at the upper threshold of single cropping, produces apricots, walnuts, wheat, barley, beans, potatoes, alfalfa, and small quantities of vegetable crops.

Terrain limits the situation of agricultural villages within the broad constraints of altitude. Terraces are built only on relatively flat and unconsolidated slopes which have some potential for rapid soil development. Agriculture is therefore limited to depositional features, not only primarily alluvial fans but also moraine deposits, kame terraces, and ancient lake beds. Hopar occupies the remains of a kame terrace that has been modified by glacial lacustrine deposits and also by several small moraines.

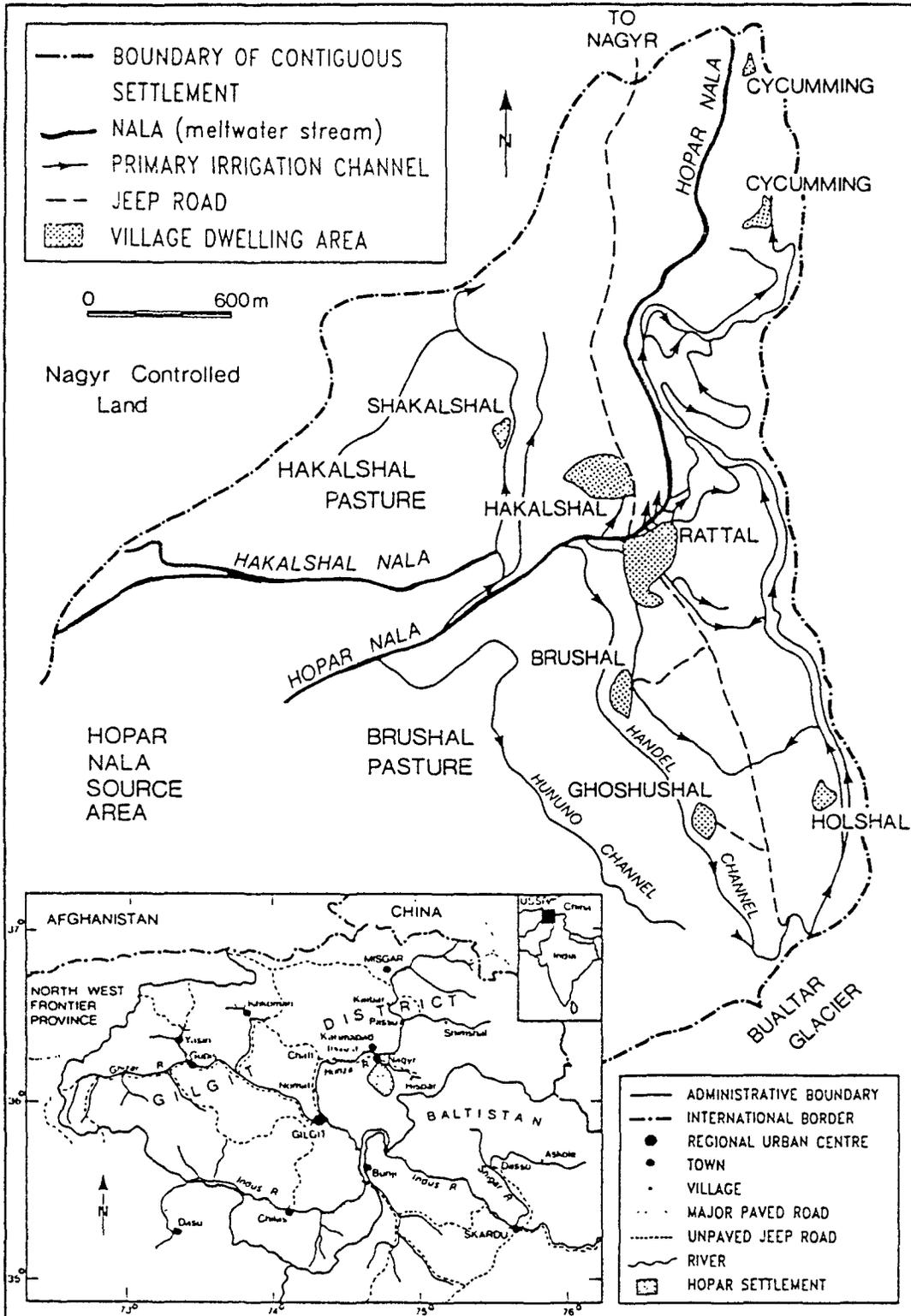


Figure A11.1: Hopar Community, Central Karakoram, Pakistan²

² From Butz, 1991.

The ultimate and most local physical constraint upon agriculture is water supply. Maximum precipitation occurs above 3500 m; below 3500 m amounts are hydrologically and agriculturally insignificant except during a brief period in spring. Most precipitation in the cropping zone falls as snow in winter and is lost to agriculture in early spring as evaporation or run-off. In Hopar potential evaporation below 3500 m is consistently several times greater than growing-season rainfall.

Above 3500 m precipitation in the Karakoram Range is in the order of 110-160 cm per year (Hewitt, 1968). Certain locations at extreme heights receive much more precipitation than this (Wake, 1987). Most precipitation falls as snow (Batura Glacier Investigation Group, 1979; Snow and Ice Hydrology Project, 1986). Such high altitude snowfall sustains agriculture through melt water irrigation. Thus crop moisture depends critically upon accumulation and melt conditions at high altitudes, but below the zone of perennial frost, rather than upon precipitation in the crop zone. Agriculture is possible only where suitable terrain is accessible to melt water from higher altitudes. Hopar settlement exemplifies this utilisation of the resources from two climatic zones. The valley is naturally arid and parched, yet effective irrigation has transformed it into a verdant agricultural oasis. Over 300 km of channels link melt water from snowfall above 3600 m to 280 ha of cultivated terraces and 160 ha of sloping alfalfa fields in the area between 2500 and 3600 m.

Melt water as a Source of Irrigation Water

Most of the irrigation water in Hopar is supplied by melt water from permanent snow and ice patches, and from seasonal snow cover accumulated in a series of cirques between 3600 and 4900 m a.s.l. Intermittent streams drain from these into a steep east-facing gully-cum-gorge cut through a melt water stream which is locally called a *nala*. The local catchment area is approximately 11.5 km², about 2.1 km² of which is covered by ice and another 6 km² by permanent snow. Seasonal snow covers the entire basin in winter, but the transient snow line moves up-slope

from a lower elevation of about 3600 m in early April as temperatures increase to 4100 m by mid July. Maximum transient snow-line retreat is at 4500m; above that altitude, and in shaded or north-facing side valleys, accumulation exceeds melting. Avalanche redistribution down-slope from the higher steeper areas contributes to dense and dirty snow deposits as far down as the mouth of the basin.

