CHAPTER IV
MARRIAGE

In the earlier Chapter we have studied the family among the Muslims in Aurangabad City from different angles. While discussing the facts as revealed through the empirical data it was argued that the conditions of living cannot but have an impact on the different aspects of family. The reality thus was found to be the ideal as modified by the conditions of living. Life thus seems to be a compromise throughout.

In this Chapter, the institution of marriage among the Muslims in the city is delineated and discussed in its various facets as obtaining at present. These are, age at marriage, selection of spouses, marriage connections as spread out in space, and marriage procedure. Here too, difference is made between the orthodox practices or view points and the current practices. The orthodox practices are taken to be the ideals and representations of the past. It has been thought unnecessary to present the injunctions and norms laid down in the Islamic Religious Law Books (Shariyat) to understand the orthodox or the ideal view point, firstly, because these have been elaborated thread-bare in competent treatises by eminent scholars and elaboration of the same here will be redundant and rather beside the point.
Secondly, and this is more important, sociologically what is pertinent to us here is what the people think to be the ideal and orthodox viewpoint, and not necessarily what is laid down in the Shariat. What is important is the version or interpretation of the Shariat that forms the core of belief among the people. The people accept and observe the Shariat normally as it suits them or their living conditions. Thirdly, the elaborate observance of religious norms and injunctions may better suit the affluent classes of people, and it is common knowledge among sociologists that the style of life of the upper classes becomes the ideal for the lower classes for whom the former are the reference group. This has to be borne in mind while discussing the different aspects of the marriage institution.

1. Age at Marriage

The age at marriage of the 300 heads of families gives us the broad trends as to whether it is going up or going down. Table No.4.1 gives the distribution of the heads of families according to their present age and their age at marriage. The five broken families are headed by females and their age at marriage for 3 was 14 to 15 years, and for 2, 16 to 17 years. If the age
### TABLE NO.4.1

**HEADS BELONGING TO THE AGE GROUP AT PRESENT DISTRIBUTED ACCORDING TO THEIR AGE AT THEIR MARRIAGE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age group of Heads</th>
<th>21 to 30 Years</th>
<th>31 to 40 Years</th>
<th>41 to 50 Years</th>
<th>51 to 60 Years</th>
<th>61 and Above</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No. of Heads</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>No. of Heads</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>No. of Heads</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-15 Years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17 Years</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-19 Years</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>19.66</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-21 Years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7.30</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>10.66</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22-23 Years</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 and above</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>55</td>
<td>18.33</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>37.33</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*3 and 2 in column 12 are female heads.*
of 21, at which a male is entitled to vote and otherwise supposed to be a major, it is accepted as the normal marriageable age for a male, it can be seen from the table that only among the heads of 21 to 30 years, a sizeable number have married beyond this age. There are 22 out of 55 in this age-group of heads who have married beyond the age of 21 years, their percentage 40 of that particular age-group of heads and 7.33 of all the heads. If we include the age-group of 20 to 21 years at marriage they rise to about 80 per cent. In the next age-group of heads, namely, of 31 to 40 years, there are 9 or 8 per cent who are married beyond the age of 21 years, and 41 or 36.6 per cent who are married at the age beyond 19 years. There are none who have married at the age beyond 21 years in the higher age-group of heads. Those who are married at the age of 20 to 21 years are only 8 or 13 per cent among the heads of 41 to 50 years. Among the heads of smaller age-groups of 21 to 30 years or 31 to 40 years, there are none or very few who have married at the age below 18 years. But their percentage increases as we go to the heads of higher age.

Thus among the Muslim males in the city, the trend at present seems to be to marry at an age beyond 21 years. That this trend has not suddenly appeared but has gradually
grown over a number of years is also clear from the table. The years between 18 and 21 of age appear to be the most popular ones for marriage among the males.

2. Selection of Spouse

(a) Consent of the bridegroom or the bride

In the selection of the spouse, as noted earlier, there are a number of aspects to it which we shall deal with one by one. The first and the most important again in order to see the changes therein, is the freedom enjoyed by the prospective bride or the bridegroom in the selection of their life-partners. Muslim convention in India has been that the bridegroom is not supposed to see the face of his would be wife prior to marriage, nor the bride is supposed to see the face of the bridegroom. All the negotiations right from the selection of the bride are conducted by the elders in the family. This convention fits in with the fact, seen above, that most of the heads were married at an age when they could be neither economically independent nor mentally mature enough to use discretion to select their life-partners. While marriage alliances were also alliances in the pursuit of economic interests that the patriarch should use his influence and power in deciding about the former of his words is but natural.
It will be interesting to see the trends in the selection of the spouses among the heads of families in the sample and of the sons and daughters of these heads, in the light of age at marriage.

Table No. 4.2 gives the distribution of Heads of 118 joint and 176 nuclear families according to the relative who selected the brides for them.

As was expected, in majority of the cases it is the father or the mother of the head who has selected the bride. Those cases in which the elderly relative of the head, either paternal or maternal uncle or aunt has selected the bride, either the parents of the head were not living them or they, on their own, sought the advice of their other relatives. Only in 5 cases of the joint families and 10 of the nuclear families the heads have said their consent was taken. But they do not say that they selected the bride. After a descriptive account of the bride given to them by their mother, sister or such other relative they gave their consent.

Another thing to be noted here is the fact that among the Muslims of the city, as elsewhere in India, parallel cousins are preferential mates in marriage. We shall see later that quite a sizeable number of marriages pertaining to the families in the sample, belong to this
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Family</th>
<th>No. of Families</th>
<th>Father/ Mother when Respondent was minor</th>
<th>Father/ Mother</th>
<th>Father/ Mother without Head's consent</th>
<th>With the consent of the Head</th>
<th>Other elderly relative</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Family</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>2 (1.66%)</td>
<td>103 (34.33%)</td>
<td>1 (.33%)</td>
<td>5 (1.66%)</td>
<td>7 (2.33%)</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Family</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>158 (52.66%)</td>
<td>3 (1.00%)</td>
<td>10 (3.33%)</td>
<td>5 (1.33%)</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
category. The bridegroom in such cases is not completely ignorant of the necessary particulars of his would be bride. His acceptance of the selection made by his elders therefore, is not entirely passive.

Those who have said that their consent was taken seem to give vent to their sense of independence, which perhaps now they nurse, but which independence they could not exercise fully at the time of their marriage.

