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PASTORALISM IN CENTRAL SARDINIA

D. M. MOSS



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## Abstract

This thesis describes the social organisation of shepherding in a hill community of 3500 inhabitants in central Sardinia. Its focus is on the consequences of the two major changes in the pastoral economy of the late 19th century: the conversion of public land into private property and the establishment of the dairy-processing industry in Sardinia. The landowners of the village were enabled to reinforce their dominant position and to draw shepherds into a network of patronage ties based on the access to land and the marketing of livestock produce. Among shepherds themselves new relations of solidarity and conflict were created in the countryside. The community became more rigidly stratified.

These consequences are contrasted with the effects of the same changes among the villages of the central highlands of Sardinia where transhumant shepherds became more geographically and socially mobile. Relations set up in the course of this century between the shepherds of different communities are illustrated in the practice of livestock-rustling which constitutes at the same time a mode of prosecution of conflict in one community and an opportunity for capital accumulation by outsiders.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fieldwork in central Sardinia was carried out between June 1971 and July 1972, with occasional visits to the village in the course of 1973. The research was financed by the Social Science Research Council whose assistance is gratefully acknowledged. Thanks are also due to the Trustees of the A. Radcliffe-Brown Memorial Fund for a supplementary grant to assist writing up.

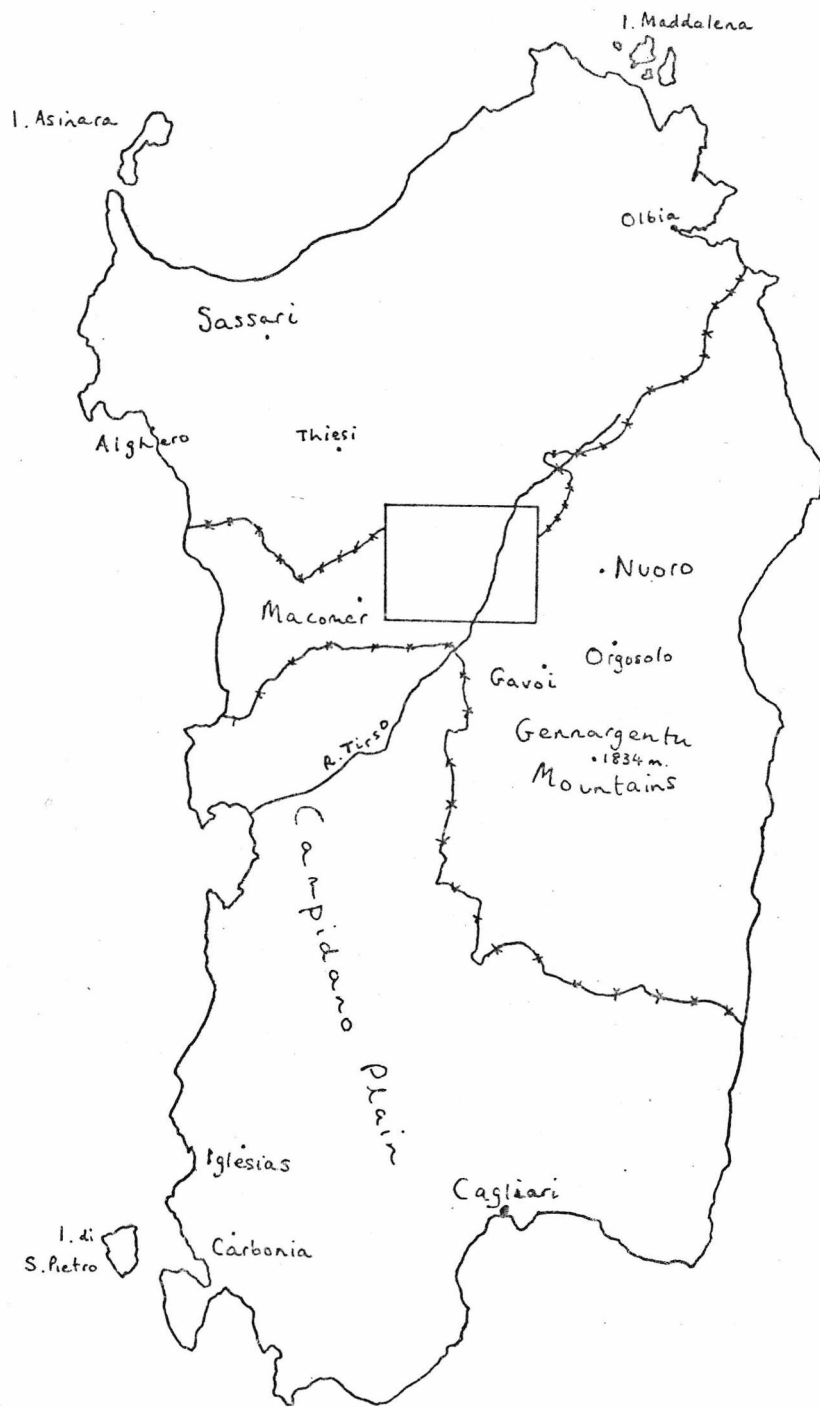
I am very grateful to my supervisor, Dr John Davis, for patient encouragement and suggestions and to Professor Paul Stirling for help on the drafts of several chapters. I owe Dr Neville Colclough a more diffuse debt of gratitude for introduction to research and many conversations about Italy.

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The Island of Sardinia



area surrounding 'Limbara'



provincial boundaries

Scale: 0 10 20 30 40 km.

Chapter 1 : Introduction

The inhabitants of Sardinia now number  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million. The language they speak points to the island's distinctiveness as well as to the history of its contacts with the rest of the Mediterranean. Linguists accept Sardinian as one of the Romance languages in its own right which in the course of centuries has been unevenly modified in different parts of the island by the languages of its successive rulers.(1) The dialect of the Barbagia - more precisely, the three Barbagie which constitute the northern approaches and central highlands of the Gennargentu mountains in east-central Sardinia - remains closest to Sardinian, while the coastal plains have been strongly influenced by Tuscan, Catalan, Spanish and Italian. It is exclusively an oral language: there is no literature in Sardinian, and the island's best known writers (e.g. the Nobel Prize winner Grazia Deledda) have used Italian. It is still often preferred to Italian in public and private communication: in the village where I worked the official communiqués of the council and list of fresh vegetables and meat available daily in local shops were broadcast to the inhabitants in Sardinian, and a central feature of village festivals all over the island are the Sardinian poets with a flair for witty improvisation.

The linguistic differences between the coastal plains and the interior correspond today to a striking demographic and

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(1) M. L. Wagner: La Lingua Sarda: Berna (1951).



economic contrast. With the exception of Nuoro, which owes its growth to its designation as the third provincial capital in 1927, all towns with more than 15000 inhabitants lie on or near the coast. The biggest centre is Cagliari with a population of nearly 1/4 million, which for centuries has been the only sizeable port of the island and therefore the only link with the Mediterranean trade-routes and the outside world. It has also been the island's administrative capital and is today the seat of the Autonomous Regional Government set up in 1948.

The coasts and plains have received all the agricultural and industrial development initiated from above during the last century. The irrigation works, land reclamation and settlements created between the wars and by the Sardinian Agrarian Reform Board (ETFAS) after 1951 have been situated mostly in the Campidano plain. They have encouraged the cultivation of specialised fruit and vegetables for the urban and export markets and a few industrial crops such as sugarbeet and tobacco. The provinces of Cagliari and Sassari now also account for almost 90% of the area under cereals and 75% of the island's cattle.

All the major industries lie within easy reach of the coast: the declining coal, lead and zinc mines of Carbonia and Iglesias and the new petrochemical plants with their satellite industries near Cagliari and Sassari; together they account for five-sixths of the island's industrial work force (excluding transport and construction).(1) These new enterprises are completely separated from the hinterland: all are owned by foreign or continental-based

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(1) M. Ferrarini: L'Industria Sarda com'è, Quaderni Sardi (n.d.), tab. 5.1, p.55.



companies to process materials sold outside Sardinia, and each has its own port which connects it directly to Mediterranean and world markets. Like their counterparts in Southern Italy these costly capital-intensive industries have taken the lion's share of development funds but have been quite unable to stimulate the growth of local enterprises and therefore to offer more than a token alternative to emigration for many Sardinians. The official figures, which are certainly underestimates, show that between 1951 - 1971 93,223 men and women left the island mostly for Common Market countries and a further unknown number moved to find work in the cities of mainland Italy.(1)

Sardinia's hinterland presents a very different picture to these outward-looking coastal towns. Its population lives in small, often isolated communities, huddled along the sides of hills or mountains and divided by a bewildering combination of oak forests, bare granite slopes and narrow valleys; the quality of the soil and vegetation varies considerably over short distances with the highly fragmented geological structure of the island. The 102 villages of the province of Nuoro have an average of 2700 inhabitants each at a population density of 37 per sq. km., the lowest of all Italy's provinces.

In the hills and mountains of the interior pastoralism continues to provide an important source of livelihood. The number of sheep in Sardinia have increased to more than 2 million over the last century (see table 17), and the total of shepherds

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(1) N. Rudas: Studi Emigrazioni, 34, 1974. tav.IX, p. 189.

and cowherds has remained steady or even increased: in 1931 they numbered 35,582 and recent estimates (1968) put the figure now at 35,000 - 45,000.(1) They now constitute roughly half of the total number of peasants and shepherds, compared to less than one-fifth (18%) in 1931. It is common to meet shepherds moving their flocks from pasture to pasture along the country roads, wearing the traditional dark fustian jacket and trousers with high leather leggings which distinguish them at sight from other categories.

The two Sardinias, industrial and pastoral, have now been brought together geographically in the unlikely village of Ottana in central Sardinia. Here, where the population barely reaches two thousand, the state-owned ANIC (a subsidiary of ENI, the National Hydrocarbons Corporation) in partnership with various private companies began to construct a huge petro-chemical complex in 1970. These plants are intended to give permanent employment to 7500 men and women drawn from villages throughout the area.

This industrialisation is the first deliberate attempt to heal the historical fracture between the coastal plains and the interior of Sardinia, to return to the unity symbolised in the nuraghi, the conical stone watchtowers and dwelling places of the first millennium B.C. scattered through the countryside outside the mountainous centre. More than 7000 towers in varying states of repair have been discovered or unearthed, either as parts of complex settlements or standing guard in bleak isolation over

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(1) ISTAT 1933 ; La Nuova Sardegna, 30.X.1971, supplemento; Brusco e Campus (1971) I p.

the routes of communication. For Sardinian historians the abandonment of these towers marks the end of the island's unity and its original contribution to the pre-Christian Mediterranean Civilisation, when the Carthaginian invasions of the 6th century B.C. forced part of the indigenous population to retreat to the central mountains. The successive invaders - Romans, Vandals, the city-states of Pisa and Genoa, Spain, Piedmont and the latterday Romans of the Italian state - have conquered and administered the hills and plains but failed to subdue the fugitive population of the Barbagia. Some writers therefore see the Barbaricini as the authentic heirs of the truest Sardinian tradition and the carriers of the distinctive identity now recognised in the establishment of a regional government; others see them as outlaws, the enemies of progress and civilisation.

The island's history and sociology has therefore been written exclusively in terms of the various dimensions of contrast between the hinterland and the rest of the island. The social conflicts to which this opposition gives rise are the focus of the Questione Sarda and set Sardinia apart in the intellectual tradition which since the late 19th century has defined the problems of Italy's underdeveloped areas.

Firstly, the problems of Sardinia occupy a minor place in the political institutionalisation of the Questione Meridionale. The first parliamentary commission despatched to the island in 1869 never presented a final report, although one of its members, Paolo Mantegazza (the future founder of the Società Italiana di Etnologia e Antropologia) worked his impressions into a short

anecdotal account of Sardinian life.(1) Fifteen years later the contribution on Sardinia to the Jacini Inquiry into Italian agriculture was presented after the final report and proposals had already been published. Sardinia was excluded altogether from the Lorenzoni Report into the condition of the southern peasantry (1910) except for the section on social classes and criminality.

Secondly, the stature and interests of the men who demanded the intervention of the precariously-unified Italian State to resolve the Questione Meridionale were very different from those of the authors who contributed to discussion of Sardinia's problems. The concern of Fortunato, Nitti and Salvemini, for example, for the economic and social problems of the South stemmed not only from their knowledge of the area - they were all from southern landowning families - but also from their abilities as politicians and publicists to secure attention and action for their proposals.

The author of the first book to be entitled La Questione Sarda compared the paucity of serious information and discussion about the island with the debates stimulated by the meridionalisti. "I firmly believe that the Questione Meridionale has made enormous progress only because illustrious and talented men have studied it and have agitated and harassed public opinion, the press and Parliament".(2) Our knowledge of Sardinia over the same period derives very largely from a mixed bag of administrators, travellers

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(1) Profili e Paesaggi della Sardegna. Milano. (1869).

(2) G. Lei Spano in: Antologia della Questione Sarda: a cura di L. Del Piano. Padova (1959) p. 283.

and casual observers: even Gramsci who wrote a collection of articles about the Questione Meridionale has nothing directly to say about the island where he was born and brought up. Contributions to the Questione Sarda have emphasised three features of central Sardinian society: its lack of change, the archaic basis of its economy, and its violence. I shall deal with these themes in various chapters of this thesis and I shall therefore briefly summarise the tradition in which my discussion will be inserted.

The insistence on lack of change marks all descriptions since the last century. There is a line of continuity between the Jesuit Father Bresciani who in 1850 entitled his account of travels in the interior Dei Costumi dell'Isola di Sardegna Comparati cogli antichissimi popoli orientali, through Alfredo Niceforo who in 1897 described central Sardinia as "morally and sociologically stationary"(1), to the ethnographer of the village of Orgosolo who in 1954 declared that "les Orgosolais représentent une ancienne peuplade guerrière qu'une série de facteurs économiques et culturels ont fait survivre jusqu'à nos jours".(2)

The basis of this static society is to be found in its archaic economy, nomadic or transhumant shepherding. Here nomadism refers not to the movement of women, children and dwellings with the flocks but to shepherds' necessity to move continually from pasture to pasture. The contributor on Sardinia to the Jacini Inquiry declared that he "would not abstain from deploring the vigour in the Sardinian provinces of that nomadic

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(1) A. Niceforo in Sorgia (1973) p. 266.

(2) F. Cagnetta (1963) p. 90.



shepherding characteristic of barbarian peoples".(1) Nearly a century later, in 1971, the report of the parliamentary commission of inquiry into criminality in Sardinia concluded that "to transform Sardinian pastoralism from a nomadic and archaic affair into a modern and rational activity is an immense but feasible task, which fascinates both those animated by the spirit of social reform and those dominated by modern technology (sic)".(2)

The rhythm of pastoral life is held to strengthen shepherds' primordial ties to kin and community by excluding them from all wider forms of social relations. "[The Sardinian shepherd] is a nomad; he is where his flock is. He has no fixed abode; he wanders from place to place according to the season and necessity of pasture ... he has no friends but at best workmates ... rarely does he succeed in establishing relations of reciprocal trust and protection with other shepherds ... he lives from day to day, identifying himself with his sheep to the point of assimilating the biological rhythm of their lives with its regularities and necessities tied to the most elementary expression of instinctual needs".(3)

Particularly bitter conflicts are created by the necessity to move flocks down from the mountains in winter when they invade the crops and pastures of communities in the hills and plains in a perpetual struggle with local peasants and shepherds

(1) F. Salaris in Jacini (1885) Vol. XIV, fasc. I, p. 154

(2) La Nuova Sardegna loc. cit. p. 6.

(3) Atti del Convegno Internazionale sull'Abigeato. Cagliari (1966) pp. 264-5.

for the use of land.

The third feature of the Questione Sarda - violence and banditry - is considered to be partly the consequence of this struggle, and has received by far the most public attention. Violence has been the concern of two parliamentary inquiries (in 1894 and 1969), the subject of innumerable books and articles (the bibliography of La Violenza in Sardegna lists more than 500 items), and the source of endless controversy. Homicide, feuds, kidnappings and livestock-rustling are now generally classed as banditry, and their various aspects have been taken up by criminologists, psychologists, sociologists, lawyers and journalists. The range of approaches and conclusions is far too diverse to summarise here, although only recently has the detailed statistical examination of the incidence of criminality in Sardinia begun which will enable some of the wilder folkloristic speculations to be demolished.(1)

Surprisingly little is known about any of these phenomena. The discussion of feuds, for example, which are held to demonstrate the axiomatic support given to kinsmen and even the existence of clans and lineages, is based on the single disamistade (literally, 'unfriendship') between the Cossu and Corrairie families in the village of Orgosolo between 1903 and 1917. However from the one, fragmentary, published account, it appears that only 3 of the 13 victims were close kin or affines of the protagonists, and many men of closer genealogical distance than the victims played no

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(1) Some useful studies have appeared in the Rivista Sarda di Criminologia which began publication in 1965.

part at all in the sequence of homicides.(1)

Kidnappings are scarcely better documented or understood. They have been a central interest since 1966-8 when no less than 33 were successfully carried out and an estimated total of roughly 930 million lire (£620,000) was paid in ransom money.(2) Neither the victims nor criminals were exclusively from central Sardinia. Half the victims were large land or flock-owners, and half were industrialists, free professionals, university students and others. Although those kidnapped were kept prisoner in the hills and mountains of central Sardinia, the bands responsible certainly contained men from the towns who secured information about the financial possibilities of the targets, procured arms and recycled the ransom money outside Sardinia.(3)

While both feuds and kidnappings are sporadic and well-dramatised events, livestock-rustling (abigeato) remains a perennial feature of central Sardinian pastoral life. It appears to be no less endemic there than in many other societies partly or wholly dependent on transhumance or nomadism, whether the principal capital is reindeer, camels, cattle or sheep and whether the animals are stolen by force or guile. The attempts to eliminate theft have been based on stricter controls on the ownership of livestock and more thorough policing of the country side: in the last two decades alone the number of carabinieri in Sardinia has been doubled and distributed in villages and isolated outposts throughout the island. In the province of

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(1) Cagnetta, op. cit., pp. 249 - 301.

(2) Corriere della Sera, 17.viii.72, p. 2.

(3) G. Pinna: La Criminalità in Sardegna. Cagliari(1970), passim.



Nuoro there are road blocks day and night, and some fifty special squads have been created to patrol the least accessible parts of the countryside and combat livestock-rustling. Dogs, radios and helicopters are part of these squads' equipment: the police carry arms and are ready to shoot if their suspicions are aroused.

Such measures have by no means eradicated theft. In the whole of Sardinia between 1960 - 1965 81,827 animals were denounced to the police as having been stolen, equivalent to 2.4% of the island total of 3,349,617 animals (sheep, cattle, goats, pigs, horses, donkeys): this was the booty of 13,117 thefts. Both figures are underestimates: for reasons discussed in chapter 8, shepherds are reluctant to denounce the thefts of which they are victims, so that to approach their real incidence, the numbers of animals stolen and of thefts should probably be at least doubled.(1) Livestock-rustling clearly persists as a fundamental element in pastoral life.

Its pattern is taken as an image of the social relations of the transhumant shepherd. Loath to steal from members of his own community, the rustler finds his targets in the villages where he spends the winter and to whose shepherds he has no

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(1) I owe these unpublished figures to Prof. G. Fuggioni of the Political Science Faculty, Univ. of Cagliari. The investigation of which they are part shows that less than half the shepherds in the sample report thefts.

moral obligations. His solo raids establish his own status but maintain the hostility between the population of the centre and the rest of the island. The persistence of livestock-theft confirms the unchanging value given to such gestures in a pastoral order whose archaism has only been thrown into sharper relief by the developments of agriculture and industry in the coastal plains.

This thesis takes a critical look at the stereotype of central Sardinian pastoralism from the perspective of a village to which I give the pseudonym Limbara, lying in the province of Nuoro but outside the Barbagia. Since only a minority of families now draw their livelihoods from animals, I shall begin with a description of the family and kin relations into which all Limbaresi, shepherds or not, are born (chapter 2). In chapter 3 I shall consider how the resources which support households shape marriage patterns and create particular territorial concentrations of men with common interests in the same property. The remaining chapters are concerned with the changing relations based on the ownership and the use of land and livestock since the mid-19th century. Chapter 4 describes the distribution of resources in Limbara in 1865, and compares it with that in the very similar villages of central Sardinia which are usually referred to as eternally 'pastoral': the tendency to typologise societies as 'pastoral' and 'agricultural' rather than

look closely at the importance of the variety of resources which provide livelihood has recently been criticised in studies of nomads, (1) and a similar tendency is responsible for the false picture of an unchanging society in central Sardinia. Chapters 5 and 6 contrast the organisation of the pastoral sector in Limbara and the Barbagia since the late 19th century; the final chapters set the rhythm of pastoral life in Limbara in the context of social relations between shepherds in the countryside and the ways in which that order is threatened by the sequence of actions and responsibilities which constitute the theft of livestock.

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(1) N. Dyson-Hudson in W. Irons ed. (1972).

The village of Limbara lies on a spur of the Marghine hills, facing south across the river Tirso towards the Gennargentu mountains of central Sardinia. The village territory is a rectangular strip, running roughly north - south, about 20 km. long and between 4-8 km. wide, with the settlement itself almost exactly in the centre at an altitude of 472 m. Across this territory run the main east - west road and railway line of the island which connect Limbara to Nuoro, to the east, and to the town of Macomer to the west, and a much more recent road (a bridlepath until 1953) which joins the village to the Cagliari - Sassari highway to the north and to the villages in the Gennargentu foothills in the south.

Below the settlement the land falls away to form a flat open plain ( su campu ) of natural pastures on clay or sandy soil. The only water available comes from the few wells sunk in recent years or the streams which flow down across the plain from springs in the mountain. With the winter rains these streams overflow and leave stagnant pools on the clay soil, threatening livestock with disease; in summer they dry up to mere rivulets so that shepherds must take their flocks down to the river Tirso to drink, across the arid grazing where only insects and occasional swarms of locusts thrive.

In the plain stands the most visible evidence of the Italian State's presence. At the crossroads for Limbara there is a barracks of the traffic police who set up daily roadblocks on the Macomer - Nuoro road; they examine and record the licences and identity of drivers and passengers and frequently search vehicles for arms as part of the attempt to eliminate banditry.

Not far beyond Limbara's boundaries rises the ANIC petrochemical factory at Ottana, evidence of more positive intervention in the elimination of the causes of violence; however in 1972 the buildings were still only half-complete, and the future of the initiative was surrounded by controversy and conflict, especially over the eventual loss of jobs by the workers who were building the factory.

Above the village the land rises steeply through scrub and wild olives to a height of 1200 m. and then gradually slopes away to the north into a series of shallow valleys. Along the highest ridge stands a belt of thick wood, but most of the mountain ( su monte ) is open terrain broken up by crags and hollows protected by groves of oaks. Springs and streams are numerous, and the rainfall here is considerably higher than in the plain: 999 mm. as against 698 mm. annually.(1) The most striking impression is a sense of desolate emptiness in this rough pasture, with its silence broken on still days by the sound of sheep-bells from a nearby flock or the barking of dogs. Apart from the scattered shepherds' huts and dry-stone walls, the only sign of human intrusion into this harsh landscape are the nuraghi on the summits commanding views over the valleys to the north.

Both here and in the plain the absence of farmhouses enhances the sense of isolation; all Limbaresi live in the central settlement, and although shepherds sleep in their huts in the countryside, they never take their families with them. In the period c. 1880 - 1950 the mountain hamlet of Ferulas was occupied

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(1) Cossu (1961), pp. 63, 68.

by the tenants on a large estate, but this is now deserted and the single occupied dwelling is an outpost manned by a handful of carabinieri.

The countryside is exclusively men's territory, where they work as herdsmen and formerly as cultivators: only within the last two decades have the majority of Limbaresi ceased to earn their livings there.(1) Because sheep and cattle require continuous supervision, their herdsmen spend much more than a full working-day in the countryside, and in the course of this work establish and maintain relationships with other men from their own and surrounding flocks. Women are excluded from these relationships: they do not herd animals and they only go into the countryside for specific collective activities, organized or accompanied by male kinsmen or other women - the olive and previously grain harvests, and the preparation of food at the annual sheep-shearings. With their fathers or husbands they used to attend the week-long celebration of the novena in the country church of S. Bachisio, the village's patron saint, but this no longer takes place. With these exceptions the range of women's activities reaches no further than where the houses of Limbara end.

The settlement itself is believed to have been founded in 1317 by the defeated faction in a feud in a nearby village. The fugitives settled in what is now the highest part of Limbara

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(1) In 1971 the active population numbered 832 men and women. 221 (27%) worked in the agricultural and pastoral sector, 367 (44%) in the 'industrial' sector, mainly building, and 244 (29%) in commerce and services.

and as the population has grown, so houses have been built further and further down the hill. The following table sets the population figures for Limbara between 1861 - 1971 alongside those for the central Sardinian villages of Gavoi and Orgosolo with which Limbara is compared in later chapters.

Table 1 . Population 1861 - 1971.\*

<u>Year</u>	<u>Limbara</u>	<u>Gavoi</u>	<u>Orgosolo</u>	<u>Sardinia</u>
1861	2858	1735	2113	609015
1901	3536	2455	2845	795793
1936	4317	3085	3563	1034206
1951	4494	3622	4250	1276023
1961	4274	4166	4638	1419362
1971	3495	3849	4801	1473800

Note \* Population legally resident.

Sources: 1861, 1901: Cens. Gen. della Pop. Min. dell'Agric., Ind. e Comm., Roma.

1936 - 1971: Cens. Gen. della Pop. I.S.T.A.T Roma.

The centre of public life is the main square which lies where the road into Limbara from the Macomer - Nuoro highway divides into a set of narrow lanes winding up to reach the highest and furthest houses. The physical layout of the village can best be visualised as an amphitheatre, with the square as the stage and the rows of houses stepped unevenly up the hillside to form a

very rough flattened semi-circle. This image of the square as the stage, the central feature of the village, is appropriate in several ways.

Firstly, most people who enter or leave Limbara must pass through the square, and the bus which serves the railway station 3 km. away picks up and drops its passengers there. Arrivals and departures are therefore necessarily public and often arouse interested speculation about reasons and destinations among those who witness them.

Secondly, the square is where most public business is transacted. A single building houses the labour exchange, post office and the offices of the village administration, where routine certificates are issued, council meetings held and the limited powers of local government exercised. Opposite this building stands the parish church, in the centre of a wide asphalted space where the weekly market is held; it is the only one of three churches in Limbara now used for daily services and for baptisms, marriage and funeral ceremonies. Nearby are a few specialised shops selling electrical goods, furniture and clothes, and most of the available services - the doctor's surgery, the chemist's, the two barbers and the branches of two regional banks.

However, Limbaresi cannot secure within the village all the rights which they formally acquire as Italian citizens. Business involving pensions or sickness benefits requires a visit to Nuoro or Macomer as do dealings which concern the cadaster, the Direct Cultivators' Guild ( Coldiretti ) and the Agrarian Reform Board (ETFAS). Limbara has three schools - nursery, primary and lower secondary - educating children to the age of 14; beyond this



level the nearest lycée and technical institute are at Macomer (an hour's journey by train), the nearest universities at Cagliari and Sassari. Some services too can only be obtained outside the village: there are two doctors in Limbara but no dentist, an occasional magistrate's session for minor offences but no lawyer or notary; Limbaresi can pay road tax but not acquire driving licences nor insure their vehicles. To take advantage of these various rights and services which they increasingly regard as essential, Limbaresi must deal with people and agencies outside the village. Since the criteria by which state bureaucracies in particular formally operate are no easier to understand in Sardinia than anywhere else in Italy, Limbaresi attempt to protect themselves against failure through ignorance with the help of other villagers who work or have personal contacts in these organizations. I shall not discuss this network of links along which the resources made available by the state are channelled down to village level; but all Limbaresi now have some dealings outside the village, and the man who polled by far the greatest number of preference votes in the village elections both in 1964 and in 1970 was not only in charge of the local labour exchange but also ran an office whose sole business was to help people with applications for pensions and welfare benefits.

Thirdly, the square is the centre of public sociability, where men gather in the evenings in search of casual company or particular people and where the festival of the village's patron saint and political meetings are held. Around the square and in the lanes immediately behind it lie four of Limbara's six bars, provided with tables and chairs and in two cases opening

out onto covered terraces overlooking the plain, where the long summer evenings can be whiled away.

There are in fact no other places in which men can gather regularly. None of the political parties or trades unions have offices or recreation rooms where members and sympathisers can meet nor, with the exception of the Hunters ( Circolo dei Cacciatori ) which keeps a room open on Sunday evenings during the season, are there any clubs or associations. A month before the general elections of 1972 the Christian Democrats rented a set of rooms in which they installed a bar and television set; few people spent any time there, however, and the rooms were closed immediately after the elections. The hall attached to the parish church is only used occasionally for films and for political meetings in bad weather.

Not everyone participates in the sociability of the square and its bars. The most obvious category excluded are women. They do not enter bars, seldom venture into the square and when they must, cross it as rapidly as possible with eyes either modestly lowered or set in an unfocused gaze beyond the men standing around. If a wife has an urgent message for her husband, she sends a child to fetch him home; if a man wishes private conversation with another, he merely calls him to the nearest spot out of the earshot of others.

Among men, the magnates (the large landowners and professionals from the families whose members have traditionally been given the courtesy title Don or Donna) make very infrequent appearances in the square, for the most part confined to brief Sunday morning visits of limited conviviality. If they want to speak to a man,

they generally send a message to his home asking him to call. Young people too spend little time in the square and prefer to congregate further down the hill. Although the bars sell soft drinks and ice-creams, youths are not encouraged to spend much time there; one bar-owner had installed a juke-box on the terrace, but this led to arguments between the youths and the older customers rather than making it a place where young people could meet freely. The only organized social activities for this group are the football team and dances held at New Year, Carnival and the festival of Sant'Isidore at the beginning of May.

Otherwise only the very ancient and those content to be considered unsociable appear less than once or twice a week in the square and bars, and most pass through much more frequently. The small groups that form to exchange comments on some matter of public or private interest may therefore consist of men from any category - shepherds, clerks, teachers, industrial workers and so on. On the whole men talk to people of their own age, and the old in the traditional dress of sleeveless black jacket and trousers, white shirt and tall black hat folded to a peak over the forehead are a conspicuous group apart.

While men may talk, however briefly, to others of different status in the square itself, they move into one of the bars only when their group consists of those they regard as equals. For an inferior, temporarily attached to the group, to suggest such a move is to invite a refusal phrased as a denial of thirst or wish to wait for someone else, or to split the group into those who are prepared to drink with him and those who are not.

Once in the bar itself, the ritual of drinking symbolises

the equality of the participants. Each man must offer one round of drinks and must accept to drink in each round offered by the others. No one can be left out of a round, not even women on the very rare occasions they are present, although for them and for men who feel they have drunk enough, a small plate of sweets may be substituted for a drink. The cost of each round is noted down separately by the bar-owner and when the group breaks up or moves on to another bar, each man settles his individual debt, ideally having reciprocated a drink with every other member.

These rules apply even when two men who have quarrelled and who consider themselves unequals in every respect are thrown together through their common acquaintance with an unwitting or forgetful third party. In this case, Limbaresi say, any outward expression of feelings must be avoided because of the respect ( rispetto ) which each has for the involuntary agent provocateur. The demonstration of respect towards another man requires that he should not be put in an awkward position, still less be made to pay publicly, for an action which he did not intentionally commit; and he should not be forced to take sides openly between two men who in that situation he considers equals. Thus a forthright local politician who refused a drink from an acquaintance in another village explicitly because the company included a public and private antagonist was denounced there and then by his acquaintance ("I shall never shake your hand again") and his refusal later criticised by those who witnessed it. On a different occasion a shepherd explained his unusual taciturnity during an earlier drink together by confessing that I had unwittingly compelled him to drink with a man to whom he had refused to speak

for twenty years: the conversation was so skilfully managed that neither had to address or reply to the other directly, only through the ignorant anthropologist.

In one sense this is a necessary social art in the context of drinking, since no bar is reserved or monopolised by any particular group or category. For example, in one bar managed by a prominent and popular Christian Democrat men of all political colours might be found, just as a number of habitual drinking-groups might contain open supporters of quite different political ideologies. In the course of a summer evening groups commonly move from one bar to another so that there is always the danger of meeting an antagonist face to face and perhaps of being forced to drink together. The skills of self-control and dissimulation demanded by such a situation are praised, and men unable to restrain themselves verbally or, worse, physically at the sight of an opponent are strongly criticised.

Although this sociability is organised around drinking, it is meeting and talking to others that men value most. No one drinks by himself, and it is very rare to see men drunk when they leave the bar. Only old men play cards, thus reducing the necessity or possibility of talk to a minimum.

Conversations are built up out of the tiny details of people's everyday activities and so appear devoid of interest and largely incomprehensible to outsiders: the pasture at Tolovò is vacant, X has begun to help his father-in-law build a house, Y is now selling his milk to a different dairy-processing firm. To a Limbarese, with the tacit knowledge of the context in which such remarks can be given meaning, these statements convey the

information that disputes have arisen or been terminated, alliances sealed or ambitions thwarted. Because fellow-drinkers may live and work in different parts of the village or countryside, their fields of observation and knowledge are different; an alert listener can therefore pick up directly or deduce from idle scraps of conversation a great deal of information on the movements and plans of others which would otherwise have escaped him. With skill he can do so without showing himself especially inquisitive or, more importantly, without revealing a particular interest in the actions of any single person or subject of discussion.

Not everyone is interested in the same bits of information, nor are people's interpretations of any given detail identical. Men with different interests view the whole process of exchanging information rather differently. One successful local politician, an assiduous cultivator of public and private sociability, attributed his political success in part to his intimate knowledge of people's doings gained through these contacts; for example, the casual discovery that the neighbour of one of his drinking-companions was thinking of enlarging his garage led him to offer help with the application for permission through his own contacts in the relevant bureaucracies - no doubt the hoped-for return for this help would be a vote at the following elections. He was openly proud of his extensive knowledge not only of his electors' peccadilloes but also of their most mundane aspirations and fears. Others take a less instrumental view of the information passed in the square and bars: a worker on the ANIC site explained the rarity of his appearances as due to his dislike of "coming here just to gossip about others", and this attitude was sometimes

voiced by others with jobs outside the village who were thereby partially excluded from appreciating or contributing much vital information.

The wider the range of a man's interests, the greater his need for information and the more powerful the incentive to spend some time in the square and bars. Magnates, commanding the resources to make them independent of other Limbaresi, can afford to stay away; youths have not yet acquired the interests which they alone must defend. Among other Limbaresi shepherds stand out as the most dependent on these exchanges of information. They are the only category whose work takes them over the whole village territory as they move their flocks according to the season; in certain periods their flocks are split up in different places, surrounded by different sets of men, and they therefore have far-flung interests to protect. If livestock stray or are stolen, their herdsmen depend on the cooperation of others to identify the direction taken and form a large search party. Since each shepherd never knows when he may need this help from other men, he must maintain relations with them so that this help can be asked for and given when required; these relations can best be kept up through the casual exchange of drinks and conversation in the common meeting-place of the village. To drink together reaffirms their reciprocal claims to equality and the willingness to share news which is not divulged to inferiors. A shepherd protects his flock not only by direct supervision but also by spending some time on sociability in the village where he can renew and strengthen the ties to men from whom he is normally

separated by his work in the countryside.

The rest of the village is divided into 14 named quarters ( rioni ). The names are used mainly as geographical referents in descriptions or directions and do not represent administrative or electoral units of any kind. Each quarter has between 50 - 100 houses and a handful of shops selling a limited range of food and useful household articles; most have an open space with a drinking fountain where old men sit and children play. Quarters are not distinguished by class or occupation, and there are no occasions on which their inhabitants act collectively.

When Limbaresi describe the character of the area they live in, however, they think not in terms of their quarter but of their neighbourhood ( su ighinadu ) - an unnamed group of 20 - 40 houses flanking a couple of lanes. The narrow grey and brown stone houses are packed tightly together along the steep side of the hill and linked by a warren of lanes, alleyways and steps often only just wide enough for a man astride a donkey to pass. Limbaresi do not use the official names of these lanes and paths and they may be hard pressed to identify them, so that an outsider can only find his way to a particular house with difficulty. Because houses are so close together, Limbaresi inevitably know a great deal about the doings of their neighbours. Although the structure of houses allows a certain amount of privacy once inside, all arrivals, departures and visits are matters of daily observation, and the sound of celebrations or quarrels carries easily to the surrounding houses. People may sit outside their own houses but visit other neighbourhoods only



on specific business, and they are relatively uninformed from direct observation about what goes on there. No one hangs around in a neighbourhood which is not his own.

As a social space the neighbourhood stands in sharp contrast to the square. The protagonists of activity are women and to a lesser extent old men and children - precisely the categories which are excluded from the square. Women stop and talk to one another while doing their shopping or from their own doorsteps as they keep a watchful eye on their children outside, and in warm weather older women without the responsibilities of a family to look after may sit outside to sew or embroider. Men are away at work.

Secondly, while the square begins to fill up only in the evening, neighbourhoods buzz with activity during the daytime. As dark descends, women are busy in their own homes putting children to bed and preparing the evening meal, and neighbourhoods gradually fall silent. The only people to be met in the lanes are men returning from the countryside or square to the single space that they share with women, their own homes.

Chapter 2 : Family and Kinship.

A home ( sa domo ) provides security and a status for each Limbarese. Those who live together may be divided by their place of work, but they unite in their contributions to the home's well-being, and they are seen from the outside as a single unit: a man who works permanently for a magnate is described as being 'in domo de Don ....' Trust and support are expected within a home and although bitter quarrels may sometimes occur, direct criticism of other members is rarely vouchsafed to other villagers. I shall begin by describing the composition of households and the relations between their members and follow by considering some of the ties which link members of different households.

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In 1971 there were 976 occupied dwellings in Limbara. Half of these had been put up since 1945 as new houses were built further down the hill and many of the oldest houses were torn down and re-built. This has led to a very considerable improvement in living conditions: whereas in 1951 60% of dwellings had neither running drinkable water nor a lavatory, by 1971 this figure had fallen to 5%. All houses now have electricity and one-third contain a shower or bath.(1) Donkeys and pigs are

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(1) ISTAT (1955), p. 46; ISTAT (1973), pp. 86, 94, from which all subsequent data on houses and household sizes are taken.

now kept in stalls adjoining each house rather than in the house itself, and cattle, sheep and goats may no longer be driven through the village lanes on their way between mountain and plain.

Dwellings now contain an average of 4 or 5 rooms and most houses, old and new, have a basically similar layout. On the ground floor or below street level down narrow wooden or stone stairs is a single large room where household members spend most of their time at home. Set into one wall is a wide recessed fireplace, generally containing a raised stone oven which is still used in many families to bake the various types of Sard bread. Around the other walls stand the cooking equipment (a gas stove and a few utensils), sink and cupboard for plates and glasses, with a door to the larder where the household provisions of wine, cheese, sausages and perhaps hams are stored. These are never kept in the room itself but fetched when needed so that visitors cannot take in at a glance the state of family subsistence. Many houses now have a refrigerator and television set. The centre of the room is occupied by a large wooden table and chairs.

Each family is normally united round the table for the evening meal. Otherwise a woman's place is either at stove or sink or beside the fire where she may nurse her young children, sew or chat to visiting kinswomen or neighbours. The fireside is strongly associated with women. It is their duty to light the fire in the morning and keep it burning to welcome their husbands home in the evening. If their husbands have visitors, wives and daughters retire to the fireside without participating in the drinking or conversation. In some of the older and bigger fireplaces, women may actually move right inside and half-draw the curtains which

normally shield the hearth from view when the fire is out: this withdrawal from the normal room space completes their social exclusion from the men's business at the table. A boy considered lacking in the male virtues of independence and initiative will be taunted as a chisineri (from chisina = ashes), an epithet suggesting his attachment to the place reserved for women, in the home rather than the countryside where men must earn a livelihood; perhaps the reference to ashes carries an overtone of poorly-executed women's work, having allowed the fire to go out. In some Sardinian villages, although not as far as I know in Limbara, the emissary ( su paralimpu ) conveying a marriage proposal would make his business concerning women unambiguously plain by going to sit at the fireside immediately on entering the house of the prospective bride.(1)

The men's place, by contrast, is at the central table. Here they entertain visitors who have come on a specific errand or men who have been drinking with them at the bar. A common way to round off an evening is to invite the rest of the drinking-group home for something to eat and a glass of wine - the bars mostly offer either beer or the heavy Vernaccia (similar to sherry) from south-west Sardinia. In winter particularly, men look forward eagerly to offering the wine they have made themselves for others' comparison and approval; because every male will invariably be offered wine, excuses for visiting those known to have excellent vineyards are often ingeniously contrived.

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(1) Enciclopedia Italiana, Rome. 1933. Vol.     p.     In Limbara, men who seem too active in domestic tasks are also derisively called cogoneddu, from su cogone, a type of bread: breadmaking is exclusively the task of women.

If, however, visitors are unknown to husband and wife or of clearly superior status, or have come to pay their respects on a formal occasion such as a wedding or a funeral, then they are entertained in 'the good room' ( s'istanza ona ) normally on the ground floor. This room is a small sitting-room where the best furniture is arranged - a sofa, armchairs, low table and a cupboard with bottles of spirits or bitters and the best crockery and glassware. Children are kept out of this room, and the severe formality of its layout and atmosphere helps to induce the restraint appropriate to the occasions when it is used.

Finally, on the first floor are the bedrooms, the number depending on the size and composition of each family. Parents may share their own bedroom with young children, while sons and daughters separate at adolescence into different rooms which may be added on or divided up for growing children. The higher average number of rooms per home (3.6 in 1961, 4.6 in 1971) is probably due to the addition of extra bedrooms as a consequence of the declining number of men employed in the countryside. Men and boys who ten years ago regularly slept alongside their flocks in the country now require permanent sleeping-quarters in the home, and daughters who slept in the same room as their mother while their father was away now have to be shifted into their own rooms.

Furniture in bedrooms is strictly functional: a wooden or brass bedstead, chairs, mirror and a small chest of drawers. In the parents' room there is usually a large wardrobe where the best clothes of all household members are hung and linen is kept.

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In 1971 these 976 dwellings contained 1004 domestic groups

( famiglie ), defined by the census as co-residents who pool all or part of their separate incomes towards joint subsistence. In Limbara, the members of each domestic group are linked to one another by kinship or affinity: the sole exception I discovered consisted of a widow and widower who had set up house together without a legal marriage.

The size of these households varies from a single individual up to a dozen people. The modal household contained 4 members, and two-thirds of Limbaresi were living in households with between 2 - 5 members.

Table 2. Limbara: Household Sizes, 1971

<u>Members</u>	<u>No. households</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total members</u>	<u>%</u>
1 :	151	15	151	4
2 - 5 :	717	71	2374	68
6 < :	136	14	951	27
<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTALS:	1004	100	3476	99

Source: ISTAT(1973), tav.15, p.68

The commonest form of domestic group is the nuclear family household, created at the marriage of a man and woman who leave their respective homes for owned or rented accommodation in which they will bring up their own children. Every married couple aims and is expected to have their first child within two years of

marriage, and the news that his wife is pregnant is greeted with evident satisfaction by her husband, kin and friends. The ideal association between wifedom and motherhood is strong: unmarried girls are often referred to as bagadias, the word for a sheep which has not yet lambed, and for a wife to remain childless is considered at best a misfortune, at worst a curse. The peace of one neighbourhood was broken from time to time by abuse between two women whose tiff many years ago had been transformed into lifelong hostility when one publicly expressed the hope that the other be barren.

Occasionally a childless couple may take in the baby of a close relative with other children of her own into their own home where it will be brought up and expected to perform the normal household tasks of a son or daughter. I knew of two such cases, a girl living with her mother's sister and a boy who had been brought up in the home of his father's brother but who had since returned to live with his parents. No kind of formal adoption is made, and the practice is considered partly as a generous gesture to an unfortunately childless couple and partly, for the mother, as a means of reducing a perhaps already overcrowded home. The parents retain all powers of decision over the child's schooling, work and marriage, and the informal foster-parents generally favour the child against his brothers or sisters or other relatives in passing on their own property.

As children are born, so the domestic group expands. As they marry and move out, so the household is gradually reduced to the original couple. At the death of one of these, the widow or widower remains in the home with any unmarried children and, especially if the children are young, may remarry and create a

second family. If there are no unmarried children still at home, a widower will generally stay alone while a widow is more likely to move into the household of a married daughter. The working-out of this process accounts for the most frequent types of household which are not constituted by a single nuclear family: single individuals, a set of unmarried siblings and a nuclear family plus the wife's widowed mother.

Households containing a single person account for 15% of the total number of domestic groups in 1971. Since no unmarried person leaves to set up house on his or her own, these households consist of the middle-aged and elderly, the sole surviving parent or unmarried child of a former nuclear family household. The statistics do not classify these households by sex, but my impression is that the numbers of men and women who live alone are roughly equal: of the 5 single-person households in my own neighbourhood, for example, 3 were occupied by men and 2 by women. For the most part, these are widows and widowers, and the rough numerical balance between them is accounted for by the fact that although widows outnumber widowers by nearly 3 : 1 (209 against 74), they are also more likely to join one of their children's households rather than remain alone. Some elderly men are proud of their domestic independence and go out daily into the country side to tend their vineyards or vegetable gardens. Most venture out more rarely however, and are looked after by a close female relative in the neighbourhood who cleans the house and brings in cooked meals from time to time.

Where both parents have died, leaving unmarried children, these siblings continue to live together until their marriages. There were about a dozen households of unmarried siblings in



1971, mostly constituted by sets of two or three middle-aged brothers who worked together as shepherds and seemed unlikely ever to get married. They spent very little time in the village, none in the square and this preference for self-sufficiency in the countryside was widely regarded as a deliberate shunning of all normal sociability. In some cases these brothers had helped each other build separate houses in preparation for their eventual marriages but until that event continued to live together, keeping their future houses either empty or rented.

Lastly, a widow may move into the household of a married daughter, thus reuniting in a single home two women who have already spent many years together at the same domestic tasks. Limbaresi consider this to be the only acceptable form of three-generation household, and there were a number of cases in 1971. Daughters are assumed to have picked up their mothers' own ways of organising a home and can therefore adapt easily to their inclusion, and the bond of affection between them is the strongest between members of a nuclear family.

For a widow to join her son and daughter-in-law is seen as inevitably disruptive of household harmony through the contact over the daily ordering of household tasks - the elder woman with her own tried ways of caring for her son and managing a home, the younger determined to assert her own right to control domestic affairs. In the only case of such a household that I knew of, the conflict seemed to have been resolved by the relegation of the husband's mother to an entirely insignificant part in the daily routine; she ate her meals separately and never appeared in the main room, even on festive occasions. Although a single example is scarcely generalisable, the contrast to the active and welcomed participation of older women living in their

daughters' homes was complete.

The case of a widower living with his son or son-in-law poses the same problems in the male sphere of activities as a widow living with her daughter-in-law, and I found no examples in 1971. In the past, men had occasionally moved into their wives' natal household on marriage, generally when the bride was an only daughter, or the last unmarried sibling, of elderly parents who might be expected to relinquish their control over house and land to the younger couple; this property transfer was in all probability the price of ensuring an active worker in the household, while at the same time largely eliminating conflicts between the two men over their respective duties to provide the women's subsistence. For a widower to live in his son's household provokes the sexual danger, at which Limbaresi hinted darkly, of bringing together a woman and her father-in-law, particularly if her husband is away at work all day. Not only is his overall command in the home threatened by the presence of his father to whom he owes lifelong respect and obedience but also his exclusive rights to his wife's sexual favours are endangered.

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The nuclear family household is not only the statistically commonest form of domestic group but also the ideal at which adult Limbaresi aim. Therefore, to remain single or childless, or to share a home with a parent (with the single exception of the wife's mother) is regarded as falling short of this ideal, as a limitation on the claim to a full social personality achieved through the successful performance of the roles appropriate to the various relationships in a nuclear family.

Each member of a nuclear family has clear-cut rights and

duties towards the others. Successful discharge of the responsibilities appropriate to age and sex brings credit, and failure disrepute, to the whole family, and members should support or restrain each other accordingly. The content of most of these roles is substantially similar to other parts of rural Italy where the dominant form of domestic organisation is the nuclear family.

A husband and wife are only divided by death. Although the law establishing divorce in Italy had been passed in 1970 (and was to be definitively confirmed after a national referendum in 1974), at the time of fieldwork no Limbarese had taken the step of legal separation which was the necessary prelude to divorce. No one could recall a case of the annulment of a marriage performed in church. The reciprocal obligations assumed at marriage are therefore lifelong.