Winter snowfall on the western slopes above the cultivation zone and outside of the main source basin also contributes small quantities of melt water to Hopar. The steep slopes receive direct radiation during the period from sunrise to mid-afternoon, so that by the middle of May almost all the snow has melted except for that in a small area to the north of the main melt water basin. This micro-basin, between 3800 and 4100 m a.s.l., is sufficiently high and shaded to retain the majority of its snow until early July, after which it releases peak afternoon discharges of approximately 0.2 m³/s until sometime in late August. Hoparis have diverted the small melt water stream into their irrigation system.

The cultivated area of Hopar receives snow accumulations of 60-90 cm in the winter months. In most years this snow has melted by early March, although accumulations occasionally persist until early May and thus contribute to moisture for crop germination.

Discharge Through the Hopar *Nala*

Hopar *Nala* flows continuously, although minimum discharge between November and March is less than 0.1 m³/s. Discharge begins to increase towards the end of March when shallow snow patches and avalanche deposits at the mouth of the basin start to melt. Flows increase until the combined effect of greater radiation and the upward migration of warmer temperatures allow melting at altitudes with progressively deeper and more extensive snow accumulation. During March, April and early May, however, melting is unpredictable and highly irregular. By late July

melting occurs throughout the source basin, from avalanche deposits at 3600 m to perennial snow and ice patches above 4900 m. Peak afternoon discharges reach 11 m³/s, and melting of this magnitude continues on into early August, causing rapid depletion of the remaining seasonal snow-pack. In late August a decline in melting corresponds with diminishing snow surface and decreasing heat input until winter flow of approximately 0.1 m³/s resumes in November (Figure A11.2). The period of substantial melt is prolonged by the existence over a variety of aspects and elevations of several types of snow ranging from seasonal snow through perennial snow and avalanche deposits to a core of about 2.5 km² of glacial ice. Discharge variability both throughout the season and between seasons is greater than in predominantly glacierised basins, but less than in rain-fed basins (see R othlisberger and Land (1987), Whiteman (1985), and Young (1977) for a discussion of the variability of melting and its association with snow density).

Several observations may be made concerning the diurnal flow of Hopar *Nala*. The predominant aspect of the basin is easterly so that peak daily discharge occurs relatively early in the day, at around 14.00 h in mid-July. This contrasts with observations for Askole, a village in Baltistan with similar altitudinal characteristics but a south-facing aspect where peak flow occurs around 17.30 h. Early onset of melting is also enhanced in this region by particularly steep east-facing valley walls which allow almost perpendicular exposure to direct radiation early in the morning. The presence of a variety of slopes, aspects and snow types has the same effect upon diurnal melt as it has upon seasonal discharge; it tends to prolong melting and diminish peaks.

As the melt season progresses snow both compacts and collects dust and debris. The consequently reduced albedo and higher absorption capacity results in a diurnal melt which shifts toward morning as the summer progresses. Increased exposure of dense and dirty avalanche deposits, perennial snow, and ice as seasonal snow melts enhances this trend (Young, 1977).

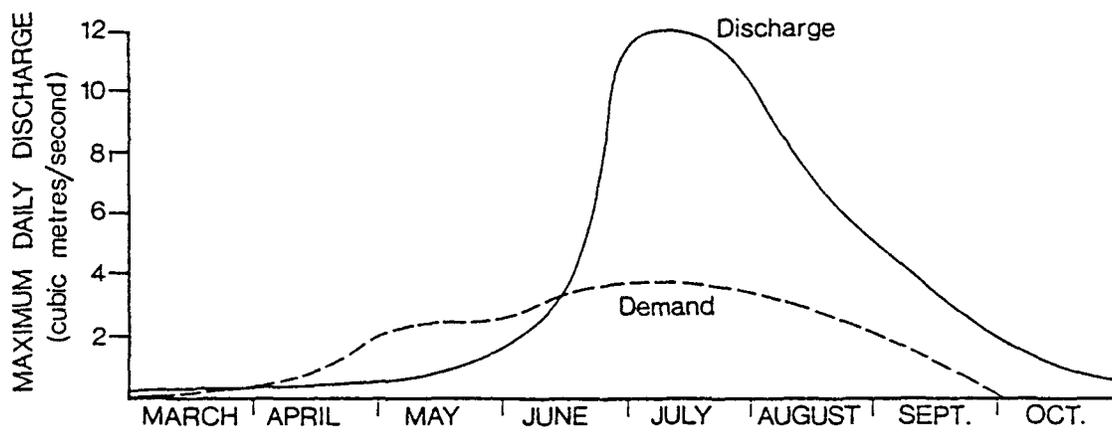


Figure A11.2: Discharge Through Hopar *Nala*³

³ From Butz, 1989.

Discharge measurements taken in 1986 indicate that the timing of peak discharge migrated approximately 2 h toward morning from mid-May to late-July. This migration follows the path of sun height penetrating the gorge as summer progresses.

Melt water entering irrigation systems is characterised by low temperatures and high sediment load. During the period of investigation temperatures at Hopar ranged from 0.5°C, where the highest channels cut off from the *nala*, to 7.0°C at the lowest cut-off. Sediment studies were not conducted, yet it is apparent that both steep and unstable slopes and heavy avalanche activity contribute to high bed-and suspended-loads in Hopar *Nala*.

Water Supply and Irrigation Demand

The relationship between water supply and irrigation demand can be summarised in terms of volume, timing, accessibility, and quality of flow. Irrigators in Hopar, as elsewhere, require sufficient volume throughout the irrigation season, and predictable flows from year to year. The main *nala* carries abundant flow for the period of regular, intensive irrigation from about 15 June to 1 August each year, and also for the progressively lighter irrigation that occurs until potato harvest in September. Flow is insufficient for irrigation from mid-May to mid-June although early melt from snow coverage outside the *nala* basin helps to ameliorate water shortage in terraced areas and triggers alfalfa growth on sloped above 3000 m.

Total seasonal discharge is more reliable in Hopar than in comparable rain-fed basins, because when seasonal snowfall fails perennial snow and ice-melt is enhanced. In this way, glacier melting compensates for vagaries in temperature and regulates seasonal stream flow (Meier, 1973; Young, 1977). The result of this is a relatively consistent flow from year to year which, unlike that of many small rain-fed basins, does not depend greatly upon variable local precipitation conditions.

