CHAPTER-3

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

It is easy to reiterate the fact that the pastoral nomadic communities and Grand Transhumance as (Barth, 1960) defines them occupy a large canvas in the Anthropological texts (Barth, 1961, 1968). The pastoral – Nomadic communities of Iran occupy a significant segment of these early ethnographic studies (Barth, 1961; Arfa, 1964; Salzman, 1971, 1994, 2002; Irons, 1975, 1994). These studies have examined the lifestyle, customs, and all that makes up the substance of their Great and Little Traditions as experienced from within and outside these communities to comprehend processes of cultural and ecological adaptations (Salzmann, 2002; Barth, 1961) and also the political proliferation and preferences (Irons, 1975).

The majority of pastoralist studies have focused on Africa and Asia (Azarya, 1999; Bennett, 1988; Blench, 1999; Fabietti and Salzman, 1996; Gebre, 2001; Johnson, 1969; McCabe, 1990; McPeak & Little, 2005; Misra et al., 2003), and some have considered pastoralism to be an activity carried out exclusively in Europe, Asia or Africa (Markakis, 2004; Salzman, 2004). Numerous other groups settled in lesser-known parts of the world including the Andes were neglected by social scientists until the early 1960s (Flores Ochoa, 1968, 1977b; Markakis, 2004).

Typically, pastoralist productive systems have been defined either as a mode of production providing subsistence products (de Vries, et al. 2006; Markakis, 2004) or as an adaptive process to natural conditions (Browman, 1974; Salzman, 2004). As such, pastoralism is a land use system that either occupies extensive lands to maintain herds year round (through a system of free-range grazing) or that moves periodically within or between specific grazing territories according to economic and ecological needs (Browman, 1974; Khazanov, 1984, 1998, 2001; Orlove, 1982).

Though pastoralists’ subsistence is achieved through livestock husbandry, barter and trade, and seasonal migration, social relationships and cultural constraints seem to prevent wealth accumulation (in this case, herd size) that would lead to social differentiation and overexploitation of limited resources Browman (1974). Further, livestock serves as a mobile “secure food base” (Browman, 1974:189) and a producer...
of exchangeable goods. Key aspects of pastoralists include their adaptation to harsh and changing climatic conditions.

With a view to develop a comprehensive understanding of issues that Pastoral nomadic communities confront, it is important to arrive at a working definition of Pastoralism and search the existing literature to understand how scholars working on the issue have meandered their way through a very complex body of empirical evidence.

**Pastoralism and Nomadism: A Working Definition**

The terms ‘nomads’, ‘pastoralists’, ‘nomadic pastoralism’ and ‘nomadic pastoralists’ are often used in a very colloquial, imprecise way. Experts on the subject argue that these are technical terms and a consensus has to be built for pursuing systematic research on the subject. There is really no agreed definition of the term ‘nomad.’ Rather, the meaning of the term varies from country to country. It was suggested that the term implies groups of people who for one reason or another had to move in pursuit of their livelihood, and did not have a fixed dwelling. Usually nomads do not rely on agriculture, with some exceptions. In Sudan, all nomads depend on domesticated animals of various species, as dictated by ecological conditions. Some nomads engage in small-scale agriculture at fixed points or along their migration routes. However, their main income is derived from their animals. Among some tribes, some nomadic groups have a permanent dwelling, for temporary and occasional use. Distinctions in the literature are also made between Nomads, Semi-Nomads and Transhumance. Semi-nomads are those who raise herds and have one or more permanent dwellings and often engage in small-scale agriculture. They usually migrate for short distances, twice annually based on the seasons, between one or more herding grounds, and maintain a permanent dwelling in a village in order to secure water for their animals. Transhumance is a more stabilized form of semi-nomadism, often with two fixed dwellings at different altitudes.

Johnson (1996) and Hutteroth (1973) prefer to differentiate pastoral communities on the basis of emigration patterns and in combination with the extent of agricultural and pastoral activities. Some scholars would like the term ‘pastoral nomads’ to refer to all households that depend on their livestock husbandry through migratory lifestyle (Dyson-Hudson and Dyson-Hudson, 1980). Salzman and Sadala
(1980) define nomadism as a ‘movement of the household during the annual round of productive activities’. In this way, they limit nomadism to families rather than to individuals engaging in migration with the purpose of productive animal husbandry. Khazanov (1984) in his analysis opts for a broader approach. He defined nomadic pastoralism from an economic perspective. He calls it a food-producing economy based on extensive pastoralism and migratory lifestyle where the majority of its population gets involved in seasonal migration. He delineates five major characteristics for nomadic pastoralism:

1. Pastoralism is the predominant form of economic activity.
2. Its extensive character connected with the maintenance of herds all year round on a system of free-range grazing without stables.
3. There is periodic mobility in accordance with the demands of pastoral economy, within the boundaries of specific grazing territories [as opposed to migrations].
4. There is participation in pastoral mobility of all or the majority of the population [as opposed, for example, to the management of herds on distant pastures by specialist herdsmen, into which only a minority is involved in pastoral migrations].
5. The orientation of production towards the requirements of subsistence [as opposed to the capitalistic ranch or dairy farming of today (Khazanov, 1984: 16)].

It has been argued that pastoral nomads as active agents ‘are continuously adapting to external pressures’. The process of adaptation may influence many aspects of their lifestyles including mobility, income sources, social relations etc. Galvin (2009) went even further and suggests that many contemporary changes such as production systems, land use changes, tenure systems should be included into the analysis of adaptive measures, since they are parts of more or less dynamic responses and resilience patterns. Galvin argues that for the purpose of analysing vulnerability, the term ‘pastoral nomadism’ should include every household engaged in pastoral lifestyles in order to capture the entire range of possible adaptation strategies.
**Transhumance**

Although a number of definitions have been proposed to define transhumance, it can simply be described as the regular movement of herds between fixed points to exploit the seasonal availability of pastures. In the hills, the transhumant pastoralists followed a regularized, cyclical migratory pattern from the cool highland valleys in summer to the warmer lowland valleys in winter. Transhumant agro-pastoralist has regular encampments or stable villages with permanent houses. They often practice subsistence agriculture at one or the other destinations during the long summer months. Climatic variations and land use practices are two most significant factors that govern the migration practices of transhumant populations. Most of these communities exchange their products for grains and other basic requisites in the local market. Yak breeders in Tibet transport salt to sell in distant markets. The Basseri of Fars sells sheep offspring, milk and wool in local markets.