A husband owes his wife material support. If he has not been able to provide a house of his own and the couple are therefore living in rented accommodation, he must either help to build a house himself or save to pay for one. It is his responsibility to feed his wife and children, until only a few years ago by cultivating the cereal crops which were each household's basic subsistence. He should clothe and generally keep his wife in at least the manner to which she has been accustomed, and he must take all decisions which concern the household income to fulfil these responsibilities. Most men said they would consult their wives before reaching an important decision, but my impression was that a man would only give real weight to his wife's opinions where administration of her own property was concerned. Because they are debarred from the countryside and square where informa

tion is acquired and exchanged, women are thereby also excluded from a full knowledge of the relevant considerations affecting, say, the sale or purchase of land or livestock. They know mainly what their husbands choose to tell them except for any information they may have been able to pick up in the neighbourhood.

A man must defend the broad economic interests of his wife and children at all times and against all others including, if need be, his own father and siblings. When he works with them in a joint flock any suspicion that his interests as a husband are being regularly sacrificed to the maintenance of good relations with his father and brothers is sufficient to bring a strong protest from his wife. When brothers end their cooperation, responsibility for the division is generally attributed to women's interference in defence of their distinct family interests. Men may regret this, but they acknowledge the legitimacy of their wives' protest and the primacy of the claim it represents.

Raffaele and Bobore, for example, are brothers who had herded a joint flock of sheep for two decades. The purchase of some land from their father's brother increased their pasture area to the minimum necessary to qualify for a regional improvement grant and Bobore, married with a year-old son, wanted to take advantage of this to put up a pigsty and cattle-byre. Raffaele, who although several years older was still a bachelor, opposed this plan on the grounds that the construction and the extra animals would increase his own workload yet, since he had no heir, all the eventual benefits would accrue to his brother's children. Bobore saw his brother's opposition as a limitation on his own duty to provide for his family's future. At the end of the pastoral year the brothers separated and put up a fence to divide what had previously been their common pasture.

A man is expected to be flexible in pursuit of his family's interests. He should have his priorities clear but be able to set them in a long-term assessment of the likely costs of their achievement. Anyone who siezes on the slightest temporary disadvantage to break off relations with others is considered nearly as unsatisfactory a husband as the one who never defends his interests at all - aggressive over-sensitivity merely multiplies the number of hostile relationships in which a family is involved and sets its livelihood unnecessarily at risk. One shepherd confided to me his sister's plight thanks to her husband who, although "not really bad at heart", turned every imagined slight or loss into a quarrel. He himself had agreed to join flocks with his brother-in-law to try and restrain him but had had to abandon him after two years because of his facility for making enemies thereby putting the flock of both men at risk. Ready quarrellers make poor partners and so forfeit the chances of cooperation which might advance their own family interests.

A wife should be a virgin at marriage and must be faithful to her husband thereafter. She should bear him children whose early upbringing keeps her firmly tied to her other major responsibility, the home. A dutiful wife sees to it that her home is spick and span at all times, her husband and children have changes of clean clothes when needed and meals are prepared regularly. When her husband brings visitors home, she is expected to fetch food and drink without eating or necessarily taking part in the conversation herself, and her demeanour in front of others should express submission to her husband's authority; she should never publicly press a point of disagreement. In all these ways

a woman shows to other villagers how devoted or negligent a wife she is.

In the company of visitors she knows well or in private, however, wives become much more spirited companions of their husbands in many homes. Neither is over-demonstratively affectionate in front of others but both often show a quiet mutual confidence stemming from the satisfactory fulfilment of their complementary roles. The quality of the personal relationship varies considerably: some men say they prefer to stay at home with their wives rather than spend much time in the square, others are notoriously authoritarian. The outcome in each case is partly a matter of temperament and of the extent to which husbands make use of their far greater freedom of movement outside the four walls of their home.

Although the husband is finally responsible for all major decisions which concern the disposal of property and income, a wife has a close check on the consequences of those decisions: she keeps the household accounts. All working members of the household turn their income or wages over to her and must ask for any cash they need, so that she exercises an overall surveillance over day-to-day expenditure. Cash is now deposited in the bank or a post-office savings account rather than kept in the house itself, but the chequebooks and account statements remain in the wife's possession. A wife herself negotiates the sale to other villagers of any surplus cheese or olive oil in the household and, if her husband has cows, of any milk which he brings back in the evening. Women in general are considered harder bargainers than men: one elderly woman had caused amusement when, thinking her husband's suggested price for the oil from his

olive crop too low, she wished to prove her superior financial acumen. She insisted on buying half his supply herself and then managed to resell it to other villagers at a higher price.(1)

As long as they live in the home, children must contribute their earnings to the whole family's subsistence: an unmarried shepherd aged 38 who had worked with the family flock for nearly thirty years was told off by his octogenarian mother for consigning to her only 10,000 lire (circa £ 6.50) from the sale of a ewe for 22,000 lire and telling her he would keep the rest in his own pocket. However, the financial role of the wife differs according to the main source of family livelihood.

In pastoral households where her husband and sons herd a single flock in which they each own animals, a woman maintains financial control by virtue of the fact that she is the only one permanently in the village. It is the women, not only from shepherds families, who actually pay the local taxes and busy themselves with getting licences and documents. They keep track of the gross income from the flock, subtract the various expenses and make sure that each member of the household gets his rightful share. Since she herself generally has no direct rights to animals and is not expected to favour deliberately one son against another, her role as treasurer is perhaps a guarantee for each man. So long

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(1) In local lore, the treasure reputedly lying under the altar in the church of S. Bachisio is guarded by sas sinagogas, bellicose harridans conspicuous for their pendulous breasts knotted behind them. More seriously, in the gang responsible for the kidnapping of Luigi Moralis in 1968, it was the woman's role to keep and recycle the money from the ransom (see the sentence published in La Nuova Sardegna, 24 Sept. - 15 Oct., 1971).

as her husband and sons continue to herd the joint flock, she continues to perform this role, even when her sons have perhaps married and moved out of the home. Since, as I shall discuss below, shepherds do not in fact separate their animals when they marry, their wives do not gain immediate control over their household finances but receive through their mother-in-law the income from their husbands' livestock: none becomes fully mistress of her home's income and expenditure until her husband has ended the work partnership with his brothers.

No such problem is posed for the wives of peasants or men with a weekly wage. At marriage they take charge directly of the income which had previously been turned over to their husbands' mother. Among professionals, teachers and tradesmen, however, wives seem to be much less well-informed financially: their husbands play the major role and turn over to their wives a housekeeping allowance. The widow of a tradesman, for example, was astonished to discover that her late husband, who she believed at his own insistence to be seriously in debt, had left a bank account containing 2 million lire.

Wives may themselves legitimately contribute to household income in various ways, apart from any revenue deriving from their own property. The 1971 census shows 126 (15%) women in the labour force of 832, and most of these were employed in teaching and commerce. Both these jobs are seen either as extensions of a woman's own household role or actually take place within the confines of the household itself.

The most prestigious and best paid job is teaching. There were 44 women, of whom 21 were married, out of a total of 65 Limbaresi teaching in the elementary and secondary schools of Limbara and the surrounding villages. This job is considered



especially suitable for women "because they are good with children" and therefore used to dealing with the problems that schoolchildren raise. Elementary teachers beginning work might expect to earn about £80 a month in 1971. During school hours, their own children are either entrusted to a grandmother or a hired domestic help.

Women may also work in their own or their husbands' shops, which are often a converted front room of their own homes. They can thus combine ordinary domestic activities with looking after the shop, and this frees their husbands for other work. The wife of a taxi-driver, for example, took charge of his shop selling electrical appliances, and a butcher with ambitions to become a clerk in a nearby town intended to leave his business in his wife's hands. Similarly, within the confines of their home, about a dozen pairs of women wove carpets and rugs of jealously-guarded traditional design which were sold to the artisans' regional association (I.S.O.L.A.) with market outlets in various parts of Europe. This is a part-time but demanding afternoon activity, squeezed in between the housework and preparation of the evening meal and with poor returns: a rug requiring work spread out over about ten days will fetch each woman about £8 net profit.

In the past, women from many families helped their husbands and brothers with the grain harvest and several women were pointed out to me as especially indefatigable workers. However, they worked alongside only men of their own families at harvest time: there were no female day-labourers available for agricultural work. Some women constituted teams of olive-pickers working in the groves belonging to magnates near the village, and in 1971 there were still a handful of women from poor families who took on this work. They were paid in kind at the rate of 3 litres of

olive oil a day -- in cash equivalents, with a litre of oil costing 700 lire, this amounted to 2100 lire (circa £1.50), about half the daily wage for all other work in the countryside performed by men.

The rigid segregation of male and female activities is also emphasised in the rarity of joint social appearances by husband and wife. They are very largely restricted to the ritual occasions of baptisms, confirmations and wedding ceremonies, which for each couple will furnish at most half-a-dozen invitations annually. Confirmation is performed once a year by the Bishop of Alghero, and there are now about a dozen weddings each year. Husbands and wives pay joint social visits very infrequently, and in almost every case their destination is either their own more-or-less housebound parents who like to see their grandchildren or kinsmen in another village. One shepherd accompanying his wife and children to our house confided to me that it was the first time in seven years of marriage that his whole family had paid a social visit to another home; there was a striking contrast between their uncomfortable and unnatural formality during the visit and the free-and-easy behaviour in their own home.

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Children are an important part of what marriages are for, so the birth of the first child is a happy moment. The new mother is visited by her kin and neighbours who are often extravagant in their praise of the baby, and the friends of the proud father will press him to offer drinks in celebration, especially if the new-born is a son. Where possible the mother will breast-feed her baby: if she has abundant milk, she will sometimes suckle the baby of another woman with insufficient milk, and the two children

are thereafter referred to as frades 'e titta, brothers of the breast. This relationship carries no prescriptive behaviour, but those who have shared milk are expected to treat each other in a friendlier way than they would otherwise have done: the fact that one was entrusted to the other's mother in any case suggests a prior tie of friendship or neighbourliness between the two families.

Children's early years are spent in the home and neighbour<sup>h</sup>ood. In the home they come under the watchful eye of their mother, helped perhaps by an elder daughter who will be encouraged to pick up as soon as possible tasks which she will later have to perform as a mother herself; in the street a supervisory check is kept by the old man and woman who having retired from active family life themselves like to observe the progress of others. At the age of 3 children become eligible for nursery school but because the school has insufficient places (only 42 out of about 150 children aged 3 - 5 could be accepted in 1971), most begin to attend school at the age of 6.

Within the last two decades schooling has assumed increasing importance in children's upbringing. A full school career has become possible for those who were formerly excluded, and parents see educational qualifications as the principal means of securing the best start in life for their sons and daughters. Until 1956 there was no secondary school in Limbara so that fathers who wished their children to continue beyond elementary level (after the age of 11) had to send them to Nuoro or Macomer. The cost of the daily journey, or of boarding weekly in these towns, put a school career beyond the range of most families' possibilities, and few were in any case prepared to dispense with their sons'

contribution to agricultural work or their daughters' help in the home. Only magnates, state employees or officials and some artisans had both the financial means and the independent jobs which enabled them to have their children educated to diploma or degree level. In the last decade, however, these barriers have been breaking down. The establishment of a lower secondary school in Limbara in 1956 allowed children to stay at school till the age of 14 without leaving the village, and in 1970 a regional law ( Legge Regionale del Diritto allo Studio ) guaranteed free road and rail travel to school to all secondary school students. During the same period, the progressive abandonment of cultivation has freed sons from the necessity of beginning work in the countryside at an early age. The resulting expansion in the numbers of students gaining certificates at the various educational levels is shown in the following table:

Table 3. Limbara: Educational Achievement, 1951 - 1971.

Year	A. Elementary		Lower B. Secondary		Upper Secondary* C. University		B + C as % of resident village popul.
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	
1951:	1015	911	35	17	48	30	3 %
1961:	1221	1089	73	35	59	51	5 %
1971:	634	565	136	168	89	90	14 %

Note: \* lycées, magistrale and technical institutes.

Sources: ISTAT (1955); (1966), (1973).

Since 1961 the percentage of the resident population holding a certificate beyond elementary school level has trebled. At both levels of secondary education the number of successful girls has expanded more rapidly than that of boys: an increase of rather more than five times since 1951 compared to the boys' more modest threefold increase.

These figures imply that children of both sexes now grow up following a similar pattern of activities with broadly similar aims. They travel to school together, study in each other's houses and hold their own dances at festival time: in consequence their relations are markedly freer and easier in each other's presence than those between men and women of their parents' generation. This is a recent phenomenon, however, and it is hard to say how far or how quickly it will affect the traditionally rigid expectations of complementary behaviour according to age and sex. The following description at any rate looks towards the past, to the kind of family upbringing which the protagonists of this thesis - shepherds and peasants - experienced but whose rigidity their own children have not known. It is a world of very limited formal education and of early and harsh introduction to the techniques and demands of securing a livelihood.

Children owe their parents love and respect. They use the formal second-person plural pronoun boisi in addressing their father or mother but receive the informal tue in return. This respect is based not only on the deference due to age, but also on the work and sacrifices that parents perform for their children, and it should be lifelong. A man who had his father taken into a hospice rather than look after him at home was fiercely

criticised for his failure to reciprocate his father's past provision for his own subsistence; a youth who in a fit of anger slapped his widowed mother was soundly thrashed by his godfather for this lack of respect, and this intervention was heartily approved.

Since the pattern of work and recreation sharply divides men from women, the most important relations of each are to the household members of the same sex.

When men talk about their parents, they talk almost exclusively about their fathers. Visiting aged parents was inevitably described as 'going to see my father', and the deference shown to their fathers during the visit was never marred by the occasional impatience with which their mothers' remarks might be received. When an older man asks who they are, boys generally reply "the son of X" (fizu 'e X), and they sometimes inherit their fathers' nicknames.

Sons never meet their fathers in terms of equality either in the village or at work. It was very unusual to see them stop and talk in the square, and they never drink together in public. The only sign of recognition that one gives the other as he passes is a curt nod. At home sons are subdued in their father's presence and they very rarely entertain their own friends there.

As long as a son remains at home unmarried, he is subject to his father's authority and must accept his decisions. A certain amount of conflict, especially in pastoral households, is inevitable, but a prolonged dispute may sometimes only be resolved by the son's emigration. One man who had worked abroad for seven years to support his mother and father returned

to Limbara to find his notoriously wayward brother installed at home with his illegitimate child; both were being provided for by the parents. The emigrant protested strongly that his own sacrifices were merely being taken advantage of by his brother and demanded that this stop. His father refused, maintaining that the man was equally his son and asserting his own right to allocate household income as he thought fit. The emigrant, confronted with an ultimatum to accept his father's powers of decision or leave, chose to leave the village. The Limbarese who told me of this episode accepted that the father had perhaps been unjust but that he was justified in insisting on his right to take decisions regarding his children. This was a particularly provocative instance, but I heard of several other cases in which men had chosen to abandon Limbara either permanently or until the quarrel was settled.

Limbarese often speak of sons acquiring their capacity for work from their fathers, and it is in the context of work that the two are usually thrown together for the first time. Boys begin their lives in the countryside at the age of 7 or 8, and almost all are definitively withdrawn from school by the age of 11. Until then they are entrusted to the love and care of their mother as the overseer of the household around which much of their daily activity revolves: their father is away working and is therefore prevented from intervening to approve or disapprove his children's everyday behaviour. To begin work brings a boy into daily contact with his father for the first time and separates him brusquely from his mother and sisters. From the predominantly female environment of the neighbourhood



a boy is pitchforked into exclusively male company in the countryside.

The role of the father is strongest in those families which herd their own livestock. A son is despatched as a shepherd-boy ( laghinzaresu ) to the family flock where under the direct supervision of his father or an elder brother, he picks up the skills and techniques of a successful shepherd. The habit of obedience is inculcated early as he is made aware of his responsibilities toward the other members of the household and the need to avoid risks in herding the vulnerable animal capital: any disobedience which exposes the flock to danger is severely punished. His work confines him to the countryside and separates him as effectively from his peers as from the female members of his family. Apart from specific errands many boys return to the village once a week in the winter and spring - more often in the summer - so that there is no time or opportunity to keep up close friendships with others. One man recalled that as a youth he had spent exactly 17 nights in bed in the village in one period of two years.

In the countryside itself a boy is generally alone among adults, and in some periods will be left entirely by himself: only in a large flock is there another novice of his own age. Contact with boys in neighbouring flocks is discouraged since this not only threatens his work but may also involve him with those who help men openly or potentially hostile to the shepherds of his own flock. A boy who works with his father tends to acquire a pattern of relationships in his own generation similar to that of his father - friendly with his father's

friends' sons with whom contact is at least permitted if not actively encouraged, and indifferent or hostile to the sons of his father's enemies with whom association is punished. Limbaresi in fact single out the sons of their father's friends as the men they are more likely to be friendly with than anyone else.

As a son grows up, he is entrusted with a greater share of the herding responsibilities, and he also learns to perform the agricultural work that will eventually provide his own independent home with cereal crops. A father relaxes his direct surveillance but retains control of his son's labour. For reasons which I shall discuss in the following chapter, a son's relations with his father become more strained as he grows older and as he threatens his father's overwhelming authority by a demand for a share of the animal capital and by the desire to take full credit for his herding skills. Nevertheless although there may be considerable tension, open conflict is generally restrained at least as long as the two men are living under the same roof. A public quarrel detracts from the reputations of both men - from the son for his lack of filial respect and from his father for the inability to gain this respect from a junior member of his own home.

The sons of men who do not own livestock but who nevertheless herd flocks have a shorter period of work directly under their fathers and a wider set of contacts with other adults. Zuanni, now a 52 year-old cowherd prematurely aged by illness, was taken away from school at the age of 8 to learn the basic techniques of shepherding in the flock where his father worked. At 13,

having acquired sufficient expertise to command a wage, he was sent to work in the flock of his mother's brother where he remained for two years, subsequently moving for a further two years to the flock of his uncle's son-in-law. Aged 17, he spent one year as a cowherd before moving again to a different flock as a shepherd where his work was interrupted by the war. When he returned, he found work in yet another flock where he remained until his forced retirement.

The sons of peasants, on the other hand, begin work alongside their fathers in agriculture, although some may be despatched as shepherd-boys for several years to bring cheese and milk, the normal medium of payment for laghinzaresos, into the household. Angelo began work aged 11 in the flock of friends of his father in return for 4 kg. of cheese and 2 litres of milk per week. Except for a brief return to the village each Sunday he was fully occupied in the countryside from October to June. He was despatched to various flocks in the space of three years until he was considered strong enough to contribute full-time to the family's cereal needs: he served a brief apprenticeship under his father and was then able to work by himself on the extra land rented for this purpose. Cultivators return to Limbara in the evening, and they are therefore not separated so severely from home or community life as their shepherd peers. Moreover the uneven rhythm of the agricultural

year with its alternating periods of intensive labour and virtual inactivity contrasts with the demands of livestock requiring labour and defence all year round.

Clearly the overall respect given to fathers, and authority exercised over sons, is strongest in pastoral households where fathers play a specific role in their sons' working lives. Father and son are jointly concerned to protect the flock, the most important material component of their status and the most vulnerable resource which can support a household: families without livestock are not characterised by this long-term and particularly intense relationship.

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While the men of the household may or may not work together, mother and daughter spend much of the day in their home. All daughters help with household tasks from an early age; they learn to make bread, cook and look after younger siblings, and they embroider linen for their own and their sisters' trousseaux. The relationship between mother and daughter is affectionate, in contrast to the

obvious authority and restraint which hold between father and sons, and even when daughters marry and leave home, close contact is often maintained between the two women: work such as breadmaking which requires a group of women is still carried out together, and a mother's help is especially valued when a daughter has her first child. If they live in the same neighbourhood, a daughter's children are often to be found in their grandmother's home. One woman who had married into Limbara from another village returned to stay with her mother for a week once or twice a year - this was probably the only time during the year she left the village.

Women transmit to their daughters the techniques of managing a home and the complex of attitudes and sentiments known as birgonza ('modesty') whose essence lies in control of sexuality: an unmarried girl must be chaste, a wife true to her husband and a widow faithful to his memory until she remarries. A woman who falls short in one of these respects is believed to pass on her weakness to her daughters who must themselves be protected against hints that they might be sexually available. Lapses by a mother or daughter damage the reputation of the men of the household who take exclusive overall responsibility for the behaviour of their women.

The best defence of their reputation that daughters can offer is to avoid places associated with men, in particular the square and its bars. The young girls who actually work in few of the bars come from very low-status families, but are shielded during their work by a kind of joking relationship with the male drinkers; they expect to receive comments and questions

which are mildly salacious, and in some cases give in reply as good as they get. But the fact that they work in the bar leads to accusations of 'behaving badly', and one girl at least had to be accompanied home in the evening by the bar-owner to protect her from the attentions of men who wrongly assumed that she was sexually available.

Similarly, a daughter's work must be confined to her own home. Servant-girls who work in magnates' households or who have to find a job on the continent are considered to have compromised their chastity: the largest landowner in the village was said to be the grandson of a servant-girl who had been made pregnant, then married, by her magnate employer. One woman told me that a widowed kinsman had been forced to remarry because he could not find a girl to come in daily and look after his home: only a wife could perform these duties without loss of reputation.

A girl is normally in the company of her mother or sisters in the home and neighbourhood but where necessary her father and brothers may take energetic measures to make sure she remains uncompromised. One father whose suspicions were aroused by a sharp increase in the number of visits paid by his 16-year-old daughter to her cousin, precipitated on the house to find his fears confirmed; his daughter's benjamin was temporarily employed there to fit a bathroom, and under the eyes of his workmate and employer's family, the two were able to exchange glances of mutual attraction. The father attempted, unsuccessfully, to persuade his sister-in-law to send his daughter away when she came to the house; in any case, the work was finished a few

days later and the opportunity for such clandestine 'meetings' lost. In another episode I heard of, a 26-year-old girl was severely spanked by her two brothers for her apparently compromising behaviour with a married outsider temporarily resident in Limbara, but I was unable to find out what she had done to deserve this punishment.

Until a few years ago control over girls' behaviour was reinforced by the custom of terracuzzare, from terracuzza = the clay used to protect the graft of an olive and wild olive tree. On summer evenings two groups of young men would climb to points on the hillside above each end of the village and begin a standard question and answer which could be heard all over Limbara: Terracuzza tu! and the other group would echo 'cuzza!' E su caddu? (the horse?) and a boy's name would be shouted in reply; E sa ebba? (the mare?), and a girl's name would be called out. E proite? (why?), and the reason for the association of names would be given. Of course these associations ranged from the serious to the bizarre, but Limbaresi sometimes watched amusedly as the more irascible or sensitive fathers set off to threaten the young men who were supposed to have designs on their daughters. The publicity thus given to carelessly-dropped hints of attraction or even clandestine meetings eases the task of supervision for peasants and particularly shepherds.

Limbaresi say that a beating is the severest punishment that a girl and her lover might expect, and no one could remember a case of homicide provoked by a violation of chastity. One recent case was resolved by the marriage of the guilty parties although I do not know what kind of threats, if any, the man



might have found persuasive. Once such a seduction has taken place however the reputation for liability to loose behaviour is transmitted by the girl to her daughters. Because the failure to control sexuality is also assumed to be associated with failure in other aspects of domestic performance, the daughters of such women find it difficult to marry a husband of equal status: they are a poor risk.

Two examples of an identical situation illustrate this point: a widow with legitimate sons and daughters conceived a child by a married man who was therefore not free to marry her. In one case, one of the widow's daughters remained a spinster, and the other in early middle age married a widower. In the second case, one daughter married a man of inferior status who was considerably older than herself, while another left the village to work elsewhere after her engagement had been broken off when her fiancé from a nearby village heard of her mother's lapse. In spite of the fact that these daughters were the legitimate and attractive heirs of a reasonably well-off couple, their failure to marry men of suitable age and status was commonly attributed to men's reluctance to take on the daughters of a woman who had succumbed irreparably to temptation. The exemplary virtue of their own household while their father was alive was not sufficient to cancel out the taint of indiscipline revealed by their mother's belated weakness.

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As elsewhere in Sardinia kinship in Limbara is traced through both men and women and the range of kinsmen ( parentes ) is fairly clearly defined. Ego refers to his parents' siblings and their spouses as ziu (uncle) and zia (aunt), and he may extend these terms to more distant collateral relatives who have particularly good relations with his parents. Uncles and aunts are addressed by the standard polite form appropriate to all members of senior generations: tiu followed by the person's first name (e.g. tiu Bachis), and the use of the pronoun boisi indicating respect. Young men use tiu in addressing men perhaps only twenty years older than themselves as well as to the oldest inhabitant of the village, and in general the strength of the deference given to age in Limbara renders any special respect or behaviour to senior kinsmen scarcely apparent.

In Ego's own generation the terminology for both kin and affines defines clearly the effective limits within which a relationship based on a tie of kinship alone will always be recognised. There is an obvious linguistic affinity between the terms for brother ( frade ) and male first cousin ( fradile ), and between sister ( sorre ) and female first cousin ( sorrastra ). A man will refer, for example, to his FBS as Mario fradile just as he refers to his brother as Mario frade, and these are the only kin terms used in this way. Each Limbarese can name all the men and women linked to himself, and quite often many of those linked to others, in this way.

Beyond this range there are terms denoting a second cousin ( zermanu primarzu ) and third cousin ( zermanittu ). These have not yet become simply dictionary terms, although they are nowadays

used only by older inhabitants: their sons and daughters generally tend to use the Italian cugini to refer indifferently to all distant cousins. Men are rarely able to identify all the fellow-villagers who fall into these categories for themselves, and they are often unable to trace the link for others beyond stating that X and Y are zermanos primarzos because e.g. their fathers were fradiles.

The same classification grouping together a man and his first cousin appears in the terminology for affines. For everyday purposes affines are usually lumped together with kin as parentes, but if there is reason to emphasise their distinctive status, they will be given their full title, parenti d'intradura. The distinction is made explicit when a man is anxious to emphasise how he and a dishonourable affine are not 'really' parentes: one man told me that he would defend himself thus in the face of shaming behaviour by his brother's wife. Limbaresi quoted the proverb 'parenti d'intradura, né frittù né cardura' (affines, neither hot nor cold) to indicate how ideally relations between real kin should not be affected by the intervention of affines. The favourite example to illustrate this was the division of a patrimony, in which parenti d'intradura are expected to hold aloof even though their spouse's interests may be at stake.

Dare s'intrada, 'to give entry', is the term for the official engagement of a man and woman when the man is publicly and regularly admitted to his future wife's home for the first time. From the day of s'intrada a man begins to describe his fiancée's close relatives as his in-laws, although months and in

some cases years may pass before the marriage actually takes place. The groom uses the term connadu (Italian: cognato) to refer not only to his wife's siblings and their spouses but also to her first cousins and their spouses, so that the relationship of connadu(a) at its widest embraces all men and women married to the children of a set of siblings. It defines the people admitted to the separate households of those who once shared a common home and who consider themselves, and are considered, equals in status. Because marriages are negotiated between men and women of roughly equal wealth and prestige, connados too accept each other as equals, and flagrant breaches of equality between in-marrying affines raises opposition: one woman told me how her kin had strongly objected to her marriage because her husband's brother had married a girl of lower status: Ehi! Comente? Una Biccu alleada 'e una Pala? (What? A Biccu allied to a Pala??).

Each Limbarese therefore has a set of kin to the range of first cousins to whose spouses he is also bound by acknowledged relations of affinity, and it is with these men and women that he shares the basic obligations prescribed by kinship. Some duties are formal - a salute on meeting, invitations to weddings and presence at funerals. Women too must wear mourning as far as first cousins, while for most distant kin this sign of respect depends on the quality of the personal relationship. If there is no other reason for these men to cooperate with one another, relations may in fact remain on this formal plane: Ci salutiamo e poi ognuno a casa sua (We salute each other and then each to

his own home) was how one woman described her behaviour to close kin. Ideally however the relationship prescribes a more positive trust and assistance, although the extent to which men feel obliged to offer it varies from case to case. One shepherd who was on poor terms with his fradile nevertheless felt that the kin link forced him to volunteer for the search party looking for his fradile's stolen sheep, even though the search was accomplished in gelid silence between them. The expectations of trust and reciprocity are an important consideration for shepherds, since this pool of close kin and affines provides a set of potential herding partners required by the demands of combining shepherding and cultivation (ch. 6).

The criterion most commonly invoked by Limbaresi to distinguish their relationships to more distant kin is residence: second-cousins who live in the same neighbourhood are closer than those who do not. In some cases men said that the criterion of common agnatic descent would bring them nearer to one another than a link through women: the shared name made them 'more' cousins, which they supported by pointing out that the common way of finding out who someone is - "De sos cales sese?" (which group do you belong to?) - receives the answer, for example, de sos Pisanos, giving the surname transmitted through men. But no one could suggest any particular rights or duties which distinguished agnatic from uterine kin, and many Limbaresi denied this distinction in principle. Affinal links are very rarely traced beyond connados, and men never frame their obligations to others solely in terms of a distant affinal connection: one man who pleaded release from an unwelcome

commitment on the grounds of his ineluctable duty to visit his future wife's brother's future wife's father who had arrived in the village was fooling no one.

The bonds of kinship are sometimes directly contrasted by Limbaresi with those of friendship. "Giuseppe non è un parente, è un amico" (G. is not a kinsman but a friend), one shepherd told me of a third cousin, emphasising the substantial and voluntary quality of their relationship. Kin are defined at birth, and the link is in theory unbreakable; friends are only acquired gradually in the course of reaching full adulthood, and the tie may be broken off at any time. The severest disputes between families, leading to homicide and revenge, are in fact known as disamistades, 'unfriendships', and it is ironic that the paradigm of a disamistade in Sardinia is the series of hostilities set off by the quarrel between close kin - fradiles behaving as if they had once been friends and were therefore able to deny their indissoluble tie.(1)

The language used to express friendship suggests its contractual nature. Sa trattenzia, from the verb trattare = treat, is the usual word for 'good relations', and bi trattamos bene is how men commonly identify their friendly relationship to a third party. The sense is precisely that of a treaty, a pact whose strength can be reinforced by goodwill on both sides but denounced in the case of unilateral violation. The perpetual risk that this may happen is revealed by an alternative way in which men communicate their friendship: non bi è mai stadu nudda, 'there's never been anything (to disrupt it)'.

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(1) Cagnetta, loc. cit.

Friendships are only established between men and between approximate status equals: I never heard a shepherd describe a magnate as a friend, although smaller status differences may sometimes be bridged. Women never call one another friends, and they rarely have contact with the wives of their husbands' friends, so there can be no contrasting relations of friendship and enmity between the members of two households. Friendships are maintained by more or less balanced reciprocity in exchanges of help and information. If friends meet in the square, they expect to drink together, and if a shepherd wants information on pasture or animals in a part of the countryside where he does not work, then he turns to a friend who does. Lambs or sucking-pigs required for a celebration will be given without payment, in the secure knowledge that the credit will be redeemed later.

Because friendships are voluntarily created and maintained, no man should ever be involved involuntarily or against his will in the private quarrels of his friends. He may spontaneously decide to intervene, but he must not be manoeuvred into supporting or appearing to support a position of which he is largely ignorant. A particularly important case is the course of livestock-theft, in which the stolen animals should never be led through or beside the pasture of a friend of the thief, since this indicates active complicity in the theft. The flock, perhaps its shepherds themselves, may be threatened by such an action, and the deliberate attempt to commit a man unwittingly to these risks is a violation of a fundamental rule governing friendships. To pre-empt a man's choice in this way is to demonstrate lack of respect for his independent judgement - far from counting on the automatic support of his friends, a man must be wary of never demanding more than the link can bear.

The tie of ritual kinship, comparaggio, is used to create



a moral bond between people who can be either of widely different status or equals. It is formally established in church at the sacraments of baptism, confirmation and marriage; each child acquires one godparent of each sex at baptism and one of his or her own sex at confirmation (and the tie links not only the child to its godparents but the godparents to the child's legal parents). No one stands as godparent to a child at both baptism and confirmation, and no two siblings have the same set of godparents. Each bride and groom chooses a further compare to act as marriage sponsor. Unmarried men who are excluded from establishing compari on these occasions may become compari de Sant'Antinu or compari de Santu Bachisi by exchanging drinks and repeating a short formula wishing the other the good fortune to get married (su bene d'isposare) and emphasising that the tie is lifelong (compare pro sa vida mia).

Godparents are overwhelmingly fellow-Limbaresi. Men may invite magnates, close kinsmen or friends to fill this role and a number of children acquire a sibling of each parent as a symmetrical set; my casual enquiries failed to reveal any correlation between occasion and godparent's rank. The bond between the two men and their wives prescribes mutual assistance but the extent of that assistance is presumed to vary with the rank of godparent chosen.

In general Limbaresi see a vertical tie of comparaggio as instrumental, created by men in the hope of preferential treatment from patrons in control of resources. But they also see patrons as sometimes turning the tables on their client compari and using their moral tie so as not to give them their



due. "If you ask Don Battista" said one artisan who reckoned to have done more work than was paid for, "he'll probably tell you that it was only thanks to his goodwill that we survived at all, and how ungrateful we've always been". In the past men hoped to secure agricultural work through this tie, but nowadays the principal transaction along an asymmetrical comparaggio link is assumed to exchange a vote for access to the resources and benefits distributed by State bureaucracies. The largest landowner and retired doctor was still the man with the most godchildren, but he appeared to be on the point of being overtaken by the politician who ran the local labour exchange. Another man who wanted to secure re-election to the village council was reported to be scouring neighbourhoods in search of babies to baptize, and one of his rivals told me that the surest way to be chosen as an electoral candidate was to have many compari.

Between equals the creation of a tie of comparaggio usually ritualises a previous tie of friendship and renders it unbreakable: one shepherd described the relationship to me precisely as "a sworn eternal friendship". Men should never refuse help to a compare, - it is interesting that they drop the standard tue form of reciprocal address in favour of the formal boisi which they normally use towards those men (father and senior villagers) whom they expect to obey. Compari may eat cooked meals in one another's homes and lend each other money. A simple ranking of obligations was given me by one shepherd for help with information about stolen animals: "I always help my compari, sometimes my kinsmen, and everybody else I send the

wrong way". For most Limbatesi a horizontal tie of comparaggio is the nearest that they can get to kinship with none of the disadvantages of potential conflict over inheritance and property, and it represents the most binding moral tie that they can assume.

Sometimes a Limbatese will describe a man from any of these three categories - compari and close kin or friends - as a custrintu, 'a man to whom he is obliged'. He will expect to give the greatest help to his custrintos as for example in a theft of livestock, and he expects them to fulfil this duty towards him in a similar situation. As its meaning suggests, the term indicates any of the men with whom he has a particularly intense dyadic tie.

Chapter 3 : Marriage, Inheritance and Neighbourhood.

Marriage establishes the domestic independence of bride and groom, and it sets up the kinship network for their children. Legitimate (or illegitimate) birth to a couple provides Limbaresi, as it does for people in most communities, with their most basic identity, as they draw on the reputation and material resources that their home offers. This chapter therefore begins with some of the individual factors relevant to a marriage.

At the community level marriage patterns indicate the basic hierarchy of groups in Limbara. Ideally, and for the most part in practice, men and women marry their status equals so that marriage not only reproduces the society but also shapes and maintains the most important social relationships. A description of the application of the rule of homogamy also shows the changes in the criteria which Limbaresi use to define equality.

Since Limbara is not a homogeneous pastoral society, I shall use this chapter to set the shepherds in relation to other social groups of traditional and contemporary Limbara. I shall focus on the mode of inheritance of land and livestock which establishes a basic distinction between peasants and shepherds until the last two decades, and which sets up a particular pattern of relations between livestock-owning households in the village: I shall describe these relations in the final section of the chapter. In recent years however the introduction of new and highly-valued resources, in particular education and the

employment it can provide, have upset the traditional hierarchy and forced changes in the ranking of occupations and potential spouses.

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Most Limbaresi hope to marry and most succeed. Men and women who stay single are assumed to do so not by deliberate preference but out of fear of marrying an inferior. Their lives are thought to be incomplete and their hard work wasted since its fruits will go to the benefit not of their children but of other kin. Generally men aim to marry by the age of 35 and women by their late twenties. Elder siblings often marry first, but there is no rule of precedence either by age or sex.

Men and women bring to a marriage their reputations, and the men must provide some guarantee of access to the resources to support a home. Talking of the custom of cohabitation without a marriage ceremony ( matrimonio naturale ) reported for several Sardinian villages in the past one man told me that they must have been very poor communities: "You can see that the man didn't even earn or own enough to support a proper family". As in other Mediterranean societies these two aspects of status - honour and wealth - are closely related. The wealthy are generally taken to be honourable and the poor dishonourable. It is the poorest and least independent shepherds, for example, who affront the risks of livestock-theft directly: honourable men may participate in livestock-theft, but they do so not from need, and they do it in ways which leave their own households as well

protected as possible (ch. 8).

Reputations consist of intrinsic and inherited qualities. A woman should be modest, in good health to bear children, and an efficient household worker. She derives much of her reputation in these fields from being the daughter of a woman who has herself demonstrated possession or lack of these qualities in her own role as wife or mother. Beauty is rarely used as a criterion for a bride.

A man too must be a hard worker and able to guarantee that he can go on working. Ill health among his ascendants is likely to cause him to be rejected. One man told me that his family's approaches to his prospective bride had floundered when the girl's mother had pointed to the strange illness of an uncle (he had suffered from undiagnosed meningitis); she suggested that he himself might be incapacitated by the same illness. A man must be able to take his family responsibilities seriously and not chircare fattos anzenos (pry into other people's business), and he must not expose his home to the risk of being left without its provider. One man, watching the return to the village of two shepherds arrested on the trivial charge of having stolen wood from communal land, commented to me: "Poor ruined fellows! Whoever will want to marry them now?" One woman summed up the guarantees that a man should be able to offer as a spouse by telling me proudly how none of her uncles, brothers or first cousins (a total of more than 50 people) had ever spent a day in bed or jail in their lives.

Limbaresi recognise that the source of their reputations lies in the comments and judgements of the men and women who live

around them in the village: narrami cun chi' abitas e ti narro chie sese (tell me who you live with and I shall tell you who you are). This emphasises the weight given to the qualities derived from membership of a particular household whose single members' performance of their complementary responsibilities produces a joint status. Women say that the traditional advice is to find a spouse not only within the neighbourhood but from the same street ( sa carrela ) where the surest knowledge of a family's past and present is available and minute differences in status can be calculated. They contrast this with the danger of marrying into the wider society where the qualities required of a marriage partner are unknown: A sposarti a fora idda est comente a buffare s'abba dae su frascu (marrying outside the village is like drinking water from a flask); because flasks are made of terracotta, water cannot be checked before being swallowed - neither its source nor purity can be known.

Marriage is seen as an alliance of equals, and it therefore affects the status of the participant households. A father who allows his daughter to marry an inferior casts doubt on his own status, and because in-marrying affines ( connados ) consider themselves equals, one sibling's marriage to a man who turns out to be a wastrel or dishonest may condemn her brothers and sisters to partners of similarly inferior status. The choice of a partner therefore cannot be left up to a girl alone, and although children's preferences are certainly given more weight nowadays - especially when they are economically independent - choice of a spouse for many Limbaresi is still dominated by parents' wishes. The matches that contravene the equality of the partners are

invariably attributed to the headstrong fancies of a resolute daughter: 'she really set her cap at him', and some women explicitly described these unions to me as matrimoni d'amore (marriages for love) in revealing contrast to the 'normal' marriage, which tempers personal attraction with more hard-headed social considerations. Older men said that they had only caught a glimpse of their future bride as she went to church on Sundays, far less exchanged words with her; a woman compelled to accept a man against her will is described as inchirinada, from sa chirina meaning both the tiny enclosure where a ewe is forced to suckle another's lamb and a place where stolen livestock are hidden.

The features of ill-health or immorality which prospective spouses have inherited or demonstrated are known about in the neighbourhood and part of every family's history. But the major component of a new husband's status - the guarantee of access to resources with which he can support a family - is not always public knowledge. The amount of land a man or woman is likely to inherit or the livestock which the man will bring to the marriage is generally known only very approximately since the exact division of a patrimony is a strictly household concern. This information is conveyed between the families of the prospective bride and groom through an emissary ( su paralimpu ), chosen by the groom among his close kinsmen. Su paralimpu is sometimes said to visit the girl's home late at night to avoid the inquisitive eyes of neighbours; and a close kinsman is selected precisely as someone a groom could be sure would not take advantage of this privileged access to a girl's home to win her favours for himself. Apart from the specific business of his visit, the emissary gains

at least a superficial impression of the way the household is run, but the groom himself must wait to be able to verify his future wife's abilities in domestic organisation until the day of s'intrada itself.

Once a man is accepted, his parents pay a formal visit to their sucronzos (co-parents-in-law), followed later by the groom himself accompanied by a brother and sister 'to show the bride she is welcomed in our group' as one girl put it. She herself had accompanied her FB on his first formal visit as his closest female relative.

The wedding is intended to be as public as the negotiations leading up to the match have been secret. It is held on a Sunday, when the square in front of the church is fullest. The groom's friends gather early to accompany him to fetch the bride, and the guests often join the procession from her home to the parish church. After the ceremony the procession re-forms and escorts the couple to the reception under the shower of grain thrown down by onlookers. Some receptions are still held in the bride's home where the wedding gifts and dowry linen are displayed, but nowadays families generally prefer to rent a room in one of two bars. Eating is followed by dancing in the evening, but the older men lament the restraint of contemporary weddings compared to the prolonged festivities of the past.

If a union is strongly opposed or in some way open to criticism, it is often celebrated as inconspicuously as possible. One case involved a girl who had already borne a son to a policeman stationed in a nearby village. The ceremony was performed on a Saturday evening by the assistant priest rather than the priest himself and no guests



were invited. The following day the reception was held not in the village but in a converted barn in the countryside at which the guests arrived in their own time. Many of these were in fact the groom's fellow policemen, and the number of empty places was conspicuous. The bride's father complained to me of the failure of close kin to attend: "I've sacrificed myself ( mi sono sacrificato ) for them on occasion, they should have done the same for me". His best efforts to keep the wedding inconspicuous were not sufficient to encourage his kin to affirm their link publicly: their 'sacrifice' would have been the loss of status in acknowledging equality to a man with a dishonourable daughter.

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This section is concerned with the marriage patterns of the traditionally distinct groups in the village. Limbara is divided by an absolute status distinction between the score of magnate families and the rest of the village population. Magnates are given the respectful title Don and addressed with the form Vosté , distinct from the normally deferential use of boisi to senior villagers. They live in large, even palatial, houses whose space and dated atmosphere of comfort contrast with the homes of other Limbaresi described in chapter 1. They do not work in the countryside and their position in Limbara has rested on overwhelming control of the basic resources for livelihood (described in the following chapters). Their monopoly of secondary and higher education until recent years has enabled them to fill the professional posts of the village, and they continue to hold the jobs of doctors, veterinary surgeon, chemist and tax-collector

(esattore). Although they do not personally take part in local politics, the reasons of changes in local administrations over the last three decades are generally attributed to their machinations. The number of their local clients is still considered sufficient to hold the balance of power in a context where direct control has passed to professional politicians.

No matter how poorly these men and women perform their household roles, neither they nor their children become eligible marriage partners for their social inferiors. One magnate was claimed as the descendant of a domestic servant, and another was said to be the natural son of a shepherd working in his parents' household. Others enjoyed a reputation for livestock-rustling and protection of outlaws, and one or two had been arrested for these activities. Limbaresi liked to illustrate the ambivalent position of magnates as defenders and subverters of the social order by the example of one family in which one man was a respected judge and his first cousin a notorious livestock rustler. Other Limbaresi families might have been fatally dishonoured by these attributes, but a magnate remains a magnate.

Men and women from these families not only marry among each other in Limbara (the diagram on p.146 shows some of their links) but also much further afield. Their benefit from full schooling entails a stay in the provincial capitals of Cagliari or Sassari, and in each generation men have remained there to exercise their professions, subsequently finding brides of equivalent status from local families or with origins in other villages of the province.

The five married sons of the landowner who previously held

the office of tax-collector will serve as an example. After their studies three returned to Limbara: one has taken on the concession of tax-collector from his father, another is employed as the vet by the local administration, with responsibility for the slaughter-house, and a third works as the village chemist. The remaining two, an engineer and a teacher, have remained in Nuoro and Sassari. Only the chemist has married a girl from Limbara, and his brothers have all found brides in the towns where they were educated.

The kin links thus established give magnates a wide range of contacts in Sardinia, not only in the larger towns but also in the villages where their affines and professional colleagues have kinsmen. They make use of these ties on behalf of other Limbaresi: I was present on one or two occasions when one magnate was approached for an introduction to one of his cousins who were both leading doctors in the island; other families could claim lawyers, a newspaper editor, judge and bank manager among their close kin and affines. Since Limbara has only a limited number of professional posts, most of the educated children of these families expect to live and work outside the village, and the probability is that they will find their spouses outside it too.

Birth therefore establishes a basic division between magnates and other Limbaresi. Occasionally marriages cross this gap: magnates may marry their domestic servants, and I knew of two cases in which high-status girls had taken men below them - an artisan and a teacher - as their husbands. In the first case the girl was disowned by her kin who refused to accept the man

as an affine, while in the second case the man was generally considered to have to put up with an otherwise unreasonable amount of interference in his domestic affairs from his father-in-law.

The division between magnates and other villagers has, with a few exceptions, corresponded to the difference between those who work in the village and those who earn their daily livelihood in the countryside. It is the access to the resources of land and livestock which distinguish the marriage classes among the remaining Limbaresi.

In accordance with their bilateral kinship system Limbaresi recognise the rights of all siblings to the basic traditional resource, land. Men and women therefore receive equal shares of the patrimonies of their father and mother and transmit these to their own children. The passage of land provides a tangible element of family continuity, symbolised in the use of the verb 'to know' ( connoschere ) for 'to inherit'. Custu possessu l'appo connottu dae sos mannos (I inherited this land from my ancestors) is how men describe the origin of their inheritance, and the noun su connottu, a share of a patrimony, is used exclusively for land: I never heard anyone refer to houses or livestock in that way.

The stress on continuity is emphasised in the duty of people who wish to sell their share of inheritance to offer it first to their siblings. When this residual claim is ignored, siblings often quarrel: one woman had sold her share of the family land without offering it to her brother, largely because she believed that he would make her a poor offer precisely because of his

privileged position. She therefore sold it secretly to another villager, and when her brother found out, he cut off all relations with her.

Some men try to use this rule in reverse, to make a sibling buy land or a house which they no longer have any use for. One emigrant I knew attempted to convince his shepherd brother to buy out his share of pasture; his brother refused, preferring to pay the low rent rather than spend capital: any purchaser would have had to oust him physically before being able to use the land. Some men say that selling land to outsiders at all is shameful: a peasant described it to me as manigare su sambene, 'eating the blood' which suggests not only the rupture of the bonds of kinship or descent, expressed in common blood, but also the crucial economic importance of land as 'lifblood' not to be consumed.

Land is transmitted at the death of its owner, and this appears to have been the rule for at least the last century. Men very rarely make wills, although they sometimes arrange the distribution of property among their heirs which will be carried out after their deaths. An elderly man makes an inventory of all land to which he has title, and divides the sum into as many portions as he has children who then draw lots for their shares. Equality is interpreted in terms of quality rather than simple size of land, and the future heirs are invited to state their objections or express acceptance of the division. If there is disagreement, then a senior kinsman may be asked to arbitrate and correct the relative sizes of shares if necessary. In most of the cases I heard of where this division was arranged, men

told me that their fathers had wished to do it in order to avoid conflict between children after their deaths.

Some men may divide their land when they retire from active work, but there is no expectation that they will do so, nor any means of checking how common this is. Passages of land ought to be recorded in the cadaster, but because Limbaresi rarely bother to declare rights to particular pieces of land, properties are attributed indifferently to all heirs of the owner and the actual allocation of land rights remains subliminal to official registration. Similarly, unless the amounts involved are large, many gifts, sales and swaps (permuta) of land are normally agreed by private treaty (scrittura privata) which has legal value but does not reach the cadaster. The disparity between the official record and the situation on the ground is shown in a survey of 1947 based on the cadaster when rights to land were credited to 6850 Limbaresi in a total village population of only 4494.(1) Limbaresi themselves sometimes find it extremely hard to establish precise rights, and a number of stories circulate in which crafty men and women have been able to 'sell' the same piece of land several times over to different buyers. When the petrochemical factories acquired land in the plain for the site, their local representative who negotiated the purchases was the tax-collector, the only man with a record of which villagers actually paid the taxes on particular pieces of land.