Table No.4.3 gives similar particulars about the selection of spouses for the sons and brothers of the heads of 118 joint families. The joint families are further shown in their sub-categories, i.e., those with one married son, those with more than one married son, those with married brothers, and those with married brothers and married sons. In all we have to deal with 191 married sons and married brothers of heads. Of these, 66 sons belong to the joint family of the first category, 56 sons belong to the second category, 53 brothers belong to the third category, and 16 sons and brothers belong to the fourth category.

Of the total 191 selections of brides for the sons or brothers of the heads 65 or roughly one-third of them are made by the parents. Next to them in importance comes the head's mother with 50 selections followed by the head's
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Family</th>
<th>Total No. of Families</th>
<th>Total No. of Married sons and brothers in the family</th>
<th>Head and/or his wife</th>
<th>Who Had Selected the Bride</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Head's Mother</td>
<td>Head's Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>118</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Single Married son</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66 (sons)</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>joint family</td>
<td>2. More than one married son</td>
<td>56 (sons)</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Laternal Joint Family</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>53 (brothers)</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lineal and laternal joint family</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16 (sons &amp; brothers)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
father with 23 selections. The mother or father of the head who is the leader of the family in the economic sense and plays the instrumental role in connection with the family's links outside, appears to play an important role in the selection of the bride for the marriageable male in the family. Although bereft of economic power the mother or the father of the head, also being the oldest member thus seems to wield emotional or social leadership within the family. It may be that they are absent in the families where the parents (the head and his wife) have taken the decision. It is also likely that in families where the mother of the head has taken the decision the father is absent and vice-versa. The cases where the head's wife's brother has taken the decision appear to be those where the marriage alliance was made with relatives. Head's wife's brother may be instrumental in introducing the bride and ultimately in selecting her. The same is the case where the distant relatives have selected the bride. The selection in any case has to be accepted by the parents of the bridegroom. The answers here simply emphasise as to who introduced the bride and who prevailed upon her selection Head's sister and head's brother have selected the bride in 5 and 9 cases respectively. Affinals on the wife's side seem to have a better say in these matters, than the head's sister or brother. It is to be noted that only
in 12 cases the heads have reported that the bridegroom himself has selected the bride. Their proportion in the total number of selections comes to 6.3 per cent.

If we presume that the selections whether made by the head and/or his wife (bridegroom's parents or his elder brother and his wife as the case may be), his mother or his father are all of similar nature, in that they are made by the eldest member in the family, we have 48 such persons in the first category of joint family, 42 in the second, 41 in the third and only 7 in the fourth category. They form 72.7, 75.0, 77.4 and 43.8 per cent of the totals of each category respectively. This means that in the first three categories they have done the majority of the selections whereas in the last category, that of the complex joint family, they have not made even half of the selections. If we look only to the selections made by the head and/or his wife they are 25(37.8%), 21(37.5%), 15(28.3%), and 4(25.0%) respectively in the four categories. Their importance in this respect appears to gradually decrease from the first with one married son, to the second with more than one married son, to the third with married brothers and to the fourth category with married brothers and sons. In the last category they seem to lose importance along with the head's mother and father who of course are probably absent in the family. The bridegroom, whether son or brother
of the head, has himself selected his bride in 12 cases. Earlier we have seen with respect to the head's marriages, that their 'consent' was taken in 15 cases. Here, the same heads report that their brothers or sons in 12 cases (5 sons, 4 brothers, and 3 brothers and/or sons) have themselves selected their brides. This seems to allow some discretion to the bridegroom after a generation or so.

We do not have any quantifiable data about the choice given to the bride in selecting her partner. But enquiries showed that the exercises much less discretion in this respect. Her parents or other elders still play an important part in this.

While the above presents the general picture, inroads into the customs are visible here and there to howsoever small extent. Since boys and girls of marriageable age and beyond cannot be confined within doors all the time and they do go out for some purpose or the other almost every day, they have occasion to see their partners or meet them after betrothal. School-going college-going or educated boys and girls influenced by the thrill of romantic love might like to select their own life-partners. Elders in the family might take the customary line of negotiations after coming to know the mind of their boys and girls. But the elders discourage independent selection by the boy or the girl, especially where the
partner so selected is unequal or against tradition in other particulars.

(b) **Endogamy, Exogamy, Preferential mating, etc.**

The Muslims of the city are divided by sectarian affiliations as Sunni and Shia. The Sunnis are in a majority. The Shias are comparatively better off in the economic sense. Bohras a sub-sect of Shias are mainly as trading community. They originally come from Gujarat and adjacent west-coast regions and speak Gujarathi at home. Sunnis are mostly long settled Muslims in the region, some of whom perhaps might have migrated here prior to the Bohras. Some of the Sunni Muslims trace their origin in the maleline early migrants from the middle-east countries or the bordering country of Afghanistan. The Sunni Muslims speak Urdu at home. Be that as it may, the Sunnis and Shias and Bohras, a sub-section of the latter are not only distinct sects in the religious sense, but they have other cultural differences as well.

The Muslims are also divided into classes of Sheikh, Sayyad, Moghal and Pathan. They are differentiated primarily by the prefix or suffix to their name, of Sheikh, Sayyad, Beg, and Khan. Culturally there are no marked differences among the local population of these groups, except that the Sayyads are supposed to be more orthodox and religiously more sophisticated.
We have earlier spoken of occupational groups, viz., of the Kazi (Judge), Mulla (Priest), Momin (Weaver), Maniyar (bangle-seller), Nadaf (cotton-ginner), Saudagar (merchant), Baghban (vegetable-vendor), Kasab (butcher), and so on. These occupations have persisted in the families through generations and the families are wholly identified with those occupational statuses in the social hierarchy. These families in due course have also developed into distinct cultural entities and resemble the castes in the Hindu caste system.

With respect to all these grouping enumerated above, the local Muslims, as is understandably common with the Muslims of Maharashtra, practise endogamy to a greater extent. Sunnis and Shias or Bohras do not intermarry. The classification of Muslims into subgroups of Shaikh, Sayyad, Moghal and Pathan is rather meticulously observed among the upper classes of Muslims while for the lower classes they do not matter much in marital alliances.

The occupational groups, those mentioned above and this-like, also operate as endogamous units. Inter-marriage between two different occupational groups has not taken place with respect to any family in the sample. This is it seems, not only because the different occupational groups have developed into distinct cultural entities within the broad spectrum of Islam but also because the
occupations are graded into a scale of high and low prestige. Thus the Kazi and the Mulla are certainly at the apex and the Kasab at a lower rung. Families of different social strata do not seem to intermarry even among the Muslims of the city.