Average seasonal timing of melt water supply to Hopar is excellent relative to

precipitation timing in the agricultural zones of the Upper Indus River Basin. In contrast to precipitation, which occurs primarily during the cold season, melting above Hopar coincides well both with maximum temperature and with crop water requirements. Average diurnal discharge is also close to the ideal for irrigation. A relatively low, east-facing snow accumulation zone means that farmers can begin irrigation early in the day, when evaporation is low, and finish before sundown. Since the release of melt water peaks and declines gradually flows rarely reach hazardously high levels and irrigation can occur throughout the day. Unfortunately, the excellent average seasonal timing of melt water discharge is frequently disrupted by inconsistencies in winter snowfall characteristics and in summer melting conditions. When most of the winter snowfall occurs early it settles and accumulates a thin dusting of debris. The consequent decrease in albedo may cause peak melting before peak irrigation need. When, on the other hand, major snowfalls occur toward spring, melting is inhibited by relatively great albedo (Meier, 1973; Young, 1977). In basins where fresh snow covers perennial snow and ice, low seasonal snow coverage causes earlier and higher summer melt. In addition, cold and cloudy spring conditions delay and inhibit melt. When particular conditions combine villages receive most of their irrigation before or after peak irrigation demand; for example, in 1986 the spring weather conditions in Hopar were unusually cold and wet, and were combined with heavy and late winter snowfall. This produced seasonal flow which was, according to locals, exceptionally low until mid-June, and slightly below average throughout the irrigation period.

Access to water supply is a serious obstacle to effective irrigation throughout much of the Upper Indus Basin. The main part of the Hopar melt water basin begins approximately 600 m above and 1 km distant from the upper limits of cultivation. It is therefore much more accessible than many Karakoram villages, especially since the *nala* dissects the lower boundary of cultivation. At the same time building, maintaining and repairing channels from the stream to the cultivated areas across steep, rocky and extremely unstable terrain poses important financial, labour, and organisational difficulties for the community.

Finally, crop cultivation is subject to two water quality problems; namely low temperature and high sediment load. Water temperatures never exceed 2°C at the highest channel cut-offs, and remain between 4°C at lower cut-offs. Unless these temperatures increase before water reaches crops, soil temperature and growing season are likely to be decreased significantly.

Melt water irrigation systems are commonly subject to high sediment loads (Whiteman, 1985). Hopar is no exception, due to steep slopes, unstable terrain, and abundant avalanche activity. If sediment is not trapped above the cultivated area it has the potential to clog channels, damage water mills, choke seedlings, and raise terraces. At the same time some sediment input is required to maintain non-organic soil constituents.

In summary, the nature and location of the water supply in Hopar presents primarily physical problems which include controlling turbulent and variable flow, raising water temperature, lowering sediment loads, and routing water from the source basin across unstable and steep slopes to fields. The essentially social concern of water allocation is less problematic in Hopar. Indeed, allocation is extremely flexible and rather nonchalant, because supply exceeds demand for most of the season. This situation contrasts with that of well-studied rain-fed irrigation systems where water shortages require sophisticated and formal allocation procedures, and where improving social control of allocation has been the main focus on development.

The following sections summarise the response in Hopar to the main physical problems created by its melt water irrigation supply. The irrigation system combats problems of turbulent and variable flow, access, temperature and sediment at three levels: primary canals flowing from stream to villages; secondary or village level channels; and tertiary or field level ditches.

Control of Turbulent and Variable Flow

The most effective control on melt water flow occurs where primary canals diverge from the melt water *nala*. Canals are constructed to traverse gully sides above and almost parallel to the stream itself. Where the two meet, rocks are piled across the stream following the angle of the channel margin, so that some water becomes diverted into the canal. Flow is regulated by altering the density of this simple dam, or by opening and closing sluices built into canal walls downstream of the cut-off. By controlling flow at the irrigation systems' entrance flooding, channel erosion, slumping of down slope walls, and mis-allocation of water are reduced.

Additional control is achieved at each channel level by diverting water into smaller and smaller channels. The melt water *nala* carries a maximum flow of 11 m³/s. Twelve primary canals with potential flows from 0.004 m³/s to 1.1 m³/s diverge from the *nala*; these supply water to over 100 secondary channels with flows of between 0.001 m³/s and 0.1 m³/s. Secondary channels flow into thousands of field-level ditches, none of which carries a flow of more than 0.001 m³/s. By the time melt water reaches crops its flow energy is dispersed to such an extent that flooding and erosion hazards are inconsequential. The entire network is patrolled continuously during daylight, so that flow to any channel or terrace can be stopped almost immediately. At night, only a very low flow is allowed to enter the cultivated area.

Access

Channelling water from the melt water basin over steep and unstable terrain in order to cultivate fields a kilometre distant and several hundred metres lower is a challenging and laborious chore. Landslides from above and slumping from below are both serious hazards, as is seepage and channel failure from within. Slumping is minimised by building dry-stone walls and by planting vegetation down-slope. Up-slope, low walls and/or ditches are constructed parallel to canals.

These prevent small landslides and debris runs from disrupting water flow. Canals themselves are lined in places with impermeable silt or slaty rocks to prevent the seepage of irrigation water. In addition, canal builders usually attempt to construct canals at slopes of about 3_ to prevent both erosion and excessive sedimentation. Where bedrock is encountered, small waterfalls or steeped sections of channel are built in an effort to achieve the necessary vertical drop between source and demand area. Finally, canals are regularly patrolled so as to check for symptoms of seepage or potential channel failure. Despite these precautions blockages and failures do occasionally occur. In this event, villagers are able to divert water flow quickly and organise efficient repair crews.

By the time water enters secondary channels the main problems of access are solved. Terraces, vegetation cover and well-developed soils all facilitate water distribution without threat of erosion. The main problem in Hopar is irrigating slopes on the valley side opposite to the melt water supply. To maintain the necessary head of gravity channels are routed around the upper end of the oval shaped valley to opposite slopes. Moreover, dirt channels and aqueducts have been raised to dissect the cultivated valley floor at elevations of 2 or more metres. These are patrolled and safety standards regularly reinforced to prevent supply failure.

Temperature

Water entering the highest channels is consistently below 2°C, which is sufficiently cold to kill or stunt all crop varieties. Temperatures increase slightly during the time that water flows through primary channels, but most warming occurs in secondary channels which are dug wide, so that water is shallow, meandering and slow moving. A large perimeter: cross-section ratio ensures maximum radiative and convective warming, and slow and circuitous routing maximises warming time. In addition, shallow ponds are located throughout the cultivated area. These are

used mainly for washing and watering livestock, but also help to increase water temperature. Water seldom enters terraces at temperatures below 9°C, and often it is several degrees warmer. These temperatures are still below optimum, but are sufficient for indigenous crop varieties.

Sediment

Sediment is a mixed blessing for mountain irrigators. Thin coatings of fine silt on channel walls help prevent seepage and erosion. In addition, sediment is a source of inorganic nutrients for terrace soils. Unfortunately, too siltation clogs channels, raises terrace levels and chokes crop seedlings. No efforts have been made to extract sediment at the primary canal level. The aim at this level is to transport sediment down-stream to the next level without threatening primary channel flow. Some siltation is tolerated as a safeguard against erosion.