Men from peasant households therefore do not bring land to their marriages nor do they secure rights to a wife's land: they

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(1) INEA (1947)

must depend on their reputations as hard and honest workers to support their new homes through access to resources owned by the older generation of the community. They do not acquire a stake in the village as they marry, nor do they forego a capital asset by leaving the community: no doubt this mode of inheritance helps to account for the considerable impact of emigration in this century (ch. 5).

The situation is different for men from pastoral households with a family flock. Sons from these homes who work with the flock achieve a share of the animal capital before they marry to provide personal income but above all as the basis for partial support of their future homes. The grant of this share is however firmly in the hands of their father who may revoke or refuse it if his son intends to go through with an opposed marriage. Shepherds therefore receive animal capital but may lose it if they contravene their father's orders. In contrast to peasants young shepherds receive a stake in the village, and its maintenance encourages a prolonged period of cooperation with their brothers under their father.

While the cadaster is not generally kept up to date on precise rights to land, registration of the ownership of livestock is much more strictly controlled, largely with the aim of eliminating livestock-rustling.(1) Each village council has an office ( ufficio dell'abigeato ) where all animals belonging to villagers must be recorded and from which owners receive the legal documents ( bollettini ) which are their only guarantee of ownership. All sheep, goats and pigs must be declared within 2

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(1) a succinct history of registration obligations is given in ch. 8.

months of birth, horses and cattle within 6 months, and each owner receives a document carrying his name and address, the village of registration, earmark or sign of the animal and date of its first marking, and details of all previous owners: when an animal changes hands, its document must follow it for the sale or gift to be legally valid. Marking is carried out between October and May by the village vet who visits sheepfolds at various points in the countryside for the surrounding flocks and herds. Each animal has one of a dozen marks cut into either or both ears, and its left ear is tattooed with the two letters of the code denoting the village; cattle and horses are branded with these letters and the initials of their owners. Every herdsman must carry his documents on him in the countryside so that his right to herd each animal can be checked; police may check these documents, and a herdsman considers such a check as a sign that someone has informed against him as a livestock-thief. Any discrepancies result in a fine or sequestration of the animals for sale or return to their rightful owner.

This contrast between the elaborate precautions to record the ownership of livestock and the substantial indifference to official precision of land rights underlines the vulnerability of animal capital. Land - su connottu - is always there: it cannot be lost, slaughtered or stolen. A flock ( sa robba = roba = 'things', belongings) can stray or be destroyed and thus lost irretrievably. Land can be left uncultivated or ungrazed while men negotiate or quarrel but livestock must be herded and guarded continuously against the threat of disease, animal predators and thieves. This puts a heavy responsibility on the



shepherds themselves as guardians of a significant part of family income: these additional responsibilities are recognised in the rules for the transmission of livestock, which are distinct from those for land.

The basic discrimination is between men and women. Women do not work with livestock, and many shepherds consider it a sign of misfortune for a woman to approach their flocks as they pass through the village. Contact with a menstruating woman is believed to cause lambs to be still-born, and if this happens, the remedy is to bury an undergarment stained with menstrual blood and force the sheep to trample across the ground above it. Without herding responsibilities, women are largely excluded from transmitting the rights to animals that they receive to their children. Not all men would affirm this exclusion openly however: several said that they would grant full rights to their own sisters - 'does she not work in the house as we work in the countryside?' - but were sceptical of other men's sisters obtaining any rights at all. The details probably vary from case to case, but the broad outlines are clear.

While a woman remains in her natal home, she benefits from the income of the family flock as a member of the household. It provides her with a trousseau and the furniture she will take to her own home as well as any personal expenditure authorised by her mother. At marriage however she loses any immediate claim and takes no animals with her as dowry. No man can therefore move directly from the rank of peasants to that of livestock-owners by marrying a woman from a pastoral household.

However when her father carries out the major division of

the family flock, a woman receives rights to a share of this capital. Since she cannot herd the animals herself, she must either leave them in the hands of her brothers or persuade her husband or another shepherd to take them on. In the cases that I knew of, one of three courses had been followed: either the woman had sold the rights to animals to her brothers, or her brothers continued to herd the animals in return for a standard payment, or the animals had been transferred to her husband as herding partner of her brothers.

The sale of shares to brothers appears to be quite common. If a sister has benefited from a particular capital outlay, then she may simply turn the sheep over to them as a gift: one woman who had set up a small hairdressing business from the proceeds of the family flock simply renounced her rights to a share in it. Occasionally a married sister may retain rights to the animals leaving them in the hands of her brothers in return for a standard annual payment of 2 kg. of cheese per animal. She has no rights to increase this share nor convert it into a cash income, and receives the cheese as a contribution to household subsistence. Thirdly, if her husband is recruited as a herding partner by her brothers, he may simply add her own animals to his share of the flock, registered on the same set of documents. Affines in fact quite frequently combine to herd together (ch. 6), and this transfer of animals constitutes the reinforcement of joint interest in a single flock.

Whichever course is followed the bargaining position of women is very weak. Because they draw a share from a flock registered on the official bollettini of their father or brothers, any passage

of animals must have the consent of these men to become legal: transfer without official registration is illegal and anyone herding unregistered animals will be suspected of having stolen them. The men of a family are therefore in a powerful position to deny their consent to a sister's disposal of her animals and to convince her to renounce an interest in the flock. This in turn is a strong factor in preventing the upward mobility of peasants through marriage: wives do not receive animals at their marriage, and if their choice of spouse has been contested, they will find it extremely hard to transfer any rights to animals to their husbands. One woman from a pastoral household had married an artisan some years ago - a choice which her father and brothers regarded as beneath her. She managed to persuade two men to try and recover her share of the flock at her father's death, but they were met by her brothers with firearms and renounced any further action on her behalf. This case was clearly extreme. Nevertheless owners of livestock can effectively prevent animals passing to men they regard as their inferiors through marriage. Transfer is permitted precisely when their affine is an equal, a trusted herding partner.

Men from pastoral households are expected to bring animals to their marriage, and one task of the emissary is to indicate how many. The number varies considerably, depending on the man's age at marriage and the size of the family flock, but because the new home will be principally supported by cereal cultivation, a new husband may not contribute more than a few dozen. Nevertheless a girl who leaves one home partly dependent on livestock can expect to enter another similarly placed.

The achievement of this share is seen by Limbaresi as a struggle, a source of conflict with fathers to secure at least domestic independence. Its negotiation frequently causes tension between fathers and sons in livestock-owning households. For a son this is the first step in the full transfer of rights to livestock and land which constitute his inheritance, and it provides him not merely with the source of status for an independent home but also with a stake in the community itself.

The timing of this claim varies. In the cases I knew of in detail sons had made their demands when they were in their early twenties or later if they had not yet completed their military service. Two men in their late twenties who had not yet claimed animals were considered notably lacking in initiative but their father was described as particularly authoritarian. A much older shepherd reviewing his past work confessed to me: "I was blind. I worked till I was thirty without receiving or even asking for a return for myself. One must of course work to support one's home, but so much work should have some compensation".

The demand for animals is expected to encounter resistance. A father must surrender part of his capital and income, and the admission of a son to participate in a share of the flock is also an admission of his right to at least consultation in the major herding decisions. Until this moment a son's labour has been entirely at the disposal of his father; the grant is a sign of changing relationships in the home as his sons begin to think of marriage and the responsibilities of active herding gradually devolve on them.

Family demography and the force of a son's threat to abandon

the animals are the factors which condition the success of the claim. Limbaresi acknowledge that an only son is likely to receive animals without conflict since the cost to his father is low, and there is no alternative (unpaid) family labour if the son chooses to leave. In larger families too men may be able to exploit similar labour emergencies to support their demand. Giovanni Sirca who had worked with his father from the age of 9 took advantage at the age of 23 of his younger brother's absence on military service to demand 20 sheep. His father at first refused but relented in the face of his son's threat to leave Limbara: he would not only have had to pay for an extra worker but also forfeited one with a unique knowledge of the flock and terrain. He was reluctant to grant animals however, and father and son compromised on a cash sum. The following year Giovanni renewed his request for animals and received 18 ewes from the flock of 220 sheep, with rights to their income from meat, milk and wool. The next year he was allocated a further 18 animals, but he was now required to pay the pasture for these 36 sheep and a share of the extra labour recruited during the lambing season.

There is some evidence that the transfer of animals to sons has been made later over the last century. Specific economic evidence concerning shepherds is given in chapter 6, but their position may be reflected in the overall figures for the average age of bridegrooms in the period 1865 - 1965. The following table sets out the average age of Limbaresi entering their first marriages, thus excluding both widowers remarrying and outsiders temporarily resident in the village.

Table 4. Limbara: Bridegroom's Age at Marriage, 1865-1965.

<u>Years:</u>	<u>Average</u>	<u>% Marriages</u>	
	<u>Age</u>	<u>Groom &lt;30 : 31&lt;</u>	
1865 - 1870	28.4	77	23
1921 - 1924	30.7	58	42
1950 - 1954	30.5	57	43
1963 - 1964	30.4	59	41

Source: Parish registers.

Whereas in the second half of the 19th century only one bridegroom in four was aged over 30, fifty years later the proportion is nearly one in two, and the average age of grooms has risen by more than two years: these figures have remained roughly constant since then.

The difficulties for shepherds of establishing their own homes can also be seen in the proportions of married and unmarried herdsmen in 1972, based on the total of 106 shepherds and 27 cowherds employed full-time in the countryside. (1)

Table 5. Married/Unmarried Herdsmen per Age Group, 1972.

<u>Age Group:</u>	<u>Married</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Unmarried</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total</u>
20 - 30	—	0	5	100	5
31 - 40	13	42	18	58	31
41 - 50	26	57	20	43	46
51 - 60	30	77	9	23	39
<u>61 +</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>83</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>12</u>
TOTALS:	79	59	54	41	133

(1) These 133 men are full-time herdsmen resident in Limbara. →

No herdsman who has reached the age of 30 is yet married, and only half of those under 50 have found wives. The two shepherds who got married during my year in the village were aged 42 and 46, and it is only among the older herdsmen nearing the age of retirement that husbands significantly outnumber bachelors.

These figures partly reflect the revaluation of herding as a desirable occupation for a husband described below. But the fact that nearly half of those born between 1920 - 1930 who might have been expected to find wives in the decade 1950 - 1960 failed to do so suggests that they were already having to delay their marriages to acquire sufficient resources before the marriage patterns were upset by the emergence of more desirable occupations. The price of receiving sufficient animals to support an independent home and maintain their distinctiveness from families without livestock was to postpone marriage and remain subordinate to their father in his household longer.

A son's choice or refusal of bride can be strictly supervised by his father. Fathers rarely, I think, transfer the ownership of animals officially to their sons before marriage, by registering it at the local office and providing their sons with the necessary legal documents which alone allow full rights to dispose of the animals or separate them from the flock. Until a son has these documents, he is in danger of losing animals if there is severe conflict with his father. Limbaresi pointed out two such cases

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The figure is lower than the official census figure (221) which includes ex-peasants who now work in other sectors, some elderly men who have given up herding and men who turn their hand to jobs in any sector but remain classified as worker in the countryside.

in which a shepherd's marriage had been opposed and the man had lost his rights to the family flock: neither had succeeded in recouping his forfeited status as an independent shepherd, since both were employed by other men.

Marriage does not generally sever a shepherd's collaboration with his father, as it does among peasants. Firstly, since he now acquires the obligation to provide his new home with cereal crops, he must leave his animals in the hands of a herding partner to perform this work. Secondly, he inherits no pasture to maintain his animals independently since he will only receive this at his father's or mother's death. Thirdly, the rules of inheritance of livestock offer a more positive incentive to continued collaboration insofar as the sons who go on working in their father's flock receive larger shares than those who do not.

These advantages can be shown by the example of the Cossu family, consisting of a shepherd and his wife with three sons and two daughters. In 1957 the eldest daughter who had married a forest guard from the continent two years earlier, asked her father for a cash settlement to liquidate her future share of the patrimony. Her father agreed to carry out this division of rights to the flock which then consisted of 242 animals, of which 42 belonged to his eldest unmarried son. These 200 animals were shared out as follows: the father retained the rights to 100 animals and divided the remaining 100 among his 5 children. His married daughter sold her rights to her shepherd brother, while the unmarried siblings were credited with future rights rather than disposing directly of the income from their 20 animals.



Ten years later their father died leaving a flock which had now increased to 300 animals, excluding those of his older sons. The original 100 animals reserved by the father for himself in 1957 were divided equally between his widow (50 animals) and his 5 children (10 animals each), while the increase of 100 animals was divided in two: 50 animals were divided between his two sons who had actually managed the flock, and the remaining 50 were shared six ways between his widow and all children who thus each received the rights to 8 animals. In 1971 the widow was still alive, but I was assured that a similar pattern of division would take place at her death: the rights to the 60 animals which she now held would be distributed among all her children as her legitimate beneficiaries. If her share is increased by, say, 40 animals, then 20 will be assigned to the two sons who do the herding and the remaining 20 will be divided among all children, including the herdsmen. The operation of these rules leads to a substantial advantage for those sons who have worked with the family flock: each of these two will have received a total of 89 sheep while their sisters and non-shepherd brother receive only 54. If the 16 sheep which were allocated to these two shepherds by their father when they reached the age of 21 are added in, then over the course of the life-cycle shepherd siblings inherit a share double the size of that of other siblings. In this family the remaining brother and sister had in fact sold their rights to their two shepherd brothers so that the total set of rights to the flock dispersed by the process of inheritance had been reconstituted in the hands of two men, one of whom was to abandon shepherding for an industrial job in the course of 1972

and to sell out to his brother.

The large share of the flock retained by the father in this example seems to be usual. Two cases which I recorded in 1972 support it: one father aged 77 owned 40 sheep out of a total flock of 170, herded by a single son who paid his father 2 kg. of cheese per animal in return for the rest of the produce; in the second case an 82 year-old owned one-quarter of a flock of 230 sheep herded by his two married sons, receiving one-quarter of the net income. In both cases shepherds paid their father for the use of his pasture. The retention of at least significant share in the animals and the control of land gives a father the major rights to take husbandry decisions. So, while marriage establishes these sons' domestic independence, in the cases where they remain with their fathers, they must accept a prolonged period of subordination in work with the animals which provide their new household with its status. I shall point out below how this has consequences for the relations between households in the village.

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Within the last two decades the closure of marriage classes based on the ownership and transmission of livestock has broken down. New resources have entered the community, largely through State intervention in the field of education, and it is by reference to these new resources that the principal marriage classes are now defined. The value of capital provided by a shepherd's lengthy subordination to his father has been diminished

by the emergence of jobs in better working conditions, with regular pay and few risks, and access to these jobs through the qualifications provided by education has come to be regarded as the desirable quality in a marriage partner. At the same time the emigration of peasants from the village has removed the major category from whom shepherds were distinguished in the past. The rule of homogamy is as rigid as in the past but it is now defined not in terms of animal capital but on the basis of educational qualifications: the position of shepherds in the community as a whole has been radically revised.

The new resources are provided by education facilities and the white-collar jobs in the expanding bureaucracies of the welfare state. Whereas at the beginning of this century there was in Limbara an elementary school with its classrooms dispersed around the village and with half a dozen teachers who were the sons of magnates, today there are nursery, elementary and lower secondary schools with a total of 65 Limbaresi teaching in Limbara or one of the surrounding villages. These men and women are from the category of sos istudiados (the studied) based on possession of at least a school-leaving certificate. The secondary school teachers who hold degrees are mostly the sons and daughters of magnates and professionals; the elementary school teachers aged over 30 who have found established posts ( di ruolo ) are overwhelmingly the children of artisans, small shopkeepers and policemen. The children of shepherds and peasants are only represented in those teachers under 30 who have been able to take advantage of the building of the lower secondary school in Limbara (cf. table 3): none has acquired an established post,

and they must therefore accept annual transfer to distant parts of the province.

The category from which many of sos istudiados are drawn - families living from a small cash income or petty trade combined with cultivation - was to some extent peripheral to traditional Limbarese society. Some such as the police officers in the Guardia di Finanza (Revenue Guard) or carabinieri (gendarmes) spent most of their working lives outside the village, and in some cases returned with brides from other parts of Italy. Others, especially the artisans, settled in Limbara from other villages of the province: 5 of the 10 blacksmiths, for example, the largest pre-war category of artisans, came from outside Limbara, as well as both of the tailors.

A generation ago shepherds with their own livestock refused marriage into these families, and might cut off daughters who insisted on marrying an artisan (cf. p.83). Today the line separating sos istudiados from the unstudied has become as absolute as the status distinction which previously separated magnates from other villagers, and marriages are negotiated only within the classes on either side of the division. Although the studied may work alongside men and women from magnate families, in only the case mentioned above has a teacher succeeded in marrying a magnate, and the match aroused opposition. Independent shepherds are frequently resentful that their former status inferiors should now be considered superior and that offers of marriage linking families from the two categories are now refused. The differences in terms of income are not in fact great: a shepherd with 120 ewes could expect to earn about £1200 net in

a good year in 1972, comparable to an elementary-school teacher with several years' experience. But the differences in working conditions and exposure to risk, both of income and personal safety, are very large.

The position of shepherds in the traditional hierarchy has been further undermined by the emigration of peasants or their decision to become building workers, most recently on the ANIC site. The conditions of this work -- safe pay, regular hours, and at ANIC protection by trades unions -- are now considered superior to shepherding; in the course of 1972 two young married shepherds with their own animal capital abandoned the countryside to take up jobs on the factory site, and they both said that they had done so at the insistence of their wives. The consequence for shepherds themselves is an increasing difficulty in finding brides (cf. table 5 above), and the acceptance of these men, the children of their former inferiors, the peasants, as husbands for their sisters or daughters.

A final consequence of the introduction of new resources and the emigration of peasants has been to widen the geographical range in which men and women in both teacher and former peasant categories find their partners.

Table 6. Limbara: Bridegrooms by Birthplace, 1865-1965.\*

<u>Years</u>	<u>Limbara</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Province Nuoro</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Elsewhere</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Totals</u>
1866-1870:	119	96	1	1	4	3	124
1921-1924:	118	84	12	9	10	7	140
1950-1954:	123	82	14	9	13	9	150
1963-1964:	35	57	11	18	15	25	61

Note: \* includes all widowers remarrying.

Among teachers, for example, 7 of the 21 married women, and 3 of the 8 married men have found their spouses outside Limbara - in some cases they had been colleagues in the same school. An educational qualification, the basis for membership of sos istudiados, is largely transferable from community to community, just as the pattern of a teacher's work may take him to other villages, and it suggests that the social origin - the reputation derived from membership of a particular household observed and ranked by neighbours - is of diminishing importance in selecting a mate. In this, the teachers and white-collar workers can be further distinguished from shepherds.

Shepherds marry almost exclusively within Limbara. Only 2 of the 79 married herdsmen have wives from outside the community, and these women come from pastoral families in nearby villages. Nor do they acquire shepherds from other villages as affines who take up residence in Limbara or graze there. Only 2 of the 133 herdsmen were born outside Limbara and neither has in fact married into a pastoral household. None of the shepherds from the Barbagia who until recently occupied a large stretch of mountain pasture established links of kinship or affinity with the local shepherds who surrounded them in the countryside. For Limbaresi this pattern is consistent with their work: they remain on Limbara's territory all year round (ch. 7) and herding partners are often drawn from among affines. It is important therefore that their dominant moral relationships should be with men of whom they have detailed knowledge, available partly in the countryside but particularly in the narrow confines of neighbourhoods in the village.

Marriages do not generally take place until there is a house for the couple to go, and this is always provided by the man. In the past a father and his sons collaborated in the actual construction under the direction of a foreman ( su mastro ), but nowadays men usually allow a surveyor to provide a design executed by the foreman who recruits his own gang of labourers. In 1972 a number of men were giving a hand on their future homes, with the subsidiary aim of keeping the rhythm of work going and encouraging the workmen to finish the job before taking on extra work. To have to live in a rented house is considered demeaning, and the fact that quite prosperous couples began their married lives without their own home is remembered against them as a sign of their humble origins. The statistics indicate that in fact only 49 (5%) of the 976 occupied dwellings are rented rather than owned by one of the inhabitants: twenty years ago the percentage (6%) was almost identical.(1)

The home is provided with its furniture and essential domestic equipment at marriage. The bride brings the bedroom articles - furniture, bedstead, mattress and linen - and the cooking equipment; her husband is responsible for the rest. In wealthier families the groom's siblings may give the suite for the best room and the friends of both spouses give useful household articles or cash. In the past both sets of parents contributed grain and oil, ideally to last a year, so that a man leaving his natal home would have sufficient food to tide his home over until his now independent labour received its return in the following harvest. When a man and his wife occupy the

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(1) ISTAT (1955) p. 44; (1973) p. 82.

home, they take up their place in a neighbourhood.

A neighbourhood is a tightly-packed group of 20 - 40 houses which for each household constitutes the unit of most intensive interaction in the village. Although the structure of houses gives a certain amount of privacy inside, its occupants' activities cannot easily be concealed from the families around them. The women who spend their lives in the neighbourhood know a very great deal about the other families and the relations between them. They can observe how well a man supports his family by his wife's purchases of food and in the past by the amount of grain brought in after the harvest. Illness or disputes in a household, the behaviour of its women and the kind of visitors the family receives - all are matters of public information and comment, and Limbaresi quite frequently complain of the control they must submit to and the need to avoid malicious gossip. One young widow told me that she had had to hide and pretend not to be at home when a male colleague from another village paid a visit, in order that her neighbours should not see her alone in the house with a man. The detail of the information available is explicit in the advice to seek a spouse in the neighbourhood.

Each family divides the other households in the neighbourhood into one of two categories: neighbours ( bighinos ) and kin ( parentes ).<sup>(1)</sup> When asked about the atmosphere in her neighbourhood one recently-married woman remarked sadly that she didn't really have any neighbours, only kin - her husband's kin (married sisters) to boot. She added that she scarcely felt free in her relations with the few non-kin since she was constrained to accept the pattern of friendships and hostilities of her husband

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(1) cf. J. Davis: Land and Family in Pisticci. London (1973) p. 68.



and his sisters, her own connadas. Those who recognise each other as kin have a certain common identity in front of the rest of the neighbourhood, although since the recognition of kinship is bilateral and ego-centred, the composition of these sets varies considerably. Figure 1 shows the pattern of kin ties recognised by the unmarried daughter of household n° 1 in a neighbourhood of 37 households:

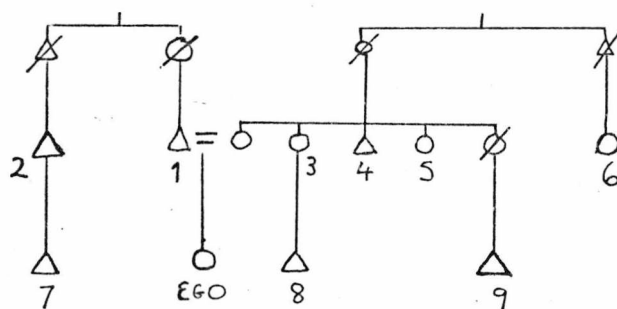


Fig. 1

A second example with a similar pattern, based on the husband in household 3, comes from a different neighbourhood (fig. 2)

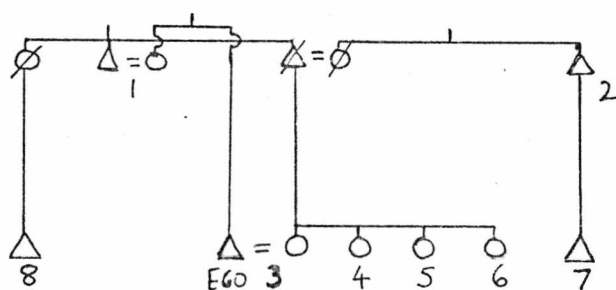


Fig. 2

The core of these two kin sets is provided by the descendants of sets of siblings, generally to the range of first cousins,

although more distant relatives may be drawn in precisely on the grounds of residence. These men and women acknowledge their relationship, though the importance they give it in daily business varies considerably. The women may help each other if there is bread to be made or linen and food to be prepared for a wedding, and their children may be inseparable companions. In other cases a formal salute will be given on meeting but there will be little everyday contact between the households.

Such configurations of kin are created by marriages within the neighbourhood, by the purchase or construction of a house for a son near his natal home, and occasionally by the demolition of an inherited house and the construction of more modern houses on the same site divided between the heirs. In general the interaction concerns women and the help which is offered or demanded for everyday domestic tasks: the men of each household usually have little to do with one another since the time that they spend in the neighbourhood is passed in their own homes after work. The exception to this is provided by the families of independent shepherds organised around the joint herding of a single flock.

Since fathers provide their sons with houses, there is some choice in where the new home can be. For peasants, who cease to work with their fathers after marriage, there is no special reason for the two homes to be near one another. However for shepherds who have taken a share of their father's flock as a basis for their marriage and who continue to work with their father and brothers, there is a strong incentive to live near to each other after marriage. In 1971-2 there were 12 sets of

co-operating brothers of whom at least one in each set was married: in 5 cases where all the brothers were married, they had all set up home in their father's neighbourhood, and in a further 4 cases, in which only one brother was married, he too lived close beside his father's home.

This proximity has obvious uses in allowing these men close contact with each other for all tasks and decisions concerning the flock. Messages and help can be passed on quickly and raise the least possible notice among other villagers. Men who arrive in Limbara from the countryside can find out immediately where their herding partners are, and all information concerning the flock can be kept narrowly circumscribed. Living close together ensures that close supervision can be kept on each family's behaviour for the protection of the joint material interest.

Since the brothers are away nightly or weekly, with the flock, this supervision is exercised by their wives, connadas. If their father-in-law is still in active control of the joint flock, their mother-in-law keeps the accounts and distributes shares of the income to them. The amounts distributed and the uses which connadas make of them can be observed, and any suspicion of favouritism can be more easily spotted in the same neighbourhood than if their homes are far apart. Closeness makes equality easier but it intensifies friction in the case of a dispute.

So long as the flock remains undivided, the solidarity of this set of households in the neighbourhood reinforces the defence established in the countryside. As the sons in each home reach an age to demand shares of the flock, the pressure on their fathers to separate and use their sons' labour to build up their

own flock finally under their own independent control is very strong. As this happens, the now separate families of married brothers occupy the awkward position of holding a great deal of information about the patterns and regularities of each other's behaviour, derived both from past collaboration and continuing residence in the same neighbourhood, with no longer any corresponding joint source of livelihood to restrain the use of that information. Indeed where they are in conflict over pasture or the division of the flock and land has provoked disagreement, there may be more positive incentives to use this information in reprisals.

Figure 3 shows the kin core of one such neighbourhood, based on 7 separate households between some of which relations were especially strained:

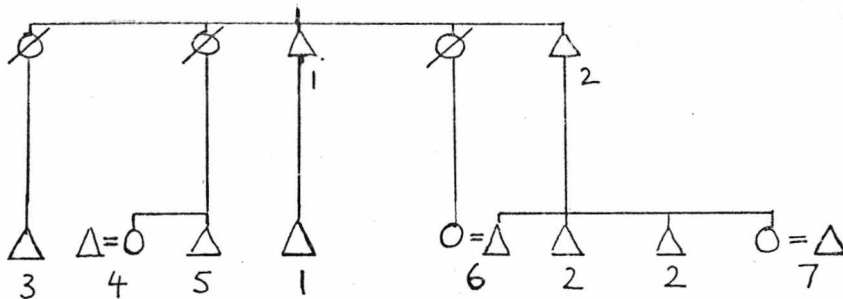


Fig. 3

A generation ago a single flock herded by the senior members of household 1 and 2 had supported their descendants who are now organised around three flocks based on households 1 + 4 + 5, 2 + 6, and 7. The narrow confines of the neighbourhood keep the memory of an unjust division alive and the threat of revenge continually present.

For shepherds therefore the regular cycle of collaboration and division creates a pattern of distinctively intense relations between kin in their neighbourhoods. The prolonged collaboration until their father's retirement or death in order to maximise their shares of his flock encourages them to set up house nearby; the division of pasture at his death provides each brother with the basis for his independent management of his own animals and the possibility of increasing his flock to satisfy the subsistence demands of his growing family. His former partners - brothers or, for his sons, first cousins - now become the men who hold information without responsibility as far as his own flock is concerned, and thus become his best-placed opponents. Other families may of course have strong friendships or enmities in the neighbourhood, but only among pastoral households with their own flocks is this brusque passage from extreme solidarity to potential conflict characteristic of the relations with the men and women around them. As I shall show in chapter 7 precisely the same structure of relations may be replicated in the countryside when kin who are former herding partners are thrown together in conflict across a boundary, just as their wives are in range of daily contact in the neighbourhood. The hostility stoked by this double division is considered to be a common stimulus to livestock-theft.

Chapter 4 : Land and Livestock in 1865.

The intention of the following chapters is to set the family and kin relationships of Limbaresi in the context of the village economy between 1865 - 1972. I shall focus on the social consequences of changes in land tenure which were accompanied more or less simultaneously by the incorporation of pastoralism into an export-dominated market economy. As I pointed out in the introduction, some writers see these consequences as the maintenance of the isolated anti-social pastoralism of the central highlands; others look more closely at the effects of these changes at village level, especially on the patterns of stratification: "Tribal or kinship societies are familiar with raiding but lack the internal stratification which creates the bandit as a figure of social protest or rebellion. However, when such communities, especially those familiar with feuding and raiding such as hunters and pastoralists, develop their own systems of class differentiation, or when they are absorbed into larger economies resting on class conflict, they may supply a disproportionately large number of social bandits, as in Sardinia ..... with luck we may be able to fix the transition chronologically to within one or two generations, e.g. in the Sardinian highlands in the half century from the 1880s to the 1930s".(1) Hobsbawm had earlier argued that the

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(1) Hobsbawm (1972) pp. 18-19.

direction of these changes was towards the polarisation and proletarianisation of village social structures: "The coming of the modern economy ..... may, and indeed probably will disrupt the social balance of kinship society, by turning some kins into rich families and others into 'poor' or by disrupting the kin itself".(1) Finally, "still less can they (social bandits) understand what is happening to Sardinian villages that make some men have plenty of cattle and others, who used to have a few, have none at all".(2)

The evolution of Barbagian villages is relevant here because in the course of this century their shepherd populations come directly into contact with Limbaresi; this network of relations, and the use made of it, is crucial to both sets of shepherds, and I shall argue that one aspect of banditry - sheep-theft - is related to the different social constraints based on the different control of resources in these villages, which appear after 1865.

The following description has the year 1865 as its base line for comparison and presents the situation on the eve of law no. 2252 of April 23, 1865. This law empowered village councils in Sardinia to survey, divide up and rent or sell large tracts of land ( terreni ademprivili ), covering roughly one-fifth of the island, on which villages exercised various rights of use. This measure was not the first formal modification of the framework of land tenure established by the Aragonese some five

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(1) Hobsbawm (1971) p.4.

(2) loc. cit. p.24.

centuries earlier; but it is only after this law, from the final third of the 19th century onwards, that the traditional system of land tenure and use is substantially and irreversibly transformed.

I shall use the date 1865 throughout, even though the evidence is mostly taken from the years between 1830-1875. The sources are various and of very uneven quality: the reports of continental administrators based on journeys round the island, documents from the village archives, and local and national collections of statistics. I indicate in the text or footnotes where the evidence is especially ambiguous or perhaps misleading.

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In the census of 1861 Limbara's population of 2858 was distributed in 763 households ( famiglie ) with an average of 3.7 members each.(1) With the exception of a handful of professionals (doctor, lawyer, notary and priests) and some twenty shopkeepers and artisans, the population drew its sole livelihood from land and livestock in the form of produce directly consumed, exchanged for other produce or cash. The workforce was more or less evenly divided between men who cultivated cereals and men who combined cultivation with the herding of animals: Angius in 1834 recorded 460 cultivators and 420 herdsmen-cultivators (who for simplicity I shall refer to as herdsmen or shepherds). He also observed that the women of Limbara were kept busy by more than 300 handlooms.(2)

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(1) Cens. Gen. della Pop., cit.

(2) V. Angius in Casalis (1834), Vol. II.



The distribution of rights to land by category of owner and size of property in 1865 is set out in the following table. In all but 9 cases each property had a single owner: there were two exceptions in properties over 30 ha., one being the largest property in the village (191.79 ha.) held jointly by two brothers. This table is constructed from the information provided by the cadaster of 1851, which was the first one ever drawn up for Sardinia.

Table 7. Limbara : Land Ownership, 1851.

<u>Size ha.</u>	<u>Properties:</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Land ha.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total property %:</u>
1. <u>Private:</u>					
0 - 1 :	384 *	46	3253.87	55	30
1 - 10 :	294	35			
10 - 30 :	111	13			
30 - 100:	38	5	2655.41	45	24
100 + :	5				
<u>Total :</u>	832	99	5909.28	100	54
2. <u>Church land:</u> †					
3. <u>Commune</u> :	1	-	106.34	-	1
4. <u>State</u> :	1	-	828.25	-	8
	1	-	4043.24	-	37
<u>GRAND TOTAL:</u>	841	99	10877.11	100	100

Notes: \* includes 63 properties consisting of a rustic house ( casa rurale ) and perhaps an adjoining vegetable patch.

† land belonging to individual priests is classified as 'private'.

In addition 44 Limbaresi possessed rights to 137.48 ha. in the neighbouring village of Birularzu. Two priests and 14 landowners held 96.78 ha., 20 peasants who owned land in Limbara held the remaining 11.54 ha. No man from other villages held land in Limbara.

Two features of land ownership are clear. Firstly, rights to land were widely distributed through the population. Since land appears to have been transmitted at the death of the owner - only 57 (7%) of the 853 Limbaresi with land in Limbara or Birularzu had fathers still alive in 1851 - when heirs would for the most part have set up houses of their own, most households almost certainly had access to land belonging to one of their members.

Secondly, there were considerable inequalities in the size of holdings. Almost half the owners possessed plots of less than 1 ha. apiece, while a mere 5% held nearly half of all private land with average holdings of 61 ha. each and were also responsible for administering the church property.(1)

The cadaster provides very limited information on the people whose properties it registers. The 43 largest landowners included 6 priests and most of the professionals of Limbara - 2 lawyers, 2 notaries and a banchiere ('banker'). Most, descendants of the noble families recorded for the village a century earlier(2), were given the title Don or Donna, although not all those with this title owned large amounts of land. No other occupations or

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(1) see Appendix at end of chapter. (p.135)

(2) De Viry (1746).

trades were recorded so we cannot distinguish between artisans, shepherds and peasants. However, since the list of owners records both name and surname, it contains one further piece of information: 138 of the 769 landed properties (excluding the 63 rural houses) in Limbara belonged to women and accounted for 766.36 ha., 13% of privately owned land.

Table 8. Limbara : Properties owned by Women, 1851.

	<u>Size ha.</u>	<u>No. Properties</u> *	<u>Amount of land ha.</u>
1. Vineyards + arable.	0 - 10 :	80	86.26
	10 - 30 :	18	280.48
	30 + :	8	393.12
2. Vineyards only.	—	<u>32</u>	<u>6.50</u>
	<u>TOTAL</u> :	138	766.36

Note: \* Each property has a single owner except in 5 cases, consisting of 4 pairs of sisters and 1 set of 3 sisters.

One-half (72) of these women are identified as widows however, which suggests that they were only usufructuaries of land which would revert at their deaths to their dead husbands' kin. Nevertheless the terms of wills and property divisions extant for this period show clearly that women could and did hold land in their own right, although in practice, once the land credited to widows has been subtracted, they transmit a

very small part of the total. Certainly their weight in the population (49%) was not matched by their importance as owners and usufructuaries of land (17%).

Ownership of livestock was much less widely diffused than rights to land in this period. The following table sets out the numbers of owners and of livestock recorded in the first national animal census of 1875.

Table 9. Limbara : Livestock Ownership, 1875.

<u>Animals.</u>	<u>No.</u>	<u>No. owners</u>	<u>Owners as % total pop.*</u>	<u>Owners as % total households †</u>
Sheep	9309	112	4	15
Goats	534			
Oxen	490	202	7	26
Cows	772			
Pigs	1134	48	2	6
Donkeys	153	264	9	35
Horses	390			

Source: Statistica del Bestiame. Min. Agric., Ind. e Comm.  
Roma. (1875), pp. 384-5.

Notes: \* 2905

† 1861 figs.

At most, one-third of the households had a beast of burden or transport (donkey or horse), about one-quarter owned a draught animal necessary for agricultural work, and only one in seven owned either sheep or goats, which are numerically by far the most important animals.

The precision of the numbers of livestock is misleading however, given the notorious difficulties of counting livestock, especially in a transhumant economy.<sup>(1)</sup> Owners may deliberately understate the size of their flocks in fear of taxation, and there is little way of checking their declarations; the size of flocks varies considerably in the course of the year before and after the slaughter of lambs which may or may not be included in the count; whole flocks and herds in transit may be omitted, and others and their owners may be attributed to the village where they are pasturing on the night of the census rather than that of origin; finally, it is practically impossible to ensure that the criteria of a national census are applied uniformly throughout the country. Merely stating the difficulties makes it no easier to decide how accurate a particular statistic is, but there are two reasons why the figures for Limbara, particularly as regards ownership, are less misleading than this list of problems suggests. Firstly, livestock remained within the village boundaries all year round so that both ownership and to a lesser extent the actual size of flocks and herds were matters of more public knowledge than in those communities based on

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(1) The census of 1881, 6 years later, shows totals of 15629 sheep (153 owners), 322 goats (18 owners), 1460 cattle (238 owners) and 1065 pigs (29 owners).

long-range transhumance. Secondly, the village council imposed an animal capitation fee on all animals using public land (the vast majority), and this record would therefore provide a reliable basis for the national statistics: outright evasion is certainly made more difficult in Limbara than elsewhere.

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The 10,877 ha. of Limbara's territory are distributed through plain, hill and mountain. In 1865 each of these three areas was broadly distinguished by different uses of land, rights of ownership and use, and category of owner. The geographical patterning of these differences was typical of Sardinian communities, but Limbara was perhaps unusual in the neat correspondence in distinctions of tenure and use to different altitudes.(1)

In the hill belt around the settlement itself lay three sorts of land: vineyards, enclosed private properties of arable or pasture, and two stretches of communal land bounding the hill to north and south.

The vineyards covered 218 ha. and were mostly terraced along the steep sides of the narrow valley to the west. Wine was produced for local consumption and for sale in the nearby villages of the Tirso plain which had no vineyards of their own; Limbaresi were said to have derived a considerable income from this sale.(2) Most households owned a small vineyard, and some,

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(1) The best historical accounts of land tenure in Sardinia are Boscolo (1967) and Le Lannou (1941).

(2) L'Indipendenza Italiana, Cagliari, 8 - VIII - 1848 p.1.

with properties of 0 - 1 ha., possessed only a vineyard: one-quarter of the properties held by women included no other kind of land.

The enclosed properties (tanche or tancati, from the Sard tancare = to close) consisted of scrub land with olives or almond trees, bounded by dry stone walls in accordance with the Edicts of Enclosures of 1806 and 1820. By the terms of these Edicts men who could demonstrate their rights to a particular plot of land were encouraged to subtract it from the constraints of crop-fallow rotation or ademprivili rights (see below) by surrounding it with a wall, hedge or ditch and to invest capital to improve its productivity. The aim of the Savoyard rulers who promulgated these edicts was to establish a rational progressive agriculture founded on the rigid separation of arable and pasture and the extension of full rights of use to men who held a claim to ownership. However, since there was no cadaster by which such claims could be verified, the often successful attempts to enclose land by men without rights or title provoked outbreaks of violence in the year following the edicts, especially in the province of Nuoro; (1) a series of commissions had to be set up to investigate and where necessary rectify the abuses.

In Limbara 25 requests to enclose were made to the provincial intendant between 1826 - 1842, of which 5 were considered to infringe the rights of other villagers or to incorporate public byways or drinking-fountains and were therefore turned down. 10 of the 20 successful applications were made by the largest landowners of 1865 and a further 5 probably by their fathers.

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(1) L. Del Piano: La Sollevazione contro le chiudende. Cagliari, (1971).

All these enclosures lay in the hills around the village, and although the total area was certainly small (not more than 400 ha.), it provided the best quality pasture in the village territory.(1) In 1865 land in the hills was almost exclusively owned by magnates: 9 men held 260 ha. of the total circa 700 ha. of private land, and all landowners with more than 30 ha. had part of their properties there.

The hill area (up to c. 700 m.) was bounded to the north, west and south by three stretches of enclosed communal land. To the north where hill becomes mountain lay Su Padru, 368.83 ha. of wooded slopes reserved exclusively for villagers' bestiame domito ( 'tame livestock' ): donkeys, horses and the oxen and cattle used for ploughing and transport. Bounding village territory to the west was Sas Costas, 242 ha. of pasture rented annually to livestock-owners. To the south where hill meets plain stretched Sa Tanca 'e sa Idda, 151.44 ha. In the past access to this land had probably been confined to men resident in Limbara but in this period, in order to shore up the village finances burdened by redemption payments and land tax, Sa Tanca was let annually either to the highest bidder in a public auction announced in all nearby villages or by private treaty. However the contract included a clause specifying whether the land was to be used as pasture or arable and usually binding the lessee

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(1) This information is taken from the State Archives at Cagliari, Segreteria di Stato, 2a serie; 1607: Chiudende nella provincia di Nuoro.



to sub-let to Limbaresi only. All contracts extant for the period 1855 - 1865 state that the tanca was to be used for grazing by the draught-animals of the village; herds of sheep, goats and cattle were explicitly excluded except in 1863 when, "in response to repeated demonstrations by the population against the lack of meat", the tanca was ceded to two butchers who were allowed to graze their sheep there, presumably in return for a guarantee that the lambs would be slaughtered and sold in the village.

The plain covers approximately 5000 ha., just under half the total village territory, and in 1865 contained all the arable land and, with the exception of the tanche and vineyards, all privately-owned land in Limbara. Although, as table 7 suggests, rights there were widely distributed through the population so that there were few households with none at all, these rights of bare ownership did not carry with them the right to choose how the land was to be used. The agricultural use of the plain was determined by a system of crop-fallow rotation common in Sardinia, applied within a number of zones conventionally bounded by paths or streams. Within each zone one part ( bidattone ) was allocated to cultivation for two years and the remainder ( paberile ) grazed by the livestock of the village. At the end of this period the fallow, or part of it, was put under the plough, and the area hitherto cultivated reverted to pasture.

Since there were no walls or fences in the open plain, the protection of crops from livestock was a crucial concern. Its difficulties were aggravated by the rent of all the uncultivated spaces ( i vacui ) in the bidattone - which were large enough

to provide 'abundant pasture' - to owners of sheep and cattle which thus constituted an even more direct threat than the animals on the paberile.(1) The task of protecting crops belonged to the barracelli, a group of owners (32 in 1865) elected annually and paid out of a levy in cash and grain on all villagers who owned livestock and vineyards.(2) Their job was to patrol the area sown and to impound animals found straying within it; the owners were obliged to pay a fine for their recovery, and the cultivator whose crops had been damaged was reimbursed from the fund created by levy and fines. Only in the period between the harvest and the preparation of land for sowing (roughly July to October) were these strictly-enforced divisions between arable and pasture relaxed while livestock were given the run of the stubble.

The principal crops were hard wheat and barley, and smaller quantities of maize, flax and pulses were also grown, but no statistics are available either for the extension of single crops or for the total area sown annually. Angius records 'arable' as

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(1) Indipendenza Italiana, cit.

(2) The barracellato, an institution for the defence of oxen and crops, was set up in most Sardinian villages in the course of the 17th century. The conditions of service were reorganised in 1853 and 1898, and the institution itself has often only disappeared from each village with the abandonment of agriculture. See N. Angioi: L'Istituto del Barracellato in Sardegna. Cagliari (1969).

2400 ha. which, to take account of crop-fallow rotation, should be reduced to 1200 ha. cultivated each year. This estimate is close to a calculation based on village subsistence requirements on the assumption that very little surplus agricultural produce was sold outside the village.(1) Calculating the village population as 2253 consumption units, the annual requirements of each unit as 3 quintals of grain and the average yield per hectare as 7 quintals, then the cereal crops necessary to feed the population could be grown on 965 ha.(2) To this figure should be added the area whose produce was needed to provide the seed for the following year's sowing and the crops sold to pay taxes, and the extent of minor crops. This very approximate estimate suggests that in 1865 between one-fifth and one-quarter of the plain was cultivated annually and the remainder devoted to pasture.

The sheep and cattle maintained on this pasture were an integral part of agricultural production since the manure they left, especially in the pens where they were kept at night, was the only fertiliser for generally poor soil: the seed/product ratios for this period were given as 1:5-10 for wheat and 1:8-12 for barley, but the yield was likely to be reduced by the flooding of the streams and river Tirso.(3) Beyond its technical aspects

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(1) L'Indipendenza Italiana, cit.

(2) Consumption units are reckoned as 0.5 for 0 - 15 year olds, 0.8 for women and 1.0 for men: each unit consumes 3 quintals of grain annually. The figure for average yield is taken from the 1929 Agricultural Cadaster and is probably similar to the yield in 1865.

(3) L'indipendenza Italiana, cit.

the system of crop-fallow rotation established the dependence of cultivators on access to land owned by others: the alternation of arable and pasture required a household head to gain access to land in different parts of the plain every two years in order to grow the cereals to feed his family. Men with insufficient or no land and who held their property in a single fragment therefore had to negotiate the exchange or rent of land in the bidattone with other men; conversely, those owners whose properties consisted of fragments of land in different parts of the plain were able to offer at least some of these fragments to peasants or shepherds for cultivating or grazing. The evidence from the cadaster shows that there was a broad direct correlation between size of property and the range of geographical dispersal of its constituent fragments: the bigger the property, the greater its scatter.

The degree of such scatter can be indicated crudely by noting the number of mapped frazioni (out of a maximum of 22 containing private land) in which each owner held his land. The biggest property in Limbara was scattered through 20 frazioni, and the 5 properties of over 100 ha. had a distribution through an average of 16 frazioni; the next largest 15 properties were distributed through an average of 11 frazioni. At the other end of the scale the properties of less than 1 ha. consisted for the most part either of a vineyard or a vineyard and a single stretch of arable. In the context of crop-fallow rotation the fragmentation of the larger owners' properties constituted a source of power since it enabled these landowners to offer the basic means of production, land, every year to men with insufficient land of

their own. Explaining why the Limbaresi had scarcely taken advantage of the Edicts of Enclosures, the village council noted in a letter to the provincial intendant in 1826 that the larger landowners were indeed very reluctant to disturb this pattern: "For two reasons the Limbaresi have been unable to take advantage of the beneficial clauses (of the Edict of 1820) : firstly, because of lack of means, and secondly because those landowners who do have the economic possibilities to enclose hold their properties in separate fragments and do not wish either to sell or exchange them. An order either to sell land to the larger owners (ai più possidenti) or to exchange land would be necessary".(1)

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The remaining 4043.24 ha. of village territory, the mountain, belonged to the State in 1865. Until 1839 this land had been part of the feudal demesne, but with the abolition of feudal tenure in the island between 1836-9 it had passed to the Savoy State in return for cash compensation and income to the lord of the manor resident in Spain. The mountain was exclusively devoted to livestock and there was an explicit ban on all cultivation there. Angius describes it as "a continual forest... (which) has always been a refuge for criminals and outlaws who cannot be captured without the help of a spy". And its evident insecurity contrasts with the relative order imposed in the plain by the barracelli. This distinction is also reflected in

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(1) State Archives, Cagliari. loc. cit.

the broad classification of livestock: 'tame livestock' (bestiame domito), mainly draught-animals, were used only in the plain and were grazed on the enclosed communal land there, while the woods and scrub of the mountain were reserved for 'wild livestock' (bestiame rude) - flocks and herds of sheep, goats and cattle.