Transhumance of this type is practiced in mountainous regions of many parts of the world. These studies point to a marked lack of transparency in defining and classifying nomadism and pastoralism. Several authors have carried out studies on these pastoralist groups (Newell, 1967; Khatana, 1976a, 1976b; Nitzberg, 1978; Goldstein and Masserschmidt, 1980; Kango and Dhar, 1981; Rao, 1982a; Bhasin, 1988, 1989, 1996). All forms of pastoralism may be regarded as different forms of adaptation, the parameters of which are determined by ecology and the levels of technological development. This makes pastoralism a special adaptation, both from the economic and cultural point of view. It is special because it manages within the conditions dictated by the environment.

**Pastoral Nomads’ Lifestyles**

Pastoral nomads are characterized not only by their different lifestyles and means of subsistence but also because of distinct social organization. Patterns of social organization, which have been developed by them, depended largely on their specific ecological, cultural, political or historical circumstances. Pastoral populations were organized into so-called descent groups (tribes, clans and lineages). It is a widely acknowledged fact that the social organization of pastoral nomads is based on kinship. However, it is not only nomadic societies, where kinship and pseudo-kinship form the structural basis of social organization, many other societies with varying...
patterns of socio-political and economic systems also tend to have a strong kinship base.

Flexible social organization means that nomads have not only one secure support network of people but they tend to have a more fluid and changing support network within a community. The entire community of pastoralists is interdependent. They work together and can be described as a functional cooperative group. They are ready to help each other as and when required. The mobility of nomads and the permanent instability of pastoral economy give rise to a fluid social organization, which is capable of change and which has the requisite segmentary means with which to accomplish this. According to Spooner (1973:25-26), units of lower levels of segmentation, which, primarily, are connected with social, economic and more narrowly productive needs, rely on kin and contractual relations.

Barfield (1993) used anthropological methods to examine the empirical realities of day-to-day life among different groups of pastoral nomads. According to him, even though the nomads lived apart from sedentary society, there are bonds of association with the latter that had lasting impact on the nomads. He discussed generalities about certain themes like ecological base of nomads, how do they organise themselves economically and how do they form and maintain their political and social structure. He highlighted the characteristics that are normally used to identify animals that can adapt to the regional ecological conditions and must constitute a necessary component of everyone’s herd. According to Salzman (2004), nomadic movements are ‘highly purposeful, oriented towards achieving specific production rules’. Nomads deploy different strategy to meet several challenges of which the most crucial is the survival of the key animal.

The Nomads’ Concept of Wealth and Economy

The concept of wealth among the nomadic-pastoral communities is generally defined by the size of the herds that each one of them own. In these organizations, ‘non-economic’ relations in the conventional sense, belonging rather to the general organization of society, organize work. In nomadic pastoralist society, inequality is not in economic terms but is a relative positioning often based on the generosity of others. Unwarranted accumulation of material goods beyond a certain point restricts the pastoralist’s freedom of movement, thus reducing his ability to care for his herds.
and int midating his livelihood. The pastoral nomad’s economy is not organized for sustained production even in normal time. Lattimore, puts it succinctly, when he writes—‘the pure nomad is a poor nomad’ (cf. Salzman, 1980: 34). Yet this may not hold true if the total herd value owned by the nomads is taken into consideration. Every pastoralist worth his experience lays emphasis on the accumulation of more and more stock as an insurance against a lean period. An economic sense for these pastoralists means an efficient way to exploit natural grassland resources. According to Barfield (1993: 12), the economics of pastoralism could be assessed in accordance with the type of animal raised, the numbers of animals and men involved as also the products available, their market worth and the income generated from their sale or exchange. Concept of wealth is different among pastoral nomads. Wealth is tied to the ownership of animals rather than the ownership of land as is in the case of the agriculturalists. The number of animal heads they possess determines the prosperity of pastoral households. The household depends for its subsistence on the animals owned by its members.

According to Salzman (1980), “They also see their herds as banking and investment devices, so that they will try, for example, to keep some small stock as relatively liquid assets or ‘small change’ for consumption purposes, or will convert downward to small stock from their remaining large stock after a drought to take advantage of higher growth rates and lower per-unit risk factors” (Salzman, 1980: 177). Pastoral economic strategy requires ‘short-term productivity and longer-term insurance’.

Anthropological Theory and Nomadism

Anthropological theory has often assumed an ambiguous position on the Pastoral nomadic way of life. There is a common perception that these communities represent a phase in transitional processes of historical and sociological changes. Kradin (2002: 369) argues that ‘social evolution among pastoral nomads has not been well conceptualized’. In a way it is often assumed that Nomadic lifestyles represent frozen entities that have not gone through evolutionary processes of progressive complexity. Evolutionary theories starting with the writings of Spencer (1967) have discussed societies moving from simple to complex differentiations to augment their
resources but evidences from nomadic societies were hardly incorporated in their dispositions.

The classical diffusion school and the neo-diffusionist in their quest to elucidate cultural exchanges talk about integration, assimilation and acculturation processes that in their opinion constructed the cumulative present day identities experienced by pastoral nomadic societies across the world. In their opinion process of acculturation includes the adoption of the values, attitudes, and ways of behaviour, and speech from a host society by migrants into that society. In this process, the ethnic group gradually loses its separate cultural identity and slowly accepts the culture of the larger host community. (Fellmann et al., 1995). Whereas Integration is defined as a situation where all members of the society, regardless of their citizenship or ethnic association, are free to participate in all forms of social interaction. The integrated 'whole' may allow for some degree of cultural diversity, such as tolerance of religious differences. However, its basic function refuses any social obligation, which maintains ethnic separation (Hunt & Walker, 1974). Assimilation is similar to integration and includes cultural assimilation and structural assimilation. In cultural assimilation, members of the 'guest' group become acculturated to the cultural patterns of the 'host' society. Cultural assimilation threatens ethnic identity, but does not destroy it. For example, some individuals may have forgotten their ancestral culture but still respect those who wish to maintain it. Structural assimilation involves interaction at the primary group level between members of the 'host' society and those of the 'guest' group. Overall assimilation is the basis of an integrated society, but it is often incomplete and may not move at a pace equal to structural and cultural change (Hunt & Walker, 1974).