Secondary channels are relatively easy to clean and also to maintain, so that sediment is allowed to settle out at this level. Wide, shallow, slow and meandering channels interspersed with ponds facilitate the deposition of silt, as well as increasing temperature. Channels and ponds are occasionally dredged and sediment is packed along channel and terrace walls, or else mixed with manure to fertilise fields. Some sediment inevitably enters fields. In plots where this is hazardous water is directed within the field along shallow furrows. Moisture reaches roots laterally through the soil rather than from above and sediment becomes trapped in furrows where it cannot harm seedlings.

Conclusions

Melt water irrigation systems must be able to respond to the conditions of flow imposed by the nature and location of the melt water source. These conditions differ from those needed in regions where irrigation derives from non-melt sources. In Hopar, water quality, reliable access, and control of turbulent flow are more important constraints than the volume or timing of melt. Village irrigators realise this, and have designed their irrigation network accordingly.

Appendix 12: Evaluation of Shimshal's Main Pastures¹

Shagdi: visited July 19th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Shagdi is a winter pasture located between 2900 and 3100m on two large alluvial fans which are separated by the Shimshal River and its floodplain. The pasture covers just under four square kilometres; about two thirds of that is on the south (north facing) fan. Thus, the prevailing aspect is northerly; the prevailing slope is less than five degrees. Soils are poorly developed, consisting entirely of gravel and coarse sand, with very little organic matter. The exception is a terraced area of about 1.5 hectares which is fertilized regularly with manure.

Each fan is dissected by an intermittent snow melt stream draining seasonal snow cover between 4300 and 4900m. Avalanche deposits descending to about 3500m contribute to run off in some years. Peak diurnal flow in July of 1988 is estimated at about 11 cubic metres per second (cusecs) on the north side and 7-8 cusecs on the south side. This is an abundant and dependable water supply for the rudimentary trickle irrigation that is practised on this small pasture. The pasture area receives little snow in winter.

Some limited erosion (rills up to 8cm deep) has been caused by a combination of trickle irrigation and spring melt. Erosion due to overgrazing is unlikely because the surface is frozen during the period of use.

¹ Reproduced from Butz (1990) Pastures and Pastoralism in Shimshal: A Preliminary Report to AKRSP. The dates noted beside the names of each pasture are the dates that I first visited them, with measurement instruments. I visited most pastures on subsequent occasions, often several times, and collected more information during these subsequent visits. Some of that information is incorporated into Chapter 10.2. Most of it remains to be incorporated into a more detailed report to AKRSP.

Vegetation

Less than 10 percent of the entire pasture is vegetated, however ground cover reaches 60 percent in the irrigated area. The existing vegetation is thriving. There is no evidence of disease or overgrazing. The low ground cover is probably due to aridity in un-irrigated areas, and poor soil development. Four or five species of grass were identified, as well as thorn, wild rose, willow and artemisia. Grasses average about 50 cm. Maximum height of any vegetation is 2m. The area has not been grazed since May 15th. It was classified on July 19th.

Pasture Use and Management

This pasture is the most accessible of all Shimshal pastures. It is located two days walk up the Shimshal Valley from the Karakoram Highway, and about 5 hours walk downstream from Shimshal village. Two shepherd dwellings exist on the north side of the pasture, adjacent to a small patch of terraced cultivation. Approximately 25 households graze 1000 goats and sheep and 100 cattle in Shagdi from the beginning of November to mid May. Goats are kept on the south side of the river; kids and sheep on the north. Six male shepherds stay with the animals throughout the winter.

Due to its small size, poor vegetation and the large numbers of animals grazed Shagdi is more a winter holding pen than pasture. It is appealing because of its low elevation, sheltered location and proximity to the village. Much of the fodder for animals is carried from Shimshal village. Recent attempts to trickle irrigate may result, over time, in the development of more fertile soil and better pasture vegetation.

Shagdi is the source of some firewood for Shimshal.

Zartgar Bin: visited July 22nd, 1988**Location and Geophysical Conditions**

This pasture is located on a gently sloping alluvial fan on the east side of the Zartgar Bin River. Its lower portion covers a flat silty area that may be composed of ancient lake sediments. It is a small pasture, perhaps three square kilometres, sloping about 10 degrees on average to the WSW (240 degrees). Zartgar Bin lies in a long narrow strip along the river. It rises from 3900m at the rivers edge to 4000m. The east, west and northern extent of the pasture is defined by steeply sloping mountain walls. To the south the terrain drops steeply to the Zartgar Bin River canyon.

The pasture is drained by a small intermittent stream flowing down the mountain side from the east, and by the south flowing river. There is ample water for watering livestock, but no irrigation and very little potential for irrigation. Soils are fine, mainly silt, but with lots of organic material. As such they are vulnerable to compaction and subsequent erosion by water and wind. Some patches are un-vegetated, probably because of compaction by animals. In addition, characteristic criss-cross patterns of animal paths are evident. However, there is little evidence of subsequent erosion of that bare material. The surface is well drained. Soil colour is pinkish gray; 5YR 6/2 according to the Munsell soil classification.

At 10:00 AM on the day of my visit the temperature was 18C under sunny skies.

Vegetation

At least 10 grass and creeper species grow in this pasture. Ground cover is about 60 percent. Mean vegetation height is about 9cm, ranging from 3cm to 15cm. No shrubs or trees are present. The pasture was being grazed at the time of my visit, and had been since late June.

Pasture Use and Management

Zartgar Bin is grazed during July and August by about 300 cattle. These animals range between a number of similar small pastures which lie along about a five kilometre stretch of the Zartgar Bin River, so they are not all at Zartgar Bin the entire period. In addition, two or three donkeys are pastured here, and the occasional flock of sheep or goats spends a night at the pasture on its way up or down slope. Because the pasture is enclosed by the terrain no permanent shepherds are used. However, because the pasture is on the main route to other larger pastures, Shimshal people often pass through and monitor the animals. There is one poor dwelling, and a couple of corrals.

Villagers are aware of the pasture's limited carrying capacity. Therefore they graze only a small number of animals for a short period of time. Still, the pasture is stressed. The vegetation is very short, and typical pasture erosion is in its early stages. It is an attractive place to graze cattle because it is only five hours walk from Shimshal, it is sheltered and relatively low, and it supports a variety of tender vegetation.

Peryan Sar: visited July 23rd, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Peryan Sar is a pasture of about eight square kilometres facing WSW on the north side of Shujerab stream. It is situated between 3900 and 4400m on a rolling plain between the stream gully, which is several hundred metres deep, and extremely steep rock and talus slopes. The pasture itself averages about 10 degrees slope, but steepens to 30 degrees on the north side. Peryan Sar is about two days walk from Shimshal village.

Soils were formed of in situ breakdown of parent rock, and range from sand to silt. Soil colour is very pale brown (10YR 7/3). The area is poorly drained. Surface gullies 10 to 15cm in

depth dissect the entire pasture. These gullies deepen to one to two metres as they flow toward the main Shujerab stream canyon. There is no continuous water supply: only spring melt and occasional light summer rainfall.