Over at least part of the mountain villagers exercised ademprivili rights: to gather wood, to collect acorns for their domestic pigs and for sale in nearby villages and to graze a few goats, cows and possibly sheep for their household subsistence. The produce of these animals was directly consumed by the owner's family, and the adjective used to describe them - mannalitta - derives from su mannale (pig), the paradigm of an animal whose produce (ham, meat, sausages, lard) goes entirely to provision a home. The number of mannalittas animals that each Limbarese might graze in the mountain was restricted: in the early 19th century the administrator of the feudal manor complained that some Limbarese were passing off up to 20 cows as mannalittas, and he fixed the limit at 3 plus calves for each inhabitant.(1) For Sardinia generally this number was set at 4, or 6 in the case of sufficient pasture, in 1827.(2) Since these animals were not subject to tax and were almost certainly not included in the statistics of 1875, I have no idea of their total number. Most households probably had one mannalitta animal, usually a goat; some shaky evidence on their importance comes from the

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(1) State Archives, Cagliari: Archivio feudale, Vol. 76 bis, fasc. 4.

(2) Leggi Civili e Criminali del Regno di Sardegna: Torino (1827), art. 1997.

surveys of food consumption carried out by the Società Italiana di Etnologia e Antropologia between 1872-8 in which the meat consumption of the 'poorer classes' in Sicily and Sardinia was second only to that in Lombardy and the Veneto.(1)

Sheep were numerically by far the most important of the animals that grazed in the mountain. They provided work for the greater part of the pastoral labour force, and it is likely that many of the cattle were herded by each shepherd alongside his main flock of sheep. I shall therefore concentrate on the main features of shepherding here.

The Sardinian breed of sheep ( razza ovina sarda ) is primarily a milk producer. Attempts during the 18th and 19th centuries to improve its meat and wool by crossing it with Barbary sheep from North Africa, Merinos from Spain and other breeds from continental Italy and Sicily merely reduced its milk yield without improving its meat or wool production and were consequently abandoned. Ewes breed once annually between December and April, beginning in their second year and continuing till the age of eight when they are generally slaughtered. Both the twinning rate and the milk yield improve as the ewe gets older. The percentage of twin births rises from a mere 1% among ewes of 2 years to 15% among ewes of 5 - 7 years; similarly between first and third lactations the annual milk yield improves by about 30% reaching the maximum normal level on Sardinia's unimproved pastures of 90 - 100 litres. Ewes are milked twice daily until early summer, then once daily until July or August

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(1) quoted by S. Somogyi in : Storia d'Italia, Torino 1973  
Vol. V, tab. 2, p. 847.

when lactation ceases, and the cycle is renewed after the birth of lambs the following winter.(1)

An average ewe weighing 40 kg. is reckoned to require 410 kg. of grass forage for its own subsistence and a further 150 kg. to reach the annual lactation of 100 litres. Today, as presumably a century ago, the hay yield on Limbara's natural pastures in mountain and plain is approximately 1200 kg. per hectare so that each fully productive ewe needs 0.50 ha. of pasture annually; animals grazed in the hills, the tanche of the magnates in 1865 where the hay yield is 2400 kg. per hectare, need less. When this level of nutrition falls, the milk yield begins to decline.(2)

This ratio of two sheep per hectare seems to be average for Sardinia generally,(3) although of course it takes no account of yearly or local variations in temperature, rainfall and other hazards such as fire and insects, all of which influence the amount of grazing available.(4) In 1865, before it was possible to buy fodder to make up for annual pasture deficiencies,

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- (1) These details are taken from Mason (1967) and the animal breeding abstracts cited therein.
  - (2) Ewes' nutrition requirements are given in Pampaloni and Idda (1974). Hay yield in Limbara is reported in Cossu (1961), pp. 63-8.
  - (3) Olla (1969), p. 98.
  - (4) Le Lannou, op. cit., documents and emphasises the often extreme variations of climate which condition grazing in the various parts of Sardinia.



flocks were clearly much more at the mercy of these natural factors just as they were more liable to decimation by disease. Nevertheless in mid-19th century Limbara the total of between 9000 - 15000 sheep could be easily accommodated in all but exceptionally poor years on the c. 8500 of natural pasture - 4500 ha. in the paberile and hill, and 4000 ha. in the mountain - with a reasonable margin of extra pasture. A proportion of these sheep had in any case not yet given birth and therefore required nutrition for subsistence only. The cattle used as draught-animals were maintained without competition on the communal land.

The overall sufficiency of pasture within village territory and its distribution at different altitudes had two consequences. Firstly, it enabled shepherds to keep their flocks within Limbara all year round and to practice a form of herding cooperation which allowed them to cultivate cereals as well as maintain a flock. The subsistence requirements of their livestock did not compel men to move outside the village for long periods and thus forfeit their rights to arable land falling in the bidattone: they were able to provide their families with staple cereal crops.

Secondly, shepherds could move their flocks to take account of the different weather conditions at each altitude - the higher rainfall in the mountain regenerating pastures more rapidly, and the more temperate winters in the plain shielding ewes and their lambs. Short-range movements also prevent the exhaustion of particular grazing-grounds, and in the extensive Limbarese pastoral vocabulary s'irghiu denotes a move with just such a purpose in mind.

The unit of pasture in the mountain was the cussorgia, a vaguely-defined stretch of land to which each shepherd had acquired access by petition to the feudal administrator of the manor. Although at the abolition of feudalism in 1839 a shepherd who had enjoyed thirty years' uninterrupted use of the same cussorgia was entitled to convert these use rights into outright ownership by enclosing the land, no Limbarese had in fact done so. The administration of the land passed into the hands of the State and village council but in other respects the traditional system persisted largely unaltered in 1865. In return for an annual capitation fee on his flock each shepherd was granted the right to occupy a hut in the mountain and to use the pasture around it. He did not thereby acquire the right to exclude other flocks however, which could only be exercised when permission to cultivate a part of the concession had also been obtained: in Limbara, as in many other villages of central Sardinia, cultivation in the feudal demesne was banned. On the other hand a shepherd could only be evicted from his cussorgia when the land had remained ungrazed for two successive years - that is, when in effect the grantee had already abandoned the land by choice or misfortune.

In the plain shepherds grazed their flocks in the paberile or on the land left uncultivated in the bidattone. Where their own land was insufficient, they rented pasture from other owners almost certainly by paying in cheese at the rate of 8 kg. per hectare. I have no direct evidence that this was the medium and rate of payment in 1865; but if it was not, then it had certainly become so by the beginning of this century.

Although the ownership of sheep was less widely diffused than the rights to land, it was characterised by similar inequalities. The following table is constructed from an incomplete document in the communal archives:

Table 10. Limbara : Ownership of Sheep, 1877.

<u>No. of sheep</u>	<u>No. owners</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Total no. sheep</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Average no. of sheep.</u>
1 - 100 :	89	82	? 5000	55	56
100 - 200 :	7	7	1078	12	} 216
200 - 300 :	8	7	1750	19	
<u>300 +</u> :	<u>4</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1285</u>	<u>14</u>	
<u>TOTAL</u> :	108	100	9113	100	

Source: communal archives.

This picture is not complete, although I think not misleading, in two ways. Firstly, the figure for the total number of sheep in the 1 - 100 category is an informed guess to make the total up to at least the 9000 sheep recorded in the 1875 statistics; only the number of all owners and the sizes of individual holdings of over 100 sheep have survived in the communal archives.

Secondly, since the document was compiled for capitation fees on demesne land in the mountain, the list did not include

those magnates whose animals used pasture in hill and plain only; in fact the names of several magnates credited with livestock in other documents of this period do not appear in this list. Their inclusion would certainly raise the number of sheep in the larger holdings, probably sufficiently to balance any underestimation in the 1 - 100 category and to maintain the range of inequalities between larger and smaller owners.

18% of these owners held nearly half the total number of sheep with average individual holdings four times the size of the remaining 82% of owners. The largest owner recorded held 360 sheep.

These figures refer to individual ownership and not to the effective unit of management, the flock, which may contain sheep belonging to different owners. In 1842, in the legal conclusion of an earlier dispute between the manor administrator and Limbaresi, the administrator claimed the rights of a capitation fee on sheep of 54 different marks ( signi ) which very likely represented 54 different flocks.<sup>(1)</sup> That the number of flocks should have been much inferior to the number of owners is consistent with the information provided by the details of extant herding contracts and with what we know from other sources of the patterns of pastoral work. Broadly these flocks can be classified according to the different relations between those who own the animals and those who herd them.

In the first place the larger flocks were organised by a

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(1) State Archives, Cagliari. Archivio feudale, loc. cit.

partnership between men of clearly unequal status, reflected in the terms of their contract.(1) A magnate who perhaps had a professional job and in any case did not work in the countryside, entrusted his sheep to one or more shepherds with or without animals of their own. In both cases the contract was binding for six years "according to the custom of the village"; the shepherds accepted all responsibility for the animals, pledged their own property in the case of drastic losses, promised not to include other men's sheep in the flock and bound their heirs to fulfil all these obligations in the event of their own premature deaths.

When a magnate entrusted his animals to a single shepherd without animals of his own, the shepherd was responsible for finding other men to help him with the flock in order that he should also be able to cultivate the cereal crops to feed his family. The work of, typically, four men was organised so that each week two men herded the flock while the other two performed their separate agricultural tasks: each Sunday they changed places.(2) This pattern of weekly alternation is reflected in

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- (1) Examples of these contracts exist in the State Archives in Nuoro. They are unclassified but can be found by looking through the documents filed in the name of the lawyers and notaries from each village.
- (2) This alternation was criticised by the anonymous correspondent of L'Indipendenza Italiana. "The villagers themselves recognise that shepherds' performance of cultivation is extremely damaging. It means that tasks are delayed and badly done .... that (the shepherds) do not grow devoted to the industrious life of the peasant, and that trying to do too much they get little from either activity".

the name for this kind of shepherd, su chidarzu deriving from the Sard sa chida = week, and the verb acchidare means 'take the place of'. The magnate provided all the livestock and probably all the pasture - the contracts did not mention land except in an injunction to the shepherds to use grazing "in the usual places" ( nei luoghi soliti ) - and he received one-half of the annual produce of cheese, buttermilk curds, meat and wool; the shepherds provided all the labour and divided the remaining half of the produce between themselves.

Rather more common among the contracts I have been able to trace is a form of contract known legally as atterzio and in dialect as a cabuzzu. By its terms the magnate ( cumonargiu maggiore = major partner ) contributed two-thirds of the total flock in return for one-half of the annual produce; the shepherd provided one-third of the animals and received the other half of the produce from which he had to meet all extra labour costs and any incidental expenses. Again, the cost of pasture was never mentioned: probably when pasture belonged to the magnate, the shepherd paid in proportion to the number of his animals, and when extra land was rented, the expense was either divided proportionately or equally between the two partners. At the end of the six-year contract the total number of sheep were shared equally between magnate and shepherd. In some contracts the magnate guaranteed himself against loss through a clause allowing him to recover at least the original number of sheep he had contributed regardless of whether the flock had increased or diminished in size.

On the magnate's side the risks of entrusting his animals to another man in the considerable insecurity of the countryside

were to some extent reduced by this contract of atterzio: it provided him with a partner with animal capital of his own and therefore directly concerned in the joint flock's safety. From the shepherd's point of view this contract allowed him a higher annual income, since having contributed only one-third of the flock he received half of its total produce, and it ensured him an eventual increase in his animal capital. Also, if the flock was grazed on the magnate's pasture in the hills, his own animals were provided with the best-quality grazing in the village and were easier to herd, since the land was enclosed and lay within easy reach of the village itself.

The second type of flock is not recorded in any contracts since the men who owned the sheep had the equal responsibility of herding them. These shepherds worked either with their sons or in collaboration with other shepherds to allow each man to combine agricultural and pastoral activities. Since the list of men in this category with 1 - 100 animals is missing, no definite amount of land can be attributed to them; but they certainly came from households with rights to 10 - 30 ha. in the plain and to a cussorgia in the mountain, and they were therefore very largely independent of other villagers both for access to land and for the labour requirements of their livestock.

All shepherds, whether independent or employed by magnates, transformed their ewes' milk into cheese in their countryside huts before bringing it back to the village for conservation. Much of this cheese was consumed in Limbara itself, either directly by the shepherd's family or in payment for land rented in the plain but a part may have been sold to traders for export to continental Italy or the Mediterranean ports of France and

Spain. Sardinia had long exported cheese(1) but nothing appears to be known about how far the villages of central hills and highlands contributed to this trade. Lambs were slaughtered and sold locally by early summer, since butchers in Limbara were forbidden to sell mutton or lamb after July 31. The very poor-quality wool was used in making clothes and blankets.

This distribution of material resources suggests a fairly clear pattern of stratification in Limbara in 1865. A small group of magnates dominated village society: they owned nearly half all private land and livestock, administered church properties, held the few professional posts and controlled the village council. Beneath them were some 50 - 100 households supplied not only with grain but also the produce of sheep and cattle, and with independent access to much of the arable and pasture they used. The actual size of their flocks at any one time was probably determined by the amount of labour available and the unpredictabilities of climate and disease. Finally, most of the remaining households were largely dependent on the magnates for work with livestock or some of the arable land for their subsistence crops; the more fortunate possessed draught-animals, while the least fortunate could provide only their own labour. The basic resource which established the magnates' position as patrons to the men who worked in the countryside was arable land rather than pasture.

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(1) F. Braudel: *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II*, London (Collins) 1972. Vol. I, pp. 150-1.



In this final section I suggest that this pattern of stratification and of earning a livelihood - a small group of dominant families, restricted ownership of livestock, a sizeable agricultural sector and the combination of agricultural and pastoral work - also characterised in 1865 those central Sardinian communities often simply described as eternally pastoral and contrasted as such with hill villages like Limbara. I choose my two examples, Orgosolo and Gavoi, for different reasons.

Orgosolo, at 591 m. above sea level, is one of the very few Barbagian villages about which there is any ethnographic evidence, and it is often taken to be the most representative. "At Orgosolo, more than in any other village of Sardinia and the Barbagia, can be found together all the fundamental factors of banditry which make Orgosolo the nodal point of all the contradictions lying at the root of banditry", according to one document of the recent Parliamentary Commission of Enquiry.(1) This conclusion unconsciously echoes the words of Alfredo Niceforo some seventy years earlier: "Orgosolo is the village which gives life to the cream of Nuoro's delinquents, it is the criminal point of a criminal zone".(2)

I choose Gavoi, at an altitude of 771 m. and some 15 km. from Orgosolo, because in the course of the twentieth century Gavoi's shepherds came to occupy a large part of Limbara's mountain pasture so that the dynamics of its pastoral economy

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(1) Pirastu (1973), p. 154.

(2) Niceforo (1897): extracts in Sorgia (1973) p. 252.

are particularly relevant to any comparison between the Barbagia and Limbara.

The following tables establish at least a superficial comparison between the economies of these two villages and Limbara. Clearly the same reservations made above about the statistics of this period apply with equal force here; but until someone investigates the local archives, these figures are the only indicators of these villages' socio-economic structure in the 19th century that we have.

Table 11. Limbara, Gavoi, Orgosolo : Population and Land, 1852.

<u>Village</u> :	<u>Population</u>			<u>Land ha.<sup>c</sup></u>	
	<u>Total<sup>a</sup></u>	<u>Shepherds<sup>b</sup></u>	<u>Peasants.<sup>b</sup></u>	<u>Private</u>	<u>Public</u>
Limbara :	2858	420	460	5909	4968
Gavoi :	1735	240	150	2604	2263
Orgosolo :	2113	400	300	5173	17499

Sources: a Cens. Gen. della Pop. 1861.

b Casalis (1840) cit.

c Jacini (1885), vol. XIV, pp. 274-277.

These figures show for each village that between one-third and one-half of the work force was concerned solely with cultivation. For Orgosolo the list of the occupations of household heads compiled

in 1803 by the vice-rector of the parish indicates a similar pattern: 100 shepherds, 22 cowherds, 10 goatherds, 20 swineherds and 85 peasants ( agricoltori ).(1) The importance of the agricultural sector is further confirmed by the numbers of cattle - draught-animals used exclusively for cultivation - in the three villages.

Table 12. Limbara, Gavoi, Orgosolo : Livestock Ownership, 1875. \*

<u>Village</u>	<u>Sheep</u>	<u>Goats</u>	<u>Owners</u>	<u>% Pop.</u>	<u>Oxen</u>	<u>Cows</u>	<u>Owners</u>	<u>% Pop.</u>
Limbara	9309	534	112	4	490	772	202	7
Gavoi	8880	769	70	4	212	126	120	6
Orgosolo	6580	1460	116	6	130	3480	98	5

Source: Stat. del Bestiame (1875), cit., pp. 384 - 387.

Note: \* For Gavoi and Orgosolo, the 1881 animal census shows fewer owners (except for sheep-owners in Gavoi who increase to 91) and smaller or similar numbers of livestock.

These rights to sheep were combined into the management unit of a flock in the same ways as in Limbara. Magnates, usually referred to as prinzipales, and shepherds were linked by the contract of atterzio, while independent families created their

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(1) R. Branca, Medioevo a Orgosolo. Cagliari (1966) pp. 42-50.

own joint flocks. As table 12 shows clearly, rights to livestock in the villages of the Barbagia were no more widely diffused than in the hill communities outside it; and there seems therefore to be no justification in terms either of the proportion of shepherds to peasants or of the distribution of livestock ownership for describing the ones as 'pastoral' in contrast to the others. Evidence from a slightly earlier period suggests too that except in one respect the organisation of work in the countryside in all three villages was similar.

In the detailed report of his journey throughout Sardinia in the spring of 1770 the Savoyard Viceroy, Des Hayes, noted of Orgosolo, as of several other villages in the Barbagia, that "the majority of the population herd livestock, but many of them also perform agricultural activities".(1) The implication is that, as in Limbara, herdsmen were able to combine these activities because they remained in or within easy reach of their village territory all year round. Des Hayes in fact explicitly states that there was sufficient pasture in Orgosolo for its livestock but that sheep, not cattle, had to move to villages at lower altitudes during winter months. For shepherds this is one of the two possible ecological constraints which distinguish the Barbagia from Limbara.

Firstly, the territory of Gavoi and Orgosolo is mostly at a high altitude: in Gavoi there is no land below 603 m., while in Orgosolo much of the land lies above the village itself, reaching 1433 m. on one of the peaks of Supramonte. At these altitudes

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(1) Archivio Storico Sardo, 1957, XXV, fasc. 3-4, pp. 168-9.

winters are harsh with temperatures averaging 3° - 4° C. between January and March and nights with several degrees of frost and ice. While the Sardinian breed of cattle is fairly resistant to these conditions, snow and the sharp falls in temperature threaten the new-born lambs and deprive ewes of adequate pasture during their lactation period; flocks must be driven down from the higher slopes which they occupy in summer either to lower ground or outside the village territory altogether. Unlike Limbara where a short movement between mountain and plain enables sheep to escape the effects of a sudden worsening in the weather, a bitter winter renders a much greater part of the village territories of Gavoi and Orgosolo unusable as grazing until late spring. A mild winter, however, especially in Orgosolo where part of village land lies between 250 - 500 m., allows at least some flocks to spend the whole year close to the village.(1)

Secondly, and for reasons which have nothing to do with climate, the pattern of flock movements is conditioned by the ratio of livestock to land. A village with a small amount of land may not be able to support some of its livestock at any time of the year, winter or summer, and its shepherds may then have to choose between expanding their flocks in a kind of nomadic existence or limiting their livestock and spending more time in their own community. On the rough basis of 0.50 ha. required annually by each ewe the shepherds of 1875 were clearly able to return to Gavoi and Orgosolo in summer and autumn and obtain the necessary grazing there; in these months the lactation

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(1) 9891 sheep were grazing on village territory on the night of March 19 when the 1930 animal census was taken.

cycle is in any case over and ewes require only the reduced fodder sufficient for bare subsistence.

As in Limbara, shepherds' access to pasture in both these communities was largely based on the rights of cussorgie on the public land shown in table 11, and in winter they enjoyed similar rights on land in other villages. Gavoi shares, and probably shared in 1865, with Limbara the same medium of payment - cheese - for privately-owned village land.

The conclusions to be drawn from this brief sketch are as tentative as the figures they are based on are shaky. Nevertheless it seems legitimate to suggest that all three villages in central Sardinia were essentially similar in 1865 in three important respects. Firstly, livestock was owned by a restricted number of households. Secondly, the majority of the working population remained all year round in the home community, either cultivating grain or combining this work with cattle, and in mild years, sheep herding. Thirdly, regardless of whether their pasture lay inside or outside their home community, shepherds had access to it by identical rights. It is only in the century after 1865 that different patterns of earning a livelihood in these three villages begin to appear.

Appendix : The Cadaster of 1851

The cadaster was instituted in April 1851 as the basis for a tax on land and rural buildings to replace all tithes and feudal dues which were abolished from January 1, 1853. This tax was established at 10% of income at four rates corresponding to four classes of productivity of the land. The cadaster has on various occasions been described as 'absolutely misleading' (e.g. Pais Serra in 1896) and the status of Table 7 as evidence should therefore be defended.

The charges of inaccuracy are essentially two. Firstly, Pais Serra states that land had often been assigned to an unrealistically high income class so that peasants were saddled with a tax burden they could not meet. This assertion is irrelevant to the distribution of ownership in 1852 although, if true, it might help to explain later sales and purchases of land. But the years of Pais Serra's enquiry corresponded to the nadir of the depression in agricultural prices in late 19th century Italy and the viability of plots of land may have been threatened as much by market conditions as by tax overvaluation half-a-century earlier.

The second charge of inaccuracy derives from the method of measurement used. The frazioni (units averaging 200 ha. into which village territory was divided for cadastral purposes) had been surveyed geometrically between 1840 - 1851; but within each frazione the boundaries between one piece (particella) of private property and another were established by the naked eye on the

basis of statements by owners - in some cases it seems that no direct inspection of the area was ever made. Where the extent of the frazione surveyed and the sum total of the sizes of the constituent particelle declared by the owners were at variance to within 15% of the former, then it appears that the difference was simply added to or subtracted from the registration of individual particelle in proportion to their sizes. Perhaps the bolder and craftier owners managed to get themselves attributed a larger amount than they really had rights to, although of course they paid taxes on the extra. To take accounts of this knavery, Table 7 would have to be revised in one of two ways: either by expansion of the number of owners or by their redistribution from one category of holding size to another. In the first case, this would merely substantiate still more firmly the evidence for the wide distribution of land rights; in the second case, the range of inequalities is far too great to be significantly affected by anything but the most drastic redistribution, and there is no other evidence which suggests that manipulation on such a vast scale took place.



Chapter 5 : Land and Patronage since 1865.

The structure of land ownership in Limbara in 1946 is surprisingly similar to that of 1865. While the number of properties has more than doubled, the range of inequalities between the largest and smallest properties is as great as a century earlier:

Table 13. Limbara : Properties by Size, 1946. \*

<u>Size of Properties</u>	<u>Properties</u>		<u>Amount of land</u>		
	<u>ha.</u>	<u>no.</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>ha.</u>	<u>%</u>
0 - 0.5 :		822	42	136	1
0.5 - 2 :		522	27	578	5
2 - 10 :		439	22	1969	18
10 - 25 :		112	6	1671	16
25 - 100 :		42	2	1678	16
<u>100 + :</u>		<u>16</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4669</u>	<u>44</u>
TOTAL :		1953	100	10.701	100

Note \* significant changes since 1946 are noted below, pp. 148-9.

Source: INEA (1947), tav.I, pp. 26-27.

Included in this table are 691 ha. of public land and an estate of 1875 ha. belonging to the descendants of an English engineer, J. Martin, who had been granted this land in 1879 by the Italian government for his work on the Sardinian railway system then under construction by an Anglo-Italian Company. If these two properties are omitted, then 3% of holdings account for 47% of all land owned by Limbaresi, with an average size per property of 68 ha. Small properties remain both very numerous and very small: those of less than 2 ha., nearly 70% of the total, cover only 9% of private land, averaging 0.53 ha. per plot.

Comparison with the figures for 1865 shows that not only have these peasant holdings been reduced in size but also that they each support more men and women. In 1865 properties of 0-30 ha. had an average size of 4.12 ha. and except in a handful of cases, each property had a single owner. By 1946 the average size of properties of 0-25 ha. had been halved to 2.30 ha., and the number of jointly-owned properties had enormously increased: 60% of all properties had two or more owners, and one-third of this 60% had 5 or more owners. These figures are for formal rights and for the reasons given above (p. 78) are not reliable, but the general trend is fairly clear: the size of individual holdings had diminished and the numbers of joint-owners had increased.

In 1865 private properties were confined to the plain and hill, but by 1946 rights of private ownership had been extended to all land in the mountain with the exception of a small amount of communal property. This extension has created different

patterns of rights in plain and mountain.

The overwhelming majority of small properties lie on the lower slopes of the hill and in the plain, which thus remains the area where the rights to land of most Limbaresi are concentrated. Although there are no precise figures to demonstrate it, the geographical scatter of the constituent fragments of these small properties has certainly increased since 1865. This is partly due to the greater amount of land transmitted by women. Statistics do not distinguish owners by sex, but unquestionably women now claim equal rights to men in the inheritance of land and thus constitute a greater proportion of the owners than in 1865: many of the jointly-owned properties are held by sets of siblings in which sisters enjoy equal claims to their brothers. As these rights are transmitted between generations, their geographical spread becomes very wide: men inherit land from both parents and because their wives do not work in the countryside hold rights to administration and use of their properties too. Shepherds in fact often complained that the fragmentation of these formal rights of ownership was now so complex that the people they paid rent to scarcely knew where their own land was; they themselves only knew who the owners were because their fathers had paid rent to the owners' fathers or mothers. Most smallholdings therefore consist of an intricate set of interlocking rights to land in various parts of the plain.

The scatter of the larger estates which was already evident in 1865 for hill and plain, has been increased by acquisition of land in the mountain so that magnates now hold rights to land at all three levels of village territory; this pattern is in clear

contrast to the restriction of peasant rights to the plain only and because it has important consequences for the system of land use and the relations between men who use land in the different parts of the village territory, I shall look at the process of conversion of State and demesne land into private property in some detail.

The rights of village councils to distribute, divide and rent or sell all public land (with the exception of a meadow to be kept for villagers' draught-animals) had been established initially in 1820 by the same edict permitting private owners to enclose their land. The extension of the full rights of private ownership was intended not only to stimulate capital investment in land but also to improve the apparently lamentable state of public order. "Let the security of private landed property be established", declared the royal council with regard to the edict, "and the annual slaughter of the population, caused by homicides, executions, verdicts of guilty, imprisonment and proscription of bandits, will cease".(1)

The amount of land at each Council's disposal had been considerably increased by the land expropriated from fief-holders between 1836-9 and the ademprivili land, both of which the State had devolved to the councils with peremptory orders to pay for and sell: at mid-century one-fifth of Sardinia was

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(1) quoted in Brigaglia (1971) p. 69.

communal demesne.(1) Councils began to divide up this land in the second half of the 19th century not only in response to the orders (which were often ignored and in any case required a further series of laws until 1907) but also because of the tax burden this devolution brought with it: compensation to the fief-holders and the land tax based on the cadaster of 1851. The only way to evade this burden was to get rid of the land on which it fell.

In Limbara the first piece of communal property to be divided up and sold, Sa Tanca 'e sa Idda, lay in the plain and lower hill. Its 151.44 ha. was divided into strips and sold to 173 villagers in 1878. 26 men, including half-a-dozen magnates, bought plots of between 1-14 ha. for a total of 86.98 ha. apiece. Most of these buyers were peasants and shepherds who had in fact been trying to persuade the council to carry out this division for more

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(1) Year	State ha.	Communal land ha.	Private land ha.	Total ha.
1848	662,220 *	512,770	1,234,616	2,409,606
1946	60,182	352,696	1,816,468	2,229,346 †

Notes: \* includes 151,322 ha. of 'contested' land.

† excludes 131,369 ha. held by church, commercial companies and charitable institutions.

Sources: 1848: Archivio Sardo del Movimento operaio, contadino e autonomistico, 2, 1973, p. 35.

1946: D. Olla (1969) p. 24.

than a decade, and who thus acquired a fragment of arable land which was not subject to the constraints of crop-fallow rotation. Some of the larger fragments were subsequently enclosed so that the land just below the village itself is broken up by a myriad of stone walls.

The only other two stretches of communal land in the plain were sold off in 1929 and 1936 to pay for urgent repairs to various public buildings. 31 ha. of pasture were sold to a magnate by private treaty, and 34 ha. of steep hillside was divided into half-hectare plots for vineyards - the Mayor ( podestà ) hoped that this extra opportunity for work would reduce emigration.(1)

By far the most important sale of public land concerned the mountain. In 1874 the State sold 2021.62 ha. of its 4043.24 ha. of mountain land to the village council, and five years later granted the remaining half to the English engineer, J. Martin. The council retained a small part ( 112.67 ha. ), relinquished a rather larger area ( 290.44 ha. ) to neighbouring villages and sold off the bulk ( 1618.51 ha. ) to Limbaresi in 1881.

Unfortunately the survey maps and record of prices paid for this land have been lost so that only the bare list of transactions remains in the cadaster. A total of 267 plots were auctioned, ranging in size from 2.79 ha. to 37.41 ha. Since

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(1) Delibera 7 - 5 - 1926.

each plot carried an identical rateable value (6 lire 6 cents. of income per hectare), there can be no suggestion that some plots were drawn larger deliberately to compensate for the inferior quality of the terrain. In all but 12 cases plots went to single owners, some of whom bought more than one plot; a total of 235 people, including 23 women, acquired full rights to mountain land by this purchase.

Since 617.99 ha., 38% of the total, was auctioned in plots of more than 10 ha., it is scarcely surprising that the wealthier landowners of 1865 and their descendants should have acquired a considerable proportion of this land: the size of the plots put purchase beyond the pockets of most peasants and shepherds. More detailed analysis of the purchasers shows that it was the professionals in the group of magnates who did best from this division. The following table lists the ten largest owners of 1865 and those with 30 - 100 ha. who acquired land in the mountain in 1881. If the 1865 owner was dead, his name is asterisked and the number of his heirs is shown in brackets beside the total land they acquired.

Table 14. Limbara : Sale of mountain land, 1881.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Amount of land</u>		<u>Amount of land bought</u>	
	<u>1865.</u>	<u>ha.</u>	<u>1881.</u>	<u>ha.</u>
1. Fois Antonio	191.49		22.99	
2. Fois Costantino			13.00	
3. Senes Gabriele	189.51		10.80	
4. Delitala Giovanni *	129.58		54.52	(4)
5. Tola Giovanni	113.74		27.80	
6. Pintore Gio. Antonio	101.22		46.20	
7. Pisano Pietro *	99.80		12.63	(3)
8. Marcello Giommara	90.15		10.10	
9. Fois Giuseppe	88.06		-	
10. Basolu (bros.)	81.99		-	
<hr/>				
11. Corda Giuseppa	67.13		10.80	
12. Falchi Bachisio *	48.35		33.10	(1)
13. Scarpa Luigi *	46.96		27.00	(2)
14. Filia Giuseppe *	45.29		89.52	(2)
15. Tanchis Giuseppe *	34.52		60.31	(1)
16. Corda Andrea	33.89		52.85	
17. Ortu Bachisio	33.78		40.48	
18. Zolo Domenico and sons	32.03		19.50	
19. Corrias Giuseppa	-		20.50	
20. Sulas Billia	-		17.91	
<hr/>				
TOTAL :	1427.49		570.01	

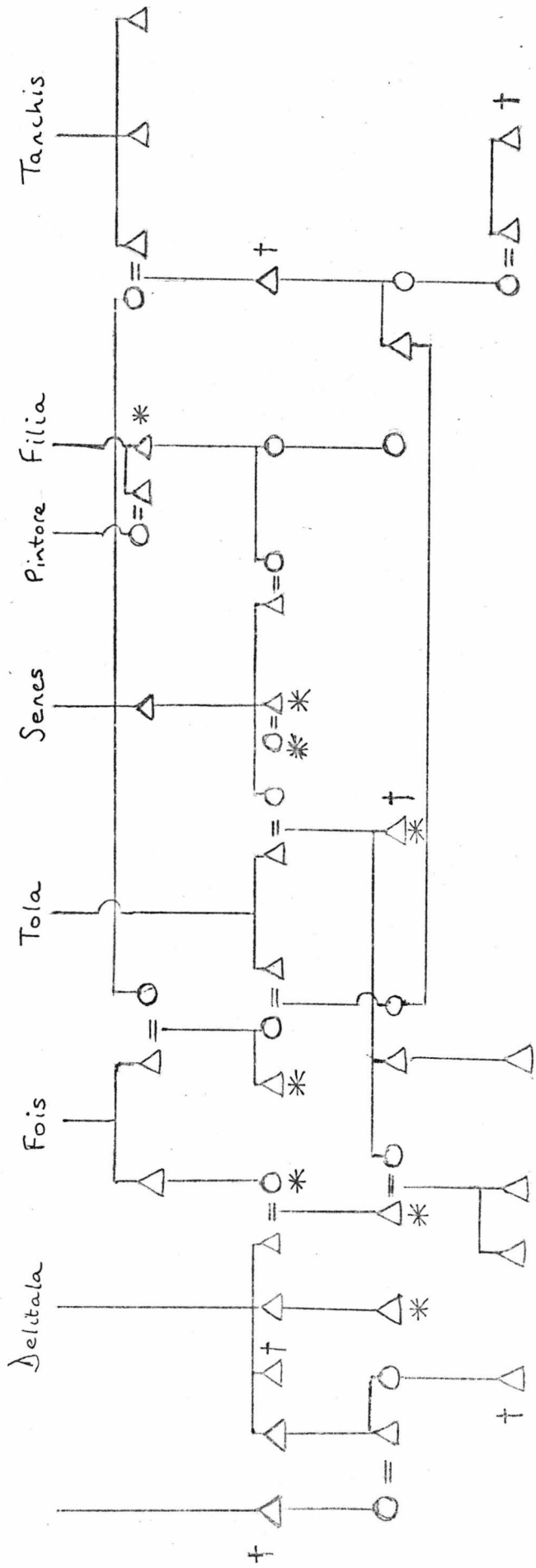
Source: Cadaster.



With the exception of a lawyer (4) and a notary (6), all the professionals came from the second group - schoolteacher (13), tax-collector (14), doctor (15), lawyer (16) and priest (17). The largest landowners who already owned large properties in hill and plain achieved fairly modest shares, while the professionals, with smaller properties concentrated mostly in the plain, now achieved substantial holdings in the mountain.

The boundaries and some subdivisions of these new holdings were marked by the dry stone walls put up after 1899 (see maps pp. 224, 225) to create the mountain tancati. Over the following years the ownership of this land was consolidated in three ways.

Firstly, a series of strategic marriages enabled these magnates to evade the gradual dispersal of land through the processes of bilateral inheritance; some of the kin and affinal links between the major landowning families of 1865 and their descendants are shown in figure 4. Secondly, many heirs left the village to pursue their professions and sold out their rights to a sibling or first cousin. Others retained their formal rights but left all administration in the hands of the co-holder who remained in Limbara; they did not insist on a division of the property but preferred simply to receive an annual income from a distance. Thirdly, magnates increased their properties by buying up many of the smaller shares



\* 8 largest landowners, 1926

† Representatives of dairy-processing firms.

FIG. 4: THE MAGNATES

acquired by shepherds and peasants in 1881.(1)

Four-fifths (227) of the plots were less than 10 ha.; they covered a total of 1000.52 ha. at an average size per plot of 4.40 ha., and the great majority went to shepherds and peasants. 9 men with more than 100 sheep in 1877 acquired a total of 81 ha., and it seems likely that most of the men with smaller numbers of sheep and cattle managed to achieve at least a few hectares: their present-day descendants - shepherds whose fathers and grandfathers herded their own livestock - generally have rights to a hectare or so in the mountain.

Much of the land bought by peasants did not remain long in their possession. Although these plots were described as compensi, compensation for the loss of adempriuvili rights, they were in fact entirely inadequate either to replace these rights or to serve as an extra fragment of arable. In the first place these newly-created properties were subject to a land tax, and mannalittas animals whose produce went directly to feed the owner's household could not provide the cash income to pay this tax. In the second place much of the terrain where these small properties were created was rocky and wooded, and therefore useless for cultivation. Finally, where crops could be grown, only the cultivator's full-time surveillance could protect them from the depredations of livestock since the barracelli who defended crops in the plain did not patrol the mountain. In the course of the following decades, therefore, many of these original purchasers sold their rights either to Martin or to the larger Limbaresi landowners.

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(1) Little was acquired by usurpation. A commission set up by the village council in 1899 to investigate accusations could find only a total of 66 ha. incorporated in 45 properties.

By 1926, when the cadaster was renewed, 9 properties accounted for four-fifths (3030 ha.) of all privately-owned mountain land. Much the biggest property (2561 ha.) belonged to Martin who had extended his original grant by buying not only from Limbaresi peasants but also directly from the village council. The council often motivated these sales explicitly as the necessary consequence of paying off the heavy debt with which it had been saddled by the devolution of the ex-feudal and State demesne. "Because the village council must pay the State the sum of 33,791 lire 74 cent. for the ex-ademprivili land ceded to it; because it would be onerous for the council's finances to carry out this payment over twenty years as agreed with the government since the interest payments would double this sum; because this debt could be extinguished by the sale of the ex-ademprivili land S'Elidone: this council deliberates the sale of the aforesaid land to Sig. J. Martin ....".(1)

8 properties held by Limbaresi magnates, either individually or jointly with siblings, accounted for 469 ha. of land in the mountain, and comprised a further 259 ha. in the plain. These men and women who dominated Limbarese land ownership at all three altitudes are indicated in fig. 4.

Only in very recent years has the dissolution of the Martin estate altered this distribution of land rights in the mountain. In 1950 the village council acquired 372.26 ha., making its own property up to 1029.21 ha.; and in 1965 a further 1490.79 ha.,

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(1) Delibera del Consiglio Comunale: 1881 (date illegible).

taken over by the Sardinian Agrarian Reform Board (ETFAS) after a lengthy court case with Martin's descendants, were finally distributed in 54 separate lots ( quote ) of unimproved pasture without farmhouses or capital equipment of any kind. The size of these quote varied between 19.11 ha. and 46.65 ha. at an average size of 27.60 ha., and they were assigned to married shepherds with the largest numbers of sheep. Each quota went to a single beneficiary in all but four cases where it was attributed to sets of brothers. Strictly speaking these beneficiaries are not the outright owners since they may only have full disposal of the land after the redemption payments to ETFAS, spread out over thirty years, have been completed. (1) ETFAS also undertook to construct access lanes and fences between properties so that the large tancati are now divided up by paths and barbed wire.

Since 1965 three sets of brothers have been able to buy the land which they formerly rented from magnates: 83 ha., 30 ha. and 16 ha. respectively, in the two smaller cases to add to the quote already received from ETFAS. There may have been other minor transactions, but these are the only ones of any size negotiated by men who are still active shepherds.

For most of the last century, then, the distinction between plain and mountain corresponds to different patterns of rights to land. Men who work in the countryside as peasants or shepherds

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(1) In 1967 quotisti were given the right to redeem this land by payment of a lump sum. In 1971 no Limbarese had yet done so.

hold their rights to land in the plain: magnates who do not work in the country and who in several cases have professional jobs own most of the mountain. Since the properties of these large landowners also include a considerable amount of land in hill and plain, they are able to dictate the pattern of land use over most of the village territory in this century.

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In villages of southern Italy the same combination of population growth and distribution of the demesne in the 19th century converted the basis of the local economy from a mixture of pastoralism and cultivation to cultivation only. Peasants used their newly-acquired plots to provide cereal subsistence, and landowners turned their estates over to grain, farming the land capitalistically or renting it in small strips to peasants and labourers with insufficient or no land of their own. Livestock, to which the land was generally better suited, ceased to be of much importance except as draught-animals.

In Limbara however, although the area cultivated each year increases after 1865, most of the village territory throughout this century remains pasture. I shall discuss the reasons for the comparative profitability of livestock later in this chapter and concentrate here on the organisation of cultivation. Because shepherds also work the land, agriculture concerns everyone in Limbara who works in the countryside.

Table 15. Limbara : Land Use, 1865 - 1970.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cereals</u> <u>ha.</u>	<u>Vineyards</u> <u>ha.</u>	<u>Olive-groves</u> <u>ha.</u>	<u>Pasture</u> <u>ha.</u>	<u>Total</u> *
1865	c. 1200	218	?	c. 9000	c. 10500
1929	2310	57	57	8262	10686
1959	1470	95	157	8964	10686
1970	28	94	321	9563	10006

Note: \* the fluctuating total is due to boundary changes and recent loss of agricultural land to ANIC.

Sources: 1929 - Catasto Agrario. Rome (1935) fasc. 91 p. 104.

1959 - S. Vacca, Regione del Marghine. Cagliari. (1964) p.78.

1970 - 2° Cens. Gen. dell'Agricoltura. Roma (1972), fasc.93.

The doubling of the land under cereals accompanies the population growth of the period 1861 - 1951 while the emigration of post-war years parallels the decline and eventual abandonment of cultivation. In 1962 the gross marketable value of cereals, expressed in 1963 prices, was 62 million lire; by 1965 it had fallen to 12 million lire, and a few years later to almost zero. The 28 ha. sown in 1970 was the part-time work of a handful of shepherds, and no one derived his livelihood any longer from cereal cultivation.

Staple crops in 1960 - wheat and barley - were the same as a century earlier, grown exclusively in the plain where the use of land was still governed by the crop-fallow rotation system. The land remained open, without walls or fences to divide

properties or to keep livestock out of the arable. Although the overall boundaries within which the alternation of bidattone and paberile was practised seem to have remained the same, the area actually cultivated increased. Men took up more of their widely-scattered rights to land, and the patches left uncultivated in the middle of the bidattone in 1865 were gradually reduced. Crops were divided by the pasture for village animals which for a flock-owner without sufficient land of his own was still rented at the traditional rate of 8 kg. of cheese per hectare, regardless of the extent or quality of the land. The biennial arable-pasture rotation was certainly maintained by the decision of those magnates and flock-owners with larger properties to continue to make use of some of their scattered fragments as pasture each year: a rebellious peasant who sowed outside the traditional boundaries risked the destruction of his crops by livestock and could not claim either the protection or reimbursement from the barracellato.

The struggle to secure a livelihood for each family from this restricted amount of arable worsened after 1865. Individual properties were reduced in size and rights to them shared with others; population growth implied an increasing number of men in competition for this land to feed larger numbers of women and children who did not work in the countryside and old people who lived longer after retirement. Because sons did not inherit rights to land until their parents' deaths, there were more family heads with the obligation of maintaining their households but without the direct access to arable to do so. These men generally took on sharecropping contracts for larger landowners,



by which they provided all labour, seed and draught-animals (which they might have to hire) and received a proportion, usually three-quarters, of the crop yield.

The persistence of crop-fallow rotation blocked off paths of upward mobility for even the more enterprising cultivators. Men who bought land were not necessarily able to use it to grow crops for profit nor even secure a cash return for renting it out. The cheese which was the medium of rent for pasture provided food for the owner's family but neither increased his income nor provided the money required to pay the tax on the land.

One reaction to the difficulties of providing food was to delay the age at marriage when this obligation was irrevocably assumed, as I have pointed out above. But men also responded more positively in three ways: by securing access to arable land in other villages; by acting collectively to try and force the village council and landowners to convert their pasture to arable; by abandoning Limbara altogether, taking their families with them.

The search for land in nearby villages began in the early part of this century. In 1929 a complaint to the village council by the Peasants Union ( Sindacato Contadini ) representing, so it claimed, more than 400 workers of the land, stated that "in the current agricultural year peasants have once again been compelled to find and cultivate land outside the territory of Limbara". Most of the retired shepherds and peasants I spoke to had at one time or another grown cereals in other villages, often at considerable distances. One family had cultivated land in the same year in three villages lying in the three different provinces

of the island. Limbaresi approached these outside landowners either individually or as the representative of a group of peasants for sharecropping contracts similar to those in Limbara. Where a group of men rented a large stretch of arable, the land was divided into equal strips ( taulas ) for each man; if the land was of uneven quality, then each man received as many different strips for cultivation as there were qualities of terrain. Each participant was therefore expected to contribute equally to the total rent due to the landowner for which the peasant who had originally negotiated the land was responsible. In general these work teams seem to have consisted of young unmarried men while their fathers remained in the village to co-ordinate their sons' geographically-dispersed labour and to work themselves on the land in the plain which they had inherited.

The second type of response was collective action to secure more arable in Limbara itself. The council had already sold off Sa Tanca 'e sa Idda in 1878 under the repeated threats of occupation to force a sale, and by 1907 250 cultivators were organised into a Labour League ( Lega di Lavoro ); its leaders demanded that the council assign part of its hillside property - "so many years uncultivated" - to peasants rather than flockowners, and in the following year petitioned the council again to acquire a tancato for use as arable which Martin was prepared to sell. The land was in fact bought in 1914 but devoted exclusively to livestock. Returning to the attack in 1929 the Peasants Union asked for its assignation to cultivators and denounced the fact that "the land policy of this administration

has been of exclusive advantage to shepherds ( la classe pastorizia )": the request was refused.(1)

More forceful action was taken in 1950 when the members of one of the peasant cooperatives set up in the turbulent post-war years occupied mountain pasture belonging to Martin. The police intervened and arrested 92 men, most of whom were released immediately and the remainder after a fortnight in gaol. The land was subsequently granted to the cooperative for a period of two years; its members divided up the land, cultivated it individually and paid a reduced rent. Other small pieces of land in the plain were requisitioned without violence in the following years but as men began to abandon agriculture and Limbara, the movement gradually faded away.

This cooperative was largely organised by the Communist Party which received immediate and lasting support among peasants on its first presentation in local and national elections. In the Parliamentary elections of 1948 the PCI received 31% of Limbarresi votes for the chamber of deputies and at local level ran the village administration between 1952 and 1960. This is not the place to discuss politics in Limbara but two points about support for the PCI are worth noting. Firstly, although by no means all peasants voted PCI, enough did to make Limbara an exception in a province dominated by the Christian Democrat Party: in the 1963 Parliamentary elections for example, in the province as a whole the DC secured an outright majority of 50.2 % compared to 19% for the PCI, while in Limbara the PCI vote stood

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(1) This information is taken from the records of village council meetings.

at double this level (38%) and the DC at only 36%. Secondly, although class is not the only determinant of voting patterns, Limbarresi of all categories see the irreducible and unusual strength of the Communist Party as the product of the extreme polarisation between magnates and peasants, rich and poor: as soon as peasants were able to express their opposition to the dominant élite in political terms, they did so in the most radical form open to them.

The third response to the difficulties of gaining an adequate livelihood from agriculture was to leave Limbara to search for work elsewhere. Between 1901 - 1911, the major period of emigration from Sardinia, 588 people (17% of the 1901 population) left Limbara, mostly for South America and France.(1) Some returned after a few years but many stayed on, so that in the census of 1911 244 Limbarresi were registered as resident abroad; there were probably other emigrants who were still officially resident in Limbara. The restrictions on migration imposed between the wars and the participation of contingents from the village in the wars in Spain and Abyssinia halted this flow, but within a decade of the collapse of the Fascist regime men had again begun to emigrate. Limbarresi themselves attribute the specific incentive to leave to the consequences of the construction of the road into the mountain begun in 1950: for the first time men saw the possibility and advantage of earning a steady cash income by their labour in contrast to the unpredictabilities of agriculture. When the road was completed in 1953, many men did not return to work in the countryside but left the village in

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(1) Cens. Gen. della Pop., 1911.

search of these improved working-conditions elsewhere; the gradual flow of emigrants since then has reduced the population by a quarter since 1951.

In 1970 at least 383 men and women aged more than 21, officially resident in Limbara, were living and working abroad;(1) the vast majority were in Common Market countries, and those who I spoke to on their annual return to the village for a brief holiday in August had all been away for between 5 and 20 years. Some had married French or German girls, and most were prepared with greater or lesser degree of reluctance to spend at least their entire working-lives outside Limbara. A number had invested in houses but few had any hopes of occupying them before retirement age - none had invested in agricultural land. Their emigration was definitive, not a part-time measure in the hope of a better job in Limbara in the future; contrary to the pattern in some southern Italian villages, men who marry take their wives with them and set up home where they work so that there are no women and young children in Limbara supported entirely by a husband working abroad. Unmarried sons send remittances to their parents but when they marry, they either return to the village or the new family leaves.

Further nuclei of Limbaresi emigrants are concentrated in Rome and Turin. Their separation from the village is less decisive and often takes account of changes in the state of the village labour market, particularly in the building business.

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(1) This figure is the number of electoral certificates sent to Limbaresi abroad.

A number returned to find at least a temporary job when work on the ANIC site was begun in 1970.