Hunt and Walker (1974) state that a segregated society is one in which contact between various groups is restricted by law, by custom, or by both. Whether cultural or biological, the group differences are permanent in nature and determine the individuals' social role. The segregated society has to agree with the regulations of the dominant group. The individuals have few rights apart from their ethnic group and therefore the ethnic groups are unequal. Members of the minority group are allowed to engage only in the type of activities, which are seen as useful by the dominant group.
This classic theoretical perception in anthropology helped in comprehending the complex realities of nomadic way of life. The pastoral nomadic communities have always had close interactions with the settled communities with whom they had trade relations and when they settled in their neighbourhood in the long summer months, visible influence on their social and cultural fabric was evident and has been so documented by chroniclers of nomadic ethnographies across the world. The political formations of these nomadic groups often threatened their neighbours who were weary of the military might of these somewhat elusive groups.

The school of thought represented by Chase-Dunn and Thomas (1997) and supported by Hall (2001) and Kradin (2002) argue that nomadic societies went through cyclical movements that helped them at times to form complex political organizations addressed by Hall (1997) and Barfield (1991) as ‘Xenocaratic’ at times. These scholars argue that these political formations were not exclusive to Nomadic economies that extracted surplus from agrarian mode of production to consolidate their political hegemony. However, similar accumulations were witnessed by several other kind of political formations.

Kradin (2002: 370) with this perspective constructs a ‘three level cultural integration of pastoral nomads’ and puts them in the following order according to witnessed political complexity in the society:

1. Acephalous Segmentary Clan and Tribal formations
2. ‘Secondary Tribe and Chiefdom
3. Nomadic empires and ‘quasi-imperial’ pastoral polities of smaller sizes

The problem that linear theory of social reconstruction confronts vis-à-vis Nomadic societies is that the political complexity of these societies is not accompanied by other characteristics of evolutionary growth namely increase in population density, specialization in technology, greater complexity in structural and functional organization of society except for a temporary increase in population by the fact of enslavement of population in captured territories. The only perceivable change was in increased levels of hierarchical differentiation. The cyclical changes witnessed in the political formations of several nomadic societies have perplexed several scholars of evolutionary theories including Marxist theorists. They are troubled by the fact that political complexities did not bring economic progress and class power witnessed in other economic formations that moved from agrarian to industrial mode.
of production with greater economic differentiation and inequality. Nomadic political formations remained relatively egalitarian as the economic basis of society did not change but ‘political superstructure’ in the expanded empires differed markedly from each other. Kradin (2002: 370) reflects that given this reality ‘nomadism drops out of unilinear Marxist dialectic of history’. To explain this he draws reference from Gellner’s (1988: 93-97,114) work and notes that the giant steppe empires later disintegrated into separate acephalous lineage societies contradicting the Marxist unilinear theory of historical evolution.

According to Salzman [1971], however, not politics but the adjustment to biophysical variability was the prime objective of pastoral mobility, and the political and military formations that emerged in these societies were a consequence of the nomads’ arrangement with ecological adaptation. He argues that their migratory lifestyle enabled them to sustain utilizing the marginal lands which otherwise would have remained unprofitable [Salzman, 1971]. Their political organizations therefore, were a consequent of their migratory lifestyle and the necessities of cooperation in herding practices, protection and regulation of territorial rights and of an appropriate organization of human and animal populations. This holds true not only for the inter-tribal laws and rules, but also for the intra-tribal regulations of grazing grounds, campsites and migratory routes and their temporal sequences.

There are two other prominent schools of thought arguing that there was a pre-class development of nomads (Sahlins, 1968; Johnson and Earle, 1987) and the other arguing for a concept of ‘Nomadic Feudalism’. Proponents of these schools have often criticized each other often highlighting limitations of these theoretical positions. George Murdock in his famous Ethnographic Atlas suggests that ‘all ethno-historical known nomads have not approached the state level and nor have they had class stratification’ (following Korotayev, 1991:157, Table XI cited from Kradin, 2002: 371).

Some studies have tried to classify Nomadism into three stages namely:

**Stage 1 of Nomadism**

Perry (1975) believes that the first stage is that of pure mountain nomadism. In this phase there is no particular contact between nomads and other village dwellers and limited interaction with the urban people. These nomadic people migrate between long distances moving from mountainous Yalaq / Garmsir summer homes in the
mountains to lowland winter homes often called as *Qeslaq/Sardir*. The distance can be at times several hundred kilometres. They normally have only tents to house them and unlike several contemporary nomadic communities do not maintain permanent dwellings. These groups are solely dependent on animal husbandry for their economic survival.

Perry (1975) also addresses the issue of necessary contact that nomads always had to face with sedentary populations while moving from one home to the other or while taking their herds to pasturelands. To survive nomads also had to sell their products like milk, cheese, meat to the settled populations and buy their daily needs like tea, sugar, implements and several other necessities from them either on exchange or on payment. They were often involved in conflicts with them over grazing rights, trespassing on agricultural lands and various other issues. In addition the governments in power have always stressed the nomadic populations. The political leadership is encroaching on their rights by taking away their pasturelands and transferring it to peasants for agriculture purpose. The primary concern of most administrators is to convert nomadic into settled populations, as they believe that migratory lifestyle stresses the environment and is a perpetual political threat.