At 8:50 on the day of my visit the temperature was 19C. It was raining lightly.

Vegetation

Much of this area was previously covered with juniper and dwarf cedar. There are no trees or bushes left. Six or seven species of clumpy vegetation and some sparse grass cover about 30 percent of the ground. Mean vegetation height is about five centimetres. Vegetation ranges from 3 to 20 cm in height. Erosion can be attributed in some extent to deforestation.

Pasture Use and Management

About 700 goats and sheep graze here briefly in spring and fall: in October for most of the month on their way from Shuwart to Shimshal, and for three weeks in May as they travel up slope from Shimshal to Shuwart. Five or six shepherds care for the animals during these periods. They dwell in two large huts. The entire southwest side of the pasture is enclosed by a stone wall and gate. In addition, other small fences, gates and tether poles are employed to contain the animals. Formerly the area was used as a source of timber and firewood.

Due to a lack of water and vegetation the area is a poor pasture. It seems to be over-utilized during the two brief periods it is grazed. The long period in between may not be sufficient for the pasture to recover. This is evident from the erosion and poor ground cover. Villagers do not view this as an important pasture for providing sustenance to their flocks. Rather, it is a large flat area for containing animals briefly in spring and fall.

Arbob Peryan: visited July 23rd, 1988**Location and Geophysical Characteristics**

Arbob Peryan is a small pasture of about three square kilometres located between 4000 and 4200 metres on the east side of a small stream which flows south into the Shujerab stream. The pasture consists of two parts: a larger gently sloping meadow at about 10 degrees which suddenly descends sharply to a small almost flat basin about 100m below. The stream flows through the lower part at about 2 cusecs. The prevailing slope is NE to NW.

The soil is formed mainly from in situ breakdown of iron rich rock, and ranges in texture from coarse sand to gravel. The soil contains much organic material. Soil colour is reddish brown (5YR 4/3). Small rills drain into the stream. There is no evidence of human induced erosion.

Temperature was 24C under cloudy skies at 11:30AM.

Vegetation

About 60 percent of the ground is covered at an average height of 10cm. Vegetation ranges in height from about 4 to 50cm. The same clumpy species as at Peryan Sar grow here, as well as some lush grasses. Overall the pasture seems much more verdant than the previous three. This is due probably to soils with higher inorganic nutrients, a more constant water supply, and that the area had not been extensively grazed since the previous November. There is no appearance of overgrazing. Formerly the pasture was a source of timber and firewood.

Pasture Use and Management

Arbob Peryan supports about 700 sheep and goats for about a month from mid October to mid November. In addition, other flocks are pastured here overnight in spring and fall. The pasture helps to fatten animals up for the winter they will spend up slope at Shujerab. Four shepherds care for the animals during this period.

Improvements include a small dwelling, a corral, a couple of small fences and a minor water diversion. Arbob Peryan is a little more than two days walk from Shimshal village.

Shujerab: visited July 23rd, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Shujerab is a pasture of about 10 square kilometres located on both sides of the west flowing Shujerab stream. It is in a wide u-shaped valley between 4300 and 4500m. Aspect is split almost evenly between 140 (SE) and 320 (NW) degrees. The main valley bottom slopes at about 10 degrees. Up slope areas are concave and approach angles of 30 degrees. The pasture is situated at the confluence of the Shujerab stream with a smaller stream flowing north out of Shuwart. In late July their combined flow was about 30 cusecs. In addition, many small meltwater rivulets contribute to the water supply.

Soils originate from a combination of in situ breakdown of parent material and fluvial deposition. They are fairly well developed, consisting mainly of coarse sand to coarse silt, but with some patches of loamy soil. Soil colour in the area sampled is pale brown (10YR 6/3). Much of the area is damp and poorly drained; standing water is common in the lowest portions. The soil is high in organic material.

The temperature at 6:15PM was 12C under cloudy skies. Due to the elevation rain and snowfall is common, even in summer, and temperatures range from freezing at night to mid teens during the day.

Vegetation

Shujerab is heavily vegetated. All species growing at Zartgar Bin, Peryan Sar, and Arbob Peryan, plus several others, are found at this pasture. Ground cover by vegetation is 80 percent for most of the area. Some steeper more gravelly slopes have as low as 20 to 30 percent coverage. Vegetation ranged in height from 4 to 15cm, with an average of about 8cm. Wet areas have developed bog-like vegetation. Shujerab appears to be a verdant and productive pasture. It was last grazed at the end of June.

Pasture Use and Management

About 4000 sheep and goats and 400 yaks graze Shujerab during three periods. From the end of May to the end of June sheep, goats and yaks are kept here. Animals are sheared here, and some females give birth to calves, kids and lambs. In addition, the milking and cheese making season is begun here. In September only 1500 sheep and goats are kept here. During these two periods approximately 25 families (women and children) care for the animals. About 30 dwellings have been built in two clusters surrounded by corrals.

At the end of September animals make their way down to Arbob Peryan, and thence to Shimshal. Some return to Shujerab for winter. Dairying activities stop for the winter, so only four men are required to herd the sheep and goats. Around this time yak cows come down from Shuwart. Six men care for them, and the bulls at Shuwart, throughout the winter.

Shujerab is perceived as an important pasture, especially during the winter. Water and vegetation is abundant, and the area is well sheltered for a high altitude pasture. Essentially it is the wintering place for those animals which spend the summer up slope at Shuwart, and which are hardy enough to remain at high altitude for the winter. Young and feeble animals are taken back to Shimshal for the coldest months.

Shuwart: visited July 24th to July 27th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Shuwart is the largest of Shimshal pastures; it covers an area of about 45 square kilometres in a long narrow strip southeast and then east from Shujerab. The pasture's location in a broad gently sloping indentation makes aspect less important than it would normally be in mountainous terrain. All aspects are represented in relatively equal proportions. The prevailing slope is 10 to 15 degrees, with some higher slopes up to 30 degrees. Elevation ranges between 4500 and 5000m.

Water is abundant in this area and elevation. Shuwart is comprised of two stream valleys flowing northwest and east southeast. The sources of these two streams are located on either side of a gentle divide. The northeast flowing stream is fed by two small lakes of about a hectare each. The other flows from south facing Shuwart-i-yaz Glacier. Maximum discharges of each stream are about four cusecs. In addition many small ponds and snow melt streams contribute to an abundant and well distributed water supply. Precipitation at this elevation is considerably greater than at lower pastures. Much of the pasture is poorly drained, with wet spots and pools of standing water.