The hardships of agriculture after 1865 affect both peasants and shepherds since the latter combine herding with cultivation. Each household head must provide cereals for his family, and shepherds need the dried bread ( pane carasau ) which keeps fresh during their week-long absence in the countryside. The persistence of crop-fallow rotation means that shepherds hold at least some of their rights to land in the area designated as bidattone which can only be used for cultivation: since their flocks remain on village territory throughout this century (ch. 7), all shepherds are able to take up these rights.

Firstly, access to livestock produce through ownership or employment with animals becomes more important: cheese supplements diet, and in poor years for crops income from livestock can buy the essential grain. Competition to herd magnates' flocks between men without livestock increases, and those who fail risk progressive exclusion from the village - first to find land in other villages and then by definitive emigration.

Secondly, the increase in the cultivated area reduces pasture. As their properties diminish in size and are shared with other owners, shepherds need to rent more land. They secure it not by offering higher prices (since the rent is a fixed amount of cheese) but by maintaining good relations with owners, and they are therefore drawn into a wider set of relations, with accompanying social constraints, than their larger properties and less severe competition in 1865 required.

Thirdly, as the penalties for failure get harsher, shepherds demand greater trust in their herding partners, and they lay great weight on the ties of kinship and affinity which ideally provide

it, as I shall show in the following chapter. The relationships between a father and his sons, and the households of a woman and her daughters-in-law in the neighbourhood are strengthened and more vigilantly supervised: the carelessness of one man may bring disaster on the livelihoods and status of all. The evaluation of a shepherd's qualities becomes more critical, and the very nature of pastoral tasks lends itself more easily to differentiation than agriculture: a peasant whose crop yield is poor may blame the climate, insects or soil, and the defence of his crops is partly assumed by the community itself through the institution of the barracellato; a shepherd, on the other hand, has few defences except his individual ability as a herdsman which is tested all year round. The conditions under which he demonstrates his success change radically from the beginning of this century.

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By the division and sale of mountain land in 1881 shepherds lost their rights to cussorgie. The bulk of this pasture was acquired by magnates on whom most shepherds now became dependent for access to mountain grazing. The passage of the demesne into private hands not only consolidated the dominant position of magnates but also constituted the basis of a transformation of pastoral organisation.

A cussorgia had provided each shepherd with a stretch of land over which he did not exercise exclusive rights and to which he himself was not strictly tied. Once granted, his rights to a cussorgia were more or less permanent and might be transmitted from father to son. Because access was by capitation fee, annual variation in flock sizes corresponded to higher or lower rents for the use of the land: if a man lost half of his flock through disease, then he paid a reduced amount of rent.

The establishment of the rights of private ownership no

longer permitted this flexible ratio of animals to the unit of pasture. Each shepherd, as owner or tenant, was restricted to a particular piece of land with its clear delimitation marked by the newly-built stone walls. Each stretch of pasture therefore acquired a given carrying-capacity for livestock, although the precise limits of this capacity might be revised upward or downward according to the weather conditions in any given year. Overgrazing leading to a fall in milk yield and lowered resistance to disease could no longer be compensated simply by moving the flock further from the hut which had been the basis of the cussorgia; on the other hand, since a tax or rent was now payable on this land according to its size, undergrazing reduced the net return to the shepherd - a higher proportion than necessary of each animal's yield went towards the cost of pasture.

A shepherd who wished to expand his flock or who lost part of it through inadequate protection was therefore compelled to change his pasture to maintain at least his previous level of income from the animals' produce. This change disrupts two sets of relationships: firstly, with the landowner to whom he has paid rent; secondly, with the shepherds who use the same or adjoining pasture and whose flocks surround his own. I shall discuss the relationships between shepherds in chapter 7 and describe here the vertical tie between shepherd and landowner as part of the web of patronage which constitutes the local structure of the dairy-processing industry.

In 1865 throughout Sardinia shepherds themselves converted their flocks' milk into cheese in the countryside. Most of this



produce was consumed locally and from some villages at least the surplus was exported through the initiative of traders from continental Italy; the cheese was of very variable quality because of the differences in qualities in pasture, techniques of transformation and conditions of storage. This system of production and distribution was changed by the establishment of the dairy-processing industry in the island in the last decade of the 19th century.

The first processing-plants ( caseifici ) were set up between 1890 - 1900 by entrepreneurs from Genoa, Naples and Rome who traded a wide range of goods and were encouraged to branch into cheese by the opening-up of the profitable United States market; these caseifici were situated in the towns of Macomer and Thiesi lying on the railway lines which connected central Sardinia with the ports of Olbia and Porto Torres. The success of these early initiatives led to the creation of a vast network of small plants through the plains and hills of northern and western Sardinia in villages where local and transhumant flocks from the Barbagia spent the winter: in 1937 there were already 166 plants and by 1968 177.(1)

The 149 firms which own these 177 plants differ greatly in size and market position. Whereas the first enterprises were scarcely more 'industrial' than the huts where shepherds made their own cheese, by 1968 dairy-processing is dominated by 26 large firms which process nearly two-thirds of all the milk transformed in these 177 caseifici. Together with 29 merchants

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(1) Le Lannou op. cit., passim; Brusco e Campus (1971) provide information on the overall structure of the dairy-processing industry.

they also buy 87% of all the cheese produced in the smaller plants which belong to 58 small firms and 64 shepherd cooperatives. These cooperatives were created to contest the virtual monopoly exercised by the large enterprises in dictating the prices and conditions of purchase of milk from the producers, the shepherds, but they are in fact almost wholly dependent precisely on these large firms for the sale of their produce: they themselves account for less than 1% of all cheese exported from Sardinia.

Nearly three-quarters (70%) of cheese produced in these caseifici is pecorino tipo romano, the name indicating the origin of the earliest entrepreneurs and its exclusive use of the milk of ewes; it differs from the traditional Sardinian cheese, known as fiore sardo, in methods of transformation, salting and maturation and has a very restricted market in the island itself: 84% of pecorino produced is exported either directly to the United States or to mainland Italian ports for re-export to Europe and the U.S. From the beginning of this century annual exports of all cheese from Sardinia have nearly trebled - from an annual average of 68,166 quintals between 1909-12 to 182,221 qu. between 1962-5 - and pecorino now represents four-fifths of the cheese exported.

The prices paid per litre of milk to shepherds do not however show the same linear progression over this period. Initially there was a very rapid increase: the price per litre rose by four times between 1897 and 1906, while the retail price index for cheese sold in Sardinia moved from 100 to 151 in the first decade of this century.(1) The depression of the

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(1) Boscolo, Bulferetti, Del Piano (1962) p. 200.  
L. Camboni (1913) tav. IV, p. 18.

1930s sharply reduced the size of the U.S. market, and the steady advance of prices and exports was halted. In recent decades the export trade has once again expanded, but the most salient feature of the prices which dairy-processing plants pay to shepherds is their extreme annual variation: between 1953 - 1965 the average price per litre was 98 lire, but whereas it stood at 107 lire in 1960, by 1962 it had fallen to 70 lire and two years later climbed to 138 lire.(1) In terms of its average market value milk now accounts for roughly 70 % of the cash income derived from each ewe, meat for 25 % and wool for a bare 5 %.

Shepherds who turn their milk over to the dairy-processing industry do so in conditions of extreme uncertainty. Although the value of milk is by far the most important part of each ewe's annual produce, the income they receive may vary considerably from year to year. The price per litre is largely determined by a few big enterprises reliant on an export market which shepherds are powerless to influence. A crude calculation suggests that the annual milk yield of nearly half the number of ewes in Sardinia is now transformed in dairy-processing plants and that the number of shepherds who now derive their

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(1) Olla, *op. cit.*, p. 72. cf. also Bergeron (1969) p. 257, fig 2, which shows a comparable set of oscillations for the period 1957 - 67 in the prices paid by a cooperative.

annual livelihood under these conditions is increasing.(1)

Shepherds who do not turn their milk over to this industry continue to make the traditional fiore sardo in their huts in the countryside. This cheese is usually sold to intermediaries in the shepherds' own villages who arrange for its distribution to retail outlets in Sardinia itself or southern Italy. Fiore sardo accounts for about one-sixth of annual cheese exports from the island, and with the greater amount of milk now drawn off for pecorino the returns to shepherds per litre of milk transformed into fiore sardo are at least as high as those for each litre turned over to the dairy-processing industry for pecorino.

The dairy-processing industry was introduced into Sardinia by men from the continent. To obtain milk these entrepreneurs needed to reach shepherds spread out through the length and breadth of the desolate Sardinian countryside and establish a reciprocal guarantee that milk would be delivered and paid for. They therefore put up or rented caseifici in the areas with the

- (1) This can be shown by reducing the total cheese exports (mostly in the hands of the large firms) to quantities of milk - roughly 7 litres are required for 1 kg. of mature pecorino - and calculating the total as a % of the approximate total yield of all ewes in Sardinia at a figure of 100 litres per capita:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Ewes</u>	<u>Cheese Exports</u>	<u>Exports as % of milk yield</u>
1908	1,278,322	54,309	30
1930	1,536,628	100,000	46
1968	1,889,606	141,442	52

No. of ewes from livestock censuses; cheese exports from Le Lannou, p. 404, and Brusco, Campus, p. 58.

greatest concentration of sheep during the months of lactation and entrusted the negotiations for milk to villagers designated as their local representatives.

Limbara was drawn into this network early on. The first caseificio was put up alongside the Macomer - Nuoro road in the first decade of this century and its ruins can still be seen: a square stone building comprising rooms for the rudimentary equipment (cauldrons, measuring instruments and a fire) to convert the milk into cheese, for the brief storing of cheese before its transfer to be salted and matured in the specially-constructed plants (caciare) at Macomer, and for the sleeping-quarters of the men (mainly Abruzzesi, experts in making pecorino romano) who worked in the caseificio. Like nearly all caseifici in Sardinia it remained open only from January till June for receiving and transforming the milk from village flocks.

Since this first building a further nine were put up in various periods, used for several years and then abandoned. All lay alongside the road and railway-line in the plain, but no more than four were in operation in any single year. In 1969 the last caseificio in Limbara was closed and the milk of the morning and previous evening's yield is now collected early each day in lorries belonging to the various firms. Drivers stop at agreed assembly-points in the mountain and plain, measure, record and transfer each shepherd's milk from his urns into containers on the lorry and then take the entire load directly for transformation to the town where each firm has its centre of activity.

The men who owned these buildings and those who have acted as representatives of the dairy-processing industries are the magnates indicated in figure 4 . The buildings were rented directly to the various firms who provided equipment and labour while the owners and their kinsmen negotiated the supply of milk from the flocks of Limbara. These local representatives were paid on commission according to the quantity of milk they could guarantee: the more they could offer the higher the return they received. Although the caseifici in Limbara have now been closed, the alternative ways of securing milk remain very similar to the past.

Firstly, these magnates are able to contribute directly the milk of their own flocks, the largest in Limbara, and those of their close kinsmen. They order their shepherds to turn over all milk of the winter and spring months to the caseifici they represent.

Secondly, since the beginning of this century the rents of land in hill and mountain have been fixed in quantities of milk by all landowners; either they themselves are representatives or they negotiate the amount they receive as rent with those who are. In the case of the Martin estate which was broken up in 1965 Limbawesi shepherds turned their milk over to the small caseificio on the estate itself. Although there are considerable variations to take account of the different qualities of pasture, the average rent for each hectare throughout this century is approximately 100 litres per hectare, roughly the total annual yield of a single ewe. In the better hill pasture however, with the additional advantage of lying within easy reach of the

village, rents are very much higher.

Table 16. Rent of mountain and hill Pasture in Limbara.

<u>Mountain ha.</u>	<u>Rent litres</u>	<u>Litres per hectare</u>
17	1625	96
34	3250	96
95	14250	150
164	16000	98
368	20000	54
<u>Hills ha.</u>		
8	1600	200
12	1040	87
20	3400	170

Shepherds who rent this land are responsible for transporting the milk directly to the caseificio indicated by the landowner who is reimbursed in cash at the end of the season. Until 1965 when they received quote of the Martin estate from ETFAS all shepherds paid their rents for mountain pasture in this way.

Landowners do not permit shepherds to commute this milk rent into cash. If a flock's yield is unexpectedly cut by loss of ewes, any default on the rent cannot be made up in money but must be added to the following year's rent. Nor can shepherds choose their medium of payment. Isidore rented a stretch of pasture for 2000 litres but before occupying the land, he sold

his sheep and bought cows for which he decided the pasture was inadequate. He therefore sub-let to Luisi. In the course of the year Luisi decided that he would prefer to pay 240,000 lire instead of the 2000 litres of milk to Isidore; Isidore approached the landowner to see if he would accept this commutation, but received a refusal. Luisi who was on good terms with another magnate to whom he wished to consign his entire milk yield insisted on paying in cash, while Isidore pointed out that as the official tenant he would have to use this money to buy ewes' milk from a shepherd to pay the landowner. The dispute became a quarrel, and the two men broke off all relations.

Thirdly, the local representatives of the caseifici compete with one another to secure the remainder of Limbaresi flocks' milk according to one of three standard contracts negotiated with each shepherd. A fixed-price contract ( a prezzo chiuso ) establishes the rate to be paid per litre before the caseificio season opens, and the price remains unmodified by changes in milk supply or demand. An open-price contract ( a prezzo aperto ) sets a price in early autumn which may be revised upwards to the level paid by the other caseifici of the zone. For the shepherd this contract has the advantage of allowing his own returns to keep pace with the demand for milk and of not forcing him to accept a low price determined by the temporary necessity of a cash advance. The caseifici too are allowed to revise their prices so as not to be outbitten by the largest enterprises and thus lose all their clients. The third type of contract relates the price paid for milk directly to the wholesale price of pecorino: each litre of milk is calculated at the price for



0.15 kg. of pecorino so that, for example, in 1961 when the price of pecorino stood at 550 lire per kg., each shepherd with this contract received 82 lire per litre.

All contracts are negotiated in summer or early autumn, and when agreement is reached, the local representative gives the shepherd an advance ( caparra ) to be deducted at the end-of-season settlement of accounts. This advance may be vital for shepherds since it enables them to buy hay and beans for their flocks before pastures have been regenerated by the autumn rains which end the long dry summer. When the caseifici open in January, the shepherd turns over his milk daily, and he returns to his representative for further sums. If he urgently needs a large amount and has a record of dependability and honesty, then the representative may grant the request on condition that the shepherd agrees to turn over his milk to the same caseificio in the following year: a similar demand is imposed on those who have already drawn more than the amount due to them before the settlement of accounts. Accounts are in fact rarely fully settled: the negotiations for the following year's milk are generally initiated soon after the caseifici close in June so that shepherds may accept an advance before receiving their outstanding credit for the previous season. In good years firms may at their own discretion concede through their representatives a bonus ( premio ) of 5 or 10 lire per litre to their shepherds.

Although these representatives (4 in 1971) can in theory offer alternative prices and conditions of purchase to shepherds,

Limbaresi shepherds do not expect to be able to turn this competition to their own advantage. In the first place the contracts which the dairy-processing firms now offer in Limbara are mostly a prezzo aperto which are related to the general demand for milk and do not permit wide or consistent differentials between the prices offered by separate firms. No representative can therefore guarantee long-term superiority to his shepherd clients on economic grounds alone nor does anyone have a reputation for being able to do so. Secondly, the competition between two representatives is known to be based on personal enmity, so that for a shepherd to abandon one in favour of the other is considered an irrevocable betrayal. One of these two representatives confessed to me that he only undertook the exhausting and complicated series of negotiations and settlements relating shepherds and caseifici in order to prevent the other monopolising the local market, and he expressed himself in savagely irreverent terms about a priest who had switched the milk of his flock to his bitter rival. Thirdly, in the other cases these representatives are assumed to be more solidary with each other than with their shepherd clients. To illustrate this several men recounted the story of Pauleddu. Pauleddu was owed £35 for the definitive settlement of his milk consigned two years earlier but his repeated requests for the money had had no effect. Aware that the representative was delaying payment in the certainty of negotiating a further year's consignment in which the £35 would be part of his advance, Pauleddu agreed to turn over his milk. Having received his advance, he returned all but £35 and announced that he considered it settlement of his outstanding

credit and that he had in fact already negotiated his milk with another firm. At his first request for an advance from his new patron Pauleddu received the amount requested minus £ 35 which, he was informed, had been returned to his previous patron who had been made to part with it under false pretences. The moral, and the warning to other shepherds, was clear.

Shepherds themselves see the defence of their livelihood - milk constitutes two-thirds of the value produced annually by a ewe - as best answered by a long-term tie to a particular Limbarese patron. Until 1965 all shepherds paid their rents for mountain pasture in milk; by turning over their entire flock's production to the landowner or representative designated by him, they not only earned his goodwill to remain on pasture for which there was severe competition but also provided him with a larger quantity of milk to guarantee to the dairy-processing firm, ensuring a higher commission for him and a better price per litre for themselves. The close link between negotiation of milk and negotiation of access to pasture is also a powerful incentive to stay on the same land associated with the same milk patron. In the example of Isidore and Luisi above, Luisi explained his own reluctance to pay rent for the extra pasture in milk rather than cash as the wish not to deprive his usual patron of part of his flock's yield.

This long-term tie has other advantages. Patrons are believed to grant different prices to their shepherds and to represent them more enthusiastically according to length of service. One man said that his price of 165 lire a litre in 1970 compared to 150 lire for other shepherds attached to the

same representative was due to his ten-year record of dependable consignment, and he boasted that he could present himself to his patron with a demand for a large lump sum and receive it the next day. Another shepherd attributed his failure to get the bonus that his fellow-clients received to his decision to leave the patron. Milk representatives may also act as guarantors for bank loans to shepherds at negligible interest rates which in arid years the regional government concedes to shepherds to buy fodder. In these ways shepherds see themselves as at least partly protected against the extreme uncertainties of returns in the dairy-processing market.

During the last half-century three attempts by the smaller flock-owners to set up milk cooperatives have been made, and each has foundered after at most three years. The administrators accused some shepherds of adding water to the milk they consigned, and the shepherds blamed the administrators for their inability to sell the cheese at an adequate price. The cooperative's members returned at once to the magnate representatives who had exacerbated the dissension by increasing their own prices and bonuses. Even in 1971 when most shepherds had acquired mountain pasture from ETFAS and when the newly-asphalted road into the mountain had widened the possible range of contacts between shepherds and firms, few shepherds had abandoned their local patrons. One pair of brothers made their own fiore sardo rather than turning their milk over for pecorino, and one man consigned his milk to a cooperative from Nuoro: his attempts to persuade others to join him and accept the higher prices offered met with no success.

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Thus, the distribution of demesne land in 1881 not only reinforces the dominant position of magnates but creates different patterns of rights in plain and mountain. Peasants and shepherds own about half the village land, and most of their rights are concentrated in the plain: the score of magnates acquire most of the land in the mountain to add to their already substantial properties in hill and plain.

The establishment of the dairy-processing industry increases the value of sheep and their produce, so that magnates use their land as pasture rather than arable. Livelihoods from agriculture alone become increasingly precarious, and peasants are forced outside the village in search of land and work elsewhere. The income from livestock becomes more important for the shepherd families who derive a living from both herding and cultivation.

Shepherds lose their rights to cussorgie in 1881 when they give up not only their rights to mountain land but also to a unit of pasture which permitted variations in flock size from year to year. The boundaries of the newly-defined properties set limits to the carrying-capacity of pasture so that overgrazing or undergrazing reduces the total quantity of milk produced and increases the proportion of the animal yield paid in rent, and the penalties of incompetent herding are therefore more severe.

The strategies of shepherds must take account not only as in 1865 of the defence of flocks but also of the destination of the annual produce. Men are drawn into the uncertainties of the dairy-processing industry, and defend themselves against the variations in prices for milk, constituting two-thirds of their annual income, through their relationships with the magnates

who own pasture and mediate the consignment of milk. With the expulsion of peasants and the creation of shepherd clients, the basis of patronage in Limbara alters. In 1865 the magnates derived their principal source of power from arable land in the plain while most shepherds enjoyed independent rights of access to pasture: half a century later peasants are already leaving the village or finding land belonging to patrons in other villages, and shepherds have become the clients of magnates for both land and disposal of their flock's produce.

Chapter 6 : The Organization of Flocks.

The immediate consequence of the introduction of the dairy-processing industry was a dramatic increase in the number of sheep in Sardinia.

Table 17. Livestock : 1881 - 1970.

<u>Village :</u>	<u>Sheep</u>		<u>Cattle</u>		<u>Pigs</u>	
	<u>1881</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1970</u>	<u>1881</u>	<u>1970</u>
<u>Limbara :</u>	15,629	18,498	1460	1038	1065	303
<u>Gavoi :</u>	8695	75,000	480	418	97	?
<u>Orgosolo:</u>	5099	27,000	2557	3009	727	?
SARDINIA:	844,851	2,153,226	279,438	273,050	66,347	206,769
ITALY :	8,596,108	6,050,794	4,783,232	8,696,401	1,163,916	5,928,297

Sources: 1881 : Cens. del Bestiame, 13-14 Feb., 1881. Roma (1882).

1970 : Limbara: council document.

Gavoi } Pampaloni e Idda, cit., p.19.

Orgosolo } 2° Cens. Gen. dell'Agric., ISTAT, Roma, 1974 fasc. 92.

Sardinia }  
Italy } : 2° Cens. Gen. dell'Agric., cit., vol. IV, pp. 8-9, 58-59.

This table shows clearly two interesting processes. Firstly, Sardinia constitutes an exception to the general trend of livestock numbers in Italy. Between 1881 - 1970 the number of sheep in Sardinia nearly trebled while in Italy as a whole it fell by

one-third: Sardinia possessed 10 % of the national total in 1881 and 36 % in 1970. For cattle the picture is reversed: while in Italy their numbers double over this period, in Sardinia they show a very slight decline. The growth in livestock on the island has been restricted entirely to sheep as men took advantage of the vastly-expanded market for their produce.

Secondly, the overall growth rate for Sardinia disguises the variations in different villages. While Limbara shows a small increase (less than one-fifth of the 1881 total), Gavoi and Orgosolo show increases of ten and five times respectively. These differences are reflected also in the numbers and readiness with which young men enter the pastoral sector. In Limbara only one-quarter (27 %) of the active population now works in the country side and when these shepherds retire - if indeed they reach the age of retirement without having already changed jobs - they will not be replaced: a mere 7 % of agro-pastoral workers are aged under 30. Gavoi and Orgosolo represent a sharp contrast to Limbara, with 40 % and 72 % respectively of the active population working in the countryside and a much more balanced age structure: nearly one-third in Gavoi (29 %) and one-quarter in Orgosolo (26%) of these men are aged under 30.(1) Since flocks from Gavoi come to occupy part of Limbara's territory in the course of this century and therefore subtract land from local shepherds, the different rates of growth in sheep numbers are partly complementary. This juxtaposition of flocks from different villages on a single territory will be discussed in the next chapter. Here however I shall show how the differences are correlated with contrasting

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(1) These figures are taken from ISTAT (1973) tav.9.



forms of flock organization which have emerged since 1865. In both chapters sheep only will be considered: in Limbara at least many of the cattle are owned and herded by shepherds alongside their flocks of sheep, and the dozen herds now consisting solely of cattle are very recent.

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All Limbaresi shepherds aspire to be independent. They begin their working lives as shepherd-boys, subordinate in every way to older herdsman, and they hope eventually to be themselves responsible for the management and protection of their own animals. No shepherd can however hope to control the complete range of resources necessary to maintain his flock: his mountain pasture must be rented from magnates, and he must come to terms with the representative of a caseificio for the consignment of his ewes' milk. These men do not work in the countryside, and they are separated from shepherds by an absolute status distinction. The dimensions of independence to which shepherds refer and which the successful proudly claim can be distinguished between herding (the control and nurture of animals in the terrain) and husbandry (the growth of herd capital and the formation of profit).<sup>(1)</sup> Shepherds are evaluated according to their skills and rights to take independent decisions on both of these dimensions.

Men pride themselves on their skills in the various aspects of herding - recognition of all animals in the flock and the immediate awareness of missing sheep, detailed knowledge of the

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(1) I take this distinction from Paine (1970) p. 53.

terrain, their speed in milking and abilities in cheesemaking. They should know not only how to make the usual kinds of cheese but also how to allow them to spoil in the right way and produce a much sought-after delicacy (which it is illegal to sell) known as casu patitu.

Herding decisions basically concern the movement of flocks. Some choices can be considered carefully beforehand: where to graze daily on a particular pasture to avoid trampling grass into mud, the shortest route to a source of water in the plain, when to change pastures altogether to avoid overgrazing. Other decisions may have to be taken more rapidly: the flock may need to be shifted according to a sudden change of weather such as a snowfall; a group of sheep which have strayed must be pursued; any signs of disease must be immediately diagnosed and treated. The right to take these decisions in all forms of flock organization is generally conferred by age since there may be no time for long drawn-out discussions of advantages and disadvantages. Shepherds who do not own any of the sheep they herd nevertheless acquire at least joint responsibility for herding decisions, and they expect to be obeyed by laghinzaresos and younger shepherds. Similarly, one retired shepherd with his own flock told me that he always sent sons with the greatest age difference (uno grande e uno piccolo) to herd the sheep together so that there would be no doubt about the authority in decision-making. Junior shepherds may of course be required to act on their own initiative in any emergency since they should never abandon the flock to seek help from the village, and the way they come out of such tests is noted with approval or scorn. In general, the authority given

to age in the context of herding corresponds to its general importance in Limbarese society, but it also reflects older men's wider experience of the countryside.

The rights and responsibilities of husbandry are confined to men who own animals. Shepherds without animals who work for other men have no say in deciding on the number of lambs to slaughter or rear or the proportion of ewes to be sold and replaced; they take no part in negotiations for pasture and for milk, meat and wool consignments. Shepherds with their own animals take all these decisions, and those whose sons work in the flock must allocate capital to them and decide on its rate of growth. As the senior shepherd owning the majority of the flock he has the final say in dictating conditions, although he will generally consult his sons; he has the authority of being their household head and the power established by the ownership of the basic nucleus of pasture.

For a son the grant of animals by his father lays the basis for his future husbandry responsibilities and provides him with individual income which can be used to gain entry to the society in the bars. He can now offer and receive drinks and therefore begin to participate on his own account in the communication of information which surrounds drinking. This participation is reinforced when he marries and sets up his own home. In his father's household he never entertains his peers, and he takes a respectful back place when his father himself has visitors; now he has a home of his own to invite men to, with food and wine to offer them, where information can be exchanged out of the sight and earshot of fellow-villagers.

However the willingness of shepherds to allocate animals to their sons and encourage the growth of their shares is reduced after 1865. Pressure on pasture is considerably increased by the greater amounts of arable and sheep necessary to support the expanding human population and is worsened by the occupation of part of Limbara's territory by flocks from the Barbagia (see table 21 below, p. 216). Ewes' annual yields are said to have been nearer 75 litres in the earlier part of this century as opposed to 90 - 100 litres today, and shepherds recall quarrels over the slaughter or allocation of a single animal. In order to maintain the same level of income household heads need a greater share of the flock themselves rather than allocating sheep and the rights to their produce for the exclusive benefit of sons. The introduction of dairy-processing also inhibits young shepherds' rates of accumulation of animal capital in two ways.

Firstly, the corollary of maximising a flock's milk yield for consignment to the caseifici is that lambs should be weaned and slaughtered as early as possible. The maximum amount of ewes' milk can therefore be exchanged for cash and the remainder converted into cheese to pay for pasture. The natural increase to the flock through reproduction which might constitute the basis or expansion of a son's independent share is annulled. The decision to raise lambs is in any case a costly one: they do not give birth until their second year (11 - 24 months), and their milk production is much beneath its adult level until the third lactation; young ewes also have the lowest twinning rate, so that income from meat is reduced. To keep them on the pasture

is a grave loss of annual income therefore, since they require grazing for their subsistence but do not compensate their owner by their milk yield. Shepherds in fact keep the lambs reared to the minimum necessary to replace the oldest ewes of 8 or 9 years ( sas zurras ) and nowadays often prefer to buy already adult ewes from other shepherds. In consequence, shepherds are not only reluctant to allocate animals to their sons but also to permit them to expand their share gradually by taking advantage of the animals' self-reproduction.

Secondly, the bargaining position of sons as labour for their father is weakened. Compared to 1865 when cheese was made by shepherds themselves in the countryside, the consignment of milk daily to the caseifici reduces the labour requirements of the flock: there is no longer any need for one or two men to work full-time transforming the milk into cheese. Particularly in large households fewer sons can usefully be employed with the animals, and more sons therefore risk not only the loss of the larger share of livestock inheritance which goes to working shepherds but also the chance of building up sufficient animal capital to provide a livelihood.

The difficulties of building up a flock and of acquiring full rights to take herding and husbandry decisions can be seen by comparing the figures for the ownership of sheep in 1954, the most recent year for which I was able to obtain data, with those of a century earlier.

Table 18. Limbara : Ownership of Sheep, 1954.

<u>Size</u>	<u>No. owners</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>No. sheep</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Average no. sheep</u>
1 - 10 :	11	5	69	14	47
11 - 50 :	80	36	2446		
51 - 100 :	73	33	5142		
100 - 300 :	57	25	9280	51	177
<u>300 +</u> :	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1319</u>	<u>7</u>	
<u>TOTAL</u>	224	100	18,256	100	

Source: tax records, communal archives.

These 224 owners represent 5% of the population and 22% of the number of households (1023 famiglie in 1951), figures very similar to those of a century earlier. One quarter of these owners hold more than half the total number of sheep with an individual average of 177 animals, while the remaining owners - with less than 100 sheep - own 42% of the total with an average of 47 per head. Although the range of inequality between smaller and larger owners is similar to that of 1877, at both ends of the scale the average number of animals held by each owner has been reduced by roughly one-sixth. Ownership of sheep is therefore no more widely diffused than a century earlier, and each owner has a smaller number of ewes to provide income.

Among the smaller owners these inequalities are partly the result of the recording of men at different stages of their life-cycles, so that newly-married men with small numbers of sheep are classified alongside older men with larger households

and a greater amount of animals. Nevertheless as in 1865 the broad inequalities correspond to quite different patterns of flock organization.

Throughout this century magnates dominate the ownership of sheep, owning mostly between 200 - 300 animals: in 1954 the largest single holding was 583 animals. So far as I can tell, in that year these sheep were organized in 20 - 25 flocks herded by roughly 100 men and some of their sons.

In 1865 many magnates' flocks had been herded according to the contract of a cabuzzu by a shepherd who himself owned animals, found his own herding partners and increased his own share at the expiry of the contract. This form of cooperation provided a magnate with the guarantee that his shepherd had an equal interest in the safety of the flock, and it gave the shepherd the incentive to maximise the yield of all animals since each year for six years he drew half of the total income. In the insecure conditions of the Sardinian countryside in the mid-19th century this contract had obvious advantages for both sides.

The extension of magnates' properties to include mountain pasture strengthens the bargaining position of magnates, while population growth creates severer competition among all Limbaresi to earn a livelihood. Magnates are thus able to offer less favourable terms for the right to herd their animals and to draw part of their annual produce. The contract of a cabuzzu therefore virtually disappears. Limbaresi said that it was impossible to find a magnate prepared to grant it with the exception of one lawyer who lived in another village and therefore had less direct control over his shepherds. One pair of brothers

without pasture who sought such a contract had to be content in 1950 with achieving one in a village 40 km. away. A cabuzzu has only reappeared very recently when emigration from Limbara has made it difficult to find herdsmen, but it is now considered a favour towards a patron rather than vice-versa. In 1971 there were two examples, and I heard of a number of shepherds who refused to take on animals in this way.(1)

For most of the century after 1865 magnates' flocks have been herded by shepherds who fall into one of two categories, teracu or pastor'anzenu, employed according to different terms of service, although in the larger flocks they may work alongside each other.

A teracu (or serbu) stands at the bottom of the pastoral hierarchy. In 1971 there were still two teracos in Limbara, one of whom was from another village, and they were regarded at best with affectionate tolerance. The outsider was described to me as regortorzu ('picked up') meaning that if he had succeeded in finding food and work it was only thanks to the Limbaresi who had picked him up from destitution.

Teracos either work alone with cattle or help to herd sheep. In neither case do they themselves own animals. They work with their employer's livestock all year round, returning to the village only at irregular intervals. Frequently the employer rides out to take food and instructions to his teracu so that the flock is never abandoned. Teracos take no decisions concerning pasture or the

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(1) Today, the magnates who move to professional jobs in the larger towns often sell their flocks. Those who remain find it very difficult to hire shepherds from Limbara, and therefore either employ outsiders or negotiate to have their animals herded by independent Limbaresi shepherds.



size of the flock but merely carry out the magnate's orders. In return they receive a small salary fixed in advance, food and a pair of boots; the food is mainly bread, pasta and cheese, more rarely vegetables and meat.

Since these men work full-time with livestock, they can have no obligations to grow crops for their own families, and teracos are therefore drawn from two categories. Either they are young unmarried men, usually from large families with sufficient sons to be able to spare one from cultivation, or they are older men who have deliberately renounced the chance of creating their own family and household. The elderly unmarried teracu, faithful above all else to his employer's family, is a characteristic figure in the novels by Grazia Deledda which deal with pastoral life in the province of Nuoro in the early part of this century.(1) In Limbara teracos were referred to simply as being 'in domo de Don...', and in the past some did in fact live in their employer's household since they had no family of their own. In the very rare cases when teracos were married, their wives were taken in by the magnate's wife as a domestic servant.

These shepherds are peripheral to village society. They are confined to the countryside and so cannot participate in the normal sociable interaction in the square in Limbara; in the countryside itself, they have no rights to take husbandry decisions concerning their flocks nor is their fixed salary directly related to their success as herdsmen. The young men who are despatched as teracos by their fathers have no interest in remaining in this category since it condemns them not only to

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(1) Canne al Vento (1913) for example.

the lowest position on the pastoral hierarchy but also to bachelorhood. Teracos who want to get married must secure a contract which allows them time with their wives and families and the opportunity to grow the cereal crops for their subsistence. As they approach the age of marriage, or in the same year that they marry, they convert their status as teracu into pastor'anzenu.

Pastor'anzenu means 'shepherd of another (man)', and the conditions of the contract institutionalise the inequality between the shepherd and his employer. The magnate provides the flock and its pasture, and the work is performed by four pastor'anzenos who work in pairs in alternate weeks. They use the intervening week for their individual agricultural work, either on their own land or on a plot of arable which they receive according to a separate sharecropping contract from their employer. They are responsible for making cheese in the autumn and early summer, consigning milk in winter and spring to the caseificio designated by their employer and disposing of lambs to the slaughterhouse or directly to a butcher who has acquired them. Sometimes more idiosyncratic tasks are demanded: one magnate who had moved to Nuoro insisted on his shepherds sending him daily two litres of milk which had to be taken to the station and put on the local train.

At the end of the pastoral year the gross income from milk, meat and wool is added up, and the cost of marking the animals and any treatment of disease is subtracted. The magnate then receives the rent for the pasture he provides, at the rate per hectare of roughly 100 litres in the mountain and 48 litres in the plain. The remaining sum is divided 50 : 50, half going

to the magnate and half being shared equally among the four pastor'anzenos, and the cheese made by the shepherds is divided in the same way. If they have employed a laghinzaresu during the lambing season, then they must meet the cost themselves; if the flock is large, say more than 300 head, and cattle are included, then the magnate may also engage a teracu at his own expense.

The relationship between each pastor'anzenu and his employer is predicated on inequality. No pastor'anzenu has the right to herd his own animals alongside his employer's sheep, so that as long as he works according to this contract, he draws a livelihood from livestock but cannot achieve animal capital of his own. Similarly, since the employer decides on the size and structure of each flock, he thereby determines the limits of the net income which his shepherds draw. It is his decision to expand or reduce the flock according to the grazing available each year and to negotiate the price of milk with the caseificio representative. The duty of pastor'anzenos is to return at least the same number of animals that they received at the beginning of the year - failure to do so has to be compensated out of their own income or savings - and it is in their own interests to perform all herding tasks as efficiently as possible to safeguard the flock and maximise the annual yield, thus increasing their own returns.

During this century Limbaresi are in severe competition for work as pastor'anzenos. The cheese and income from the flock make an important contribution to household subsistence, and the magnate may also provide arable land which saves his shepherds

having to search outside Limbara. Since the length of the contract is annual, many Limbaresi said that they were perpetually on guard to defend themselves against false reports of their behaviour circulated by their envious and less fortunate competitors seeking to replace them. Even the pettiest misdeeds - the 'theft' of prickly pears, for example - were zealously relayed to magnates in the hope of discrediting their pastor' anzenos. On their own part shepherds are anxious to demonstrate their regard for their employer by small gifts and services; they may contribute free labour in his vineyard or help occasionally in agricultural activities to establish a sense of obligation. They invite their employer to stand as their child's godfather at baptism or confirmation, and the men with the longest periods of service are invariably compari of the magnate who owns the flock. Frequently this link is reinforced in the next generation between the two men's sons.

When the shepherd's reliability is established, he may continue to work for the same magnate for decades. One man had worked for his employer for 47 years, first as a teracu and after marriage as a pastor'anzeno, and several others I met had similarly spent the greater part of their working lives in a single flock. One line of father, son and grandson had followed each other in this relationship to a particular family. Each pastor'anzeno has to strengthen the link to his employer, to convert it into a tie of moral obligation to ensure his continuing employment and avoid relegation to the difficulties of earning a living from agriculture alone. Reliance on this vertical tie to a magnate corresponds to the relative lack of importance given

to the links between the four pastor'enzenos who herd the same flock.

The terms of their contract impose equality on each man. They contribute the same quantity of work, and receive equal shares of the annual income; each man knows that his own herding abilities improve these shares, and carelessness sets his own and his partners' livelihood at risk. Since no pastor'anzeno may keep animals in the flock, no situation arises in which one man is receiving extra income from the labour of his fellow shepherds which he himself does not pay for and on which he relies in the weeks when he is performing agricultural work. By the same token it is very difficult for one pastor'anzeno to keep animals clandestinely in the flock since concealment from the employer requires the complicity of his partners and their agreement to herd and milk animals whose produce benefits one pastor'anzeno only.

This structural equality seems rarely to have been reinforced by a moral bond. I came across no cases in which kinsmen worked as pastor'enzenos in the same flock and very few examples of pastor'enzenos who were also compari. Limbaresi suggested that the magnates' deliberate policy was not to employ a set of men with moral obligations to each other to counterpose to their own link to each man. Pastor'enzenos were called separately and confidentially to their employer's household where they were assured that they alone had the employer's trust and were invited to report on the abilities and performance of their partners who the magnate could not observe directly. Clearly when pastor'enzenos are kinsmen or compari, their bond

constitutes a powerful restraint on confiding fully to their employer any of the failings of a companion.

Independent shepherds suggested that pastor'anzenos were at least partially absolved from the work of defending their flocks against thieves, and the son of a pastor'anzeno offered direct, and unsolicited, confirmation of this. His father had worked with 3 other shepherds for the wealthiest magnate of the village; at night the senior shepherds would regularly return to Limbara for several hours, leaving him - then aged 12 - alone in charge of the flock, in spite of the fact that the pasture lay in a zone notorious for the passage of stolen animals. I remarked that this seemed rather risky, but the shepherd said that his father had not been in the least concerned. He was convinced, correctly for the years that he worked in the flock, that no one would touch the animals of such a powerful landowner and that even if some thief was foolhardy enough to do so, the landowner had plenty of kinsmen and acquaintances in other villages to help him trace the animals. The defence of their flock against other shepherds was therefore a less important concern to pastor'anzenos than to shepherds with animals of their own.

As the terms of the contract suggest, pastor'anzenos find it extremely hard to move into the category of independent shepherds with both herding and husbandry responsibilities. They cannot accumulate animals directly so long as they work for a magnate, and their bid for their own flock can only be made by saving and buying animals. In 1971 only 2 of the 98 men who herded independent flocks were the sons of pastor'anzenos who had bought

sheep and built up small family flocks with the help of their sons. A further 11 shepherds had themselves started out life as pastor'anzenos but had only secured their independence very recently, in conditions of declining competition for work with livestock and helped by the assignation of ETFAS land in the mountain. In several cases however the degree to which these men were now solely responsible for their flocks was very much contested: accusations that magnates had put their own sheep temporarily in shepherds' names to enable them to benefit from the assignation of mountain pasture which could then be used by the magnates themselves were common, even from men who were not shepherds and whose own relative status in the pastoral sector was therefore not at issue. Certainly some of these men continued to herd magnates' sheep, but the exact division of rights and responsibilities was not known even by other shepherds.

There is a strong presumption that men who have been dependent on others for decisions over pasture and livestock are incapable of adapting to a situation of independence. The behaviour of one elderly shepherd was cited to me to bear this out. He had worked for a landowner for the best part of thirty years, bought sheep of his own and received a quota from ETFAS to maintain them. Since he had no son to share the labour, he had joined the flock of 3 other independent shepherds. He complained regularly about the difficulties of collaboration and confessed that but for the fear of derisive taunts of villagers that even when offered independence in the most favourable conditions he had failed to take it, he would have returned to his original employer. In fact at the end of the year he did



abandon his herding partners and went back to work with his original employer. Other shepherds took this as confirmation of the persistence of the habits of dependence once they have been acquired.

The difficulties of upward mobility for pastor'anzenos are not confined to the simple purchase of sheep. In order to work in agriculture they must find herding partners to manage the flock in alternate weeks and share equal tasks and responsibilities. But by buying sheep they have effectively attempted to repudiate their equality with former partners, pastor'anzenos, while they can offer few guarantees of their abilities or trustworthiness to their status superiors, the independent shepherds. They rarely have pasture of their own to contribute and, more importantly, as pastor'anzenos they have had no husbandry responsibilities and reduced herding demands in the defence of their flock, which is a matter of paramount concern for independent shepherds. There is thus no reason for other men to risk cooperation with them.

This dilemma is illustrated by the fate of those pastor'anzenos who do buy their own animals but who become not independent shepherds but mannelitarzos. Mannelitarzos are men with tiny flocks of up to 20 animals, herded during the day by a young son who brings them back to a stall in the village at night. Their pasture - pastura fura ('stolen pasture') as one shepherd described it - consists of the paths and olive groves around the village itself or on the fringes of the remaining communal land. The word mannelitarzu derives from mannelitta, and the same function is performed by both the flocks of mannelitarzos and the mannelittas animals: they provision their owner's



household and are never involved in the wider exchange economy of livestock's produce. Their owners are scarcely regarded as shepherds at all, certainly not as competitors with men who herd sheep permanently in the countryside. There are no longer any mannelitarzos, but the word is still used in disparagement of another shepherd's abilities. "Him a shepherd? He isn't even capable of being a mannelitarzu!"

The remaining flocks consist of the sheep of the smaller owners who bear direct responsibility for herding and husbandry decisions. Their sheep are combined into joint flocks of between 75 - 300 animals, and for most of this century the average size of such flocks has probably been between 100 - 200 sheep. Flocks organized in this way were the commonest type in 1954 and have become almost the only type by 1971.

Table 19. Limbara : Flock Organization, 1971.

<u>Position of shepherd</u>	<u>Flocks</u>	<u>Men</u>
1. <u>Independent.</u>		
a. single men	24	24
b. partners (kin)	23	58
c. partners (non-kin)	7	16
2. <u>Dependent.</u>		
a. <u>a cabuzzu</u>	2	2
b. <u>pastor'anzenu</u>	1	4
c. <u>teracu</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
<u>TOTALS :</u>	59	106

The majority of these flocks are managed jointly by herding partners. The 24 flocks with single shepherds are very recent and have only been made possible by the abandonment of agriculture and distribution of mountain land; their shepherds are in all cases the surviving member of a previous partnership, usually with kinsmen who have now left the countryside. In some cases the ex-partners still have rights to animals and give a hand in the evenings to allow shepherds to return to the village knowing that their flocks are safely guarded.

Partnerships have been necessary for all shepherds until the recent abandonment of cultivation. The demands of the flock during the lambing period require at least two men working full-time, and each household head must find time to grow cereals and look after his vineyard and olives. No married shepherd wants in any case to spend his life permanently in the countryside away from his family. Partnership may be contained in a single household when a father and his adult sons share the agricultural and pastoral work, and each leaves his animals in the care of the others. However as the age of shepherds at marriage rises after 1865, men must wait longer for the help of sons. They are compelled either to keep their sheep with their father's flock or find a partner outside the family.

Family demography or casual factors also force a man into partnership. He may have no sons, or he may have a large number of daughters so that more time has to be spent on cultivation for these household members who consume but do not work in the countryside. Sons may get ill, be temporarily absent on military service, decide to separate their animals when they marry or

refuse to work with the flock at all.

Limbaresi express a strong preference for kinsmen or affines as herding partners, and in 1971 three-quarters of jointly-managed flocks were based on these ties. Kinship prescribes the trust and help that a herding partnership demands and supports the reciprocal obligations that each partner assumes. He must look after his partners' animals in alternate weeks and therefore be trusted to ensure the maximum yield and protect the animal capital. Partners share the consequences of carelessness or inadequate defence and support each other in quarrels with other shepherds. The partnership creates a single target for their individual enemies, and they therefore assume joint responsibility for acts of aggression or defence.

The bilateral kinship system and the recognition as connados of sisters' and first cousins' husbands provides a wide range of potential partners for all shepherds. Each man has in principle a choice of links of equal moral strength which can be converted into herding partnerships and which he can use to secure his own best interests. This flexibility allows a re-shuffling of partners and flocks to overcome shortages or surpluses of grazing or labour. In practice analysis of herding partnerships in any one year throws up various combinations of men at different points of the life-cycle, acting under different ecological and demographic constraints.

Within the category of potential partners siblings are particularly favoured. In 1971 they constitute 18 of the 23 kin-based partnerships. They have grown up together in the same home, working in the same flock and acquiring knowledge of every

inch of the pasture. Both have an equal interest in defending the flock whose successful management gives them their joint status; at the same time they are often defending equal rights to their father's animals when he retires or dies and to the pasture which supports the flock.

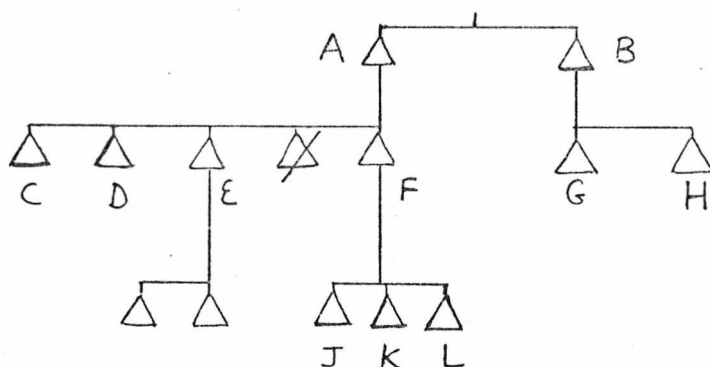
Brothers also know more about each other's social relations than about those of other men. They have taken on their father's friendships and enmities in the countryside, and they are either living unmarried in the same household or commonly in the same neighbourhood after marriage. In neither of these places can actions or secrets be easily concealed. This knowledge offers the best guarantee against partnering a man who turns out to be a born quarreller or involved in unpredictable hostilities into which his herding partners are inevitably drawn. The advantages of working with a sibling are sufficient often to reunite brothers who have quarrelled but make peace and resume their cooperation; there were two sets of brothers who were sometimes pointed out amusedly to me by other shepherds who said they had lost count of the times they had parted company and then returned together. Other herding partners who quarrel are very rarely reconciled.

The importance of these criteria is emphasised in the reasons which the shepherds who worked alone in 1971 gave for not joining forces with each other. Some of them used to complain that compared to the past most of their time in the countryside was now spent on surveillance to discourage thieves: the only agricultural work they did was in the vineyards, the caseifici now sent round lorries to collect their milk, and in places

they had put up barbed wire to prevent animals straying. However they gave two reasons for not combining with one another and thus reducing not the labour but the need to stay in the countryside day and night. Firstly, the man with whom they might otherwise collaborate - in each example they named a kinsman - owned more or less pasture than themselves and no matter how easy in theory to calculate compensation, in practice this inequality would lead to disputes. Secondly, they said that although they were friendly (trattavano bene) with other shepherds, they would not commit themselves to a herding partnership since they did not know the full pattern of other men's friendships and enmities inside and outside Limbara. They might therefore get involved in a series of hostilities which could only put their own animals at risk.