**Stage 2 of Nomadism leaning towards Sedentarization:**

Persistent political pressure, diminishing economic returns and changing aspirations of the younger members of the tribe often compel nomadic groups to settle to a more sedentary lifestyle. This is identified by Perry (1975) as the secondary stage of nomadism that involves ‘partial dissolution of ethnic, economic and social solidarity and identity among the nomadic group’. There is also pressure of either some nomadic tribes being forced to quit pastureland for agricultural purposes and in certain cases they may settle for agriculture itself. In some cases urban lifestyle may compel these traditional communities or individuals from these communities to give up not only nomadic life ways but also nomadic identity.

The functional and structural changes experienced by nomadic communities also alter the nature of relationship that they share with their neighbours. Those nomadic households that wanted to continue with their traditional economic and social mobility patterns move to other pasturelands. The impact is much greater in lowlands—the popular habitats for the summer, though the winter habitats being in
difficult mountain ranges may remain isolated and thus protected. These areas often become overcrowded pasturelands and winter habitats for the remaining nomadic families from different clans. In respect of tradition, it is only men and boys who move to the winter habitats but women and small children stay in rented accommodations in the villages that are on the route to the winter pastures and winter homes.

Stage 3 of Nomadism:

This phase symbolizes nomads adapting to a sedentary life. This happens when the nomads find that they cannot sustain tradition because of immense competition being faced due to the practises of animal husbandry and large dairy farms in the lowlands. In some cases the yelag / Garmsir itself changed either to dairy farming or changed their pastures into settled agriculture areas. Community living and the practise of using common resources are almost abandoned. Nomadic-pastoral communities are now gradually adapting to lifestyle of rural peasant societies. Some of them may continue with the traditional pastoral nomadic mode of existence but the routes adopted for migrations may become much shorter and also the size of the herds gets considerably reduced. One can reason that rupture from traditional economy and social organization is difficult and therefore these communities adopt a kind of middle path-partly balancing histories with the existing compulsions and demands of changing economy and polity.

Constraints of the Nomadic Production System

There is a relatively large body of literature that discusses constrains of Nomadic Production system and argue that the reasons why pastoral nomadic system is under perpetual threat is because of these constraints. Some of these constraints could be summarized as follows:

- Undeveloped economy that still runs on traditional practices.
- A subsistence system for providing basic needs.
- Economy built on numbers, and not quality of animals’ breeding, for prestige and hedging against risks of herd losses during drought and disease outbreaks.
• Full dependence on the natural range, which has been subjected to decrease in area because of competitive horizontal expansion of crop production activities and continued degradation of remaining pastureland.

• Shortage of water supply in nomads’ stock routes, especially during dry season.

• Conflicts with other users over access to grazing resources, intensifying on the livestock routes, especially in the resting grounds for the herds during migration.

• Low production of milk and meat from the livestock.

• Inadequate veterinary services and animal production services, other than the vaccination of animals under the rinderpest programme.

• Shortage of drugs to combat major endemic and epidemic diseases.

• Shortage of fodder during the dry season, with low benefit from crop residues or baling, compelling nomads to buy wheat bran, straw and sorghum grain to supplement their animals’ food.

• Nomadic groups are not organized and not motivated at the grassroots level. Their trade unions are elitist.

**Pressures of Development on Nomadic Routes**

Much of the development taking place in plains, including the construction of reservoirs and other water resources for facilitations of the irrigated agriculture, urban expansion and intensification of cash cropping have reduced access to winter pastures. At high altitudes, where shepherds take their herds for summer grazing, serious over-grazing is taking place. At the same time, the herder’s payment for winter in the form of providing organic manure during the process of grazing has become obsolete as a number of permanent agriculturalists are applying chemical fertilizers. Thus, the early movement of the herds up through the forest belt must begin progressively earlier because of restricted winter pastures.
This enforced delay in the upward transfer of the herds adds to the grazing impact on the intermediate forests. Finally summer grazing is prolonged as long as possible, which in turn leads to the over-grazing of the meadows. These mal-effects are gradually witnessing the total breakdown of the traditional arrangements laid down between the herder and the permanently settled cultivators. This proves detrimental to the environment as it adversely impacts upon the winter grazing areas at low altitudes and the forests along the migratory routes.

In India the forest officials identified herding as the main cause for erosion of the north-west Himalayas. Gaddis were facing a double challenge: shrinking low altitude pastoral areas in the Siwaliks and rapidly eroding claims to whatever remained. Three dams constructed in the foothills of the Siwalik Hills were instrumental in forcing the Gaddis to change their migration patterns with harmful effects for themselves and the environment. Thus, these were some of the very real challenges that the pastoralists had to face in terms of environmental shifts on their traditional grazing grounds.

Pastoralists mostly depend on natural resources, particularly for fuel, fodder and water. Their dependence on natural resources is institutionalized through a variety of social and cultural mechanism such as religion, folklore and traditions. The typological separation of the pastoralist from the agricultural mode of life of the transhumant from the settled mode is not rigid. The two modes of production, pastoral and agriculture exist side by side within the same household. Those who have settled and practice agriculture support pastoralists by growing food for them.

However, when government assumes control of natural resources, these mechanisms become defunct and a radical reorientation of existing patterns of resources take place, including a transition from collective to individual use of resources with the main challenge being on how to establish sustainable and efficient levels of operations for the maintenance of natural resources and to ensure food security in the area. Interestingly there were no clear-cut policy initiatives having stringent legal or institutional implications and planning frameworks for sustainable development. There were observed a considerable number of problems of integration, overlaps and duplication of efforts among development agencies, with no common vision and objectives. The development agencies were all working without a common
or unified vision and objectives that facilitated both the pastoralists and the environmental requirements. This lack of initiative began resulting in further problems of assimilation, overlaps and repetition.

Pastoral groups vary in political structure from state-controlled peasants, to centralized chiefdoms, to weak chiefdoms, to lineage system. The dress designs, social practices, beliefs and rituals prevalent in the three areas are intimately linked with the local economy, availability of raw materials either locally or nearby and culture-historical factors. Traditional pastoral systems have remained stable for a long time, particularly through flexible responses to short-term variations of climatic conditions. Today, however, numerous demographic and economic changes of long-term nature have occurred, triggering adaptive changes that were capable of transforming the system significantly.