Soils are formed of a combination of in situ development and glacial and glacio-fluvial deposition. The valley floors are primarily gravel. Above the flood plain silts predominate, although clays and sands are evident as well. The soil is quite well developed in many areas, with lots of organic material. Soil colour in the section sampled is grayish brown (10YR 5/2). Some evidence of recent and minor erosion on poorly drained or steeply sloped surfaces exists. This appears to be due to repeated trampling of the ground, rather than overgrazing of vegetation.

Climate is variable at this altitude. From July 24th to 27th midday temperatures ranged from -2C to 20C. Night time temperatures were well below freezing. Several centimetres of snow fell on the 24th. The 25th and 26th were sunny and clear. Diurnal temperature ranges in mid summer are about 25C.

Vegetation

A great variety of species grow at Shuwart, including all those noted at other previously visited pastures, as well as several varieties of grasses and alpine flowers. I saw no shrubs, bushes or trees. The mean height of vegetation was about 12cm., ranging between approximately 5 and 35cm. Ground cover varies depending on slope, use and soil type: 30% on valley bottom surfaces near summer villages, 80% throughout most of the gently sloping area, 60% on heavily sloped surfaces, and about 50% overall. Despite some erosion near villages, on steeper slopes and along paths the pasture vegetation was verdant and healthy. At the time of my visit it was being grazed by over 1800 animals.

Pasture Use and Management

Shuwart is the general name given to the contiguous pasture area described above. It is also the name of the main summer village in that area. Villagers distinguish among about 20 specific small pastures, which are used at different times and for a variety of grazing purposes during the time that Shuwart is being pastured. Each small pasture has perceived micro-characteristics that make it suitable for specific animals at specific times within the grazing season. However, the areas, attributes and uses of these pastures overlap to the extent that, at the limited depth of this classification, it is necessary to view the entire area as a single pasture, Shuwart. In any case, most animals return to Shuwart village each evening.

Approximately 40 households of women and children herd 4000 sheep and goats and 400 yaks at Shuwart between late June and early September. Animals are tended and milked in corrals at Shuwart village each evening. In addition, 10 to 15 men are at the pasture at all times to perform heavy labour and hunt for predatory animals. Losses of sheep and goats to wolves in summer and snow leopards in winter are significant.

In September 1500 sheep and goats make their way down slope to Shujerab and Peryan. Females and small animals winter in Shimshal. About 700 rams and younger stock return to the

Shujerab-Shuwart corridor for the winter. Almost all 400 yaks spend most of the year on *shpoon*, at pastures down slope from Shuwart. Only a few cows and calves spend the coldest months and spring at Shujerab (this does not include a separate herd of yaks at Lupgar). During winter six men herd yaks; four herd sheep and goats.

Shuwart is the single most important grazing area to Shimshal. It supports the largest number of animals for the longest time. In addition, its beauty, its elevation and its inaccessibility are important to Shimshali consciousness. It contains the largest, and one of the last remaining yak herds in the Karakoram. Ibex, blue sheep, Marco Polo sheep are all abundant. Villagers have improved the natural grazing area with several small water diversions, corrals, dwellings, worship buildings, wolf traps etc.

They have expressed great interest in improving the vegetation to make the area more productive. Villagers are also concerned about the predator problem. About 250 goats and sheep are lost to wolves and snow leopards each year in Shuwart alone.

Shuwart is three days hard walk from Shimshal village.

Chikkor: visited July 26th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Chikkor (including Furzin and Sheralik) is a somewhat lower and more sheltered version of Shuwart. Together, these three pastures cover about 35 square kilometres to the south and then east of Shuwart. Predominant aspects are north and south. The main pasture areas are sloped at about 15 degrees, although steeper slopes occur up slope where yaks often graze. Elevation ranges from about 3800m to 4600m. Sheralik, which is seldom used now, is at about 4000m. Chikkor is the highest of the three, at 4450m mean altitude.

Water is abundant. Small intermittent stream water each of the grazing areas, and the main

river is accessible in some places. A rudimentary irrigation system waters parts of the pastures during the growing season. In addition, precipitation is abundant at this elevation.

Soils are formed of a combination of in situ development and glacial and glacio-fluvial deposition. The valley floors are primarily gravel. Above the flood plain silts predominate, although clays and sands are evident as well. The soil is quite well developed in many areas, with lots of organic material. Soil colour in the section sampled is grayish brown (10YR 5/2). Since animals are grazed here only during winter erosion is not a problem.

Climate is variable at this altitude. On July 26th midday temperatures were about 18 degrees C. Night time temperature hovered around freezing (at Chikkor).

Vegetation

Vegetation is similar to that at Shuwart. However, mean height was higher: about 20cm, because the area had not been grazed since the previous winter. Ground cover varies depending on slope, use and soil type. Very little erosion was evident.

Pasture Use and Management

Yaks remain at Shuwart until October, when 100 of the less hardy animals return to the relatively sheltered environment of Shujerab for the winter. The rest forage in the deep snows of winter pastures beyond Shimshal Pass (Shuwart pasture is right at Shimshal Pass, one of the passes separating the Indian sub-continent and Asia). Chikkor, at about 4450m is the most important of these. Only if snows are particularly deep are animals driven to Furzin or Seralik, farther down slope. These pastures are irrigated in a rudimentary way during the summer, so that sufficient vegetation grows to support foraging throughout the winter. Half a dozen men spend the winter with the yaks at this location, completely isolated from Shimshal, by winter weather. Enough rude shelters and paddocks exist at each pasture to house the men and animals who live there in winter. Herders subsist for six months entirely on dairy products and whatever flour they

transported the six day walk from Shimshal in autumn. Villagers claim that before 1986 about 1000 yaks occupied the Pamir cycle. In 1986 a particularly cold and snowy winter killed over half of the animals. This winter campaign, locally called *shpoon*, takes on legendary dimensions in Shimshal. Those men who care for the yaks well, without many losses, are treated as heroes by other villagers. In 1988, when I was travelling from Shimshal to Shuwart with a group of men, I met two of the *shpoon* herders at a resting place. They were travelling back to Shimshal after their winter rigours. Wherever they stopped they were feasted and treated with special respect. One of my closest companions, Laili Shah, went on *shpoon* in 1989 and 1991. Only one of the yaks in his care died during the winter of 1988, despite a hard winter. To show their gratitude, other village households gave Laili's household six yaks, worth a small fortune.

Maidor: visited July 28th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Maidor is located on a long expanse of steeply sloping talus facing SSW above a meltwater stream gully. The prevailing slope is 25 to 30 degrees. Other than an area just large enough for two dwellings and a corral there are no flat places. The pasture occupies a long narrow strip along the north side of the stream. It ranges in elevation between 4000 and 4500m, and covers an area of approximately 12 square kilometres. Maidor is not on the main route from Shimshal to Shuwart. It is two hard days walk from Shimshal.