The simplest model of a herding partnership based on brothers is that described in chapter 3. A man works with his brother in his father's flock until his father's retirement when the brothers take over all day-to-day management and acquire rights to most of the animals. This labour allows them to maximise their share of livestock inheritance and when their father dies, each son receives his share of land which he can use as pasture for his independent flock, helped by his own sons. At its widest range therefore this kind of partnership is managed by adult siblings with the labour provided by their sons who are first cousins to each other.

A good example of this successive cooperation and separation is provided by the Cossu family mentioned earlier (p. 88.)



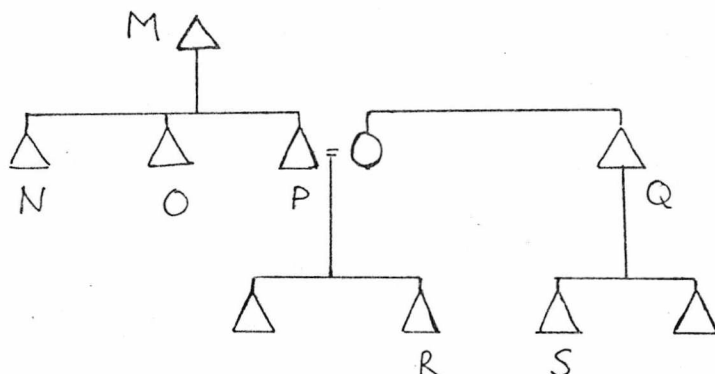
Their flock of roughly 200 sheep was owned and herded by A and B with the help of their sons. A died when his eldest son F was only 16, and the flock remained a single unit under the direction of B until his death five years later. A's share was separated and herded by DEF, since C was still at school and was allowed to continue his studies: in return he received a smaller share of land and livestock in all subsequent divisions and sold his rights to both off to his brothers. On B's side G abandoned Limbara for a military career and H worked alone with a teracu for a few years and then sold up and moved to an industrial job in Sassari. At their father's death DEF had acquired their individual rights to land so that each had a potential nucleus of pasture to support his own flock. D took this up when he married and joined the flock of his father-in-law; E and F however continued to work together for 17 years after their marriages, until in 1945 their sons were old enough to carry out the full range of herding tasks. They then separated to create their own independent flocks. F managed his flock with the help of his sons J and K except for a period of two years when they were absent on military service; in the first

year he joined forces with an unrelated shepherd, and in the second he employed a young teracu from another village to work full-time with the flock. After finishing military service J found a job on the mainland in 1956 and sold his animals to K who was joined by his brother L. L married in 1964 and set up house next door to his brother with whom he continued to work until 1972 when he abandoned shepherding to work at ANIC. In that year the two brothers owned 175 sheep which were grazed on a total of 80 ha. In the mountain an ETPAS quota accounted for 26 ha. : in the plain they owned 8 ha. between them, incorporated in two grazing-grounds of 9 ha. and 45 ha., and rented the remainder from their siblings (13 ha.), their FFBS (19 ha.), the children of their FFZD (4 ha.) and non-kin (10 ha.). This land in the plain was the same pasture that their father and grandfather had used, with the addition of 5 ha. bought by their father. In the mountain they had used the same land from 1953 - 1965 when they received their quota from the Land Reform Board. The two brothers had not succeeded in buying any land themselves and had inherited their 8 ha. as part of their father's patrimony.

In each generation herding and husbandry decisions are in the hands of two brothers who only separate when their sons are old enough to perform all the herding tasks and are nearing the age to claim rights to animals for themselves. Men's pastoral careers are spent under the authority of their father and uncle, then with authority over their own sons.

The following example, the Marras family, shows the dispersal of a set of siblings who make use of their affinal ties

to find partners.

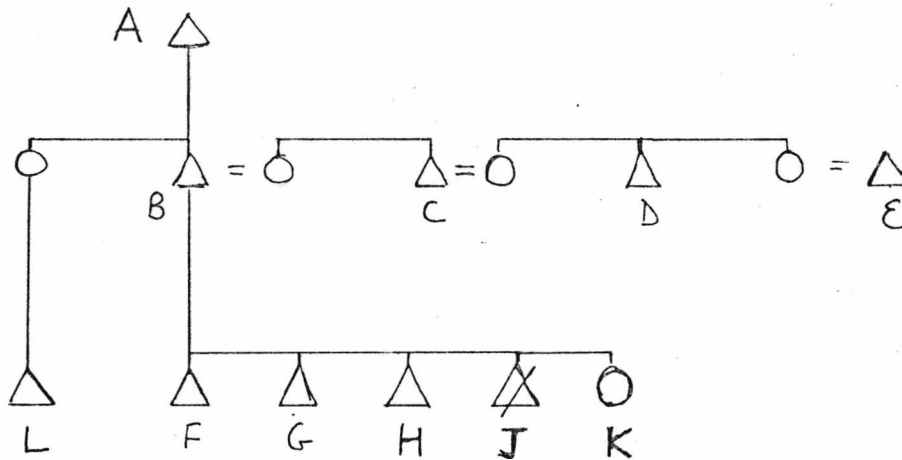


Until M's death in 1916 the flock was a family concern, managed by M with the help of his 3 sons. In 1921 N married and took his share of the flock to join his brother-in-law, and two years later P did likewise, leaving O to join forces with a non-kinsman since his own affines were not shepherds and his only child was a daughter. For 20 years P and Q shared the management of the flock with their sons' labour; not only did they work together in the countryside but lived two doors apart in the village. After P's death in 1941 and Q's retirement from active shepherding a few years later, the first cousins took over the work with the flock of 250 animals. Until 1963 when R and his brother abandoned shepherding, the flock was grazed on the adjoining land of P and Q in the plain; in the mountain one stretch of pasture was used consecutively from 1944-58 and a different stretch from 1958-65. At present the flock is in the sole hands of S, a 42 year old bachelor. He has 135 sheep of his own and 35 belonging to his father which are rented to him at a cost of 2 kg. of cheese per animal. Pasture now totals



83 ha., consisting of 19 ha. in the mountain received from ETTAS and two separate stretches of 21 ha. and 43 ha. in the plain. S himself owns 0.75 ha. which he inherited from a distant relative; he pays rent to his father for 3.50 ha., to his father's sister (P's wife) for 6.75 ha., and to roughly 60 owners of the remaining 53 ha. S complained to me several times about the humiliation of having to go round the village distributing this cheese rent to men and women who scarcely knew where their land was and who could certainly have found no use for it themselves.

Both the Cossu and Marras examples deal with families with sufficient surplus labour for the size of the flock. My third example, the Virdis family, shows how more distant kin or affines may be brought in as partners when there is a need for extra help.



A was an only son who herded his sheep with an unrelated partner. At his death his only son B continued with his father's partner, utilising the labour of his sons F and G who continued together alone after B's retirement in 1930; they were helped by their youngest sibling as a laghinzaresu, aged 8 in 1935, with

their flock of 60 animals. F and G were called up in 1940 and the sheep were entrusted to their uncle C; when the latter was called up in his turn in 1942, H was considered too young to have full responsibility and the sheep were rented to a friend in a nearby village. When they were returned to Limbara in 1946 CDEGH formed a joint flock consisting of 120 animals. In 1951 D died, and C and E took their animals to form a separate flock, so that for 5 years G and H had a flock with different partners each year. These men were not their kin, and H remembers the period as a constant series of minor disputes in which each partner accused the others of not doing their full share of the work. In 1956 with 120 animals between them G and H, who were both unmarried, decided to remain on their own with the help of a teracu from another village who worked all year round and was paid a salary. When H fell seriously ill in 1961, his place was taken by his fradile L; in 1963 G died and the sheep which now totalled 212 had to be sold. H attributes the growth of the period 1956-63 to the fact that only he and his brother had rights to the flock and that between brothers 'there is greater trust ( fiducia )'; and he contrasts this period with the squabbles which characterised the preceding partnerships. For the whole period 1946-63 they grazed the same mountain pasture; in the plain the brothers owned a negligible amount and changed as they changed herding partners.

These examples of herding partnerships could be multiplied to show further permutations of kin, affines and non-kin who work together. However these three families provide sufficient illustration of the main features of herding partnerships in

which shepherds gradually build up their independent flocks.

Firstly, these shepherds work for most of their lives with close kin or affines. Their moral tie reinforces the equality and trust between members of the same generation and supports the authority of the senior shepherds over their juniors. Partnerships with non-kin are regarded as essentially stop-gap measures to tide over a labour shortage. As two of the examples show, men often prefer to employ a young teracu from a different village, with no animals of his own and outside Limbara's ranking-system, rather than join a fellow-villager. Shepherds are sceptical of the ability of non-kin to cooperate for any length of time, and they assume that any proven partnership must be between kin. Several men told me incorrectly that two shepherds were related and when taxed with their mistake, explained it as the logical deduction from the two men's years of harmonious collaboration.

Secondly, these shepherds often use the same, largely-rented pasture for many years, supporting a flock of roughly constant size. The struggle of younger shepherds to acquire and increase their own animals then becomes a struggle to achieve a larger share of the flock rather than to expand the total number of animals. Even between brothers there is potential conflict over husbandry decisions not only because the demands of their house holds may be different but also because each must secure sufficient animals to be able to allocate some to their own working sons who will take over when they retire and support them in their old age. As sons approach the age when they expect to claim their first animals, this tension may come out into the open, and severe

control will be exercised to make sure that neither set of father and sons are pursuing their own advantage at the expense of the others. When these partners also live in the same neighbourhood and consider themselves (as kinsmen) equals in status, this control is redoubled, and minor transgressions assume perhaps exaggerated importance. These patterns of herding partnerships can be contrasted with the type of flock organisation which emerges in the Barbagia after 1865.

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In 1865 the populations of Limbara, Gavoi and Orgosolo were supported by similar patterns of agricultural and pastoral work. By 1970 Limbara and the Barbagia can be sharply distinguished in terms of the relative weight of agriculture and pastoralism in the local economy, the forms of herding partnerships and the rates of social and geographical mobility of shepherds.

For most of the century after 1865 the area cultivated increased in Limbara and shepherds continued to grow the cereals to feed their households. In the Barbagia however cultivation was in decline from early in the century: by 1929 900 ha. were sown with wheat and barley in Orgosolo and a mere 168 ha. in Gavoi. (1) These cereals were clearly insufficient to meet the subsistence needs of the population which came to depend on the income from livestock's produce. The reasons for this decline might be traced to the difficulties of finding sufficiently productive arable at the higher altitudes of these villages to feed the growing number of households. Men took advantage of the returns offered by the dairy-processing industry to switch

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(1) Catasto Agricolo, cit., fasc. 91, pp. 36, 44.

to shepherding and used the income to buy grain in the communities where agricultural production expanded. Part of Limbara's surplus produce was certainly acquired by men from the Barbagia who negotiated directly with Limbaresi peasants.

The shift of men from agriculture into pastoralism, or the renunciation to grow crops as well as herd animals, can be seen from the administrative district (circondario) of Nuoro as a whole between 1881 - 1921. In the earlier year 71% (11,366) of the agro-pastoral labour force was employed in agriculture and 29% with livestock, while by 1921 these proportions had altered to 61% (13,319) and 39% (8542) respectively.(1) More recently the sociological profile of the Nuorese shepherd drafted for the Parliamentary Commission on banditry shows that one in **two** of the independent shepherds interviewed in 1970 had begun his working life as a cultivator.(2) There is a clear contrast here with Limbara where peasants who give up cultivation do so not to become shepherds but to emigrate from the village.

This contrast in the importance of agriculture corresponds to different forms and conditions of herding partnerships. The following table gives a crude impression of these differences.

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(1) Cens. Gen. della Pop. Roma. (1884) Vol. III p. 498.

Cens. Gen. della Pop. Roma. (1926) Vol. IV, p. 165.

(2) Information kindly supplied by Prof. C. Barberis who supervised the study: Il Profilo Sociologico del Pastore. INSOR . Rome. tav. XIV, p. 38.

Table 20. Limbara, Gavoi, Orgosolo: Agro-Pastoral Dependence, 1951.

	<u>Limbara %</u>		<u>Gavoi %</u>		<u>Orgosolo %</u>	
	<u>Men</u>	<u>Household Heads</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Household Heads</u>	<u>Men</u>	<u>Household Heads</u>
<u>Administrators:</u>	3	5	-	-	-	-
<u>Independents:</u>	11	16	38	63	40	62
<u>Coadiuvanti:</u>	31	-	19	-	20	-
<u>Dependents:</u>	55	79	43	37	40	38
<u>TOTAL:</u>	100	100	100	100	100	100

Notes: Administrators: the magnates who own flocks but do not work with them.

Independents: men who earn a living from their own land and livestock.

Coadiuvanti: kin and affines who work with independent men.

Dependents: peasants and shepherds who depend on employment by other men.

Source: derived from ISTAT (1955) tavv. 7,8.

Both peasants and shepherds are included in this table. In all three villages peasants mostly fall into the category of dependents, while the shepherds constitute the independents and their coadiuvanti. In Limbara there are a small number of independent shepherds, helped by their kin and affines, constituting the typical herding partnerships described above. In Gavoi and Orgosolo however the kin basis of pastoral enterprises is much less emphasised, and a greater proportion of the working population

herd their own livestock. Here the abandonment of cultivation permits men full-time employment as shepherds, with returns which enable them to build up their own flocks to support their families.

In the Barbagia a son's labour is at his father's disposal until he reaches 21 or returns from military service; until then he either works in the family flock or is despatched to work for a wage for other shepherds. At this time his father releases a share of his livestock inheritance. Depending on the size of this share a son may either separate his animals and join another shepherd or he may remain with his father but with full responsibility for his own husbandry decisions; if he does stay, his father will pay him in cash or animals for the extra work put in with his own animals. One Barbaricino acquaintance returned from his military service to find his brother in gaol and his father submerged in debts after a disastrous year. He agreed to defer taking his share of the livestock and to work for three years as a teracu to help pay his father's debts. At the end of this period his father gave him 84 sheep which he combined to form a joint flock with a distant cousin, the two men working together all year round. Alternatively a son may leave his animals with his father, paying his share of pasture and labour costs from their produce, and work as a teracu for another shepherd from the Barbagia. This is the standard form of herding partnership by which a man from a household with no animals may build up his own flock.

A teracu works full-time for another shepherd (su mere)(1)

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(1) su mere, the equivalent of the Italian term padrone, carries the implication either of ownership or the right to exercise authority.

in return for the immediate grant of ewes and the right to their produce. The number he receives varies between 5 and 40 depending on his age, perhaps his family responsibilities, and the size of the flock he works in. He pays no pasture for these animals, and in addition to this grant of capital he receives food and a pair of boots. His lodgings are the hut in the countryside, although if the flock pastures near enough to his own village, he may be allowed to return home once a month. At the end of the year he either remains with the same shepherd receiving further animals but paying the cost of their pasture, or he may leave and join a different flock under the same conditions. After several years he acquires a flock of his own, 100-150 animals, which he combines with another independent shepherd or manages himself with the help of teracos to whom he in his turn releases sheep.

The career of a man from a Barbagian village who had formerly had a contract of a cabuzzu with a Limbarese shepherd illustrates this process of accumulation. His father had owned a small herd of cows which had been dispersed during his absence in the First World War. He himself had begun as a shepherd-boy for his mother's brother, and at 21 had come to work in Limbara as a teracu in return for 8 sheep. At the end of the year he left the village and in the following five years he worked in five different flocks in various parts of the province. He then returned to Limbara with 90 sheep and became the partner of his former employer. Such a passage from the status of teracu to independent partnership is impossible for a Limbarese shepherd, and for those men whose fathers own livestock a comparable



process of accumulation may take the best part of twenty years.

The years after 21 when a Barbaricino accepts the transient inequalities of the subordinate role of teracu in order to build up a flock sufficient to maintain an independent household are years of rapid accumulation. It is from the produce of the flock alone, and the herding and husbandry skills of its shepherd, that a Barbaricino home is supported, rather than by the cereal crops which Limbawesi shepherds grow themselves. A Barbaricino shepherd is not so reliant on his partners as his Limbawesi counterpart who must leave his animals with them in alternate weeks in order to perform his agricultural tasks. Shepherds from Gavoi and Orgosolo work full-time with their animals and are therefore individually responsible for the welfare and security of their share of the flock. For a teracu confinement to the countryside helps his rate of saving since he does not have to pay for food and has little opportunity to spend. In one published budget for 1935 of a teracu with 40 animals in a flock of 240, receiving free pasture and food, the teracu managed to save no less than 90% of the cash returns to his animals' produce.(1)

Limbawesi are uncomfortably aware of the aspirations of young shepherds from the Barbagia and they are insistent that the Barbaricini they employ to fill a temporary labour shortage in their own flocks should always be under 21 years of age. They are thus still directly responsible to their fathers to whom any incompetence or misdeeds can be reported, and they are not yet tempted to take a short-cut to capital accumulation by stealing animals. Any thefts may in fact involve their Limbawesi employer

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(1) INEA (1939), p. 202.

who will be held responsible for their actions and who may be accused of instigation by a teracu anxious to exculpate himself.

Clearly such a system of capital accumulation, in the context of a growing population and the conversion of peasants into full-time shepherds, can only result in a considerable increase in the number of sheep, and this is precisely what the figures in table 17 show. This increase however creates quite new conditions of shepherding.

While in 1865 flocks from the Barbagia followed a pattern of inverse transhumance between their home territory and the cussorgie on winter pasture at lower altitudes, the increase in sheep in the course of this century renders this pattern impossible in many villages of the Barbagia. In Gavoi, for example, only a small proportion of its 75,000 sheep can return to their home village, with its territory of 4585 ha., at any time of the year, and the remainder must search for both summer and winter pasture elsewhere. In Orgosolo too, many more flocks require winter pasture outside the village, no matter how mild the climate there.

Not only do shepherds lose one fixed point of their transhumant movements, their own village pasture, but also the other, the cussorgie which were abolished in the distribution or sale of the demesne land after 1865 in many villages outside the Barbagia such as Limbara. Shepherds are therefore compelled to rent land annually or even seasonally from the landowners who have acquired their former pasture and to reciprocally harmonise their pasture requirements and flock size. The newly-private

pasture has definite boundaries, as opposed to the vague limits of cussorgie, and like Limbaresi Barbaricini must now take account of the carrying-capacity of a given area of land. Shepherds who are bent on expanding their flocks must either rent extra pasture around a basic nucleus each year or move to altogether different grazing-grounds until their flock reaches a sufficient size to maintain a household in its varying requirements. The problem of nomadism can therefore be considered at two levels - the overall distribution of the flocks of a single village and the pattern of each individual shepherd's movements in the same and successive years.

Firstly, the expansion in numbers of sheep and flocks in the Barbagia after 1865 leads to a wider distribution of each village's shepherds throughout the hills and plains of the island and to a vastly more complex pattern of movements in these areas between summer and winter pastures. Nothing like the orderly transhumance along the tratturi of southern Italy or the organisation of the Mesta in Spain exists in Sardinia.

Secondly, as teracos accumulate their animal capital, they add their own regular changes of employer and flock to the seasonal movements of all flocks, and their pastoral careers may thus consist of a "tour of Sardinia" as one Gavoesse described his first decade in the countryside with his own animals. Similarly, an older shepherd who has released animals to a teracu must replace them or accept a cut in income. If the two men stay together the following year, then the joint flock is larger and needs more pasture and this requires a further shift of the

animals. Whatever it may have in common with the characteristics of "barbarian peoples", (1) the nomadism generated by the introduction and consequences of herding partnership between su mere and su teracu has little to do with the nomadism of the early 19th century. Then, the movement of flocks was encouraged by the vague limits to cussorgie and the sparsely-grazed countryside, permitting shepherds great latitude in searching for the best pasture or escaping from adverse weather conditions. Now, the continual movements of flocks from pasture to pasture is a necessary part of Barbaricini shepherds' process of capital accumulation and support of a family: this has only emerged in the course of the century after 1865.

Barbaricini shepherds expect to use particular pastures for at most a few years. So, unlike Limbaresi shepherds whose dependence on local magnates for pasture or work as pastor'anzenos constitutes the basis of the village patronage structure, they have only short-term links to the owners of the land they use. Some pay rent for this pasture in milk; others, notably Gavoesi, pay in cash at a rate linked to the annual price per litre of milk set by the caseifici. They themselves continue to make fiore sardo which they sell to large firms for export or to intermediaries, often ex-shepherds, with links to retail outlets in Sardinia or southern Italy. Although profit margins vary from year to year, it seems that shepherds who make fiore sardo generally achieve higher returns per litre of milk and pay a lower proportion of their gross income in pasture rent than

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(1) cf. p. 8.

shepherds who consign milk to caseifici.(1) Certainly, the fact that cheese can be stored while milk can not puts these shepherds in a stronger bargaining position during negotiations for sale.

Shepherds from the Barbagia therefore remain outside the hierarchical dyadic ties which constitute the infrastructure of the dairy-processing industry. At most their payment for pasture in milk is a simple economic transaction, not one moment in a continuing, even lifelong, hierarchical relationship as in Limbara. Rather, their aim is to purchase land and thus become independent of all ties to landowners. Studies of Sardinian pastoralism refer to the extensive purchases by Barbaricini shepherds of land in the hills and plains from the early part of this century onwards, but no figures have ever been collected so the proportion of shepherds in each generation who succeed in buying their own pasture remains at present unknown.(2) Some (many?) certainly succeed, and these purchases distinguish them further from their Limbaresi counterparts who, as the examples of the Cossu and Marras families show, own only a fraction of the pasture they use.

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If in 1865 the social structures of Limbara and the Barbagia were broadly similar, then a century later the rigid hierarchy of

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(1) Pampaloni e Idda, cit., note 30 p. 31. The four pastoral budgets they present on pp. 41-64 show that in 1970 rent accounted for between 39% and 41% of gross annual income for the three shepherds who turned their milk over to caseifici and only 31% for the Gavoesse shepherd who made fiore sardo.

(2) Le Lannou, cit., pp. 186, 221; Bergeron (1967) p. 322; Pampaloni e Idda, cit., pp. 20-21.

Limbara stands opposed to the egalitarian opportunities of the Barbagia, and the constraints of the social relations in which shepherds earn their livelihoods are radically different.

All Limbatesi shepherds are dependent on their vertical ties to magnates and horizontal ties to their herding partners for the welfare and safety of their flocks. Teracos and pastor'anzenos require work from magnates, and they receive a greater or lesser return from the flock depending to some extent on their partners' herding abilities. Shepherds with their own animals need access to mountain pasture and favourable terms from milk representatives; they spend much of their working lives in partnership with their close kin or affines who protect their flocks in alternate weeks. They are at once bound to these men by strong moral ties and yet eventually divided from them as their sons demand shares in the flock and conflict over husbandry decisions ensues.

In the Barbagia, as men abandon cultivation in favour of shepherding, they spend a greater part of the year further from their home communities. Relations within the village itself, in the neighbourhood and arenas of public sociability where Limbatese behaviour is informally controlled and sanctioned, are less important for shepherds. This process accompanies not as Hobsbawm suggests(1) loss of livestock and proletarianisation but a great increase in the owners and numbers of sheep, which still today encourages men to take up shepherding. The least successful shepherds remain teracos, forced to sell off their animals each year to meet debts: the most successful acquire

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(1) see above p. 103.

land as well as livestock and move out of the community permanently as they manage to purchase grazing for their flocks in the villages of hill and plain. Beginning their working lives as nomads, they aim to settle and become part of a community.

At least in the early stages of capital accumulation, their herding partnerships are short-term, with men who are not their kinsmen and may be from other villages. The additional work in these flocks of transforming milk into cheese helps keep up the demand for labour. Each shepherd works full-time and has direct charge of his own animals all year round. When conflict arises between herding partners, they can separate at the end of the year and move to other flocks in ways not very different to those who part amicably.

The movement of flocks between pastures from year to year inhibits the creation of long-term ties to particular landowners. For the shepherds of some villages the straightforward payment of rent in cash, rather than the daily consignment to a caseificio of their flock's most valuable produce, symbolises the impersonal and transient nature of the relationship. This pattern of geographical and social mobility frees Barbaricini from many of the social constraints under which Limbaresi work, except those common to all shepherds - based on the spatial distribution of flocks - which are the subject of the following chapter.

Chapter 7 : Mountain and Plain.

Flocks belonging to outsiders have grazed land in Limbara from early in this century. In 1877 a single outsider with a flock of 150 sheep was using pasture in the village, but by 1922 flocks from other villages were numerous enough for the local council to prohibit their entry to communal land on account of the shortage of pasture that their presence caused. The first statistical confirmation of their importance comes from the capititation fee records of 1948.

Table 21. Sheep in Limbara 1877 - 1970.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Limbaresi</u>	<u>Outsiders</u>	<u>Total</u>
1877	8775	150	8925
1930 *	?	?	23959
1948	19571	6940	26511
1953	24966	11700	36666
1954	18256	12269	30525
1955	17848	9062	26910
1970	18498	1500	19998

Notes: \* figure taken from Catasto Agrario which simply counted all animals pasturing in Limbara on the night of 19 March 1930.

Source: communal archives.



The number of outsiders' sheep causes severe pressure on pasture. In 1954 when they reached 40% of the total of sheep on Limbara's territory, four sheep were grazing where one had grazed a century earlier. Elderly shepherds recall their working lives as a constant effort not to waste a single blade of grass or to submit to the incursions of other flocks.

Flocks from other villages are not distributed randomly among Limbaresi flocks but constitute two distinct enclaves, with different patterns of movements and therefore relationships between shepherds. I shall first describe the rhythm of Limbarese pastoral life and the accompanying relations between Limbaresi shepherds on different pastures, and then the relations between Limbaresi and outsiders. This account holds good up until 1965 when Limbaresi had mostly abandoned their agricultural work and the majority of outsiders were deprived of their pastures, assigned to local shepherds by ETPAS.

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In spite of the pressure on pasture Limbaresi shepherds rarely work beyond the village borders. According to local tradition one way in which Limbara's boundaries were first established was by the allocation to the village of all land on the periphery where a Limbarese was known to have been killed while pasturing. Shepherds with their own flocks may find a small part of their annual grazing just beyond these limits but never more than a short journey from home; shepherds without animals only work in Limbaresi flocks. One of the two shepherds married to girls from nearby villages had refused an invitation

from his wife's brothers to bring his sheep to join their flock. This offer had obvious advantages: his affines had kinsmen who traded fiore sardo on the mainland, and they themselves had a lucrative contract to supply milk for the local hospital from their herd of cattle. The Limbarese turned the offer down on the grounds that he knew nothing of the terrain or the village itself, that he would be entirely dependent on the relationships established by these brothers-in-law and that he would have to abandon his hard-won knowledge of pasture and shepherds in Limbara.

Shepherds who do leave the village are known or assumed to have been forced to do so by threats of revenge from other shepherds whom they have injured by theft or some kind of betrayal. In 1972 there were five flocks in other parts of Sardinia and mainland Italy herded by Limbarese who had severed regular contacts with their home village; the murder of one of these men in the summer of 1973 was taken as a belated confirmation of his reasons for departure. To leave home territory is thus an admission of failure to handle pastoral relationships to the extent that men fear for their lives.

Throughout the pastoral year, beginning officially on St John's Day, June 24, all Limbarese flocks move between pastures in mountain, hill and plain. There is no straightforward pattern of vertical transhumance dividing the distribution of flocks neatly between summer and winter but rather a series of short-range and regular moves between and within different altitudes. Although there are no rules governing how long flocks may spend on any given pasture, most flocks move in the same direction in

the same period. Pastures are exhausted at roughly the same rate, and men like to make sure that their neighbours who moved before them are not taking advantage of their absence to steal extra grazing.

The older ewes begin to give birth in early November when flocks are on the mountain pastures revived by autumn rain. At the birth of these lambs ( sos anzones zerriles ) the flock is divided into two parts: su madrigadu includes the pregnant ewes and those which have already given birth, while sa laghinza consists of rams and the ewes born the previous year which have not yet been tupped. The senior shepherds work with su madrigadu, making sure that the new-born lambs are cleaned and suckled by their ewes;(1) this group is allocated the best grazing so that the lambs' weight at slaughter and the ewes' milk yield are as high as possible, and the shepherds' work requires constant vigilance to protect this most valuable part of the flock against animal predators (foxes and stray dogs) and thieves. Sa laghinza is the responsibility of the junior shepherds, hence the term laghinzaresu to indicate a shepherd-boy; their basic duty is to keep these unproductive animals out of the best pasture and make sure they do not stray. The proportion of the flock represented by sa laghinza varies according to the previous year's husbandry decisions but seems rarely to be more than one-fifth of the total number of animals and in some years much less. The youngest

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(1) The mortality rate for lambs varies greatly from year to year depending on weather conditions. Pampaloni and Idda, cit., p.26, reckon the average rate to be 4 - 7%.

shepherds generally work with 30-40 animals.(1) The whole flock grazes by daytime and is driven at night into a small sheep-pen, made out of bundles of branches, which is moved every few days.

Lambs are generally weaned and sold for slaughter within two months, and their ewes then form a third group, sas istellas, the flock's major milk producers: as their lambs are weaned and enclosed in a separate pen at night, the ewes from su madrigadu pass into this group. These animals are now milked in early morning and late afternoon, and the shepherds transform this milk directly into cheese ( fiore sardo ) for household provisions and payment for land rented in the plain.

Towards the end of December, as mountain grazing diminishes and the weather gets colder, shepherds move su madrigadu and sas istellas down to the plain, leaving the young shepherds with sa laghinza to make the best of the remaining pasture: sa laghinza, which contains no milk producers, only requires a subsistence diet. Except for a brief return to the mountain in March the main part of the flock now remains in the plain until late spring, and for shepherds these are the hardest months of the year's work. The ewes must be milked twice daily and their yield delivered each morning to the caseificio which is now open. Because this milk provides by far the greater part of their annual income, every care must be taken to ensure that none is wasted through careless milking or the loss of ewes. The previous year's laghinza now give birth between January and April, and these lambs ( sos anzones mesulinos ) must be tended and perhaps reared to increase

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(1) Laghinzaresos are no longer employed. Each flock's laghinza is now generally combined with one or two others under the full-time supervision of an adult shepherd.

the flock. The whole flock must be herded with continuous attention to prevent animals straying into adjoining pasture or the crops of the bidattone; at the same time the flock must be prevented from grazing too long in one place and trampling any fresh grass into mud or from picking up disease threatened in the stagnant pools which form in the winter rains. During the same period each shepherd is involved in weeding and hoeing the area he has himself sown, in harvesting olives and in pruning his vineyard.

How crucial these months are for the ewes' milk yield can be seen from the following table which shows the movements of one flock between mountain and plain in 1971 and the total and average daily milk yields consigned to a caseificio of its 145 ewes.

Table 22. Flock movements and milk yield, 1971.

<u>Dates of grazing</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>Milk to caseificio:</u> <u>litres</u>	<u>Average daily yield</u> <u>litres</u>
30 Dec.--8 March	plain	1822 (from Jan.24)	41.4
9 March--28 March	mountain	1469	73.4
29 March--14 May	plain	4198	89.3
15 May--2 July	mountain	2140 (until June 11)	76.4
3 July--2 Sept.	plain	-	-
3 Sept.--24 Sept.	mountain	-	-
25 Sept.--29 Oct.	plain	-	-
30 Oct.--30 Dec.	mountain	-	-

Nearly two-thirds of the milk and the highest daily yields

are obtained while flocks are in the plain in winter and spring so even the temporary loss of ewes or outbreaks of disease in these months are more critical to a shepherd's livelihood than at any other time of the year. The full range of each shepherd's herding skills is therefore deployed in the plain rather than the mountain.

Towards the end of the caseificio season flocks return again to the mountain where they rejoin sa laghinza if bad weather or scarce pasture has not already compelled this group to move down to the plain; if sa laghinza spends most of the winter in the mountain, then the regular supervision and relief of the younger shepherds is yet a further call on their seniors' time. In early June, the end of the most strenuous part of the year's shepherding is marked by the annual sheep-shearing, when neighbouring shepherds are invited to help, and a lamb or pig is roasted when the shearing is over. Wives and daughters of shepherds occasionally participate by helping to prepare the meal; this is the only time in the year when women approach the flocks.

Soon after the shearing the whole flock moves down to the plain so that shepherds are within easy reach of the crops to be harvested. Lambs have all been slaughtered or incorporated into the flock, the caseifici are closed and the once-daily milking during the remaining weeks of the ewes' lactation cycle is again used to produce cheese for rent and domestic consumption. This period of much reduced work with the flock coincides with the most intensive weeks of agricultural labour - getting the harvest in before crops can be destroyed by sudden storms or devoured by the swarms of insects which settle on the land in high summer.

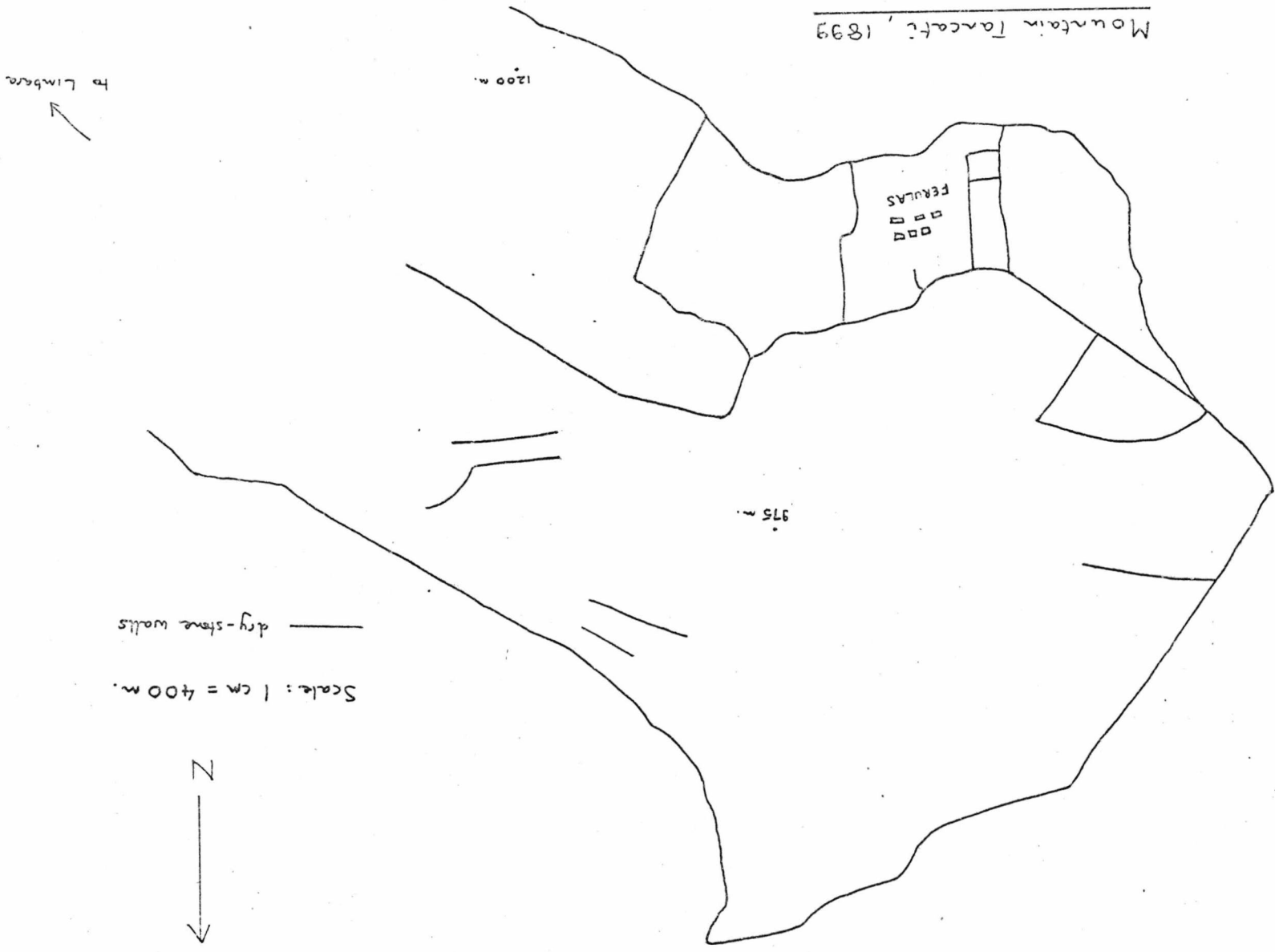
This work is done by day while sheep graze at night, making use also of the stubble at a reduced rent. In August and September there is a pause in all activities, culminating in the festival of the patron saint, San Bachisio, in early October; young men demonstrate their skills on horseback and dancing, and the whole village celebrates the completion of the agro-pastoral cycle. In Sardinian the month of September is Capidanni (literally, 'New Year') when both shepherds and peasants draw breath before the cycle begins again. Nowadays the festival of San Bachisio arouses less intense participation and no opportunities for personal prowess, and it no longer symbolises the end of the working year for any but a minority of Limbaresi.

Since flocks move at the same times between pastures, shepherds never work alone in the middle of the empty countryside. Each set of herding partners is surrounded by other shepherds with whom they exchange or refuse help and information according to a combination of geographical and social distance. The countryside is for shepherds what the neighbourhood is for women, and the presence and evaluations of other men are as ineluctable there as the comments and judgements of neighbours in the village.

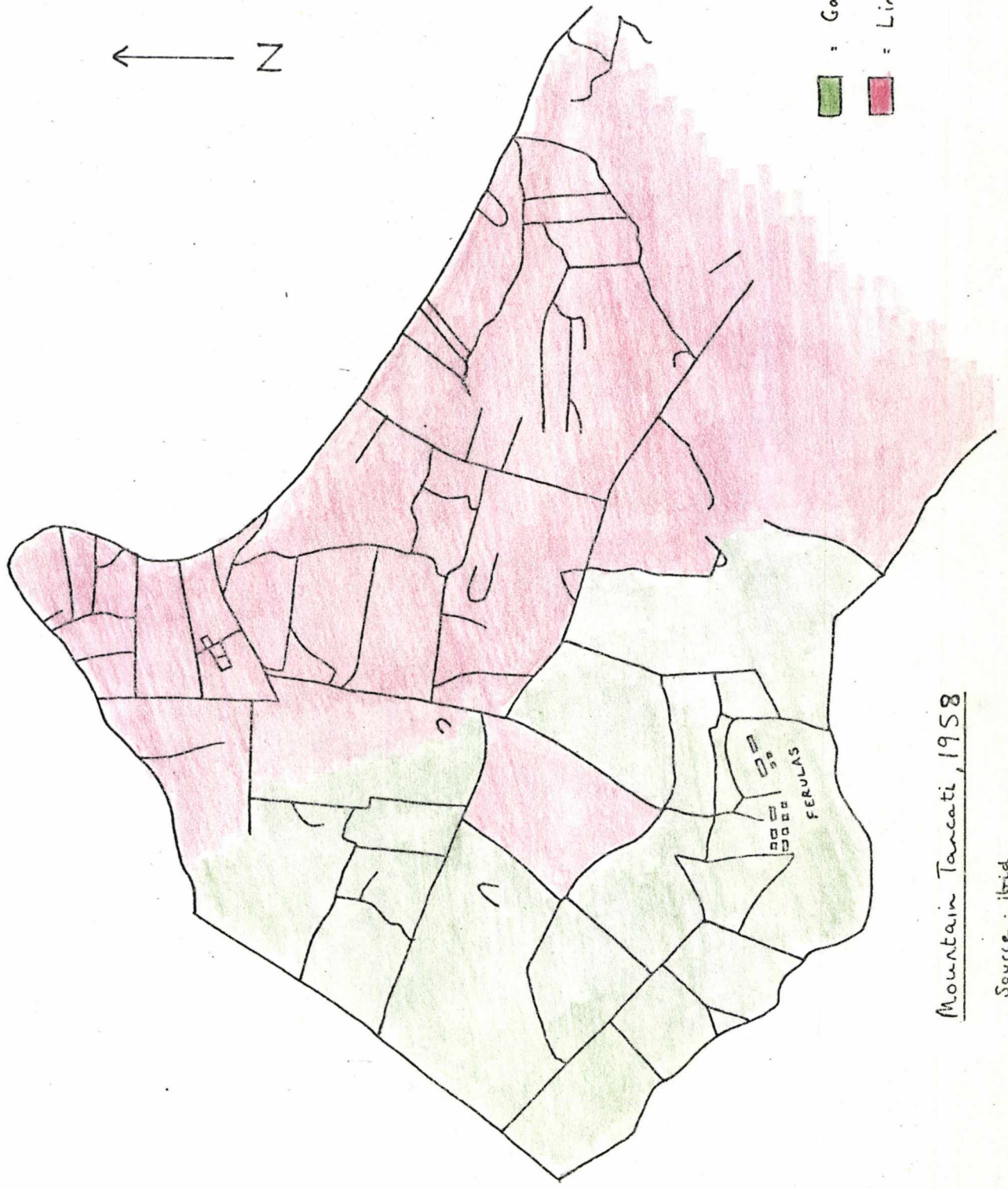
While herding partners remain together all year round, the pattern of their relations with other shepherds is different in mountain and plain. The basis of this difference lies in the fact that while the plain remains open throughout this century, pasture in the mountain is divided up after 1881 by stone walls to form a set of tancati. Since 1965 the tancati of the Martin estate have been sub-divided by barbed wire fences into individual

Source: Map of the Istituto Geografico Militare

Mountain Tancafi, 1899







Mountain Tancati, 1958

Source : ibid.

properties, and the following account refers to mountain grazing as it had been for half a century until this division.

There are 52 named tancati, ranging in size from 6 ha. to 252 ha., of which half are more than 50 ha. Not every tancato now represents a single property: some contain land belonging in several different properties, and other properties consist of a number of tancati. Each tancato however constitutes a unit of pasture. When there is more than a single magnate owner, one man is delegated as the administrator who fixes the rent in milk, designates the caseificio it must be consigned to and divides the income among the owners. Magnates who live and work outside Limbara but who have inherited mountainland draw their rent from it in this way. In the few tancati containing land which belongs to shepherds themselves, an owner cannot take up rights to his part alone but needs the consent of other owners. One shepherd who intended to use a tancato in which he and his siblings had rights to only 4 ha. had to negotiate with 17 other sets of owners, and he failed to secure access because one man had already given his consent to its use by another shepherd.

Most tancati are far too large for a single flock. Shepherds aim to secure 0.50 ha. of pasture per sheep annually, of which roughly 0.16 ha. lies in the mountain where rents are double those in the plain - 100 litres as against 48 litres (= 8 kg. of cheese) per hectare. In the years of greatest pressure on pasture shepherds had to be content with much less than this amount, nearer 0.10 ha. A flock of 150 sheep therefore requires at most 24 ha. of mountain grazing, equivalent to only a small part of most tancati so that shepherds are compelled to share

their land.

Flocks belonging to magnates themselves are generally grazed on the owners' tancati in the hills. These flocks are larger than those of independent shepherds, and the hill tancati, with the best grazing, are smaller than their mountain equivalents. Pastor'anzenos therefore rarely share pasture; if they do use mountain land, they either occupy a tancato with another flock belonging to a magnate and herded by men of similar status to themselves or they are the sole occupants.

For independent flocks the senior shepherds of one flock negotiate the rent of a whole tancato from its owners or administrator and then look for other shepherds with whom they can share the pasture. The number of shepherds they co-opt varies with the size of the tancato and the annual state of grazing determined by land and weather. One man reckoned that his pasture of 121 ha. supported roughly 700 sheep for a total of five months in an average year, and during the two decades that he had rented the tancato, it had been used each year by four, occasionally five, flocks. Another shepherd responsible for rather poorer quality 100 ha. shared the land with other three flocks, and even the much smaller tancati of 25-30 ha. generally contained two flocks each.

The shepherds from different flocks who share mountain pasture are known as cumpanzos 'e croba. Cumpanzu means simply 'companion', while de croba has the sense 'twin'. Its standard use in Sardinian is to refer to the lambs of a ewe which has twinned, called anzones de croba or crobinos. These shepherds make cheese, eat and sleep in a single stone shelter or, in the

bigger tancati, in separate shelters not far apart. Thus households in the village contain groups of siblings, and huts in the mountain are occupied by 'siblings of the same ewe'. The metaphorical usage of this twinship term indicates the acknowledgement of reciprocal obligations that bind men together as equals and which forces the original negotiator of the tancato to select his partners very carefully.

Firstly, these shepherds are united by the joint obligation to pay the landowner his milk rent, and the contribution of the separate flocks is calculated according to their sizes at the same rate per animal. Because of this joint responsibility the decimation of one man's flock by disease or theft immediately places a heavier burden on his cumpanzos 'e croba. If they are not to deprive the victim of his livelihood altogether by forcing him to contribute all his remaining milk, they themselves must bear a larger share of the rent and therefore reduce the income of their own households. Similarly any shepherd who is caught watering down his milk to make it go further will bring down the landowner's reproof on all cumpanzos for what he suspects to be collective deceit.

Secondly, cumpanzos 'e croba form a joint front against the men who surround them in the countryside. The grazing in each tancato, although shared by several flocks which are kept distinct, is not divided into particular areas for each flock. The shepherds have equal rights of access to the whole pasture so that the incursions of neighbours' livestock from any side damages all cumpanzos equally and reduces grass for all flocks. A quarrel between men in adjoining tancati over abusive pasturing necessarily



involves either the direct support of the other men on both sides or their intervention to calm the disputants and settle the quarrel. A cumpanzu who consistently provokes quarrels with other shepherds becomes a liability for the men who share his tancato since his behaviour threatens them all with indiscriminate retaliation and continually draws them into his own disputes.

Thirdly, cumpanzos 'e croba expect each other to provide direct protection for their flocks. One shepherd returned early to his tancato on a December afternoon to see the flock of his cumpanzu gathered in a corner of the pasture and three men untying the bells from the sheep's necks before driving them off. Although he recognised one of the thieves and therefore risked being identified in his turn and made an easy target for a reprisal, he took a gun and went to investigate. The men ran off, firing a couple of shots in his direction to deter pursuit. Warnings duly reached him to keep quiet about the incident and to this day, he told me, he has not told his cumpanzu of the threat averted. Cumpanzos perform these dangerous tasks for each other without expecting to become creditors by their performance.

Less dramatic but equally effective protection requires control of information. Since cumpanzos 'e croba share the same shelter and pasture for nearly half the year, each man comes to know a very great deal about the other shepherds through their daily contact and work. He knows the markings, sizes and structure of all the flocks in the tancato and the distribution and dates of movement of su madrigadu and sa laghinza; he knows the regularities of his fellow-shepherds' visits to the

village and learns at first hand their idiosyncrasies of temperament and behaviour and the state of relations between herding partners. The men generally eat together, and they may help with each other's flock and take messages, milk or cheese down to Limbara; there is no privacy available in the confines of the small hut which sometimes has only enough room for the shepherds to stretch out and sleep. The information gained is otherwise only available to men who herd the same flock, and because it may be crucial to animals' safety and therefore indirectly to the livelihoods of all shepherds using the same tancato, cumpanzos 'e croba are expected to guard this information as jealously as knowledge about their own flocks.

Direct abuse of the privileged position of a cumpanzu by petty theft is considered especially despicable. Isterzare is the epithet which Limbaresi use to describe such a man; the word derives from isterzu = plate, dish, and Limbaresi explained the association by reference to the phrase cane 'sterzu, a dog which is always hanging round the hut licking shepherds' plates or filching food from their knapsacks. Dogs have a single task in Limbara - no Limbarese keeps a dog as a pet in the village or countryside - which is to guard the flock and warn shepherds of the approach of strangers. A cane 'sterzu which is always near the hut away from the sheep cannot even be doing the only thing demanded of him, and isterzari fail in their obligations in an identical way. The second implication is that just as such a dog is only bold enough to steal from the very men who give it its livelihood, so an isterzare lacks the self-respect which would otherwise prevent him stealing from men who are largely defenceless against him and on whom he himself depends for the

defence of his own flock. A man who is so careless of his own reputation can hardly be expected to be careful of the reputations of others and therefore to fulfil the reciprocal obligations of cumpanzos.

If a major theft is successfully carried out, the cumpanzos of the victim need to lay all suspicions of having thoughtlessly given away the necessary information or, worse, having acted as accomplices. In any case they ought to use their information and friendships to get the animals back. Antoneddu traced his stolen sheep to a nearby village where he had sown crops some years before, and he managed to identify the thief as an acquaintance of the earlier period. Taxed with the theft the offender tried to excuse himself by assuring Antoneddu that the intended target had been the sheep of Antoneddu's cumpanzu. "From my cumpanzu? Suppose he had traced the animals to you and then found out about my connections with this village? Who could have got it out of his head that I was an accomplice in the theft?"