A detailed study and in-depth analyses of the causes and mechanisms of the social and economic changes pertaining to the pastoralists and their traditional ways reveals that most of the factors forcing the nomads to change their traditional lifestyles which could also be designated as ‘push factors’ were a consequent feature of a great number of rural and urban development’s that has initially attracted the nomads and resulted in their voluntarily giving up their mobile way of life in favour of a sedentary rural or urban existence which in turn could be designated as decisive ‘pull factors’.

1. Most important among the ‘push-factors’ was the transfer of land and property to the villagers. Especially those individuals were favoured who had led to a considerable expansion of agriculture and to an augmentation of rural shepherding. It did, however, cause a great number of conflicts with the nomads whose traditional land rights and land uses were severely threatened.

2. Many of the important pull-factors seem to be especially attractive for the younger nomads. Cities for the nomads were translated into ease of access to various facilities like the schools, hospitals, mosques, and other public services, as also providing more opportunities for professional careers outside the purview of the traditional learnt skills of nomadism.
3. The traditional family ties and clan structures were adversely affected and to a large extent dissipated by the promised haven of ‘urban life’. These simple folk were promised ‘El Dorado’ or the ‘land of Gold’ if they willingly abandoned age-old pastoral migrations.

4. Aside from access to basic public institutions such as schools and mosques, many nomads see the main advantage of settling in a rural environment in the preservation of certain elements of their traditional pastoralism. For example, animal husbandry, including even the use of Yeylag/Garmsir or Gheslag /sardsir, can be practiced on a reduced scale, so that at least for part of the year the aša-er-traditions can be preserved. But the growing competition of short-range pastoralism by mountain villagers posed severe threats to these forms of nomadic adaptations.

The Pastoral Nomads of Iran

Iran has a large nomadic populating—reported to be nearly 1.5 million in terms of demographic compositions. In 1920 as some websites (Bestiran Travel.com 18/04/14) on the community suggest they constitutes nearly one fourth of the total population of the country. It contains of nearly 100 different tribes having distinct dialects. Over the years their numbers declined because of forced sedentarisation. Some of these prominent groups include Bakhtiyars, Gashghaees and Khamesh. Bakhtiyars is the biggest nomadic groups in the country followed by Ghashgee or Quashquee living in different parts of Fars. Gulaks are regarded as one of the oldest nomadic tribe of the region and are of particular interest in this research as they are regarded to be closest in terms of dialect and other anthropomorphic features to the Talesh regarded as ancestors to the subject population of this research the Galesh often spelled in the literature as Galish, Golash etc. Its size and antiquity have not evoked the kind of enthusiasm among the ethnographic researchers as several other nomadic pastoral groups in particular those residing in the northwest of Iran. The present researcher identified the community while serving as a schoolteacher in the Mazanadaran province. It was neglect of this vibrant ethnicity in anthropological texts that motivated the present researcher to attempt this ethnographic documentation of the Galesh people residing in the Mazandaran province of Northern Iran.
Various researchers have argued that though there is growing interest in Iranian ethnography, there are few Western studies on Mazandaran province (cf. Elr., s.v. "Anthropology" and "Ethnography"). There are some studies of significance that reflect changing rural life in the province and discuss peasant marketing in Mazandaran (Thompson, 1976). There is a frequently cited text (1986) on Modernization of Kelardasht by Mir-Hosseini. Similarly, Bazin (1987) investigates the geographical dynamics of ethnic and professional groups in Caspian provinces. Bromberger's studied (1986, 1994) rural culture of Gilan in particular and of the Caspian region in general and furnished some data on Mazandaran as well. Borjjan & Borjjan (2008) examines the linguistic material collected in 2002 from a Galesh ranch in central-eastern Mazandaran. It transcribes, translates, and glosses two texts narrated by a patriarch on his long, eventful life: the dramatic elopement with the girl he married, his successful family life and career as a pastoral nomad, and his long resistance against the laws forcing the Galesh families to evacuate the forest for good. Notwithstanding their dialectological purpose, namely documentation of the largely understudied language of Mazandaran within the long-standing tradition of Iranian philology, they also provide raw material for the anthropologist, sociologist, and historian, as it relays an unrecorded tradition just before its total disappearance.

The Galesh Pastoralists’ Emerging Story

Developmental interventions have taken an adverse toll on the progress and perpetuation of the pastoralists of the Cherrat area. The developmental overtures like the building of Dams for improvement of irrigation have reclaimed portions of the traditional pastoral lands of the Galesh but the compensation packages have done little for the pastoralists to resettle themselves or the make sure that they have a sustainable livelihood. The elderly among the Galesh have become used to living in the traditional ways of their ancestors and are unwilling to give up on them. There are, on the other hand voices of dissent from the younger generations as well who feel that they have been given a poor deal. The compensation for the homestead and land is so paltry that they are unable to even obtain adequate rental space in cities. The promises of jobs and sustainable livelihoods had not delivered the expected results, as the people who wanted to work and obtain gainful livelihood were considered ineligible and unskilled for the jobs on offer. Most of them were living as mere daily wage earners and working as simple labour. Their socio-cultural fabric had been torn
asunder when the freedom of living a wholesome life under the stars was taken from
them and they had to confine themselves to working hard every day of the week and
had only small squalid tenements to live in. These were some of the considerations
voiced by the participants in the case studies and data collection discussions. Thus, it
was the onus of responsibility of the researcher to present the scenario, as it is with
the governmental and pastoralist perspectives in full view. An attempt will also be
made to juxtapose these with the interventions being carried out elsewhere in the
world and how the populations have adapted themselves to the new emerging
challenges.

Pastoral Nomads of South-western Iran

Several studies on nomadic mode of production report that the dichotomy in
social structure and subsistence in regions with mixed nomadic and sedentary
populations may have some bearing on the socio-economic and eventually political
development of Fars in the early fourth millennium B.C. It is further argued that the
socio-economic and political developments in Fars during the late fifth and early
fourth millennia B.C. may have been influenced by the pastoral nomads and their
interaction with the sedentary population. A historical review is done of the several
nomadic groups of South Western Iran to comprehend these complexities.