Soils have been formed of the breakdown of slaty talus, and range from gravel to coarse sand. Soil colour was not identified. Because of the nature of the parent material, and the constant movement down steep slopes, soil is poorly developed. In addition, meltwater run off has caused significant gully erosion and mud flows. The landscape suggests that erosion is due to geophysical rather than grazing induced causes. The problem may be exacerbated by grazing. However, only

200 animals pasture the entire area.

The meltwater stream mentioned above flows through a deep gully below the pasture area, so its flow is not available to pasture animals. Rather, water supply is contributed mainly by a small tributary meltwater stream (seven cusecs maximum) flowing perpendicular to the prevailing pasture slope. In addition, several tiny intermittent snow melt streams contribute to the available moisture. Summer precipitation is negligible.

Temperature at 7:35AM on the day of my visit was 17C under clear skies.

Vegetation

Relatively few species were observed at Maidor; four or five common flowering plants and a few grasses. Ground cover is approximately 30%, with very little spatial variation. Mean vegetation height was 12cm, ranging between 5 and 18cm. This is a very sparse pasture, but does not seem to be overgrazed. Only 200 animals graze the entire 12 square kilometre area.

Pasture Use and Management

Approximately 200 goats and sheep occupy Maidor pasture from around the 20th May to 20th October. The rest of the year they spend in Shimshal. Therefore, this pasture comprises part of a different cycle or rotation pattern than that described above for the Shuwart-Shujerab-Shimshal rotation.

The animals are milked and tended by one household of three women. A small corral and two dwellings are the only pasture improvements in evidence.

SpordIn: visited July 28th and 29th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Spordin is situated seven hours WNW of Maidor, or three hours north of Zartgar Bin, along the Zartgar Bin River stream. Like Zartgar Bin it is located mainly to the east of the stream on an actively accumulating alluvial fan. Spordin also includes a small area on the west side of the stream. The main pasture area ranges in elevation between 4000 and 4200m, and covers less than three square kilometres. The prevailing aspect is SW 225 degrees, at 10 to 15 degrees slope.

Soil appears to be formed mainly of the breakdown of alluvial material composed mainly of iron rich slate. Soil texture ranges from sandy to coarse gravel. Soil colour is brown to dark brown (7.5YR (4/2)). The characteristic criss-cross animal paths are the only evidence of grazing induced erosion of soils.

Zartgar Bin River is wide, shallow and slow moving at this point, so it contributes to the pasture's useful water supply. In addition, an intermittent meltwater stream flowing down from Boesim Pir (Spordin Sar) Pass diverges into three small streams as it passes through the pasture. These streams were flowing at about 2 cusecs combined, maximum, during my visit. Maximum flows would be several times greater in spring. Zartgar Bin River has maximum mid summer discharges of about 10 to 15 cusecs.

The temperature at 7:00AM on the day of my visit was 13C under partly cloudy skies.

Vegetation

Vegetation at Spordin is virtually identical to Zartgar Bin. About 30% of the ground cover is grass, the rest is flowering plants. Average ground cover is approximately 60%. Vegetation varies in height from 5 to 15cm. The average height is 10cm. The pasture was last grazed 20 days prior to my visit.

Pasture Use and Management

Spordin is one of several pastures located in a strip along the Zartgar Bin River. These pastures are used to graze approximately 300 cattle. Spordin is utilized mainly during the period from June 20th to July 10th. In addition, other stock travelling to or from Ghujerab pastures may graze for several hours at Spordin. The pasture is perceived to be well suited for cattle because it is fairly low and flat, has an adequate water supply, and is only one day's hard walk from Shimshal. In addition, the river is not dangerous along this stretch.

There is one recently constructed dwelling at Spordin. It is used mainly by shepherds and other travellers on their way to Ghujerab. Cattle are not tended during their stay at Spordin, except when they are driven to or from the pasture.

Ghujerab: visited August 14th to 17th, 1989

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Like Shuwart, Ghujerab is the name for numerous contiguous small pastures (the main ones of which are Mandikshula (4,400m), Waraband (4,200m) and Hafdiji (3,800m)) which are utilized in a complex pattern of rotation by sheep, goats and yaks. The pasture area begins about 20 kilometres northeast and then west from Spordin. It is located along about a 16 kilometre stretch of the Ghujerab River, which flows west and eventually joins the Hunza River at Kaksil. Ghujerab

pasture covers an area of 30 to 35 square kilometres. Elevation ranges from 3700 to 4900m. Aspect is mainly north. Ghujerab is a broad open area, similar to Shuwart, but generally less productive. Slopes are less than 20 degrees in areas of good grazing: more elsewhere.

Soils are formed of a combination of in situ development and glacial and glacio-fluvial deposition. The valley floors are primarily gravel. Above the flood plain silts predominate, although clays and especially sands are evident as well. The soil is quite well developed on some of the higher slopes away from the main valley, but generally poor close to summer settlements. Erosion from trampling was evident near the valley bottom, where soils are particularly light and sandy. Water is abundant throughout the area, since much of it lies on the floodplain of the Ghujerab River. In addition, several meltwater streams with maximum summer discharges of over 30 cusecs each, supply moisture to the main pasture areas.

Vegetation

Similar to Shuwart, although fewer grass species are evident. Ground cover is about 40 percent. At the time of my visit, several of the pastures were being grazed intensively, so vegetation was short: about 4- 7 cm average height. Across the river from the main pasture areas are several stands of mature juniper.

Pasture Use and Management

About 25 yaks graze at the Ghujerab pastures during the summer, migrating from Mandikshula (4,400m) through Waraband (4,200m) to Hafdiji (3,800m) and back again. These are the main Ghujerab pastures, located in the Ghujerab River valley. Yaks are herded and tended in alpine grazing areas far up slope from the main pastures (Spe Syngo, Dih, Chafchingal). In October they migrate to Pamir and spend the coldest months with the *shpoon*. Approximately 1400 goats and sheep graze at Ghujerab from May to October. 1000 sheep and goats winter at Ghujerab in the more sheltered and lower altitude locations. The other 400 less hardy animals

winter near Shimshal, and spend much of the summer time in Warabund. In summer 22 households reside in Ghujerab summer villages (located at the three main pastures) to milk and herd the livestock. Only five men spend the winter. Ghujerab, like Shuwart, is an important pasture for Shimshal.

Yazgil: visited August 1st and 2nd, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Yazgil Pasture is located several hundred metres above and immediately east of the Yazgil Glacier. Its prevailing aspect is 300 degrees WNW, and it slopes steeply at 40 to 50 degrees toward the glacier. The pasture occupies some 10.5 square kilometres between 3600 and 4800m. Lower Yazgil is a very small complementary pasture located on the west side of the glacier in an intra-montane valley. It is about half a square kilometre in extent and lies at 3400m.