Since the demands on a cumpanzu 'e croba are likely to be heavy and the costs of a poor choice high, shepherds are very careful about selecting the men they share a tancato with. The obligations of cumpanzos go far beyond payment of a share of rent, and a shepherd guarantees that he can fulfil these obligations largely through his reputations for honesty and herding ability. He should be able to protect his own flock not only in the mountain with the direct assistance of his cumpanzos but also when he works alone with his herding partners in the plain; he must control the behaviour of his sons or teracos so

that their individual quarrels do not threaten the flock, and his reputation as household head shows his authority both over his sons and his wife and daughters who may otherwise give away important information in the neighbourhood. His known worth in the roles of shepherd and family head secures him access to crucial mountain pasture.

Once a man has been accepted as an equal in a set of cumpanzos, he has a strong interest in remaining in the same tancato. He knows that among those men his most important capital asset - the flock - will be safe and therefore allow him to provide for his family and set up his sons and daughters. Protection from cumpanzos gives him additional security in the weeks when he leaves his animals in the hands of his herding partners. At the same time to remain on the same tancato strengthens his link to the landowner and the landowner's caseificio representative which enables him to get a better price for his milk and guarantees him loans and assistance in bad years. The cost of moving to a different pasture may turn out to be the forfeit of both these types of protection.

Limbaresi express a strong preference for staying in a tancato, and they do in fact spend many years on land surrounded by the same cumpanzos. The examples of the Cossu, Marras and Virdis families in the last chapter show periods of 12, 14 and 17 years on the same mountain pasture, in the first two cases with the same set of men and their sons throughout. The longest continuous use of a tancato that I came across was 19 years, shared by four groups of shepherds. The long-term use of a single tancato has an obvious cost: given that each tancato has



a limited carrying-capacity, the possibility of any cumpanzu expanding his flock substantially is reduced. Without corresponding diminution of another flock the tancato is overgrazed, and the milk yield of all flocks starts to fall. The ideal, so shepherds said, was to reach to within a safe margin of the land's carrying-capacity and for each set of herding partners to be content with a flock of that size. The alternative - renting an extra tancato - was virtually excluded by the acute competition for mountain land.

Commonly years of successful joint pasturing provide the basis for a marriage between the shepherds' families. One of the Marras brothers, for example, had married the sister of a cumpanzu, and three of the four sets of shepherds who occupied the same tancato for 19 years had become linked by affinal ties: one man had married the first cousin of a cumpanzu and his sister had married a shepherd from the third flock. Each set of herding partners, who were all brothers or first cousins, were thus united by a set of affinal ties, and their young sons who helped them were therefore kin.

Kin links are not however used the other way around. Men do not invite kinsmen to become their cumpanzos 'e croba, and the men in both examples above specifically emphasised to me that they only became related after several years of sharing the tancato. I attribute this to the kind of relationships characterised by open or latent hostility which men close enough to be recognised as kin generally have after their separation into different flocks when they first assume the responsibility of negotiating for pasture. I shall describe these relations

below.

Shepherds share their pasture with cumpanzos 'e croba in the mountain only, but in both mountain and plain they are surrounded by men with whom they have a common pasture boundary ( sa lacana ). These shepherds are known as lacanarzos. Herding partners and cumpanzos are united by joint concern for a flock and pasture, while lacanarzos are the men who in effect they are often united against. Although lacanarzos do not have a common interest to protect, they nevertheless stand close enough to be able to damage or defend each other's flocks; the ambiguity of this relationship was neatly caught by one shepherd who summarised the problem of lacanarzos as being "like a boot that is a bit too tight" - an inevitable piece of equipment that nevertheless gives constant discomfort.

In the first place, the livestock of lacanarzos are likely to stray into one another's pasture, especially in the plain where there are no fences to keep them out or at least discourage entry. Animals move quite freely across the furrows and paths which define properties and pasture for the human population. If this abusive pasturing occurs only rarely and lacanarzos are otherwise on good terms, it will probably be ignored. When it happens more frequently, the offender will be accused of deliberately driving his flock onto his neighbour's land or of culpable negligence in looking after his animals, and he will be warned to keep on the right side of the boundary. If this warning is flouted, then the victim is likely to impound the animals and call in the carabinieri to deal with what is technically an offence punishable by a jail sentence of up to 2 years or a fine

of 200,000 lire. Shepherds do not hesitate to call in the law when their patience is exhausted: between 1967 - 1970 the carabinieri proceeded against 13 offenders denounced by other shepherds and in many other cases I heard of they preferred to pacify the victim and warn the offender without resorting to official legal machinery. The rights and wrongs of each case are anyway exceedingly hard to establish for an outsider.

Occasionally men retaliate by causing minor damage to the offender. One man found one of his piglets dead without apparent traces of injury. He performed a rapid autopsy and found traces of poison in its stomach, and with the help of an informant who had observed the scene traced the responsibility to a lacanarzu revenging himself for abusive pasturing. Dogs are also favourite targets for this kind of retaliation.

Secondly, lacanarzos possess detailed information on one another's behaviour - not as full as cumpanzos, but sufficient to be able to assess each man's abilities as a shepherd and to be damaging when communicated to men who wish to attack or steal the flock. Lacanarzos know the geography of pasture, its natural boundaries and paths of access, the position of the sheep-pen and the markings of animals. They are near enough to hear dogs barking or men arriving and to pick out the distinctive sound of the bells of their lacanarzos' sheep as they move around the pasture.

If lacanarzos are on friendly terms, good relations are kept up by a series of minor exchanges of help and labour throughout the year. They keep an eye on each other's flocks while one returns to the village and in an emergency may even

milk them; they may cooperate in haymaking and they will help at the annual shearing. When relations are poor, however, every effort will be made to keep contacts to a minimum, to conceal movements from a lacanarzu or deliberately mislead him. One shepherd not only used to leave an oil lamp visibly burning in his hut while he was away - this is standard practice - but also did not switch on the lights of his van until well out of sight of his lacanarzos who might thus fail to note his departure and the fact that the flock was left briefly unattended.

The full ambiguity of the lacanarzu role is brought out in its moment of greatest strain, a theft. For a theft to be successfully carried out, the thieves and stolen animals must pass through the grazing of at least one lacanarzu. As the victim follows the animals' traces and discovers through whose pasture they lead, the shepherd on that pasture is in a difficult position. He must convince his lacanarzu that he himself neither heard nor observed the passage of the thieves with the animals, and that he could not therefore intervene to protect his neighbour. More difficult to rebut is the charge that his absence was deliberately timed, that he was establishing an alibi elsewhere thereby simultaneously allowing the thieves free passage through his pasture which could not otherwise have gone unnoticed. If relations between victim and lacanarzu are poor, then there is always the suspicion that the lacanarzu himself assisted in the theft, at the very least by keeping his dogs quiet and guiding the thieves.

Even when a lacanarzu is on good terms with the victim, he is nonetheless in a quandary if he has seen which way the animals were driven or recognised the thieves. To reveal all he knows

is to espouse the cause of a man with whom he is potentially in conflict over the boundaries of his pasture and with whom he does not share the joint concern for the flock which binds together herding partners and cumpanzos 'e croba. Since his lacanarzu may be the victim of a deliberate reprisal for a previous injury, he hesitates to intervene in this dispute whose outcome is not his concern. Open and direct assistance with information is a declaration of hostility to the thieves and draws the risks of their revenge. Each shepherd is primarily concerned to defend his own flock, and giving outright help to a man with whom he has no common interest can multiply his enemies unnecessarily and put his own livelihood at risk. In addition, because there is no reason for men who pasture side by side to consider themselves equals in status, they do not usually share information in other contexts, and shepherds are extremely circumspect about revealing anything when they have no previous experience of how their information will be used.

Men are nevertheless well aware that their failure to help a lacanarzu will certainly be rewarded by a future denial of assistance to themselves and possibly by more positive retaliation. Because of a lacanarzu's privileged position and the wealth of information on his own movements, this is a permanent and potent threat which may be equally as dangerous for his livelihood as the risks of antagonising thieves by intervening in what is essentially a private dispute. The dilemma in which each lacanarzu finds himself is never easily resolvable: strategies of offering and concealing information both have their advantages and disadvantages, and neither permits a man to preserve tranquilly

the pattern of relations in the countryside which helps to guarantee the safety of a flock.

The importance and intensity of relations with lacanarzos are different in mountain and plain. In the mountain the problems of abusive pasturing are reduced, though not completely eliminated, by the stone walls which define each tancato. Also, since each man shares the same set of lacanarzos as his cumpanzos 'e croba, a shepherd cannot prosecute his private quarrels without drawing in other men who will attempt to control and restrain him since their own flocks or pasture may be damaged. Enemies are likely to cut off all contact with each other rather than try and single out each other as individual targets. Finally, the spatial distribution of these sets of cumpanzos 'e croba who consider themselves equals is random so that each set may be surrounded by men whom they consider inferior and to whom information can therefore be denied in a theft without offence - the refusal of reciprocity does not break any previous presumption of equality, since information does not pass between the two sets anyway. Of course this denial of help is never simply a blunt verbal refusal but phrased in terms of their own ignorance or absence, or sometimes as the spontaneous offer of information which is known to be false.

As shepherds come down to the plain for the winter, they separate to their individual grazing-grounds. Herding partners now have a unique set of lacanarzos, based on their different pasture, with whom interaction is most intense in the period of the greatest demands on shepherds' time and skills: loss of ewes

or abusive pasturing have a severer effect during these months of maximum milk yield than at other times of the year. But there are three further reasons why relations between neighbouring shepherds in the plain are more likely to be hostile than in the mountain.

Firstly, the intricacies of land ownership in the plain and shepherds' attempts to create a single stretch of pasture from various rights of ownership and use can lead to conflict between lacanarzos. Egidio and Tonino had agreed to make a swap (permuta) of 3 ha. so that Egidio could grow vetch for his flock in a more protected corner of the land, and Tonino subsequently exchanged his 3 ha. with Graziano, into whose pasture it jutted awkwardly. However, Egidio's sheep frequently trespassed onto Graziano's land so that eventually Graziano lost his patience and called in the carabinieri each time this happened. Egidio was fined a small sum and in retaliation decided to repudiate his part of the swaps; he began to use his original 3 ha. which had passed to Graziano through Tonino by putting barbed wire around it and demanding access through Graziano's pasture. Irritated by this provocation, Graziano demolished the fence and ordered Tonino to give him back access to his own land. In 1972 all three were openly hostile to one another and the position so complicated that even other shepherds who had been asked to act as peacemakers to try and sort out the rights and wrongs refused to intervene. This example is one of a number of disputes I heard of between lacanarzos who had exchanged land to simplify pasturing or for other specific uses and who had failed to come to terms on compensation for swaps of different sizes or who had quarrelled

over animals' straying, followed by a unilateral repudiation of the swap.

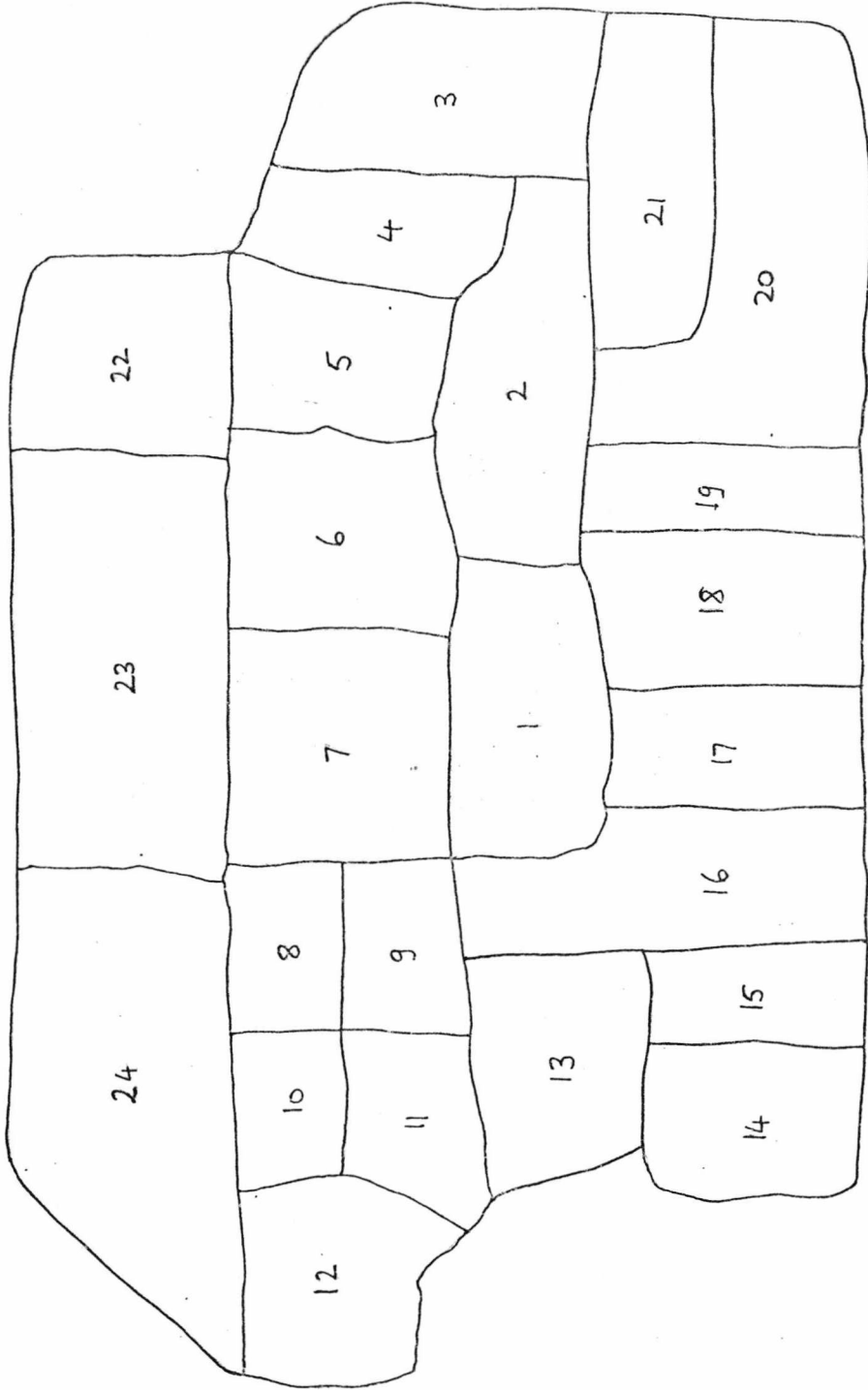
Secondly, whereas in the mountain the unit of pasture is a self-contained tancato with fixed boundaries so that a shepherd who wants more land has to rent another tancato, in the plain men can and do attempt to expand their pasture which has no obvious limits by renting more land around its perimeter. This expansion is always possible since shepherds themselves only own a small proportion of the land they use: if one of their lacanarzos can be persuaded or forced to reduce his pasture, they can apply to the owner for its rent, and it is unlikely that if they show their interest, any outsider will try and rent the land. Several men told me that one of their lacanarzos was waiting for them to have to reduce their flock and was ready to take up the pasture which they would simultaneously renounce. Sometimes when men become impatient, this pressure can turn into violence. In one case several years ago one shepherd who wanted to expand his flock and needed extra pasture made a number of offers to buy the land next door to his own in the plain; the owner repeatedly refused so the man decided on a different tactic. He began to threaten the shepherd who grazed there to try and force him to abandon the land which could then be taken over: this shepherd was in fact his second cousin (MFBDs). His threats had no effect and eventually there was a violent fight in the countryside involving a hired assailant and ended by police intervention. One of the key witnesses at the trial was a lacanarzu of both the principal antagonists whose privileged position had enabled him to follow the course of events in detail.



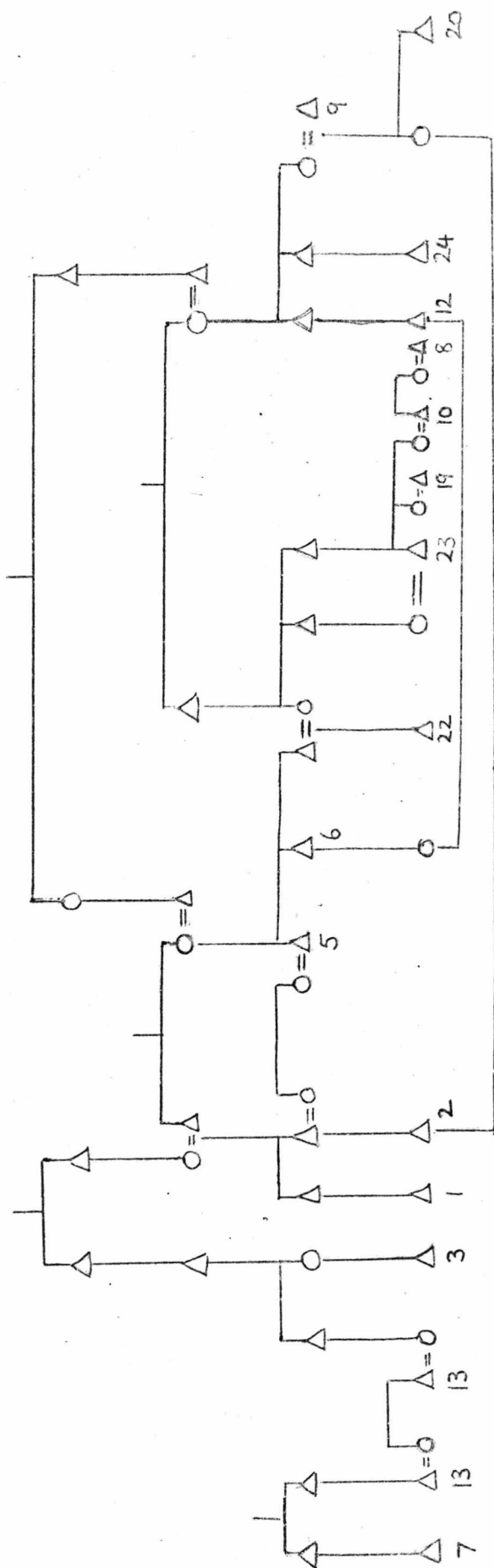
This man complained bitterly about his predicament: not only was he a lacanarzu of both men and would therefore have to resume shepherding alongside both, but he was a relative of equal distance to each since his father and the protagonists' grand fathers had been brothers. Reasonably enough he was anguished at the thought of either having to take sides publicly between men with a precisely equal claim on his support or of being arrested himself for reticence at the trial. Fortunately he was able to get away with non-committal evidence, and the presumed assailant was acquitted. Matters rarely reach such a pitch, but because each shepherd only owns a small part of his total pasture in the plain, there is a constant threat that a lacanarzu will be able to expand at his expense if he loses sheep. Once the boundaries have been moved it is very difficult to recover the land since the new occupant will be as anxious to maintain the pasture as he himself formerly was.

Thirdly, this example of violence indicates a further major difference between the pattern of relations between lacanarzos in mountain and plain. While lacanarzos in the mountain are generally random sets of men of different status, at least some of a shepherd's lacanarzos in the plain are generally kin or affines - his equals with whom information and help ought to be exchanged.

The following map and genealogical table (pp. 242, 243) show the links between some of the shepherds from 24 flocks on a total area of roughly 1000 ha. in the south-west corner of Limbăra's territory in the winter of 1971-2. Since my interest was in



Pastures in the Plain. (figs. refer to genealogy overleaf)



which shepherds share boundaries, the relative sizes of pastures is very approximate and their shape is drawn far more regular than it actually is. The genealogical table shows recognised kin and affinal connections between shepherds over most of the area, although there were certainly further links that I missed, either acknowledged or unacknowledged. In the cases where flocks were herded by brothers (1,2,3,5,6,7,24) I have drawn only a single sibling in the genealogy.

Some shepherds share boundaries with more than one kinsman. No. 6, for example, has a set of lacanarzos comprising one brother, another brother's son and, until a few years previously, this brother's wife's brother (the retired father of 23). No. 2 has a common boundary with his fradile (1), his wife's brother (20), and his father's connados (5 and 6). Although this area is exceptional insofar as it contains no large properties belonging to magnates, my casual information suggests that this web of ties is fairly typical for other parts of the plain used by shepherds with their own animals and with rights of ownership to some of their pasture: most independent shepherds number a brother, first cousin or close affine among their lacanarzos.

One qualification must be added. This map was made in 1971-2 when agriculture had been abandoned and land was no longer alternately classified as bidattone and paberile: shepherds were not therefore forced to find pasture in other parts of the plain every two years, returning to their base only in the months after the harvest, July to September. However since in the past men used a nucleus of land elsewhere to which they or their wives had rights, their lacanarzos generally included at least one

kinsman or affine, according to the processes of inheritance and marriage strategies which create the fuller range of kin and affinal relations shown in the map.

In the first place brothers inherit equal shares of land at their parents' deaths, and these shares constitute the nucleus of pasture to support their independent flocks; these may be created immediately or separation may be delayed until their own sons are old enough to assume full herding responsibilities. Since shepherds generally own only a part of their pasture, they also agree to divide the pasture which is rented: the rent is fixed so that the owners themselves do not attempt to play off rival contestants for their land. Each shepherd may also take on extra pasture elsewhere in the plain wherever it can be found, and by this he acquires a further set of lacanarzos, though these men are only coincidentally his kin: some of the shepherds in the map on p.242 have grazing in other parts of the plain but in the cases I knew of this land was a supplementary stretch, very much smaller than their main pasture.

Division of the flock and pasture however not only ends brothers' herding partnership but also sets the former partners in the role of lacanarzos since they now graze each side of a common boundary. Hence they move from the closest relationship of trust and dependence as cooperating kinsmen into the potential hostility of defending their newly-independent pasture and flocks against each other. If the actual division of the land and livestock has provoked conflict and accusations of unfair treatment, then the hostility is aggravated and the desire to take revenge for real or presumed inequalities particularly

strong. The procedure usually followed for dividing a father's remaining sheep is not guaranteed to provide equal shares for participants: sheep are herded into the pen and then driven out one by one to be allocated in turn to as many brothers as have claims. Since ewes vary in the quality of their milk production, there is often space for recrimination especially if their father's share of the flock has remained large and its division correspondingly important for his heirs.

In the second place marriages between families of lacanarzos are fairly common. Limbaresi point out that lacanarzos can observe each others' behaviour and abilities closely and thus evaluate their suitability as affines. Such marriages, like those between first cousins which have the same consequences for property consolidation, are described as being less for love than for interesse (advantage): a shepherd gains the use of his wife's land adjoining his own and their sons inherit a more consistent nucleus of pasture, becoming in turn lacanarzos of their first cousins. The land on either side of the boundary between Nos. 2 and 5 in the map derives from the patrimony of a pair of sisters who were left as sole beneficiaries when their brothers were killed in the war. No. 2 has also expanded his heirs' future property in another direction by marrying the sister of a lacanarzu (No. 20).

Many independent shepherds therefore have an identical pattern of relations in the plain and the neighbourhood around the twin poles of their lives, their flocks and families. In the village brothers grow up in the same household and after marriage often live in the same neighbourhood. As long as they

work together with the joint flock, they and their wives constitute a solidary unit, equally dependent on the major source of income to support their individual homes. Wives exchange help in domestic tasks, are careful not to be too garrulous ( leridiosa ) with neighbours and defend each other against other women's gossip. When the flock and its pasture are divided however, the families retain their privileged position of observation in village and countryside but lose the joint interest compelling reciprocal help. At least one of the flocks moves to a different tancato in the mountain, and shepherds assume obligations to separate sets of cumpanzos 'e croba. The change of mountain pasture usually implies the creation of a tie to a different landowner and milk representative.

Former partners therefore continue to live in the same neighbourhood and pasture alongside each other in the crucial winter months. If their separation has been accompanied by conflict, this closeness keeps alive the memory of injustice. Rancour may be aggravated by the various disputes to which all lacanarzos are liable whether former partners or not. As the division is often made when brothers' sons begin to assume full herding responsibilities, the daily management of flocks on adjoining pasture in the plain is in the hands of first cousins whose behaviour towards each other is less constrained by the bonds of kinship than that between their fathers. The shepherds are approaching the age of their first claim on the flock, and they are perhaps more likely to be aggressively demonstrative of their abilities to defend flock and pasture than older men - this demonstration is necessarily conducted at the expense of pasture-

neighbours.

Beyond the geographical range of lacanarzos shepherds are not directly concerned with each others' activities either in mountain or plain. They cannot know much about the flocks or pattern of relations between men on distant pastures, and no common interest in flocks and pasture unites or divides them as it does herding partners, cumpanzos 'e croba or lacanarzos. Shepherds who work at a distance and who are not linked by a particular dyadic tie recognise no obligation to give each other help or information; men do not expect support on the sole ground of being fellow-villagers, although they sometimes wistfully said they ought to be able to do so.

Each shepherd has a set of kinsmen, compari and friends elsewhere in the countryside. These men meet casually only in the village, and the exchanges of information and help which they can count on vary according to the individual relationship and the context. Most of these men might be invited to help find pasture or cooperate in haymaking or sheep-shearing, and some are potential cumpanzos 'e croba. In more serious cases, such as livestock-theft in which support carries a risk, full help is generally demanded only from a compare while kin and friends are expected to offer less assistance than a man of equivalent social distance who is a lacanarzu of the victim. One shepherd distinguished clearly the extra help he would give to a first cousin who was a pasture-neighbour. "For the lacanarzu I put myself unreservedly on his side. For my cousin who is not a lacanarzu I don't commit myself ( non mi espongo ). I tell him nothing directly, although I may try to help him indirectly.



I do not let him know that I have seen and identified the thieves because otherwise I am their next target".

Unless a shepherd can demonstrate his moral obligation to obstruct a theft or give information about the thieves, he knows the consequences will be unpleasant and perhaps even fatal. In the immediate post-war years five Limbaresi were murdered in the plain. Men were reluctant to talk about these killings, although I am not sure whether this was because they knew too much or too little about them; the commonest explanation however was that the victims had somehow got in the way of passing livestock-rustlers or given information to track them down and had paid with their lives for this intentional or unintentional obstruction. Fear of being involved quite involuntarily by giving every information which was not known to be important leads men to be very careful about communicating what they believe or know, and those who talk heedlessly to other men are sharply criticised. "He's just the kind of man to beware of," said one shepherd about a former acquaintance. "Every time I told him something, he was straight off to tell someone else". The standard disclaimer following a request or comment which has aroused an unexpectedly strong reaction is "I'm not looking for anything" ( Deo non so chircande nudda ), denying any special interest and therefore possible involvement and trouble.

A shepherd who tries to become a friend of everybody becomes a friend of nobody. Since the maintenance of friendships demands exchanges of information, a man with too many friends can hardly avoid the suspicion of using information from one source as currency in another relationship; if there is a risk of their

confidences being betrayed, men refuse to reveal anything in his presence or cut off relations altogether. The deliberately restricted circulation of information reinforces shepherds in the assumption that apart from their closest ties, they can expect little help in moments of greatest need from other shepherds in the countryside; they strengthen these particular friendships and do not pry into the behaviour of others. Petta che non manigo la lasso brusiare (I allow to get burnt any meat I'm not going to eat myself) was how one man summarised his attitude to the activities of socially and geographically distant shepherds.

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Outsiders in Limbara can be divided into two categories, Gavoesi and others, and they occupy quite different places in the system of relationships in the countryside. Limbaresesi do not therefore have a single homogeneous category of outsiders whom they treat in an identical way.

Flocks from Gavoi occupy 15 large tancati, covering approximately 1300 ha., on the Martin estate in the mountain from at least 1950 until 1965. Shepherds generally arrive in autumn, use the land until early winter and then move down to lower pastures in the Tirso valley or Campidano for the coldest months of the year. Few flocks spend more than an annual total of 6 months in Limbara: in 1954, for example, only 691 (6%) of the total of 12,269 sheep of all outsiders stayed for more than 6 months.

As the map of the mountain (p. 225) shows, Gavoesi occupy a bloc of tancati in the most northerly part of village territory. It seems to have been common for the same flocks to return for at least a few years although, following the pattern described in

the last chapter, the men herding each flock change, sometimes annually. In one of the only two tancati occupied jointly by Gavoesi and Limbaresi, the same Gavoesi shepherd returned for 15 years, helped successively by four of his seven sons who each left and formed separate flocks after two or three years' work with their father. He was also helped by teracos from Gavoi and surrounding villages who worked for a year or two and then moved elsewhere with their few dozen sheep.

Because these Gavoesi are concentrated together and are neither cumpanzos 'e croba nor lacanarzos of most local shepherds, Limbaresi regard them very much as any shepherds on distant pasture. They are largely ignorant of their activities and pattern of relations, and this made it hard to collect evidence about the regularity of their return to Limbara. In addition, there are few strong dyadic ties linking Gavoesi and Limbaresi. Gavoesi do not marry into Limbara, and I found no cases of comparaggio even with the two sets of Limbaresi shepherds who shared pasture with these outsiders. Quite frequently casual acquaintance is used to find teracos for Limbaresi with a temporary shortage of labour or with a preference for employing outsiders all year round rather than a fellow-villager in alternate weeks.

Most Limbaresi said that Gavoesi shepherds 'behaved well' ( si comportavano bene ), and one of the men who shared a tancato with them stated that they behaved 'like signori'. The strongest local complaint is that Gavoesi used to burn off the grass and weeds in their tancati before leaving in the summer and the flames sometimes spread to Limbarese pasture. This technique of

leaving a coating of ash manure is considered to improve pasture provided that the autumn rains come early enough to allow the regenerative process to take place before the temperature falls sharply. Otherwise, Limbaresi complain that Gavoesi sometimes picked up a sheep or two from local flocks on their way to other pastures but no less is expected from Limbaresi shepherds (see next chapter).

Although Gavoesi rent a considerable part of mountain land, they are not in direct competition with Limbaresi shepherds for the same patrons. They rent this land from the administrator of the Martin estate rather than local landowners, and they pay for it not in milk but in cash on the basis of the price per litre established annually by the large dairy-processing firms, at the rate of roughly 100 litres per hectare. Unlike Limbaresi they continue to transform their entire milk yield into cheese ( fiore sardo ) which they market through intermediaries from their home village. They do not therefore become potential clients of local magnates acting as representatives of the caseifici, so that there is no danger of their accepting a lower price for milk and forcing Limbaresi shepherds to do the same: Limbaresi magnates cannot guarantee their incomes from milk from the flocks of outsiders.

While most Limbaresi and Gavoesi shepherds are separated geographically, the second category of outsiders pasture alongside a set of Limbaresi shepherds on communal land. The system of pasturing is in antithesis of that described for mountain and plain, and the shepherds who use this land are regarded with considerable suspicion whether they are Limbaresi or outsiders.

Communal pasture comprises Su Padru and (since 1950) Sa Serra, totalling 741 ha. The numbers of sheep and flocks using the pasture vary from year to year. Between 1953 and 1970 the number of sheep admitted annually range from 1382 to 2577 constituting between 8 and 22 flocks. The majority of flocks in all but two years are herded by Limbaresi, who pasture an average of twelve flocks annually there: outsiders, mostly from villages in the foothills of the Barbagia, bring in an average of four flocks each year. In no two successive years is there an identical set of flocks from the same villages and Limbara occupying this land, so most shepherds are never surrounded by exactly the same men as in the previous year. Most shepherds use this land for a total of roughly six months a year, the Limbaresi combining it with their pasture in the plain and outsiders with land in their home villages or elsewhere in the island. The modes of access and use differ from those on the rest of Limbara's territory.

Firstly, shepherds are granted access by capitation fee on application to the village council. Rights of use are available to any villager, and those who take them up are not therefore dependent on their status as magnates' clients or as cumpanzos 'e croba for the use of mountain land. Because payment is by capitation fee rather than milk, these shepherds can weather a bad year by slaughtering or selling animals without losing rights to the same land for which they pay a reduced fee. Similarly they can add sheep to their flocks either clandestinely - the checks of the country guard ( guardia campestre ) employed by the council are not considered rigorous - or by paying a higher

fee. Success or failure in herding does not threaten the loss of land as it may do for shepherds in tancati. Also, since rent is paid in cash rather than milk, these shepherds are not so directly dependent on their abilities to maintain their flocks' annual yield as the men whose obligations to landowners and fellow-shepherds are expressed in milk transactions. Cash can be drawn out of savings or, as other shepherds suspect some of these men of doing, from the proceeds of livestock-rustling. These conversions are not open to men who must guarantee their access to land directly in milk.

Secondly, shepherds on communal land are subtracted from the observation, evaluation and control to which men who use only tancati and the plain are subject. They choose an empty hut and use the grazing around it, but they are not debarred from ranging widely; there are walls and paths throughout the communal land but they do not constitute the enforceable boundaries of each shepherd's pasture. If other huts are abandoned, men can change the base of their activities each year. They therefore do not have clearly-defined, long-term relations with other shepherds based on the spatial distribution of flocks; even when they do confine themselves for several years to the same area, the men who surround them change annually so that contact is transient and superficial and frequently concerns shepherds from other villages with no other ties in Limbara.

Social relations based on communal pasture in the upper hill slopes are therefore in striking contrast to the strong vertical and horizontal ties, often based on ritual kinship or

kinship, relating shepherds to landowners and to one another in mountain and plain. Limbaresi tend to view men who use communal land with great diffidence. Outsiders are there too short a time to be evaluated, and because they cannot demonstrate their trustworthiness in the normal performance of a shepherd's tasks, they are considered untrustworthy. The Limbaresi shepherds were pointed out as men too unreliable or quarrelsome to secure mountain pasture and to persuade other men to accept them as herding partners or cumpanzos 'e croba; certainly some of the shepherds I knew who used the land had had a past history of brief partnerships and angry separations, and therefore forfeited the protection and exchanges of help and labour which lasting relations with a set of cumpanzos 'e croba provide.

Alternatively, they are considered men with a fondness for livestock-rustling for personal gain, whose exposure to possible retaliation causes other shepherds to refuse association with them. In this case they may choose to pasture on communal land voluntarily, since it takes them out of the direct observation of other Limbaresi. None of the shepherds who use communal land are often seen around the village, and some never appear in the square or bars - this isolation in village and countryside reinforces the suspicion in which they are held.

Even though the rent of communal land is lower than for private tancati, Limbaresi are extremely reluctant to take advantage of this difference. The margin of difference can only be shown very roughly because the rents of tancati vary and the cash returns to shepherds for milk fluctuate annually. In 1965 when the average milk price stood at c. 100 lire per litre,

shepherds in a tancato with a rent of 100 litres per hectare supporting 7 sheep paid 1432 lire per animal: in the same year sheep were admitted to communal land at 940 lire per head, a difference of over 30% between public and private rents. Some Limbaresi reckoned it offhand to be as much as 40% in 1971. Shepherds said that the quality of communal pasture was lower (which in certain parts is undoubtedly true) and the lack of boundaries would require more labour with the flock but also that they did not wish to be surrounded by men they were particularly wary of, who would represent a perpetual risk.

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These different patterns of pasturing which have been created since 1865 can be set out schematically, with some simplification, to illustrate the associations of ownership, shepherds, medium of rent and the closest relationships of control in the three parts of village territory.

	<u>Mountain</u>	<u>Hill</u>	<u>Plain</u>
<u>Owner</u> :	Martin Magnates	Communal land	Magnates-Shepherds-Peasants
<u>Shepherds</u> :	Gavoesi Limbaresi*	Limbaresi/outsideers	Limbaresi
<u>Rent</u> :	Cash Milk	Capitation fee	Cheese
<u>Control</u> :	<u>Cumpanzos 'e croba</u>	—	<u>Lacanzos</u>

The spatial distribution of flocks gives order to shepherds' expectations of how other men in the countryside will behave. Men from other communities with unknown reputations are separated from most Limbaresi and therefore have few occasions for direct

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\* Limbaresi also use the Martin estate but pay rent in milk.



conflict: they are most sharply divided from Limbaresi peasants whose crops in the plain are never threatened by outsiders' livestock and with whom they are not in competition for the use of land.

Outsiders are also separated from the majority of Limbaresi shepherds. Gavoesi occupy a continuous bloc of tancati where they are protected by the stone walls against the casual or deliberate straying of animals which causes conflict between Limbaresi in the plain. In the event of a quarrel both sides are likely to be restrained by their cumpanzos 'e croba when flocks are grazing in the mountain in autumn. When ewes and lambs move down to the plain, the junior shepherds left in charge of sa laghinza are not expected to initiate quarrels in their own right since they have no husbandry and only subordinate herding responsibilities. In any case other adults will not retaliate directly against them but complain to their seniors who will punish the offenders. When a 17 year old boy committed suicide in the mountain, I asked another shepherd, before suicide was definitively established, whether it might not have been the consequence of a quarrel; the man dismissed the idea because at 17 the victim could have had no responsibilities to lead to such drastic revenge.

On communal pasture the men who are to a great extent unpredictable are thrown together - outsiders in Limbara for short periods, ready quarrellers and suspected livestock-rustlers whose animals invite retaliation. Conflict here is to be expected, and its consequences are circumscribed by the refusal of other Limbaresi to accept the joint responsibilities

of herding with or around these men.

Among Limbaresi the change in conditions of access to mountain pasture after 1865 leads to a much greater degree of social control exerted on shepherds and perhaps to a revaluation of the qualities demanded of them: the men on communal land who pasture in the conditions nearest to those of 1865 have low reputations in Limbara, although they continue to demonstrate the aggressive self-reliance no doubt needed for grazing on cussorgie among the outlaws and criminals noted by Angius. A century later each man has his widest set of obligations and the greatest protection against livestock loss there: the fellow-shepherds of his tancato accept him as their equal, entitled to a claim on their abilities in reciprocal defence. By contrast far greater conflict is likely in the plain where a man is surrounded by kin and former herding partners: the quarrels which threaten flocks are likely to involve the closest members of the local community.

The conditions of mountain pasturing help to differentiate among Limbaresi shepherds and perhaps convert that differentiation into a more rigid hierarchy than the uncertainties of herding in the mid-19th century allowed. This concerns the twin dimensions of status - reputation and wealth.

Firstly, men are accepted as cumpanzos 'e croba on the strength of their reputations: good relations with their herding partners, authority over junior shepherds to prevent dissemination of vital information or needless quarrels and no suspicion of being directly involved in livestock-rustling for gain which might threaten all the flocks of the tancato by revenge. Each

set of cumpanzos 'e croba can be ranked in terms of possession of these qualities in relation to the groups occupying other tancati. The least reputable independent shepherds find pasture on communal land while those whose relations with other men have deteriorated to the point of being threatened with physical elimination leave Limbara altogether.

Secondly, long-term use of tancati by the same flocks requires roughly constant flock sizes and therefore a constant level of milk yield of each flock. As this yield is converted into cash through the mediation of Limbara's magnates, the relative differences in wealth accruing to each household become more stable, and the increasing importance of cash marks this as a crucial discriminator of status.

Chapter 8 : Livestock--Rustling.

In Limbara the threat of livestock-theft is ever-present. Shepherds stay in the countryside to guard their flocks far beyond the hours required for actual work, and the men who herd alone rarely sleep in the village. Fear of exposure to theft conditions the choice of herding partners and relations with men on neighbouring pastures. The news of a local theft spreads quickly among shepherds, and the space given to the topic in the two regional newspapers confirms for Limbaresi the ubiquity and persistence of the threat.

The statistics available justify these fears. Proportionately to human and animal populations there are more livestock-thefts and more animals stolen in the 'homogeneous agricultural zone' comprising Limbara and other twelve villages than in any other part of Sardinia. Although these statistics should be regarded very warily, this zone shows the greatest overall increase in the annual number of thefts between 1800 - 1965, and over the short recent period 1960 - 1965 nearly one-fifth (18%) of all the animals stolen in the island were stolen there.(1) Every Limbarese shepherd has lost animals at some time during his

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(1) Ferracuti, Lazzari, Wolfgang (1970) tavv. 9 and 10. Also unpublished data on animals stolen made available by Prof. G. Puggioni. The absolute figures on which these comparisons are based refer obviously to reported thefts only, but it is characteristic of Sardinian livestock-rustling (and will be explained below) that victims often do not call in the police. Also, thefts appear to be counted on a territorial basis - every theft committed in Limbara is recorded there. The figures therefore make no distinctions between local and transhumant populations as offenders or victims.

pastoral career, and some men have been repeated targets.

At first sight the prevalence of theft would seem to prevent the emergence and maintenance of a hierarchy among shepherds based on acknowledged herding abilities and on a fairly constant link between men and particular pastures. Loss of animals reflects directly on a shepherd's status as herdsman, and a reduction in the flock or herd changes the ratio of animals to land, forcing men to find smaller tancati and therefore new partners and patrons. Also since Limbaresi are dependent on the income from sheep and agricultural work of cattle, thefts carried out on a densely-populated territory among men who pasture alongside one another for much of their lives might be expected to generate anarchy in the countryside. This chapter aims to provide an account of the patterns and rules governing thefts which shows how neither their execution nor consequences fatally upset the order in shepherds' relationships, and how conflicts in Limbara are harnessed to the aspirations of shepherds from the Barbagia.

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Theft is usually treated as the statistics present it - a simple uniform event unconnected to the relationships between offender and victim or to a wider social context. Indeed its very occurrence is assumed to demonstrate that there are no links between the men involved, since otherwise they would respect each other's property. In Limbara however we can distinguish four types of theft, two concerning Limbaresi only and two linking

Limbaresi and men from other villages, which can broadly be identified by their different aims and modes of execution. The evidence in what follows comes from the hints, conversations and occasional confidences of shepherds and others, backed up by as much discreet questioning as possible about behaviour which can earn men a jail sentence of up to ten years. No one described to me how he himself had organised or carried out a theft, but many men gave fairly detailed though selective accounts of thefts in which they had been the victims.

The first case concerns the theft of a single animal, a mannelitta goat or pig kept exclusively for household subsistence. Until a few years ago most families, especially those without flocks or herds, possessed one or two goats which were kept in the village, either in the ground-floor of the house or in an adjacent stall. Every day a child led the goat to a meeting-point where all villagers' goats were collected and driven to pasture on communal land by the goatherd ( su crabarzu ) employed by the local administration. His job was to supervise the flock's grazing and return with the animals to the village in the evening; each goat was milked as it reached home, and this milk provided sustenance for the women and children of the household. In 1957 there were 354 mannelittas goats which had diminished to 56 in 1969 when the practice was discontinued.

Many families still keep the second mannelitta animal, a pig, in a stall or backgarden. Pigs are fattened up on scraps, acorns and maize to be slaughtered between December and April, and their meat and fat are still useful contributions to the larder. Their slaughter is a ritual occasion for the formal

invitation of two or three compari or close friends who help kill and cut up the animal and are given pieces of meat when they leave. The offal is roasted and eaten straightaway, and this is one of the few occasions when men eat cooked food in one another's houses. Apart from reinforcing friendships, these gifts of meat over a period allowed families to distribute and receive food which in the days before refrigerators were common would have gone bad before consumption by a single household. The theft of a pig therefore not only deprives a family of meat and lard but also prevents the owner from participating in a set of exchanges with other men.

Limbaresi say that to steal a mannalitta animal is the gravest affront to a man because of the animal's direct provision of food to his family. People could remember very few instances of such thefts and they could not suggest convincing circumstances in which a man would opt to steal a mannalitta goat or pig rather than harm its owner in some other way. In practice such a theft would be extremely difficult. It would require a search through more than 300 goats dispersed over a stretch of communal land and identified only by earmarks which might be shared by different families - the target might easily be mistaken. Alternatively the animal would have to be carried off after forcing entry to the victim's home guarded by women and children, since only in men's absence would such an unlikely act even be possible.

My own impression is that theft of a mannalitta animal with the deliberate intention of harming a particular family is so rare as to be an idle threat. Rather, the insistence on its gravity and on the violent reaction it might provoke serves to



emphasise what the proper, 'legitimate' conditions of livestock-theft should be.

In the first place, as far as shepherds are concerned, the owners of mannelittas animals are typically peasants without sheep or cattle and therefore social inferiors. To steal animals or other objects from an inferior is considered dishonourable. An acquaintance commented to me that a shepherd who had picked up a sack of maize belonging to another shepherd of lower status and was unlucky enough to be caught in the act had lost a lot of prestige in the village. Men commiserated with an elderly cowherd whose two cows had been stolen because they were pasturing alongside the herd which was the target of the theft; they said that no thief would knowingly add the animals of an inferior just for the sake of the booty.

Secondly, the dishonour of stealing a mannelitta animal from an inferior is compounded by the fact that the owner has no chance to defend his animal. It is entrusted to the goatherd with whom he has no individual tie and who cannot be expected to guard two or three hundred goats against the possible enemies of the same number of owners. The goatherd is not engaged directly by the animals' owners nor does he have rights to the flock so he does not assume the normal responsibilities of a herding partner or pastor'anzeru in the defence of the goats. Were a pig to be stolen from a home it would be subtracted from the nominal protection of women or young children who are usually sharply separated from anything to do with the animals.

Thirdly, to steal the single animal belonging to a household is to deprive the owner and his family of their entire subsistence



from livestock: this gesture is symbolically equivalent to stealing the entire flock or herd belonging to a herdsman, causing him therefore definitive loss of status and livelihood in the pastoral sector. As I shall show below, the point of thefts is precisely not to provoke such a drastic consequence, and there is in fact an institution of community solidarity which prevents it.

The second case of theft between Limbaresi reinforces men in their belief of the general untrustworthiness of shepherds beyond the range of immediate observation and control. It is of little economic importance but exemplifies the uncertainties of the countryside. This type of theft is known as fura prana, 'theft at sight'.

As the name suggests, fura prana is carried out with a minimum of planning or organisation, and it implies no personal animosity against the victim. A passing shepherd finds an animal straying in the road, looks round quickly to make sure its owner is not in the vicinity and adds it to his flock or nowadays slips it into his car. In the past shepherds moving between mountain and plain used to drive their flocks through the village itself. Passage through the narrow twisting lanes required active vigilance against men waiting behind half-open doors to ambush an animal that strayed too far ahead or behind the main flock and out of the shepherd's sight. Fura prana is characterised by this quick-wittedness in turning a momentary opportunity to advantage without too much concern for absolute concealment, and the mark of a shepherd's ability is to deny other men this opportunity.

The animals stolen are usually lambs or sucking-pigs which are killed and either given away or cooked and eaten immediately to destroy all evidence of the theft. Social and religious occasions when meat is consumed are therefore the times when fura prana is said to be commonest - marriages, Easter and the novena in country churches. Limbaresi say that sometimes it is best not to enquire too closely where gifts of meat to the bridegroom come from or how the festivals of village patron saints were maintained. Shepherds are reluctant to slaughter their animals for their own consumption, so men who want to vary their diet of bread and cheese in the countryside may find their meat at another shepherd's expense. Fura prana never provides additions to the flock capital but only animals used as gifts or to offer hospitality.

Targets for these thefts are usually flocks at a distance from the thief, belonging to shepherds with whom he has no ties. The animal may be roasted directly in the countryside and lacanarzos invited to share the meal. This pattern confirms to a shepherd that men at a distance are unlikely to be solidary with him but ready on occasion to take advantage of his carelessness. Although losses of single animals are very rarely reported to the police, victims make every effort to trace the thief to avoid further thefts of this kind and a reputation for allowing animals to stray with insufficient concern for their recovery. One shepherd searched through nine flocks before finding his lamb which the thief had simply picked up from beside the road. His reaction was to warn the offender that he would take an opportunity for a reprisal, and he observed

contemptuously that the man was evidently too poor or too miserly to afford to slaughter an animal of his own.

Since the victim and the offender are generally separated by distance, there is little chance of fura prana leading to a deterioration of normal daily relations. The only men who carry out fura prana at the expense of a lacanarzu or shepherd nearby are teracos from other villages who have no binding ties to their employer or the shepherds around and who cannot move far from the flock without arousing suspicion. If a teracu is caught stealing from a neighbouring flock, the consequences of his action are determined by the state of relations between his employer and the victim. Good relations cause the men to shrug it off as evidence of outsiders' untrustworthiness which they refuse to allow to upset their own attitudes: pro more de su mere, rispettu a su cane (for love of its master, respect to the dog) was how one shepherd described his reaction to an incident of this kind. If the men are on poor terms however, the teracu's action will be taken as instigated by his employer, and the already bad relations will deteriorate further. In neither case is this junior shepherd with no rights to the flock and subordinate to his employer treated as having the power to initiate or aggravate a quarrel in his own right: the insulation of relations between men from the intervention of inferiors is the corollary of the rule that men should be preserved from direct attack by their superiors.