Beck (1980) had studied the Qashqa’i pastoralists of Iran. He documented that in
1978, the Qashqa’i had lost their privileged position as nomadic pastoralists in rural
Iran. They were rapidly becoming peasant agro pastoralists and proletariats. The tribal
context of pastoralism had previously allowed the Qashqa’i to have exclusive use of
rich pastoral resources. As the tribal political structure began to be broken by the
Iranian state, sub tribes and households became less absorbed in broader structures
and more dependent on their own abilities to arrange land, labor, and production.
They entered agricultural and urban wage labor as well as commercial pastoralism
and weaving at a time when the majority of Qashqa’i was still attempting to intensify
traditional modes of production on ever-decreasing pastures. Lacking the capital to
purchase land, they attempted once again to intensify pastoralism, but they were now
forced to compete with many other kinds of pastoralists- village shepherds,
transhumant, other tribal nomads, contract herders and commercial herders.
Salzman (2002) presents a brief review of four ethnographically documented cases of pastoralists in Iran (Persia): first, the Baluch in south-eastern Iran; second, the Konachi in southern Iran; third, the Basseri of south-western Iran and other tribes of the Zagros Mountains; and fourth; the Turkmen of north-eastern Iran. He stated that research on pastoral nomads in Iran gives a number of general observations about pastoral nomadism. In his opinion nomadic movement is highly purposeful and is oriented toward achieving specific production or other goals. He also said that nomadism is not tied to one type of economic system; some nomads have generalized, consumption-oriented production, while others are specialized and market oriented. Nor is nomadism limited to one type of land tenure; some nomads migrate within territory that they control, while others have no political or legal claim over the land they use. Furthermore, some pastoral nomads live in isolated regions far from other populations, while others live close to peasant and urban populations. Finally, he concluded that pastoral nomads vary in political structure from state-controlled peasants, to centralized chiefdoms, to weak chiefdoms, to segmentary lineages systems.

The Bakun is an externally homogeneous culture in Fars represented by a widespread, highly sophisticated painted pottery. Outside Fars this pottery has been found in northern Khuzestan (Wright, 1981), in the Bakhtiari Mountains (Zagarell, 1975; 1982; Nissen and Zagarell, 1976) and in the Bebbahan and Zuhreh regions (Nissen, 1976; Dittmann, 1984). These areas have been traditionally exploited until recently by the nomadic pastoralists of the Zagros as summer and winter pastures. The tribes of the Bakhtiari confederacy roamed in the region stretching from west of Isfahan down to south-eastern Khuzestan; the Mamasani and Boyr-Ahmadi tribes wandered around the areas between north and south-eastern Khuzestan and north-western Fars. The tribes of the Qashqai confederacy swung from the area southwest of Isfahan well into southern Fars, near the Persian Gulf, covering a distance of more than 700 km. in their annual migration. Other nomadic tribes of the Khamseh confederacy and Arabic-speaking tribes also exploited Fars, sharing it with numerous other nomads and the sedentary population (Barth, 1959; 1961; Garthwaite, 1983; Beck, 1986).
The Qashqai Tribes of Iran

Gharakhlou (2001) in his work titled, *A Study of Cultural Changes Among the Qashqai Tribes in Iran* reports that the Qashqa’i are a nomadic group of Turkish-speaking people in the south-central part of the country, and have a different language and culture from other Persian-speaking Iranians. The Qashqai population is around one million, and 100,000 of this total still have a nomadic lifestyle (Nomad Organization, 2002). The Qashqa’i cultural change is a cause for concern as the urban Qashqa’i may lose their culture.

There are many ways to view cultural change, and most researchers have been involved in the quest to understand the dynamics of this change. However, the underlying factors affecting cultural change vary among different societies. Beck (1981) states that government sponsored change in Iran from the 1950’s to the 1970’s had a great impact on the Qashqa’i lifestyle. Land reform, pasture nationalization, the dismantling of the socio-political organization, and education of nomads were main features that played a central role in this regard (Gharakhlou, 2001). Bates and Plog (1991) state that the handicrafts proliferation of is another way to study the change that has taken place in a society and culture.

Almost all of the Qashqa’i neighbourhoods, regardless of the specific city of destination, are located in urban peripheral areas. In the urban centres, the Qashqa’i migrants often intensified traditional cultural practices, and segregated themselves by building ‘nomadic neighbourhoods’ on the periphery of cities. Economic and cultural factors were of central importance in the creation of Qashqa’i neighbourhoods in the cities of destination. Socio-cultural practices such as language, clothing, music, and hobbies among urban Qashqa’i have changed relative to Qashqa’i at the place of origin.

Apart from proximity to traditional pastures, land prices for housing are lower in peripheral areas of the cities than in other areas. As distance from the centre of Iranian cities increases, urban services decrease and thus, results in lower prices for land. Most Qashqa’i migrants can neither rent nor buy houses inside the city. Therefore, they are obliged to buy very poor land in marginal ‘outer’ areas upon which to build their own simple houses. A few Qashqa’i people also believe that factors such as being far from higher crime areas in city centres, supporting their relatives in the
case of marriage or death, and maintaining old ways are also reasons for living in clustered neighbourhoods at the place of destination.

Pastoral nomadism has always had significant economic, military and political importance in Iran over the last centuries (Salzman, 1971). They had major influence in political power and almost all dynasties ruling the country since the eleventh century – e.g. Qajars, Zands, Afshars, Safavids, Seljuqs – had an internal tribal base (Garthwaite, 1983). These groups had strong military strength and were a major source for their political power and influence. In 1909, for instance the Shahsevan pillaged the city of Ardabil and gained control over the region until they were defeated and disarmed by the troops of Reza Khan in 1923 (Tapper, 1979).

Kohl (2010) in his book Modern Nomads, Vagabonds, or Cosmopolitans?: Reflections on Contemporary Tuareg Society has drawn the attention of researchers to several challenges that the Tuareg traditional life way’s of nomadism and pastoralism have been facing during recent decades. Ines extends the argument that the Tuareg are not just victims of global processes as is commonly assumed but have developed creative strategies for dealing with and participating in the outside world. They have shown an extensive capacity to adapt and to cope with transformation processes.