Exogamy is observed among the Muslims with respect to closer blood relatives. The rules of exogamy and incest taboos of the Muslims are common with those of most of the civilized societies. But there are certain exceptions where some of the closest relatives are preferred in marriage alliances. In South India we know that cross-cousin marriage is preferred and popular. Sometimes if the maternal uncle is of marriageable age his sister's daughter is given in marriage to him. Among the Muslims the latter type of preference is absent. But the cross-cousin marriage Muslims of India also practise parallel cousin marriage where father's brother's or mother's sister's daughter is preferred, is popular. The Muslims of Aurangabad are no exception to this. Although such marriages have taken place among the local Muslims they are not predominant in number.

Table No. 4.4 presents the distribution of marriage of heads of families according to whether they involved relatives or not. In all 104 heads have married girls from among the relatives. This itself shows that
only a little more than one-third of the heads have preferred life-mates from among the relatives. Of these, 62 belong to the joint family and 42 to the nuclear family. Those marrying within relation thus, in due course have headed more joint families than nuclear families. But the marital alliances of the heads of joint families have spread more to wider circle of relatives than the closer ones. We see the other way with respect to the nuclear families. Their heads where they have married from among the relatives, have restricted their choice more to closer relatives than the distant ones. Parallel cousins on the mother's side are more preferable in both the types of families.

Although occupations have remained hereditary in quite a number of cases, livelihood has come to be earned independently, resources are bifurcated on the basis of bifurcation of interests, and kinship bonds seem to have weakened. Lower proportion of parallel cousin marriages or marriages within the group of existing relations is an index of this weakening of kinship bonds.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of family</th>
<th>Outside relation</th>
<th>Total No. marriages within relations</th>
<th>Paternal cousin</th>
<th>Maternal cousin</th>
<th>Distant relative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Family</td>
<td>56 (18.67)</td>
<td>62 (20.67)</td>
<td>7 (2.33)</td>
<td>9 (3.00)</td>
<td>46 (15.33)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Families</td>
<td>134 (44.57)</td>
<td>42 (14.00)</td>
<td>13 (4.33)</td>
<td>24 (8.00)</td>
<td>5 (1.67)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
c) **Criteria for selection of partners**

As has been seen earlier, the first criterion for the selection of marriage partners is the rules of endogamy, exogamy and preferential mating. Having once fixed the circle from which to select the bride next come the consideration of families reputation, the physical features of the girl, her behaviour and character, whether she is educated or not, and whether the marriage alliance will bring immediate or later economic advantages, which are also important in finalising marriage alliances.

We have information about the selection of brides for the heads of the families in the sample, for their brothers and sons and about the selection of bridegrooms for the daughters or sisters of the heads.

Table 4.5 gives different criteria which had greater weightage in the selection of brides for the heads. As the respondents were the heads themselves these criteria also are according to the heads and according to their parents or elders in their family who selected brides for them and whom we could not meet (either because they were absent in the family or because they were too old to respond to our questions).

42 heads of joint families and 37 heads of nuclear families either could not recall the criteria considered
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>26</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>49</th>
<th>50</th>
<th>58</th>
<th>79</th>
<th>294</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10.33</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>7.33</td>
<td>12.33</td>
<td>7.37</td>
<td>176</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>5.33</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>14.00</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Nuclear Family**

**Joint Family**

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Educated
- Simple character
- Beautiful
- Relation
- Any quality
- Any special
- Did not put
- Family of
- Types of

Qualities of the Bride Prepared by the Respondent Heads

TABLE NO. 4.5
for the selection of their brides or they could not specify any particular criterion as the most important one. These form about one-third of the joint family heads and about one-fifth of the nuclear family heads. It may also be recalled here that many heads have admitted that they had very little say in the final selection of their brides.

Criteria which denote the circle to which the bride belongs are only two in the table, viz., 'the girl was from good family', and 'the girl was from within relation'. These two criteria are mentioned by 26 and 14 heads of joint family, and 24 and 12 heads of nuclear family respectively. Their proportion among the joint family heads is again about one-third and among the nuclear family heads about one-fifth. The nuclear family heads seem to care less for considerations apart from the bride herself.

It is to be noted here that none of the heads has mentioned dowry a price paid to the bridegroom's father, as a criterion in selecting the bride, although it is probable that some money might have passed into the hands of the bridegroom's party. Or, dowry must be an item left entirely to the discretion of the elders.
It is also true that the custom of dowry is taking roots among the Muslims of the city in recent times as will be clear later.

The rest of the criteria pertain to the personal qualities of the bride. They are, her beauty, her education and her character and manners. The nuclear family heads are predominant in going in for these criteria than the joint family heads. More than one-fourth (26.1%) of the nuclear family heads have selected their brides for their beauty, and more than one-fifth (21.6%) have selected them for their education, and more than one-tenth (10.8%), have selected them for their character and simplicity. The corresponding proportions among the joint family heads are one-tenth (10.2%), a little less than one-tenth (9.33%), and one-ninth (11.0%), respectively.

We have noted earlier that the nuclear family heads belong more to younger age-groups. Thus it can be surmised that the heads in the younger age-groups look more to the personal qualities of the bride, while the heads of higher age-groups care more for the reputation and qualities of the circle or family to which the bride belongs.
Criteria for the selection of brides for the sons and brothers of the heads of the sample families are presented in table No. 4.6. As the sons and brothers belong to joint families data pertaining to joint families alone are presented here. We have in all 191 marriages of sons and brothers of heads of 118 joint families.