Soils are composed of a mixture of talus and ancient moraine material. The texture varies from coarse gravel to sand. There is little organic material. Soil colour is pale brown (10YR 6/3). The pasture is drained by several small intermittent meltwater streams, each of which carries well under one cusec discharge. There is evidence of sheet and gully erosion. The pasture seems to receive frequent light summer precipitation. In addition, minor erosion occurs along paths, which are often very steep.

On August 1st the temperature at 2:30PM was 10C under conditions of fog and light rain.

Vegetation

Vegetation covers about 25% of the ground surface. The majority of that is artemisia. Only one or two other species of meagre grasses grow in any appreciable quantity. Mean vegetation height was approximately 15cm, ranging from a minimum height of 10cm to a maximum of 22cm. This pasture is not heavily grazed; no evidence of overgrazing was identified. The poor vegetation may be attributed to extremely poor soils and steep slopes. Shepherds informed me that Yazgil was previously a source of wood; currently there are no trees or stumps.

Pasture Use and Management

Shimshalis are aware of Yazgil's low carrying capacity, so only 200 goats and sheep graze the area from May to September. In October the animals graze briefly at Lower Yazgil before wintering in or near Shimshal village. Two families of shepherds milk and tend the animals. Two small dwellings and a modest corral have been constructed.

Yazgil is a large and accessible pasture. It is only a single day's easy walk from Shimshal. Unfortunately, its steep slope and poor vegetation limit the number of animals that can be grazed. In addition, the pasture can only be reached by crossing Yazgil Glacier, a treacherous trek for sheep and young animals.

Molonguti: visited August 4th and 5th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Molonguti Pasture lies at an altitude of 3100 to 3300m in an intra-moraine valley directly west of Molonguti glacier. The pasture is roughly horseshoe shaped, with substantial areas facing west, east and north. The predominant aspect is due north. The average slope of the valley bottom is 15 to 20 degrees. Valley walls are much steeper, up to 40 degrees. The pasture covers an area

of approximately five square kilometres.

An intermittent snow melt stream flows down slope in a northerly direction. Midsummer maximum flows are about one cusec, although substantial recent gully erosion of the stream bed suggests that spring flows are several times greater. Soils are composed of morainic material overlain by fluvial fines: primarily silts and sands over coarse gravel. Soil colour in the heavily vegetated area is grayish brown (10YR 5/2). Much of the landscape has suffered significant fluvial erosion.

The temperature at 6:30PM on August 4th was 14C under cloudy skies.

Vegetation

Many species of vegetation grow at this pasture, including several species of grass, artemisia, several flowering plants, thorn and willow. The valley bottom is approximately 80% covered, mainly by grasses. Steeper slopes have about 30% cover. Thorns and willow grow primarily near the stream to heights of 2.5 to three metres. Grasses average about 20cm, but reach heights of 50cm. The pasture was last grazed in Mid June. There is no evidence of overgrazing of vegetation. However, the obvious erosion suggests that the pasture may have been overgrazed in the past.

Pasture Use and Management

Molonguti pasture is grazed by 300 cattle from early May to mid June before these animals head up slope to Zartgar Bin and beyond. Until several years ago a flock of sheep and goats spent the month of November at this pasture. That has been discontinued, because of the stress on soil and vegetation.

An area of almost one square kilometre has been roughly terraced and irrigated in the past. In addition, many corrals were built. All of these structures -terraces, channels and corrals- have fallen into disrepair. This is probably attributable to degradation of the land due to

overgrazing. However, informants were vague in their comments on the abandonment of these structures, so that is uncertain. This terraced area has well developed soils and lush vegetation.

Molonguti is very accessible to Shimshal, and to Pasu: five hours walk and two days walk respectively.

Momhil: visited August 6th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Momhil Pasture is located on the west side of Momhil Glacier at 4300 to 4900m on a 30 degree talus slope facing due east. The pasture covers an area of approximately three square kilometres. The area is well drained by several small snow melt streams. There is no evidence of grazing induced erosion. The soil is comprised mainly of coarse gravel to sand. I did not identify soil colour.

Vegetation

Vegetation covers approximately 20 to 30 percent of the ground surface. Species are few; mainly artemisia, thorns, wild rose and juniper. Grasses grow poorly and sparsely up to approximately 25cm. The pasture had not been grazed since the previous December.

Pasture Use and Management

This pasture is grazed by 100 goats and 25 yaks during November and December. They spend the summer at Lupgar and the winter in Shimshal. In winters of little snowfall animals may spend the entire winter at Momhil. Similarly, if shepherds perceive that Lupgar is overgrazed during any particular summer some animals may be driven to Momhil. Lupgar and Momhil are one day's walk apart. Momhil is two day's arduous walk from Shimshal. It can only be reached from Shimshal or Lupgar by crossing one of two 5800m passes. Two shepherds tend livestock when it is grazing

Momhil. There is one small dwelling. Firewood and water are abundant.

Lupgar: visited August 6th and 7th, 1988

Location and Geophysical Characteristics

Lupgar is an extensive pasture situated along about 8 kilometres of the east side of Lupgar Glacier, between 4300 and 5500m. It slopes westerly at about 20 degrees. The entire pasture area is approximately 9 square kilometres.

Water is supplied to the pasture by several clear snow melt streams which drain onto the glacier margins. Total midsummer discharge of these streams is in the order of four or five cusecs. The pasture is well drained, without evidence of significant fluvial erosion. Soils have developed from in situ breakdown of parent material. They range from coarse gravels to coarse silt, and contain substantial organic material. Soil colour is dark grayish brown (10YR 4/2). There is some moderate erosion along main paths and near the summer village due to continual trampling of the soil.

During my three day visit temperatures ranged from just below freezing at night to a maximum of 18C under clear skies.

Vegetation

Lupgar pasture supports many species of vegetation, including several grasses, artemisia, various alpine flowers, thorns and small stands of juniper. Part of the area was formerly forested, and stumps remain. Ground cover by vegetation is about 60%, ranging between 15 and 30cm in height. Average height of vegetation, not including bushes, was about 20cm. The pasture was very verdant despite current heavy grazing.

Pasture Use and Management

Lupgar is the third of Shimshal's most important pastures. From the 20th of May to mid October it supports some 1000 sheep and goats and 25 yaks. During May and June the animals stay near the glacier; as summer progresses they move up slope. All of the animals at Lupgar belong to six families, who take special care that their animals are healthy and carefully bred, and that they are carefully tended summer and winter. Indeed, goats and sheep at Lupgar were noticeably larger and better fed than those elsewhere. Four households tend the animals. There are four dwellings and two small corrals. Animals are enclosed only for milking at Lupgar, because there is no predator problem. The pasture is two full days walk from Shimshal.

While Shuwart and Ghujerab support more animals, Lupgar seems to be Shimshal's most valuable, and most wisely utilized, pasture. Despite heavy grazing the pasture is healthy and the livestock thrives. Shimshalis appear to take particular pride in this pasture, and talk of it in terms of special attachment.

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