The book deals with a part of recent Tuareg society (ishumar) and discusses whether the three terms ‘modern nomads’, ‘vagabonds’, and ‘cosmopolitans’ are appropriate to describe this society that approximates a ‘border line’ society. She asks if Ishumar can be justifiably labelled as ‘modern nomads’? They move irregularly, in the Libyan-Algerian-Nigerien-Malian borderlands adapting to various situations. The decisions for opting for a particular economic and social lifestyle are made according to individual choice or preference. This reflects drift from common practice of collective mobility generally adopted by pastoral nomadic communities. Their lifestyle in certain ways exhibits similarities to what are commonly described as vagabonds. In this analysis, she is debating the questions of terminology and ambiguity that characterizes nomadic pastoral populations in transition. The cultural mores of the people are perpetually changing and it becomes difficult to distinguish them from the cosmopolitan characteristics of the people in their vicinity. Kohl (2010) is apparently uncomfortable in using the phrase-‘victims of modernity’ for these communities on the move. The arguments in the book are broadly located in the geo-
politics of Libyan sovereignty that she describes as a form of subaltern geopolitics in which particular sites and deeds are strategic. In her presentation she draws reference from academic arguments and reasons that sovereignty is reproduced through claims, acts and performances (Tuathail, 1996; Mitchell, 1991).

**Historical Evidence:**

Pastoralism in Iran is recorded in anthropological and archaeological evidence. In a reconstruction of early cultures in the Zagros by Zagarell (1975; 1982) various forms of migrations that accompanied some agricultural activities and husbandry is validated. Several academic sources indicate that until 1500 BC, military invasions, as well as other instances of hardship like epidemics, famine and drought forced significant parts of the Iranian population to seek shelter and security by abandoning their permanent and semi-permanent settlements and retreating as semi-nomads and nomads into the mountains. Their socio-political structures and mechanisms of transfer of authority were unique to themselves, which gradually began to be perceived as potential threats. As a result massive drives began to be envisaged by the authorities to resettle these nomads and bring them into the mainstream of Iranian life. Since the Safavid period, therefore, the massive translocation and resettlement of tribes, either in their entirety or of their majority, has been well documented (e.g., Perry, 1975; Tapper, 1979).

Barth (1961) discusses in his analysis that even though in 1909 two thirds of the Bakhtiāri population lived as nomads in the western foothills of the Zagros but due to famines (in particular in 1816 and 1865) and epidemics (especially between 1830 and 1870), as well as the general absence of basic medical services, the total population in the Zagros remained relatively stable throughout the century. Hygienic conditions and the nutritional situation were almost similar for the villagers and the nomads but to some extent they were generally worse for the villagers than for the nomads (Durand, 1902). With the improvement of medical services at the end of the 19th century, a rapid increase in population could gradually be observed in the Zagros, as well as in the other mountain regions. Yet it was because of their mobility the nomads profited less from the improved conditions than the settled population, and the villagers who were living on the peripheries of the Bakhtiāri and other nomad territories. This led to a remarkable population growth in the region (Barth, 1961: 93).
However, a considerable decline in the nomadic population of the Bakhtiari tribe was noticed in the mid-1980s Census, (Markaz-e Āmār-e Irān). The number of Bakhtiari nomads declined to 181,505 people living within 27,172 families. In all they represented only about 10 per cent of the total population, which had existed within the original tribal area of the Bakhtiari. This supports the suppositions stated earlier of several scholars of nomadism that this mode of economic and social life is under immense pressure. There is gradual shift to more sedentary lifestyle that impacts their social and cultural heritage.

Government Policies and Plans for Nomadism

In the 1930s the Iranian government definitely smashed the upper levels of nomadic leadership structures by either removing the Khans or stripping them of their power. Although this severely shook the foundations of nomadism, the tribal functions on the micro-levels (tira, awlād) remained intact. Despite facing severe travails the Khans maintained their ancestral ways for as long as they could until those in power finally split them up. They struggled against change and retained their identity and nomadic ways although they were dispersed all over the region but were not allowed to enter their ancient holdings and traditional pastures. However, this forced sedentarization of nomads did not lead to the planned disintegration of nomadism, which had been the primary objective.

A second attempt to destroy the social and economic functions of nomadism was connected to the official support granted to the ‘White Revolution’ in the 1960s wherein the nationalization of forests and pastures in 1963 resulted in the expansion of the farmlands into the erstwhile traditional nomadic territories and an increase in rural and urban animal husbandry (Ehlers, 1976). The national concern was for the conservation of the natural forest wealth and the preservation of the wooded territories because the government projection was that the pastoralists were decimating the natural resources of the nation.

Traditional collective pastoral rights were replaced by private deeds distributed by the government. Most of these were for tenure of a minimum of 15 years. Nomads who had received fertile pastures enlarged their flocks and made more profit, while those who had obtained ecologically fragile or economically poor grazing areas had to exploit their pastures beyond sustainability. Most importantly,
the privatization of collective pastoral property rights and their fragmentation into temporally limited individual users’ rights destroyed the collective organization of the pastoralists on the micro-level and led to the isolation of the individual nomad. All uncultivated pastures and forests were nationalized and became government property. The other sources of income for the nomads including hunting, charcoal burning, and gathering of traditional medicinal plants and products from the forest that were part of the customary practices, were now totally forbidden. There was increased negative impact of government legislation. The tribes that used to survive through multi-resource nomadism were particularly affected (Digard and Karimi, 1987: 85-86). The government interference and military enforcement replaced historically developed migration patterns and further fragmented the tribal unity of the pastoralist groups, since every subgroup used to organize their migration patterns, territories and extent at their own discretion. The consequences resulted in chaotic conditions on the migration routes and the subsequent destruction of many of the traditionally ordained pastures due to over-exploitation.