Of the total number of selections those made for the good-looking features of the girl are the highest in proportion (20.42%), closely followed by those made for the good character of the girl. Education of the girl and consideration of dowry, a new element that has come up in the next generation, are the two bases which claim an equal proportion (13.8%). But marriage among relatives has still held its ground with 15.18 per cent of the selections. That the girl should be from good family has been pushed back with only 12.04 per cent of selections. The lowest percentage (6.28), however, is seen among the selections made on the basis of personal liking of the bridegroom. We have noted this trend among the new generation earlier and the same has been registered here as well. Personal qualities of the bride here have gained further importance in this generation. More than 53% of selections rely on these qualities of the bride.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Family</th>
<th>No. of Married Sons and Brothers</th>
<th>The Bride was from good family</th>
<th>The Bride was among the relatives</th>
<th>The Bride was good looking</th>
<th>The Bride was of good character</th>
<th>The Bride was educated</th>
<th>The Bride was personally liked by the bridegroom</th>
<th>The Bride brought attractive dowry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. More than one married sons</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9 (16.07)</td>
<td>10 (17.86)</td>
<td>10 (17.86)</td>
<td>12 (21.43)</td>
<td>6 (10.71)</td>
<td>2 (3.57)</td>
<td>7 (12.50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lateral Joint Family</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6 (11.32)</td>
<td>9 (16.98)</td>
<td>9 (20.75)</td>
<td>11 (20.75)</td>
<td>8 (15.09)</td>
<td>4 (7.55)</td>
<td>6 (11.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lineal and lateral Joint Family</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4 (25.0)</td>
<td>4 (25.0)</td>
<td>4 (25.0)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3 (18.75)</td>
<td>1 (6.25)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>118</strong></td>
<td><strong>23 (12.04)</strong></td>
<td><strong>29 (15.18)</strong></td>
<td><strong>39 (20.42)</strong></td>
<td><strong>38 (19.90)</strong></td>
<td><strong>25 (13.06)</strong></td>
<td><strong>12 (6.28)</strong></td>
<td><strong>25 (13.09)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures in the brackets are the percentages to the horizontal totals)
While this is the over-all picture it would be interesting to note the variations with respect to the different types of joint family.

The personal qualities of the bride claim 57.58 per cent of the selections in the first type of the joint family, 50.0 per cent in the second, 52.82 per cent in the third, and 50.0 per cent in the fourth type. But strangely enough choices made by the bridegroom himself are only 4.54% in the first type followed by 3.57, 7.55, and 18.75 per cent in the second, third and fourth type respectively. Thus in the joint family with only one married son while his likes and dislikes are taken into consideration in selecting the bride, his father seems to exercise greater control over him as far as freedom of choice is concerned. The ultimate selection still appears to rest in the hands of the patriarch in these families. He does not seem to exercise the same control over his younger brothers. That the son’s likes and dislikes are indirectly taken into consideration is also evident from the fact that only 9.09 per cent of selections in the first type are made from among the relatives, while more extended joint families show a higher percentage of such selections. Dowry, the new consideration, claims the highest percentage of selections in the first type, the last type showing them much less. When a single son or the first son is to
get married, therefore, dowry appears to be an important basis for selection of bride. In a larger family with more earners, dowry seems to get less importance.

We have 57 cases where selections of the bridegrooms are made, for the sisters and daughters of the heads of the families in the sample. The highest number of selections are made, if we look to the six criteria for selection (table No.4.7) on the basis of the bridegroom's physical and moral characteristics, together making up 26 or 45.62 per cent of all the selections. Selection from among the relatives are only 4, i.e. 7.02 per cent. Coming from good family, high educational achievement, and a good post with good salary form the basis for 9 selections each.

Looking at the figures from another angle we find that there is less importance attached to the group or family to which the bridegroom belongs (relatives, and good family) than to individual qualities and achievements like handsome features, good character, high education and influential or fat-salaried post.

D) Dowry and other considerations in Bride Selection

Along with the bride her parents or guardians make over to the bride-groom or to his parents or guardians some economic goods greater as an honour to the bridegroom and/or his parents or his guardians. The custom seems to
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.02</th>
<th>15.79</th>
<th>18.32</th>
<th>26.79</th>
<th>15.79</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>67</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**

The Boardroom was selected for the selection of Boardroom for Daughters and Sisters of the Heads of Families.

**Table No. 4.7**
have its origin in the Hindu marriage custom of Varadakshina a fee to be given to the bridegroom at the time of Semaantapuja on the event of the marriage ceremony. This fee is termed as the dowry. Whatever may be the origin, the fee that the bride's party gives to the bridegroom's party has come to acquire a prestige position in the marriage transactions. It symbolises the status and rank of both the giver and the recipient. Claim or clamour for a higher rank or prestige is registered through a demand for a higher dowry. Desire on the part of the bride's party to marry her high i.e. with someone of a higher class also induces them to pay a price for the same in the form of dowry. Although dowry presupposes ability to pay and qualifications to receive it, practically it becomes a torture for those who are unable to pay it or who have too many daughters to marry.

Dowry may be in the form of goods or of hard cash. In the past dowry is said to have been nominal and restricted only certain goods. But nowadays the trend is towards the demand of dowry in cash, or cash and luxury goods. The luxury goods may include high priced elegant furniture, radio, transistor, tape-recorder or record-player, or different varieties of vehicles. The quality and price of the goods demanded varies directly with the
class affiliation of the parties to the marriage alliance, especially of the bridegroom. Higher classes demand and expect imported goods in this connection.

It was not possible to get the details of economic goods involved in dowry in our study. But the dowry in cash has been reported in most of the cases, and the information collected is presented in table No. 4.8. The data pertains to the dowry received by 176 nuclear family heads and 118 parents of joint family heads with respect to their own marriages, and the dowry received by 118 joint family heads with respect to the marriages of their 191 sons and brothers.

The dowry received by the nuclear family heads has a wider range, i.e. from Rs. 500 to more than Rs. 5000, whereas that received by the parents of joint family heads with respect to the latters' marriages has a limited range from Rs. 500 to Rs. 1500 only. Those who received no dowry in the case of nuclear families are 10 and in the case of joint families 4. There are 11 pertaining to the former who do not remember anything about the dowry transaction in their marriage. It has been noted earlier that the nuclear family heads are of a younger age comparatively. Although majority of them (65.34%) in the case of nuclear families and almost all of them (96.61%) in the case of joint families have taken dowry of less than 1500 rupees,
### TABLE NO. 4.8

**Classification of the Heads of the Nuclear and Joint Families and of the Married Brothers and Sons of the Joint Family Heads According to the Dowry They Received**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of Dowry Received in Rupees</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Heads of Nuclear Families</td>
<td>176</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(32.39)</td>
<td>(25.0)</td>
<td>(7.95)</td>
<td>(6.25)</td>
<td>(3.98)</td>
<td>(4.55)</td>
<td>(2.84)</td>
<td>(1.14)</td>
<td>(1.14)</td>
<td>(1.70)</td>
<td>(1.14)</td>
<td>(5.68)</td>
<td>(6.25)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Heads of Joint Families</td>
<td>118</td>
<td></td>
<td>62</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(52.54)</td>
<td>(34.74)</td>
<td>(9.32)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Married brothers and sons of heads of Joint Families</td>
<td>191</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Figures in brackets are the percentages to the horizontal totals)
that more than 20 percent of the nuclear family heads appear in the higher dowry range shows the trend towards more of a higher dowry. Perhaps, the joint family heads might have received more in kind than in cash. Or, since more of their marriages have taken place within former relation the question of dowry might not have been raised in their marriage negotiations. It should also be noted here that the value of rupee has gradually decreased over years and higher dowry in later years does not really point to the increase in dowry in equivalent terms.