Fura prana is a perennial feature of herding animals in Limbara. Since the kind of animals that men lose - lambs, pigs, at most a young donkey - do not provide the main part of annual

income, its overall economic importance is slight. The targets are chosen casually, without the intention of harming a particular shepherd and at a distance so that the men are not normally thrown together daily: the social consequences of the direct confrontation between two Limbaresi are correspondingly limited.

The two remaining types of theft relate Limbaresi and men from other villages. In contrast to fura prana when animals are stolen for immediate consumption, the aim of these thefts is either the straightforward transfer of animals from one flock or herd to another or their conversion into cash: this can be done directly by the clandestine sale of the animals to a butcher or trader or indirectly through a ransom paid for their return by the victim. It is of course impossible to estimate how common each strategy is, but the relative importance of the conversion into cash has probably increased over the last century: this is due not only to the better communications and policing which enable men to track down live animals more easily but also to the tighter specific controls imposed to prevent the illegal passage of livestock between flocks.

The basic means of establishing the rightful owners of livestock were set out in detail in the earliest surviving code of rural legislation, the 14th century Carta de Logu: an earmark or brand for every animal, the duty of village authorities to keep a record of each owner's livestock and the combination of earmarks and brands which identified them, and the obligation on owners to register immediately the birth, sale, purchase, loss or slaughter of their animals. Control was improved in 1771 by

the introduction of documents (bollettini) recording the past and present details of ownership: any animal in the flock or herd for which the owner or shepherd could exhibit no bollettino was presumed stolen and confiscated. The use of both earmarks and documents for the identification of animals was systematised in a decree of 1898 which provides the framework of the present rules.

Expansion in the numbers and mobility of livestock in the half-century following this decree brought two defects to light. Firstly, earmarks were too limited in number and too easily altered to distinguish conclusively each flock or prevent the illegal transfer of animals from one flock to another. Secondly, since each village had its own model of document, accurate checking at any distance from the village of registration whether a shepherd's documents were genuine or counterfeit was extremely difficult. These defects were remedied by two administrative circulars of 1947 and 1949 which established a simple code for each village to be tattooed on each animal and introduced a standard island-wide model for documents.(1)

Direct transfer of stolen animals between flocks has therefore been made progressively more difficult, while the strategy of their conversion into cash has been stimulated by the commercialisation of the regional economy. More than one Limbarese remarked to me that the industrial development planned for central Sardinia would benefit the pastoral sector most by creating a large market in stolen meat to feed the population.

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(1) A. Ghiani: Le Leggi Speciali per la Sardegna. Cagliari (1954), passim.

This process runs parallel to the development of legitimate husbandry since the late 19th century - the growth in importance of annual cash returns through consignment of milk to the dairy-processing industry and the consequent pressure to slaughter rather than rear lambs to add to flock capital.

Within these general conditions however the two types of major theft in Limbara are differently organised and motivated, corresponding to the distinct forms of flock organization: a magnate and teracos, and independent shepherds. As far as teracos are concerned, their dependence permits but does not of course compel participation in thefts, and the following account therefore describes structured possibilities rather than specific motives. In any case the description belongs to the past with the virtual disappearance of these men from the village: neither of the present men in this category were ever indicated as participants in thefts.

A magnate and teracu find their targets outside Limbara, so that their activities do not constitute a threat to Limbaresi shepherds.(1) The scarce information at my disposal suggests that magnates use their wide range of contacts in other towns

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(1) Interviews among the field of victims, shepherds in other parts of the province, confirm this pattern. "The material executor of the theft is not generally considered guilty. The negative judgement is shifted or transferred onto real or alleged organisers ( mandanti ). [The organisers] are usually indicated as large flock-owners and landowners". (Riv. Sarda di Criminologia, VI, 1-4, 1970, pp. 56 - 57).

and villages to identify a target flock or herd and recruit local assistance. Their own teracu then drives the animals away from the victim's pasture either directly to the territory of Limbara or more commonly to a temporary hiding-place elsewhere until their sale or dispersal into flocks can be arranged. In one notorious case immediately after the last war a magnate was able to use his brother-in-law in the local administration to provide false documents for the animals so that they could be added to existing flocks or sold openly. However the booty is disposed of, the objective is a direct cash gain for the participants.

Magnates are in a strong position if they wish to follow the path of illicit accumulation, and a number of magnates, past and present, have enjoyed a reputation for organising thefts of this kind. Their status is secure against the dishonour of detection and arrest: since in any case they do not work in the countryside or spend time in the square, they do not rely on their reputations as a source of help and information in these contexts. They themselves possess sufficient livestock and land to be independent of other Limbaresi.

Controls on the movements of magnates are looser than for shepherds. They can move freely inside or outside the village unconstrained by the demands of work in the countryside, and if they are professionals or milk representatives, they have legitimate business with kin, friends and contacts in other towns and villages of the province. In their neighbourhood they are not surrounded by an array of kin, herding partners or lacanarzos, but nevertheless they try to make any suspicious visits inconspicuous. One magnate



whose house backed directly onto the hill was alleged to have chosen the site deliberately so that outsiders could enter his home from the countryside, unobserved by Limbaresi.

A teracu is an ideal material executor of a theft. His employment depends directly on the magnate himself and not on the maintenance of relations with other shepherds who may help him with the flock or herd. Collusion in as risky an enterprise as a theft strengthens this vertical tie by providing each man with dangerous information about the other and a joint interest in secrecy. Since a teracu remains unmarried, he can afford to be more careless of his reputation than other men: he does not seek a wife from another family and need not therefore offer a guarantee of his ability to support a home safely in the future. He can run a personal risk of injury or arrest in ways denied to other shepherds who aim or have already managed to assume the responsibilities of a family head. A teracu owns no animals in the flock he herds, and he therefore has no capital to be threatened by a reprisal.

The readiness of some teracos to participate in thefts is criticised by independent shepherds on two counts, although the force of these criticisms will become clearer when the pattern of thefts in which independent shepherds are themselves involved have been discussed. Firstly, they point out the triviality of the reward for the risk taken. They scornfully refer to the mere 10,000 lire which is the teracu's alleged due, while the bulk of the profit goes to the magnate; the teracu's agreement to carry out a theft for a negligible return is attributed either to complete dependence on his employer's wishes or to the fact



that he is too poor to refuse the chance of even a petty improvement of his annual salary. Theft is not seen to be a channel of social mobility for a teracu: no man was ever mentioned who had built up a flock of his own by illegal means, and in this respect a teracu is excluded equally from the accumulation of animal capital by legitimate or illegitimate husbandry.

Secondly, other shepherds condemn teracos for acting without even knowing who the other members of the gang are, thus putting themselves at constant risk of betrayal by men from other villages with whom they can have no solidary tie. A teracu must rely exclusively on defence and protection by his magnate: those men who had been released after arrest on suspicion of theft were widely believed to have been set free not because of their innocence or lack of proof but because of their employer's intervention.

This pattern of theft does not upset the pastoral hierarchy in Limbara (although it may of course have different consequences in the villages of the victims). Since targets are found outside Limbara, local shepherds with their own flocks do not expect to be attacked by this combination of their magnate superior and teracu inferior. Magnates remain patrons who provide land and negotiate milk prices with the dairy-processing industries; they do not simultaneously fill the role of organiser of thefts which threaten the basis of that patronage. Teracos remain inferiors who may at considerable risk increase their cash income but who do not secure the animals which would allow them to compete on equal terms with independent shepherds.

The fourth type of theft is carried out on Limbara's territory. Its execution and outcome links together Limbaresi with men from other villages in a complex and highly skilful sequence of exchanges which bind together the status systems in different communities. The stolen animals constitute the material component of status, while the motives for their loss and the means of recovery confirm or overturn men's reputations as shepherds which they have often struggled for so long to achieve. I shall describe the loss and recovery of animals from the standpoint of Limbara, then from the standpoint of the communities of the outsiders involved, and end by emphasising the contrast between the informal and legal patterns of control.

Shepherds say that they are more apprehensive of their flock's safety in the plain than in the mountain. They point out that there is much greater movement there of livestock and men, making it difficult to distinguish between legitimate and illegitimate presences. Flocks from other villages cross the plain to reach their summer or winter pasture, and Limbaresi flocks are regularly moved between grazing-grounds or to a source of water. A considerable amount of traffic now uses the roads across the plain. By contrast the road and paths in the mountains are only used by local shepherds travelling to and from their tancati, and the presence of an outsider or Limbarese away from his rightful pasture is immediately noted. With the exception of flocks from other villages that graze in Limbara, transhumant flocks from central Sardinia rarely pass through the mountain. Shepherds are of course reluctant to leave their animals anywhere for any length of time, but in my experience

they are more anxious to return to flocks grazing in the plain than in the distant mountain tancati.

Danger to livestock is said to be especially intense in the winter months, from January to April. The nights are longer, allowing the thieves the maximum cover of darkness to remove and hide the animals, and because this is the slack agricultural season, there are fewest men in the countryside to obstruct or observe thefts. The statistics for the monthly distribution of thefts bear this conviction out: in the area surrounding Limbara, as elsewhere in Sardinia, the greatest number of thefts take place in March and April, 30% more than in the next worst months, August and July, and double the thefts in the intervening periods.<sup>(1)</sup> For most of these winter and late summer months the largest and most valuable part of each Limbarese flock is grazing in the plain, and it therefore represents the major target for thieves.

The younger shepherds - laghinzaresos and teracos - whose work is mostly in the mountain are relatively secure. For a man to organise a theft at the expense of a young boy with no rights to the animals he herds and with little chance of defence against determined adults is considered dishonourable. In addition the animals for which these shepherds are responsible, sa laghinza, are economically the least valuable part of the flock: they provide neither milk nor lambs, nor will they reach their maximum level of lactation for a few years, and they cannot easily be slaughtered for the sale of their meat. Many of the thefts in the mountain recounted to me involved laghinzaresos practising minor thefts at one another's expense, carrying off unobserved

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(1) Ferracuti et al., (cit.), tavv. VII, VIII, pp. 53-55.

a single animal from an enemy's flock. They learn under protected conditions the techniques of defence which they will be called on to use when they assume full herding responsibilities with the main part of the flock.

Animals herded by the senior shepherds are more valuable in the plain where men do not enjoy the additional defence provided by their cumpanzos 'e croba. These animals include the ewes and often a few cattle, but it is the lambs which offer a particularly inviting target. The regulations for the ownership of animals require shepherds to denounce lambs within two months of their birth and to have them marked and tattooed within six months. Because ewes give birth over an extended period and the male lambs are destined for slaughter within this two-month limit, many shepherds do not return to the village to denounce births immediately but wait until they are certain of how many lambs they wish to rear. Throughout the winter months therefore each shepherd has a group of weaned lambs on his pasture which are not identified by his own or village sign and usually lack the sole document which demonstrates their legitimate ownership. Thus the strict controls on the passage of animals from one flock to another can be evaded if the booty consists of lambs: the same applies to piglets, kids and calves.

Since lambs come onto the market in the same period, stolen animals can rarely be traced successfully in the considerable winter sales for slaughter and export. Alternatively the thief may denounce them directly to the abigeato office as the offspring of his own ewes. Provided he does not obviously exaggerate his ewes' reproductive possibilities, there are few

means of checking the accuracy of the declaration, and a suspiciously large figure may be put down to an unusually high twinning rate. The thief receives the document of legitimate ownership, and for the victim therefore the loss of lambs is likely to prove definitive. A shepherd's vigilance needs to be especially sharp in the lambing-season.

All thefts from Limbaresi flocks whether in mountain or plain require the stolen animals to be moved outside the village, and shepherds attribute thefts to the cooperation of the two men necessary to carry this out - a fellow-villager and an outsider. On Limbara's territory there are none of the natural hiding-places such as gorges and caverns which are common in the Barbagia, where animals can be hidden until their destination is decided. Although the inexperienced police may miss livestock on their patrols, no shepherd who has pastured in Limbara all his life can fail to recover his own animals within village borders, nor in such densely-grazed countryside can any sudden additions to flocks be kept secret. The outsider's role is therefore to move the animals to safety elsewhere.

Limbaresi ascribe to a fellow-villager not only participation but also the organisation of the theft: bi est sempre su dugone Limbaresu. Su dugone means both 'guide' and 'ringleader', identifying clearly the man's function and responsibility. In other villages this man is more picturesquely known as su mastru 'e partu, literally 'the midwife' who presides over the separation of baby from mother, animals from their owner. For various reasons a theft requires, and its success proves, the presence of a local guide.



Firstly, thefts are very rarely carried out with violence. In none of the examples I collected had the victim been physically attacked and prevented by force from defending his flock or herd, although occasionally a young boy or teracu unexpectedly present may be tied up while the animals are removed. Thieves are generally armed, but they only shoot as a last resort to deter pursuit or avoid capture. Sometimes animals are stolen while their shepherd is present but asleep, but this is dangerous because he is likely to be woken by the dogs' barking. The aim is to avoid violence by executing the theft when the shepherd is absent, and the information which allows a thief to be sure of sufficient time to remove the animals can only be provided by a fellow-villager of the victim. No outsider can simply wait around in the open countryside close enough or long enough to acquire this information without making himself conspicuous - he is immediately noted and may be accosted by men who are suspicious of his presence.

Bruno was robbed of 70 lambs in the winter of 1964. At the time of the theft the ewes and lambs were under his management in the plain, while his brother had charge of sa laghinza in the mountain. On return to the village to replenish his provisions Bruno was asked to fetch his brother from the mountain since the latter's wife might have to be taken to hospital. He took his horse, fetched his brother and got back to the plain three hours later to find the lambs had disappeared. Bruno believes that an enemy in the neighbourhood who knew of his sister-in-law's illness and the extra time spent at home by his brother was waiting for the moment to strike and took it when he saw Bruno

leaving for the mountain. This kind of detailed information - the knowledge that a family's labour resources are stretched plus specific observation of a man's movements - cannot be available to outsiders.

Secondly, a theft's success demands not only the absence of the victim but the avoidance of obstacles when the animals are being driven off. These obstacles are both natural and social. Main roads cannot be used for any distance because of the danger of police intervention and the risk of meeting or being recognised by other shepherds. Escape therefore requires an intimate knowledge of the route through a maze of paths, walls and natural barriers which make Limbara's countryside, especially the hill and mountain, an impenetrable labyrinth for a shepherd from another village.

Furthermore a route must be chosen which passes as far away as possible from the custringtos of the victim, since these men will help him directly if they recognise his flock passing in the hands of thieves. It is unlikely that they will intervene there and then risking a violent reaction, but they may follow the animals and will make every effort to discover the direction and perhaps identity of the thieves. Any thief who takes a haphazard route will probably be detected sooner or later, or at least the animals will be recovered, and it is part of the dugone's task to ensure the minimum danger from this source - no outsider can possibly know the relationships linking Limbaresi on different pastures, and a solo raid is only likely to set off a chain of unpredictable interventions and consequences which every thief tries to avoid.

In choosing the escape route, su dugone has a parallel duty to avoid the pastures of his own custringos. If the victim finds traces of his animals' passage through the land of a man known to be on close terms with the suspected organiser of the theft, he will certainly accuse this shepherd of at least passive complicity. The custringu will therefore be involuntarily drawn into the organiser's quarrel, setting perhaps his own flock at risk and extending the conflict.

As Piero was milking his flock at daybreak in the plain, he heard the sound of animals passing close to his hut. He stood up and the thieves ran off, abandoning the sheep which were identified as from a neighbouring village and as stolen because their bells had been removed. The flock stood all day in the shade on Piero's pasture while he became more and more anxious in case the searchers and victim arrived and accused him of the theft. At dusk he began to push the animals toward the river for water and then hid at a distance to see if the thieves would return and claim them. As they did so, he confronted them to discover that they were men from another village with pasture near his own in the mountain and with whom he was known to be on good terms. He reproved them bitterly for their deliberate exposure of a friend to the charge of complicity, and they excused themselves by saying that they did not know they were passing through his pasture: when they had recognised him, they had deliberately escaped to avoid being recognised and thereby putting him in the dangerous position of knowing who the thieves of a particular flock were.

A theft damages a man's status and livelihood. Whatever



the reason for his absence doubt is thrown on his herding ability to defend animals. Since men leave their animal capital in a partner's hands in alternate weeks, a shepherd who has lost part of his own or joint flock is marked out as a poor risk in future partnerships: he may be incompetent as a herdsman (especially if the animals have been stolen while he was asleep) and he is known to have an enemy prepared to take the risks involved in theft. Although his household's subsistence is not directly threatened since this is also provided by cereal crops, the loss of livestock at least reduces income and will upset the husbandry decisions between partners or between a father and his sons. The victim therefore attempts to recoup his loss in two ways, by the identification of su dugone and the recovery of the animals.

Shepherds take for granted that su dugone does not choose his target at random simply for personal gain: a man must have a sufficient motive for damaging a fellow-shepherd through a theft. They say that in the first instance a theft is a retaliation for an action which has deliberately caused harm: thefts are no more executed in revenge for an unintentional wrong than the victims are chosen casually, and they begin their enquiries and interpret thefts from other men in these terms. Although the restriction on the circulation of information hides the exact causes of many thefts from Limbaresi, there are certain typical situations which generate thefts.

Firstly, the bitterest cases probably arise over the unequal division of a patrimony, in which a brother or first cousin receives less than his due of land or livestock and takes revenge

by organising a theft at his kinsman's expense. In one case of more or less public knowledge a pair of brothers were believed to have acted several times against the flock belonging to their mother's brothers in retaliation for what they considered an unequal division of their maternal grandfather's property. When their maternal grandmother's land was divided in 1972, new accusations of unfair treatment were made, and Limbatesi did not think it coincidence when a further theft of animals took place a fortnight later.

A second threat to flocks stems from withholding or betraying information. One shepherd who discovered accidentally that a friend's avowal of ignorance about the passage of his stolen sheep was a lie warned the man to expect not only no help but also more active revenge in the future. In the opposite case, friends of a Limbarese hinted to him that they were planning a theft at the expense of his laccanarzu who had insulted them in a dispute concerning a woman at a village festival. The Limbarese reminded them of his own obligation to help his laccanarzu and of the awkward position created by his known friendship with the probable suspects of the theft: at the least he would come under suspicion of having given tacit assent to their action. At the same time he did his duty towards the laccanarzu by warning him that he might be a future target: the man pressed him without success for the names of the potential thieves. The Limbarese said that had he betrayed these men, he himself would have been their next target. Compare also the shepherd's statement of obligation to a cousin who was not a laccanarzu, cited on p. 248, to whom he would not reveal the names of aggressors for fear of

revenge.

Other kinds of damage which lead to a theft are less predictable. In one case I heard of, sheep were run down on the road at night while the flock was being moved between pastures, and three dozen animals had to be destroyed. Difficulties arose over the allocation of responsibility for the accident, and the negotiations for compensation broke down: the response to what the flock-owner saw as a deliberate attempt to refuse reparation was a theft at the expense of the driver's flock. Other thefts were believed to have been prompted by the deliberately repeated passage of flocks across another shepherd's pasture and by public insults or snubs.

At the origin of most thefts lies an action rejecting the obligations of a particular relationship; this is characteristically a relationship between social equals. A close kinsman is refused his rightful share of a family patrimony, or the confidences encouraged by friendship are betrayed to another man. In the case originating in accidental damage to the flock the driver himself remarked how he and the presumed dugone had always exchanged salutes and drinks prior to the dispute. The action may cause direct material damage or it may provide the means to do so, but in both cases it indicates that the offender no longer considers himself bound by the rules governing the relationship. He makes a deliberate claim to superiority and challenges the other man to accept a position of inferiority: a kinsman who is allocated an unfairly small part of his inheritance is invited to accept that he is the kind of man to be given inferior shares; the man who passes on confidential information to a fellow-shepherd

known to have offended his informant claims a superior obligation to the offender, the man who has himself insulted the other and hopes to prove him incapable of retaliation.

A theft is the revenge for this damage. Its success is intended to restore equality both materially, by subtraction of valuable livestock, and in terms of status. A theft will force reconsideration of the victim's abilities as a herdsman since it is carried out in his absence and not against that part of the flock herded by a boy with no responsibility for the previous damage. Because a theft characteristically relates equals, a man who organises a theft at another Limbarese's expense reaffirms his claim to equality with the victim by that very action, and he throws down a challenge which the victim in turn will be forced to accept in order to demonstrate his own prowess as a shepherd. I never heard of an independent shepherd organising a theft from a magnate's flock, and of course he cannot steal from a pastor'anzenù or teracu who have no animals of their own. As the class of independent shepherds becomes more rigidly differentiated in the course of this century, the hierarchy created reduces the range of each shepherd's potential antagonists and protects men against one another. Men shrug off from their inferiors a challenge which from their equals constitutes a motive for a theft, since it is demeaning to revenge oneself on an inferior according to a mode of transaction appropriate to equals.

The value of a theft is expected to be roughly equivalent to the damage that has provoked it, and it very rarely happens that an entire flock is stolen, excluding its shepherd definitively

from the pastoral sector. When this does occur, the institution of sa colletta by which village shepherds each give the victim an animal helps to reconstruct his flock. I heard of two instances in Limbara, one forty years ago and the other more recently, and the recipient's son and shepherds generally were insistent on the humiliation of having to accept sheep in this way. The man may in fact be referred to as su collettarzu, which normally indicates an orphaned lamb suckled by a whole group of ewes. To receive sa colletta demonstrates failure to recover animals and the acceptance of a gift from shepherds previously considered inferior. Men say that others would continually remind them of this charity and therefore they would prefer to abandon shepherding altogether rather than save their flocks without their reputations.

Although Limbaresti instinctively attribute a theft to the planning of a fellow-villager, they also know that in certain circumstances the initiative of su dugone can be dispensed with. A teracu from another village who believes he has been cheated or unjustly dismissed by his Limbarese employer may take revenge by theft: he knows the pasture and habits of the shepherds in detail and can therefore act unaided. Shepherds also say that if a theft organised by su dugone at their expense is successful and they do not make every effort to recover animals and trace both the organiser and thieves themselves, the material executors may return on their own account since they now know the escape routes and the flock is shown to be an easy prey. Occasionally men pasturing on the boundaries of Limbara lose animals to men from the adjoining villages. These possibilities must therefore

be taken into account when a man examines the state of his personal relationships in setting out to identify the architect of the theft among the range of men with a debt to redeem.

A motive for a theft must be reinforced by the opportunity to carry it out. The organiser must either himself be in a position to acquire the detailed information necessary or have an accomplice who is, and the victim therefore pays special attention to the movements of the men who live and work around him. Neighbours in the village hold or can deduce a fund of information about the regularity of his return from the flock and particular reasons likely to keep him away: illness in the family, the unexpected arrival of a visitor, a particular commitment in Limbara or a local town: even apparently harmless details like the clothes a man is wearing or the route he takes when leaving his home can give enemies the assurance that the flock is likely to be left unprotected for some time. Conversely the victim tries to establish whether the man he suspects has received visits from outsiders, particularly on the day of the theft when the material executors wait with the dugone until the favourable moment for action arrives.

In the countryside each lacanarzu of the victim must attempt to lay the suspicion that he has either organised the theft or that he is refusing to reveal information as an active or passive accomplice of the thief. Since the victim is away at the moment of the theft, he cannot be sure whether his lacanarzos' accounts of their movements are true or false, and several men told me that their first task had been to compare these accounts for discrepancies. The shepherd knows that his sheep have crossed



or skirted the pasture of one of these men, and the animals' tracks usually tell him which; this lacanarzu must produce an especially satisfactory explanation of his own ignorance or tell what he knows or has seen although an eloquent shepherd can plead that it was only in his own absence as well as that of the victim that the thief had sufficient confidence to carry out the theft. However convincing the story, no victim is sure whether a lacanarzu is telling the truth or lying: if he was present, was he genuinely unaware or playing a deliberate part in the theft? If he was absent, was this by chance or design?

Since the great majority of thefts take place in the plain, lacanarzos there come under most suspicion. They are anyway the men with whom each shepherd is likeliest to be in conflict, and they contain at least one representative of a category in which both motive and opportunity may be concentrated: a close kinsman who is also a neighbour and an ex-herding partner. Kin may be in dispute over inheritance, while former herding partners possess excellent information on each other's habits and grazing grounds; they also have knowledge of the animals' earmarks, which can be used to prepare false documents in advance or to select a flock with identical marks as the eventual destination for the stolen animals. In addition they are better informed than other shepherds about the pattern of the victim's custringos, which ensures a safe escape.

Nevertheless, however strong the victim's suspicions are, they will not be confirmed directly by other Limbaresi. No man will tell him outright the name of su dugone even if they themselves have seen the action and know the specific motive for

the theft: rather, precisely because they know that there is a particular reason, it is their duty and interest not to enter this private quarrel by such a partisan declaration. Nor will the organiser himself admit his guilt in the face of mere suspicion. Shepherds may try to force the issue by making the principal suspect swear an oath on a religious object, usually a cross: non appo iddu né fattu né fattu faghère (I did not see nor help nor organise). But as men point out, the proverbial retort - a zurare mi ponese, sa craba ti perdese (if you make me swear, you'll lose your goat) - shows the irrelevance of this purely formal procedure. The victim is still unsure whether the man is lying, and he does not thereby recover his animals. The attempt to dispel the uncertainty is directly related to the tracing of the stolen animals and the attempt to prove a conclusive link between the material executors of the theft and the suspected dugone.

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Once the animals have been driven out of Limbara, there are three possible outcomes to the theft: the victim recovers his animals directly; he recovers them through the help of friends in other villages, often with a ransom ( sa bona manu ); he fails to trace them.

When the theft is discovered, the shepherd follows his animals' tracks as far as possible. Generally however thieves take care to drive their booty over a stretch of well-trodden ground to confuse the sets of hoofprints and throw off pursuit.



The shepherd then returns to Limbara and recruits his kin, friends and other volunteers to form a search party of up to fifty men, and a more thorough attempt to identify the direction taken is made. One of the most zealous searchers may be the organiser of the theft himself: one man told me his suspicions about a particular shepherd were further confirmed by the man's too-prompt appearance to give help. "He knew about the theft before the animals had gone". Rarely do these searches reveal the animals' hiding-place, but they indicate more precisely the direction the thieves have taken and the villages in which the victim must seek help. In the meantime a denunciation of the theft is sometimes made to the carabinieri, but they and the victim pursue their investigations separately and do not exchange reports of progress.

The importance of friends in other villages to help recover animals is crucial. Limbaresi say that a shepherd without friends outside Limbara is defenceless, and their aim is to acquire a network of contacts throughout the province. Such a network protects a man's flock and shows that he is a man capable of fulfilling the obligations of friendship: its range is an important component of his status as a shepherd.

Friendships with men from elsewhere may be established in many ways. One very common basis is a shared period of military service, and it was surprising to discover how frequently this random association had been transformed into lifelong friendship. Men from Limbara and the Barbagia appropriately seek to create the social relations to help defend flocks immediately prior to returning home and claiming rights to animals for the first time.

Some Limbaresi had established lasting ties to men from the Barbagia whose sons they had employed as teracos, and a few men had created links to Gavoesi who pastured in the mountain. In each case maintenance of these friendships may lead to further contacts, transformed into a solidary bond by exchanges of help or favours.

Since the men work far apart all year round, their friendship cannot be reinforced as in Limbara in the normal course of sociability in the bars. They may meet on special occasions such as village festivals when visitors will be plied with food and drink; the word for 'stranger' ( istranzu ) also means 'guest', and men are expected to reciprocate this hospitality in their home villages. Limbaresi themselves sometimes complained that such hospitality could be overpowering. In nearby villages contacts may be preserved in more mundane ways by largely symbolic requests for help for which it would normally be quite unnecessary to leave Limbara. Early in my stay I was taken to another village by a shepherd who said he had business there; the business in question turned out to be payment for the sale of 2 kg. of cheese, purchase of an extremely ancient milk-churn for 4000 lire and casual inspection of a sow. The shepherd defended his apparent waste of petrol and time on the grounds that he liked to keep up these friendships for the moment when he really needed them. The major occasion for most shepherds is the tracing of stolen animals.

When the village towards which the stolen animals have been taken is identified, the shepherd visits a friend there and asks him to make local enquiries to discover whether the booty is

being hidden nearby. It is quite common for men to have to proceed from village to village to find the destination of their animals, and this can be a time-consuming task, putting extra weight on the partners herding the rest of the flock. Some years ago a cowherd who had received a ransom note for his stolen cattle traced the animals to a village some 20 km. away. He asked a friend in the local administration there to examine applications to the council made by villagers in order to find handwriting matching the ransom note. The friend identified the author as a woman (an extension of her role as manager of the household finances) who told him to ask for information in a different village. The trail led to a butcher and thence to a flockowner on the other side of the island. This man was invited to a meal but refused to admit that he knew anything of a theft, and the search lasting 6 weeks petered out in failure.

Men with few friends may ask a Limbarese magnate to use his contacts in their favour or, much more reluctantly, ask help from another shepherd. This reluctance derives from the admission of failure of their own links and their consequent powerlessness either to retrieve their animals or identify the organiser of the theft; other shepherds are themselves loath to have their own network used in tracing the responsibilities of a fellow-villager, thus taking unequivocally the victim's part. Men may also visit gathering-points at places notorious for the passage of stolen animals where they try to make contact with men from the village where they believe their livestock is hidden. The truly feeble are said to pay visits to a local fortune-teller in a final desperate gamble to identify the thieves and organiser.

The extent of help a friend can offer is partly conditioned by the decision taken by the Limbarese dugone and the thieves over the extent of damage to the victim. This decision itself affects the choice of animal target: lambs are generally stolen to be disposed off definitively, while oxen or cows are commonly expected to be ransomed. Sheep may be distributed among the thieves' flocks, although this is now more difficult with the tighter controls on identification, or they too may be ransomed. The Limbarese tries to alert his friends in time to prevent a final decision and in the hope of using their own relationships with the thieves at best to secure free return of the animals or at worst to negotiate for a lower ransom or return of only part of the flock.

The most significant point about these friendships is precisely that they are friendships, not relations of kinship or comparaggio. Very few Limbarese shepherds marry women from other villages whose shepherds in turn rarely marry into Limbara so that none of the ties of close kinship or affinity which prescribe unconditional help are set up between them. Friendships do not impose complete solidarity, and they may be broken off if the rules governing them are contravened. A Limbarese who tries to force a friend beyond the limits of friendship not only fails to recover his animals but prejudices his chance of using the link again. The older men become, the harder it is to create friendships ex novo, yet Limbarese have greatest need of these men as they achieve independent management of their own flocks. They are therefore very reluctant to act in ways which will destroy these links irrevocably.

Whatever the eventual cost to the Limbarese, the basic rule of these friendships is that no help should be given or used which is inconsistent with the informant's pattern of relations in his home village. Thus, a man may invoke a tie of comparaggio with the thief and this is accepted as a sufficient reason for not intervening on behalf of a friend: several Limbarese told me that their efforts to trace animals had been thwarted in this way. On the other hand, if relations are poor, a Limbarese can sometimes benefit from more positive help. In one case, following the breakdown of negotiations for the ransom of cattle, a friend told the victim to go home and wait. That night he himself stole back the animals from their hiding-place and returned them to Limbara where the victim found them grazing on his pasture the next morning.

The information provided by a friend rarely indicates the identity of the thieves directly. If a Limbarese is told to make contact with a man, he cannot be sure whether the man is one of the thieves or simply an intermediary who negotiates the animals' return. Limbarese say that they are not interested in the material executors of the theft except insofar as these men lead to the unmasking of su dugone; nevertheless because men's reactions are unpredictable, they are not entrusted with this information since it might lead to denunciation to the police and to revenge by the thief against the informant who has betrayed him. Similarly a friend's information is given in such a way as to conceal the informant's own identity from his fellow-villager.

A Limbarese lost 20 lambs from his mountain tancato which

bordered on the land of another village. A rapid search and the questioning of lacanarzos met with failure, so the victim sought the help of a friend of his father in this village. The man busied himself with local contacts for several hours and then told the Limbarese to search very thoroughly within a radius of 3-4 km. from his pasture. The shepherd protested that he had already looked there, but his friend would say nothing more. This second search turned up 16 of the lambs, and the position of the hiding-place unmasked the thief who agreed to pay for the lambs he had already slaughtered. Retrieval of the booty was therefore seen as a mark of the victim's skill in tracing his animals himself, and no mention of his seeking help from the thief fellow-villager was ever made.

The spread of dangerous information is further controlled by a tendency to restrict a Limbarese's links in a given village to a single dyadic tie. "If I go to Birularzu", said one shepherd, "I must go to Michele's home directly. If I don't, he feels affronted and will not come at all to my house when he comes to Limbara. So the friendship dies." He explained however that going to Michele's house forced him to accept all hospitality there and to reveal to his host the reason for his visit; Michele himself would likely transact for him any local business, and would certainly be offended by a refusal of hospitality or help. The dangerous information concerning a theft is therefore transmitted along a link which is known to be secure, and the informant can feel reasonably certain that the Limbarese has no other friends in his village to whom such information might return. If the victim himself threatens this

exclusive tie, then the promised help is generally denied. One Limbarese traced his stolen pigs through contact with a man who had served under him in the war and who still addressed him by his army rank; the victim was told to return the next day when an intermediary would be ready to negotiate the animals' return. Unwisely he went accompanied by his brother-in-law who was to help drive the animals back to Limbara. The moment the intermediary saw this outsider, he denied any knowledge of the theft: the Limbarese, cursing his thoughtlessness, lost his pigs.

In consequence, Limbarese shepherds whose sheep have been stolen are frequently presented with a choice between recovering their animals or trying to identify the thieves and thence su dugone. By the acceptance of friendship's obligations they must resign themselves to receiving little indication of the identity of the material executors, which will prevent the verification of a link between them and the theft's architect - in the absence of a decisive connection the ambiguity hanging over their fellow-villager's identity cannot be dispelled. The advantages consist of the better chance of recovering the animals, even by ransom, and the reinforcement of the friendship for future occasions. Precisely because Limbarese know that they cannot depend on the defence of those immediately around them in the countryside who are also in the best position to organise a theft, the maintenance of friendships in other villages to which their animals are driven is essential. Alternatively, the victim may attempt to unmask the thieves, using a friend's information and perhaps by threatening to go to the police; the thief will then take steps to find out who has betrayed him, and a chain of further

hostilities may be set off, ending the Limbarese's friendship with this villager because of his uncontrolled use of the information and certainly provoking the definitive loss of the animals. Given that some animals are stolen deliberately for slaughter, the fact that Limbarese reckon that about half the animals stolen find their way back to Limbara perhaps suggests which course of action they prefer.

Unless the victim can establish the identity of su dugone beyond all doubt, he hesitates to retaliate even when all the circumstantial evidence points to a particular man. Piero's unexpectedly early return to his pasture frustrated the theft of 6 cows; with the help of a lacanarzu he overtook the thieves who abandoned the animals but escaped across the river. The evidence pointed clearly to a fellow-villager: alongside the recent marks of shepherds' boots where the animals had left his pasture, Piero found the imprint of a shoe - the unequivocal sign of a fellow-villager guiding the thieves away. On the road earlier that evening he had noticed the parked car of a particular enemy, and he had seen the man himself pass twice. Nevertheless he had alerted a friend in a village across the river to try and discover the identity of the actual thieves, and he said he was prepared to pay them 100,000 lire not for the name of his enemy but for some indication of meetings or places which he could use to establish the link between them and su dugone: his wife had also been instructed to try and find out from other women in the neighbourhood whether the suspect had received visits from strangers. He warned the man that he was suspected, but confided to me that he would not take revenge until he could produce



proof of the man's guilt.

The patient detective work required to unmask su dugone contributes to reducing the tension which in the immediate aftermath of a theft might lead to violence. The victim and organiser are not brought face to face at the moment of a theft, and the often slow process of tracking down animals and the dugone's identity favours a meditated, just revenge rather than a hot-headed confrontation between the two antagonists. This resolute but protracted way of pursuing conflicts leads shepherds to see their flocks as almost perpetually at risk, with little respite for their active vigilance. But there is a second compelling reason that causes men to stay their hand: they may act against the wrong man, and once this step is taken, a further set of hostilities are opened up to endanger their flock's safety. The following example which was given to me to illustrate precisely this risk shows in detail how the Limbaresi interpret thefts but require absolute certainty before reacting.

The sequence of thefts involved Raimondo and Antonio Melis, first cousins and lacanarzos in the plain, who had herded together until their fathers' separation a decade earlier. The division had provoked a quarrel since Antonio's father was accused of having appropriated more than his fair share of land. One spring night while the two flocks pastured in the plain Raimondo's horse and a yoke of oxen belonging to Antonio were taken from the adjoining pastures. Raimondo managed to trace and recover his horse after a search of a month, but Antonio's separate enquiries failed to yield information and were abandoned after only a week. He then began to circulate the rumour that

Raimondo's horse had never really been stolen but hidden temporarily elsewhere: it was a blind to disguise Raimondo's connivance in the theft of the oxen.

Shortly afterwards Antonio lost two horses. These were traced to a village in the Barbagia, and Antonio's father who had retired from active shepherding contacted a landowner who promised to help. He summoned his teracu who, when he heard Antonio's name was Melis, asked if he was a relative of Raimondo Melis with whom he had done military service: Antonio admitted that he was a first cousin. After making enquiries the teracu assured him that one of the horses could be recovered but he insisted that Raimondo come alone to collect it. This put Antonio in a quandary since he did not wish the help of a man who was believed to have engineered the theft; at the same time the episode increased his certainty that Raimondo was indeed responsible for the theft, since his close link with a man who was in a position to retrieve the animals might plausibly be interpreted as the partnership that had organised their removal in the first place. He therefore refused to ask for Raimondo's help and the horses were lost.

Several months later a flock of sheep belonging to another first cousin, described as 'allied' to Antonio were stolen. Although they were swiftly recovered, the theft was attributed to Raimondo, and all relations between Antonio and Raimondo were broken off. "The quarrel was so serious that the whole village knew about it", said Raimondo. "Antonio's brother and I were nearly on the point of killing each other". Two years of hostility, though without further thefts, ensued until a senior

relative of the two men intervened with the help of a mutual compare in the hope of resolving the antagonism. The peacemakers themselves carried out an enquiry using the information available to both men. At the meeting of pacification the truth was revealed.

The initial theft of horse and oxen was purely casual. The oxen had been added to stolen cattle as the thieves passed, and Raimondo's horse had been taken in case they were intercepted and needed to make a rapider retreat than on foot. Antonio's horses had been taken by a teracu from another village, dismissed by Antonio for having stolen money from the hut. The final theft of sheep was a similar piece of revenge by this teracu's successor: he had been fined by the police for having neither documents nor lantern as he moved the flock along the road at night, and Antonio had refused to contribute to the fine. Both teracos of course had excellent knowledge of the pasture and Antonio's habits. The message of this cautionary tale - that a retaliatory theft demands certain knowledge and the patience to wait for it - could scarcely be clearer.

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I have so far considered outsiders as friends of the victim, but they are also the material executors of thefts, friends of su dugone. Limbaresi generally identify these men as Barbaricini shepherds, and many but not all trails do lead to villages in the foothills of the Barbagia. Theft by Barbaricini is seen as a channel of social mobility by Limbaresi, and they quite often



account for men beginning life with nothing and accumulating livestock and land in terms of illicit gains. The contexts of theft in the Barbagia and Limbara after 1865 are quite different, so that the same action has a quite different significance for the two men who cooperate in carrying it out.

The distinctive features of Barbagian pastoralism allow men to participate in thefts. Seasonal and yearly movements of flocks provide detailed knowledge of the terrain and hiding-places for stolen animals in many parts of the island. Shifting animals from pasture to pasture is normal practice and, Limbaresi say, provides cover for transferring the booty from thefts. If shepherds are intercepted by police or searchers, they can abandon the compromising animals. It is very difficult to keep track of the exact position and movements of Barbagian shepherds over a period of years, and Barbaricini are subtracted from the perennial control either of herding partners or other villagers as in Limbara.

More positive incentives to take part in thefts derive from the development of the Barbagian economy itself. Shepherds rely on the rapid accumulation of livestock to provide capital to get married and income to buy the basic cereal subsistence. A longer-term aim is the purchase of land, both to reduce the incidence of rent (usually around one-third of gross income) and to provide a permanent base for their flocks: no shepherd wants to be a nomad all his life, separated from his wife and children, and his objective is to move his family to the village where he finds permanent pasture. The means to improve his rate of capital accumulation or income are the social relations created

with friends in other communities: what would otherwise be an extremely risky and violent confrontation in a theft is converted into part of a set of continuing exchanges. As material executor he is largely protected against the victim who is anxious not to take revenge against him but to identify the fellow-villager who organised the theft. The risks of participation are substantially diminished, and they mainly emphasise the considerable herding skill required to move animals through a densely-grazed and increasingly well-policed countryside without detection.

Friends in villages outside the Barbagia are valuable to a Barbaricino shepherd. They can find pasture on private or communal land, provide local assistance in normal circumstances and especially if his own flock is stolen; through them a man hears of the chance of buying land or sheep and of contacting local representatives of the dairy-processing firms. Maintenance of these friendships is an important aspect of his worth as a shepherd since he depends for part or the whole of the year on grazing in the hills and plains outside his home community.

One way of letting his worth be known is by only semi-clandestine performance of one task which these friends demand, theft from a local enemy.(1) A certain amount of publicity is necessary in at least the thefts committed for ransom; the victim's local informant must discover that the animals are in fact in his village and available for return so that negotiations can begin:

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(1) "If one is in need, one looks for a friend and invites him to steal. 'I need 50 sheep. Will you help me?' And the friend goes without thinking twice...." (from interview with Barbaricini shepherds, quoted in Pigliaru 1970, p.475). Alternatively he may assist a friend by recruiting a younger shepherd known to be reliable.



animals cannot be retrieved if they are too well-concealed or the action has been entirely unobserved. The discreet dissemination of information is an essential part of such thefts.

A man known to have carried out thefts therefore not only demonstrates his herding ability in the removal of animals but also that he is the kind of man with friends who trust him sufficiently to perform these dangerous activities. In one respect the number of his friends indicates the extent of his additional opportunities for capital accumulation, so that he can perform more successfully the tasks of establishing and maintaining a family.

Conflicts in Limbara are therefore harnessed to the general aspirations of Barbaricini shepherds. The creation of dyadic ties between individual members of the two populations adds the possibility of illegitimate transfer of animals to their legitimate accumulation through work for Barbaricini and provides defence for Limbaresi. The extent and persistence of theft suggests that this is an important element in the growth of the pastoral sector in the Barbagia after 1865.

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Finally, the reluctance of shepherds to have recourse to the police can perhaps be seen in terms of the specific features of the loss and recovery of animals rather than attributed to a nebulous generalised 'refusal of the legitimacy of the State'.

Firstly, the distinctions between types of livestock-theft enshrined in the successive Sardinian and national legal codes have been at variance with the local distinctions. The severity

of punishment of animal-theft has been broadly ranked according to three criteria: the kind of animal, its value, and the place of the theft. Until the 19th century the theft of draught-animals was punished more severely than that of other livestock, regardless of their total value or the place where the theft was committed. The penal code of 1839 (art. 658) however dropped the distinction between kinds of animal in favour of the criteria of value and place: the most serious form of livestock-rustling became the theft of any animals to more than a given value committed in the open countryside rather than in or around the settlement itself. This distinction of place was retained in the Zanardelli Code of 1889 (art. 404) while the criterion of value was abolished. Finally, the present legislation, contained in the Rocco Code of 1930 (art. 625), has eliminated the place of the theft as a significant criterion and returned to a distinction based on value: the theft of a single ox, cow, horse or donkey and of more than three sheep, goats or pigs is considered more serious than that of one or two small animals whose theft is equivalent to that of any other object. In practice however, since in Sardinia most draught-animals and groups of more than 3 sheep, goats or pigs are kept outside the village, the law continues to punish thefts in the countryside more heavily than those in the village. This contrasts with the explicit Limbarese system of distinctions which makes the stealing of a single mammalitta animal, associated with the village itself, the most serious type of theft.

Secondly the refusal to risk the intervention of police to recover animals corresponds to the reluctance to involve any

outsiders, even a close kinsman of the victim (cf. p. 295) in the delicate series of negotiations concerning the theft. Moreover if the police are successful, they are likely to reverse the order of responsibilities that Limbaresi see as paramount. The men most easily caught are the material executors, arrested with the animals or traced, who bear the brunt of a possible jail sentence of up to ten years and fine of 600,000 lire. Limbaresi are not directly concerned with the material executors except to trace the link to su dugone, and they aim to recover their animals rather than punish the thieves who they know to have no personal rancour against themselves. Victims may denounce their loss to the police either as theft or simple straying (they can be fined for not doing so) but they make every attempt to keep the police out of subsequent developments. If the police insist on accompanying the search, they may be deliberately misled, and details of how animals were recovered will never be revealed. Their intervention can only threaten the set of links by which conflicts in Limbara are handled, and provoke the direct and far more violent confrontations between enemies which would throw the countryside into anarchy.



Chapter 9 : Conclusion.

Livestock-theft and the social relations in which it is embedded provide the nexus between two very different social structures. But - to return to the Questione Sarda and the dichotomy between the Barbagia and the rest of the island - these differences are not eternal, nor are they accounted for in the distinction between shepherds and peasants. They are associated with the population increase and the extension of the market in the later 19th century.

In 1865 the communities of the central highlands and surrounding hills were supported directly by the produce of both arable land and livestock. The ownership of flocks and herds was restricted to a minority of households, and each community was clearly stratified in terms of access to these resources. Shepherding over most of the island was carried out in the lawless state and communal demesne, emphasising the uncertainties and risks of work and the self-reliance of shepherds.

The expansion of the market in land and in the produce of sheep has had profoundly different consequences in these communities. In Limbara the magnates used their wealth from landownership and the professions to acquire the bulk of mountain pasture left after the grant of the largest estate to the English engineer, Martin. Shepherds lost their largely independent access to cussorgie and became dependent on magnates for the use of land; the magnates were able to use their new properties to

mediate the consignment of the milk of village flocks to the dairy-processing firms set up at the beginning of this century, and to establish new relations of patronage with their shepherd clients. Shepherds themselves were to some extent protected against the vicissitudes of the market in livestock produce in part by their vertical ties to patrons and in part by continuing to cultivate cereals which provided their homes independently with subsistence.

In this century the village territory, based on the polarity of mountain and plain, provides the coordinates of each shepherd's working life. He begins work as a laghinzaresu with the least valuable part of the flock in the mountain, and he hopes to achieve full control over his independent flock on the basis of su connottu in the plain. The mountain represents the protection offered directly to his flock by cumpanzos 'e croba and his tie of clientage to the magnate who owns the pasture: most of the hostilities which threaten his flock are concentrated in the plain. The achievement of independent status - through marriage and the responsibilities of herding and husbandry - is likely to bring him into conflict with those who are nearest to him in the neighbourhood and countryside, and he protects himself against the consequences of quarrels by the maintenance of friendships outside Limbara. The value of work - the establishment and support of a household - is the same in Limbara and the Barbagia but the means to its achievement and the constraints it involves are different.

Contrary to the descriptions of the Barbagian economy as unchanging and archaic, its shepherds have become more deeply



involved in the expansion of the market in land and milk than their Limbaresi counterparts. The abandonment of cultivation for full-time herding makes them dependent on the income from their flocks to buy food, while the conversion into private ownership of the state and communal demesne frees land which can eventually be purchased as a permanent base for their flocks. Whereas in Limbara the initial grant of sheep to a son establishes his stake in the community and binds him more tightly to kin and fellow-villagers, in the Barbagia the grant of animals either from a family flock or by work requires that a son should leave the community since only outside the village can he accumulate the animal capital necessary to create and maintain his own home. For the most successful shepherds, this is the first step in the abandonment of their home village to purchase land and perhaps transfer their families to communities in hill or plain although contact with birthplace is rarely severed completely.

These two types of pastoralism - one based on the firm control of shepherds within a community and the other on the more transient ties of nomadism - are to a considerable extent complementary. Shepherds from the Barbagia find pasture in Limbara, thus restricting the expansion of local flocks but they are rarely brought into direct conflict with local shepherds. Rather, their freedom of movement enables them to play an essential part in reducing the violence of conflicts between members of the same village, while these conflicts have been turned to their own advantage through the incentives to capital accumulation. Hitherto the expansion of the pastoral sector in the Barbagia and the sloughing-off of the most successful members

of each generation into the villages of the plains has maintained the pattern of these relations, and in part accounts for the difficulties in eradicating sheep-theft. The value attributed to individual daring among the Barbaricini is the reverse side of the value given to conformity and restraint among shepherds in Limbara.

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