When we come to the consideration of the amount of dowry with respect to the marriages of the 191 sons and brothers of 118 joint family heads, it is seen that about 56 per cent of them have brought dowry of Rs.1500 and less and the remaining 44 or 44 per cent are distributed over the rest of the higher ranges in a decreasing order of their percentage. Demand for dowry, it is presumed here that dowry is given more because it is demanded—seems to be on the increase in the recent generations.

3) **Marriage Alliance**

Marriage alliances as spread out in space indicate the socio-economic connections of the people as well. People usually have their marital alliances with areas which they visit otherwise or with which they are
sufficiently acquainted, and with people with whom they
have socio-cultural affinity and whose culture is similar
to their own, or is a referent for their cultural ideals.

Aurangabad formerly, as mentioned earlier, was a
part of the Nizam State which was looked upon as a seat
of Muslim erudition and culture. The political or admi-
nistrative expediency of frequenting visits to Hyderabad
led to cultural affinity as well.

After the merger of the region in Maharashtra
its socio-economic orientation was shifted from Hyderabad
to Poona and Bombay which are also commercial, political
and administrative centres for the people of the region.
Greater cultural affinity perhaps may be slowly built up
with these cities and marriage connections might also
emerge with these areas.

The data of the marriage alliances of the heads
of the families in the sample, and of their brothers and
sons (Table No. 4.9) might prove instructive from this
view-point. The areas specified in order to understand
the spatial distribution of marriage alliances of the
Muslims in the City are, 1. Aurangabad City, 2. Aurangabad
District excluding the City, 3. Other four Districts
within the region of Marathwada, 4. Other areas within
the State of Maharashtra, and 5. Areas outside the State
of Maharashtra.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Brothers</th>
<th>Sons and Daughters</th>
<th>Total Heads</th>
<th>Nuclear Heads</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>111.2%</td>
<td>112.2%</td>
<td>183.4%</td>
<td>174.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Families</th>
<th>Repeated</th>
<th>Not Repeated</th>
<th>State of Maharashtra</th>
<th>Within the State of Maharashtra</th>
<th>Other areas of Maharashtra</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>Outside District</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Outside City</th>
<th>Total No. of Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Marriage alliances bridged sought from within Maharashtra

Table No. 4.9
Majority of the brides are sought from within the region of Marathwada comprising the five districts of Aurangabad, Beed, Nanded, Osmanabad and Parbhani, and this is so with respect to the brides of the heads of Nuclear families, of joint families, and the brides of sons and brothers of the joint family heads. In the case of the last they form 88.48 per cent followed by 79.66 per cent in the case of the nuclear family heads. From this it appears that selection of brides is getting gradually confined to the region more than to the areas outside it.

Within the region, however, there are variations from the city to the district and to other districts. The brides of the joint family heads are more sought from within the city (37.29%) and from within the home district (29.66%) than from other districts of the region (12.71%). They are also proportionately more than in the case of the nuclear family heads with respect to the first two areas and much less with respect to the third category. The corresponding percentages in the case of the nuclear family heads are, 32.95, 23.86, and 19.89. Between, the two, the joint family heads, we have seen earlier, belong to an earlier generation as they are more of a higher age-group. Brides seem to have been sought earlier from within the city and the home district more than in later years.
But a feature which appears intriguing here is that quite a number of brides are also sought from areas outside the State of Maharashtra. Their proportion is 17.61 per cent in the case of nuclear families and 18.64 per cent in the case of joint families. This needs an explanation. Aurangabad was formerly part of the erstwhile Nizam State. It was the only city in the State next to Hyderabad, the State capital, that was a strong hold of Muslim culture with sizeable Muslim population. Urban cultural links of the city were more with Hyderabad which was also the educational centre. Most or almost all of the graduates of the older generation in the city are from the Osmania University of Hyderabad. This led the upper middle class or even middle class and upper class families to establish merital alliances with families in Hyderabad. Hyderabad also attracted many immigrants from Aurangabad. Migration and marriage connections tend to be co-extensive in space.* It has been seen that most of the marriages outside the State have been with Hyderabad and few with Gulbarga and other towns in the erstwhile Nizam State.

After the merger of Marathwada in Maharashtra, its socio-economic, political and administrative links were forged more with the leading cities of the State like Bombay, Poona and Nagpur. Nearby and distant towns of the State which are otherwise looked upon as Muslim cultural strongholds or as centres of sizeable Muslim population, like Bhiwandi in Thana District, Malegaon in Nasik district, Ahmednagar, etc., also appear in marriage, connections of the local Muslims. But in any case marriage covering distant areas whether the olden or present days mostly belong to well-to-do classes of high salaried Officers, self-employed high income groups of engineer, doctors, and lawyers, and big traders. Marriage linking area outside the State in the case of sons and brothers of the joint family heads are only 12 or 6.28 per cent whereas those covering other areas within the state are 10 or 5.24 per cent. The percentages of the same with respect to the nuclear and joint family heads are 3.41 (6) and 1.69 (2) respectively.

That the brides for the sons and brothers of the joint family heads are more sought from other areas than the city itself is also clear from the fact that the brides from the city are only 29.32 per cent, and those sought from within the district are 40.31 per cent. But those from outside Aurangabad district but within Marathwada
are less than those in the case of nuclear family heads. This is because during the last couple of decades and more new urban industrial centres are coming up within the vicinity of Aurangabad and within the district. Jalna a town about 60 kms. away from Aurangabad is fast developing into a big commercial centre. Chikalthana a village 9 kms. away from the city on the road to Jalna is close to the Air Port and the belt between the village and the city is knit with new industries. The Jayakwadi Irrigation Project is also within the district the site being about 50 kms. away from the City. These developments have brought in many immigrants from far and near. Thus the chances of getting suitable brides from these now developing areas within the district have increased and we see quite a large number of brides selected from these areas.

Conventional areas and circles for the selection of brides, therefore, seem to be slowly being given up and fresh avenues areas and circles are being sought for the purpose.

Institution of Mehr:

An important part of the Muslim marriage contract is the institution of Mehr. Mehr is the amount of money, gold coins, and/or share in the household immobile property, property promised by the bridegroom to be given to his
wife upon his death or if she is divorced by him. This Mehr is fixed, agreed upon, entered and duly signed in the marriage contract in the presence of the Kazi. The amount is determined by the social status of the bride and the and the bridegroom. According to Islamic law the amount is actually to be paid by the husband to the wife. For this reason, the amount of Mehr is not generally high. The Prophet has disapproved of non-payment of Mehr, calling it adultery. The Prophet has noted that if the amount is very high the bridegroom might avoid payment of the same. Therefore, he has commanded that heavy amount be not fixed. However, according to the custom of the country, it is generally never demanded by the wife.\footnote{Data pertaining to the amount of Mehr promised in the marriage of the heads of families in our sample are presented in table No. 10. The amount is shown in ten classified ranges.}

There are 18 of the nuclear family heads and 8 of the joint family heads who have reported that they don’t know the amount or that they don’t remember. It is presumed that in their case the amount is negligible.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Family</th>
<th>Total No. of Heads of the Married Family</th>
<th>Less than 100</th>
<th>1001 to 2000</th>
<th>2001 to 3000</th>
<th>3001 to 4000</th>
<th>4001 to 5000</th>
<th>5001 to 6000</th>
<th>6001 to 7000</th>
<th>7001 to 8000</th>
<th>8001 to 9000</th>
<th>9001 and above</th>
<th>Don't Remember</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joint Family</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Family</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitional Family</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broken Family</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is to be noted here is that the amount of Mehr in the case of joint family heads is upto 2000 for two-thirds of them (78) and upto 1000 for more than two fifths of them. The corresponding proportions among the nuclear family heads are about a half and one-fourth respectively. Higher amount of Mehr comparatively appears more among the nuclear family heads. It appears, therefore, recent trends are for a higher amount of Mehr.

This may be either because of the depreciation in the value of money, marriage partners are more conscious of money transactions, and/or women find or need more security in the Mehr.

While delineating the rituals and ceremonies pertaining to marriage among the Muslims of the city, care is taken to high light the similarities found with Muslims elsewhere in India and of the Deccan in particular and to point out at the same time the peculiarities or departure from the tradition as found in the empirical study.

It has been pointed out earlier that the injunctions and imperatives as laid down in the religious texts pertaining to the observance of a ritual or ceremony are usually observed in their details by well-to-do families. Observance of rituals in their pristine grandeur and elaborateness entails heavy expenditure. So it becomes the
prerogative of the rich. As for the marriage ceremony the
Nikah, the actual wedding and its entry into the written
contract in the presence of the Kazi— the judge, duly
signed by the bridegroom, witnesses on the side of the
bridegroom and the bride, and by their walis or guardians,
is the only ritual laid down by the religious law*. All
other rituals are customary but have a force of law among
the Muslims. Observance of these in their details
varies from one region to the other in the country as is
testified by a number of empirical studies.** The custom-
ary rituals entering a heavy expenditure and although
being observed by the well-to-do families, are looked upon
as ideal and the correct procedure by the rank and file
among the Muslims. They will prefer to observe them
themselves if they can afford to. Another feature to be
noted is that in spite of variations in details the
customary marriage rituals have a uniformity at least in
the Deccan and with respect to important steps therein.

We shall first describe these sequential rituals in
brief (they are recounted in greater detail by scholars
elsewhere).***

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* Shaikh Akbar Hussain, "Marriage Custom Among Muslims in
India": A Sociological Study of the Shia Marriage Custom,

** Ahmad Intiaz, "Family, Kinship and Marriage Among Indian

*** Shusthey A.M., "Outlines of Islamic Culture", Bangalore, 1955
Some scholars speak of an institutionalised intermediary to bring the parties desirous of a marital union together. This intermediary, usually a woman, is known as Mushata.* The woman carries detail information about prospective bridegrooms, to the families of prospective brides. If the bride's parents or guardians are willing to negotiate further on the basis of information supplied by the Mushata, with the bridegroom's party, then the latter's mother or elderly women accompanied by other womenfolk pay an official visit to the bride's house to finalise the marriage alliance.

It is not clear from accounts of Mushata given elsewhere by scholars as to whether this job is professionalised and if so whether it is hereditary, i.e., runs into families, or any one can take to it. Since the person acting as mushata has to enjoy confidence of both the bridegroom's and the bride's party in each case, and this results from a long-standing acquaintance, and since the information of prospective brides and bridegrooms and their families has to be laboriously collected from close quarters, and as such person engaged in such work must enjoy the good will of the parties concerned and must have good reputation, it seems that the mushata is more likely to be a hereditary one.

*Jaffar Sharif, "Guanume - Islam" Oxford, 1929,
Whatever may be its nature in this respect, as far as the families in Aurangabad are concerned, only few rich families admitted that they had employed the services of an intermediary. But the person who acted as an intermediary did so more as a courtesy or as a return for obligation, not necessarily against a fee. Among the middle and lower classes it was reported that relatives of the bridegroom's parents either voluntarily act as intermediaries or are requested to do so. They are not given any fee as such against this service. But during the marriage ceremony, if the negotiations prove successful, they are honoured with some gifts even as other close relatives are. Upon the intermediary bringing a word of consent from the bride's party leading women from the bridegroom's family pay a visit to the bride's family and make further enquiries by way of preliminary negotiations. When these are gone through they report to the head of the family and other male members who then meet the brides party to finalise the negotiation. Usually the dowry and the Mehr are also finalised in this meeting.

The customary rituals of the marriage ceremony in sequence are as follows:

1. Mangani: (Asking or requesting). Men and women from the bridegroom's party pay a visit to the bride's house with gifts and sweets. If they can afford they may
be accompanied by music all along the way. Sweets and clothes are distributed to the bride's family members and to the bride. Since offering of the sweet is the main part of this function it is also known as sugar-eating ceremony. Although mangani literally means asking, here asking for the girl's hand in wedlock. This ritual comes when the negotiations are already finalised. It seems to be the equivalent or corrupt form of vanamachay of the Hindus. This or the Mangani are both rituals of betrothal. The clothes or sweets distributed are costly or of various kinds depending upon the status and means of the parties concerned. Gold and other ornaments also are presented to the bride on this occasion.

2. Mehndi or Haldi: (Turmeric) - Applying turmeric paste all over the body. Both the bridegroom and the bride are rubbed with turmeric paste ceremonially by the womenfolk all over their body about a week prior to the marriage ceremony. Educated bridegrooms now-a-days avoid this ritual.

3. Raj-Jagna: (Keeping awake for the whole night).

Marriage is always an occasion for revelry and it sets a festive mood amongst all the family members concerned amongst all the sections of Indian society. The gay abandon with which the youngsters move lither and thither with festival clothes and the fun and folic in which they
indulge are a feast for the eyes. This mood is expressed in marathon singing sessions at night. Ladies, young and old, express their joy through singing for the whole night to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Sometimes, experts in singing are specially invited for such sessions.

4. **Nehari** (Break-Fast): This ceremony is observed prior to the ceremony. The bride's family sends a rich and sumptuous break fast to the groom along with coloured water. The persons carrying this break-fast garland the groom and after the break fast. Then they throw the colour water on the bridegroom. This latter custom, however, is common mostly among the lower class of Muslims.

5. **Sanchag**: This is a ritual which involves the bridegroom's party coming to the bride's house accompanied by a musical band with choice presents which include the symbols of prosperity and auspiciousness, viz., fruits, coconut, dry-fruits, betel leaf and nut, and vermillion powder, and also Saries, and ornaments for the bride. The items they carry vary with their economic ability and class affiliations.

The notable feature of this ritual is that comments are passed on openly on the items they bring, by way of taunt and teasing.
6. **Mehendi**: On the night of Sancha, this ceremony is observed. Some female members from the bride's side come to the groom's house, and play fun with him. In the Deccan in this the bride's sister plays an important role. She teases and cuts jokes at the bridegroom. If the bridegroom is a stranger they may use the purdah, a veil over their faces.

7. **Dhingana**: (Row of disturbance): When the bridegroom goes to the bride's house, usually on a horseback, accompanied by his kinsmen, he is held up at the gate by the bride's brother who demands money as a right from the bridegroom. As this perhaps used to kick up a row in the olden days the custom is named after that but presently it is a tame affair.

Some of the marriage rituals among the Hindus including that of the final marriage procession in which the bridegroom used to carry his bride on a horseback are supposed to be remnants of the marriage by capture or marriage by elopement.

This **dhingana** custom wherein the brother of the bride accosts the groom and asks for a fee to let him in is perhaps a remnant of marriage by force or by placating the bride's party which initially perhaps involved use of force and the resulting fracas.
8. Nikah (Wedding): The chief function of the marriage according to Muslim law, is the ceremony of Nikah, an Arabic word, which means a conjunction and is understood as a contract. It is an essential and simple ceremony for which the assent of the man and the woman to marry each other is necessary. Two men must bear witness and the amount of Mehr payable must be fixed. It is performed in the presence of invited friends, relatives and parents of the bride and the bridegroom. The Qazi (Judge) after receiving the consent of the bride through her agent, and after acceptance of the terms and conditions of marriage by the bride and the bridegroom recites the relevant verses from the Quran and Hadith (tradition) in praise of conjugal relation, and blesses the couple and those present join him in offering their blessings. Then music will be played announcing the solemnisation of the wedding ceremony. Sweets, almonds and dry fruits are thrown to the assembly and youngsters try to collect as many as they can. There are still some sections among the Muslims who perform the marriage ceremony strictly according to the Shariyat. According to the Shariyat marriage is a very plain and simple affair and less expensive. The mosque is generally selected for the Nikah ceremony. The groom comes in a very plain dress without any pomp and fan fare. He does not perform other rituals recounted here which prevail among the community.
The amount of Mehr in such marriages is generally very low. Adherence to the Shariyat of Islam rather than to the custom is seen only among those who are known as revivalists among the Muslims. In their view the customs accompanying the Nikah ceremony corrupt and shroud its meaning and significance.

"Among the Shiahs two distinct types of marriages are found to exist side by side. The first is the Sharai (strictly religious) form of marriage and the second is the Urfi customary form".  

"In the Shia form of marriage only simple rituals of religion are observed. The bride, bridegroom and the Mujtahid (religious scholar) is necessary. A well known feature of Sharai marriage is the comparatively small amount of Mehr".

"The Urfi marriage is more common among the wealthy sections of the Shia community i.e., the Nawabs, Wasisquaders (Royal pensioners) and ex-Zamindars. The Urfi marriage is celebrated among the Shiahs with great pomp.


There is provision for music, dance and fire-works as well. Usually the amount of Mehr is in thousands or lakhs which is not possible for a bridegroom to pay at any time in his life.4

9. Arsi Mushaf or Custom of Jalwa: This comes after the wedding is over. The Arsi Mushaf is the occasion when the bridegroom first sees the face of the bride in a mirror held between them. Arsi means a mirror and Mushaf means the 'Holy Quran'. The Holy Quran is placed along with the mirror for seeking divine blessings for both. A candle is held under the shawl spread over the heads of both. Thus the bridegroom sees the face of the bride in privacy through the mirror, though, the ceremony takes place publicly. The veil of the bride is removed from her face and the husband sees the face of the bride in the mirror, for the first time. The bridegroom is also asked to write the Surai-Ikhlas (a Holy verse) on the forehead of his wife with the right hand pointing finger known as Kalmey-Ki-Unglee, (finger of the pen). This is an indispensable ritual of marriage and is observed by all the sects of the community.5

10. Barat (The marriage procession): When the bride and bridegroom return to bridegroom's home, they usually go in pomp and show with lighting and illumination. Some of

5. Ibid, p.106.
the families of the Muslims arranged this procession early
in the evening but usually it takes place late in the night.
When the bride and bridegroom reach home, certain other
rituals are performed. The feet of both the bride and the
bridegroom are washed in water mixed with sugar by his
sisters. This water was sprinkled over in all corners of
the house with the belief that it would lead to prosperity.

*Ceremonies After Marriage*

11. *Walima Feast* (The Napital Feast): The only
ceremony besides the Nikah which has some religious signi-
ficance and importance is the Walima Feast in a marriage.
The father or the guardian of the bridegroom gives this
feast at his residence, generally on the next day of the
marriage. Relatives, friends, acquaintances, fraternity
and locality people are invited on this occasion. This is
considered as Sunnat, an essential part of the marriage
because the Holy Prophet gave the Walima Feast at the
marriage of his only daughter, Hazrat Fatima Zohra.

The Walima or wedding feast usually consists of
pulao (rice mixed with meat), vegetable dishes, and sweets.

In Aurangabad city this feast consists of
Man-Khaliva bread (made of wheat flour and Khaliya is
curry made of meat and spices). It is a popular dish in
Aurangabad and is prepared on all the occasions.
12. Chaathi-Ki-Rasam: This ceremony is performed from the fourth day of Sachq. In some of the families this ceremony is known as "Kangan Ki Rasam". On that day the wife's brother and wife's sister of the groom come to his house and invite all the family members to have dinner at their house. All the relatives of the groom are welcomed on this auspicious occasion and are served with nice dishes. After the dinner the father-in-law and the mother-in-law present Salami (gift of cash money) to the groom and this marks the end of the wedding. All the relatives then play with each other and throw vegetables, rotten eggs on each other. This is observed among affluent classes only.

In the case of Shiah and Bohra sects it is celebrated on the occasion of every marriage.

13. Jummegi: After the marriage on every Friday for five weeks this ceremony is observed.

Bride's parents or guardians offer Salami or cash present to the bridegroom and treat him to a feast on every Friday alternately in the groom's and their own house.

These are the main rituals observed by the Muslims of the deccan and those of the city in particular. Acceptance of marriage alliances also depends upon a reference being made to an astrologer, to certain verses in Quran or upon other methods employed to know the will of God.
An astrologer is usually consulted among the Shias although Sunnis may also resort to it. If the alliance is destined to be good upon the interpretation of zodinoal calculations it is readily accepted. Some others might open the Holy Book of Quran and only select a verse and read it. If the meaning of the verse bids well to alliance is accepted. Some others put slips of paper on which the words 'to accept' and 'not to accept' are randomly written and tucked under the carpet on which the namaz prayer is offered. After the prayer two slips are drawn one after the other from under the carpet and if both contain the words 'to accept' then the alliance is accepted.

In our study, however, while all the Shias and the Bohras (a sub-sect of Shias) said that they had consulted the astrologer, the Sunnis said that only in the case of 12 marriages he was consulted. None reported the other methods. But as they are deemed to be too private to be reported, it is felt that people do practise the other methods more than consulting the astrologer. Consultation with the astrologer lends a sense of adherence to Orthodoxy, and thus may be openly mentioned. But the other methods are too personal.

The Nikah ceremony appears in the case of all the marriages. This is as was expected. As was noted earlier,
TABLE NO. 4.11

DISTRIBUTION OF MARRIAGES ACCORDING TO THE RITUALS
THAT WERE OBSERVED DURING THE MARRIAGE CEREMONY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total No. of Marriages</th>
<th>Reference to Astrologer</th>
<th>Mangani</th>
<th>Mehndi and Haldi</th>
<th>Rat-jaga</th>
<th>Nehari</th>
<th>San-chaq</th>
<th>Dhin-gana</th>
<th>Nikah</th>
<th>Playing of Music</th>
<th>Jalwa</th>
<th>Barat</th>
<th>Nap-tial feast</th>
<th>Chauti</th>
<th>Jumma-gi</th>
<th>According to Shariat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunni</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>421</td>
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<td>421</td>
<td>404</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>359</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shia</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
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<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bohra</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
this is the only ceremony ordained by the Shariyat.

The Chauti, the Jummagi, and the mangani comparatively are not observed in quite a number of marriages. While the first two are post nikah rituals, the third one is a pre nikah one. Post marital rituals appear to lose appeal in the rush of the modern life. Wage-earning or poorer classes cannot afford to keep themselves engaged in the long drawn series of rituals continuously. Moreover these also involve expenditure. Therefore, mangani also does not appear in as many as 47 marriages. Like-wise, playing of music, barat or the marriage procession, mehndi or haldi, shingana, nuptial feast, Nehari, Sachaq, rat-jaga, and jilwa, do not appear in all the marriages.

Some are expensive, some are time-consuming, while some are not appreciate in the modern times. Whatever may be the reason, it is clear from the table that not all the rituals are observed in all the marriages. It is also clear that the Shias and Bohras have observed all the rituals in their marriages. It must be noted here that they are a well-to-do community and belong mostly to trading classes. Among the wage-earning and self employed service classes, however, option of skipping some of the rituals is allowed and practiced. Nonetheless, they are all loyal Muslims, it is to be pointed out here, therefore, that
while Nikah, the ritual laid down in the Shariyat is strictly observed in all the cases, the other rituals which have a halo of tradition around them are being modified or observed as they suit one's convenience.

As for the other trends pertaining to marriage, which are more social rather than religious, in the sense that they are not parts of any rituals, mention may be made of westernization in marriage dress and costume as far as the males are concerned, although some may done the typical muslim dress of the court (darbar), sophisticated jewelry and other costumes in the case of females, display and exhibition of the pomp of the ceremony by processions, musical bands laid speakers, use of luxury conveyance and the like, and invitations being sent to relatives and friends thus making the ceremony more social, than religious or contractual.

While the upper class Muslims like to adhere to the traditional pattern which itself is an amalgam of indigenous royal or upper class cultures of different origins, the lower class Muslims evince a greater similarly with the local Hindus in their rituals and many accompanying beliefs. The upper class also is not completely free from such beliefs and superstitions but these latter are glorified in the name of tradition. The lower class Muslims, however, observe them without any pretense to
high class standards.

Marriage processions about a generation ago used to be on horseback. Although this has not completely disappeared at present, affluent classes vie with one another in using the automobile for the same.

This elaboration on the marriage rituals may bound up with the comments offered by Abrar Hassan on 'Marriage Customs Among Muslims in India', which are applicable to and endorse what has already been said.

"The numerous customs and ceremonies involved in a Muslim marriage have evolved from the Indian environment. Muslim in India have, however, taken many customs and rites from their countrymen (the Hindus) owing to the prevalent political, social, moral, economic, cultural and ecological conditions. In an Indian State, when Hindus are in an overwhelming majority, a greater number of customs and ceremonies are observed in a Muslim marriage than in the other parts of the country, e.g., in Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan this is a clear proof that a number of ceremonies and rites, which the Muslim are performing now during a marriage celebration, has been adopted from the Hindus. Another fact in support of the above is that in many parts of the world Muslims observed very few ceremonies at the time of marriage, specially in Iraq, Iran, Turkey,
Egypt, etc. The ceremonies and customs followed by Indian Muslims bear resemblance to Hindu customs and ceremonies. Many of the customs which Muslims observe are the result of the assimilation and mutual interacting of the two great cultures in this country, that is, Hindu and Muslim cultures giving birth to a new culture. Indian Muslim culture is entirely different from the cultures of Muslims of other countries. This fact is supported by our empirical observations.

6. Ibid. p. 186.