_Qashqai_ for instance (Lambton, 1969; Beck, 1986) experienced the effects of land reform that were combined with other detrimental policies revolving around the Forest and Range Nationalization Law of 1963. According to this law, all natural rangelands except for those surrounding villages now belonged to the government. Lands nationalized included desert and mountainous areas, in addition to actual forests and rangelands, and all uncultivated lands lying outside the service areas of village water supplies (Lambton, 1969). These comprised 76 % of Iran's total land area. Included in the nationalization programme were almost all of the _Qashqa'i_ pastures. The government also began to collect taxes on herd animals sold to state-run slaughter houses on the grounds that grazing had been 'free' on state land (Beck, 1986). Thus, pasture nationalization represented another pressure on the _Qashqa'i_ to change their traditional ways of life.

**Nomads- The Political Players**

Almost up to the 20th century the nomads and pastoralists were equally important members of Iranian society because the tribes constituted and even wielded a very powerful military and political influence. Tribal leaders were known to engage in political decision-making that was significant for the establishment and
continuance of ruling dynasties. During the Safavid period such an accumulation of tribal power caused the already-mentioned instances of forced migration (Perry, 1975). Khans and their families were also confined at the court, whenever the government needed hostages to ensure peace and security in the nomadic territories that were deemed to be out of direct control. Each tribe was functioning as an individual unit according to a pre-established social order, which was derived from a strict hierarchical arrangement with clear obligations and responsibilities for all members of the community. The intra-tribal hierarchy also established clear social and economic roles for each member as were exhibited among the Shahsevan, Bakhtiarí and several other nomadic groups.

One of the reasons for the decline of several nomadic groups in Iran including the Bakhtíari nomads and their decimation in terms of their pastoralism ways was their conflict with the Iranian government. The Bakhtíari represented an important military force until the 1930s, and controlled the most important trade routes between the Persian Gulf and Isfahan. The Bakhtíari, like most of the major nomadic tribes, had their own tribal identity that came into conflict with the national Iranian identity that the Iranian government had been trying to establish ever since the beginning of the 20th century especially during the Pahlavi period. Finally, rich oilfields were located in the Garmisir of the Bakhtíari territory. The British had acquired these in 1905, and as a form of compensation the Bakhtíari Khans received a small percentage of the profit (Garthwaite 1983:108-10). Since the Iranian government was interested in gaining full-centralized control and power over the highly lucrative oil exploration and extraction, both Shah Rezá (r.1926-41) and Shah Mohammad Rezá (r. 1941-79) made several attempts to dissuade the nomadic tribes from their habituated ways of life. In fact they went all out to virtually destroy the nomads’ livelihood, and the existence of nomads was officially more or less negated during the Pahlavi era.

Identity politics among the pastoral nomadic tribes played a critical role in defining political equations in Iran. The affiliation to a tribe is the main identifying factor of social coherence and cohesion of nomadic identity. Even today, when many nomads have abandoned their traditional way of life and settled in rural or semi-urban and urban areas, the sense of belonging to an awlād, tira or ta efa is a singularly powerful component of the nomads personal and social identification.
Since the Islamic Revolution of 1978-79 nomadism had experienced a certain, though marginal revival. Ayatollah Khomeini (Beginning of the Revolution 1979 to 1989) considered the nomads the most oppressed part of a feudal society and called them \textit{\text{\textipa{\texta{a}\textbar{\texti}{\textae}\textbar{\texte}\textbar{\texti}\text{\textl}{\textae}}}} (literally the ‘treasures of the revolution’; cf. Beck, 1980:18; Digard and Karimi, 1987: 86). Yet the Islamic government has continued to treat all pastures as government property, and pastoral rights are still leased to individual nomads. Despite expressions of support by the religious leaders, the government considers nomadism an anachronism, since modernization and the compliance with Islam are of prime importance. Although nomads are no longer perceived as an anti-governmental power (Tapper, 1979: 196-203), the government still sees nomadism as a potential risk factor because they are difficult to control and also probably because they are rooted in their traditional ways. Against this background the successive regimes in the country found safe solace in the argument that the pastoral nomads were solely responsible for the ecological crisis in many regions of the country (Abdollah and Chelebi, 1995: 349). This was an ecological argument and thus politically neutral. Consequently large-scale sedentary settlements of pastoral nomadic communities started. Accompanying this was a silent protest, desperate to protect their tradition and heritage. There were forced ruptures but these disjuncture’s failed to produce complete disconnect from ancient cultural heritage and modes of production.

\textbf{Components of Change and Catharsis}

The continued prevalence of pastoralism and nomadism in the second half of the 20th century was evidence enough of the fact that Iran’s mountain nomads had developed a variety of organizational and spatial patterns to cope with the impacts of modernization and globalization. However, the greatest challenge that they had faced was the pooling together of their resources for sending their animals out to grazing in the summer and winter pastures making the entire enterprise into one economically viable unit. And this was despite the introduction of newer varieties of sheep that had proven useless, as they were prone to disease and death in the extreme weather conditions. The survival strategies defined their existence, giving it a unique lifestyle with an almost infinite variety of adaptations between nomadism, settled agriculture and orchards besides adaptation to the jobs available in the urban lifestyle. The
traditional spatial-temporal structure of their lifestyle was visible in the following patterns of behaviour:

1. March until beginning of May: migration from the winter pastures to the summer pastures
   May until August / September: summer pastures (Yeylag/Garmsir)

2. End of August until November: migration from the summer pastures to the winter pastures
   November until mid-March: winter pastures (Gheslag/sardsir)

Several factors influenced the prosperity and fortunes of the nomads and among them were also included the Galesh - the subject of present study. These factors are degradation of the natural environment; population pressure, modernization of transport and traffic, and a series of legislative actions that have changed these traditional patterns of emigrational behaviour. Deforestation, changes in land use, and overgrazing, led to a critical reduction of the natural vegetation cover in many parts of the country. Soils exposed to rain and the effects of snowmelt, and also because of the result of the severe impact of wind and water erosion and gullying of the slopes had lost its nutritional value and were not good for growing grazing quality grasslands anymore. Simultaneously, an increase in the rural population led to the encroachment of agricultural land on traditional pastures and reduced the nomads’ traditional economic basis.

At the governmental level there were several beneficial and restrictive measures. Among them the most important one was the development of roads, which resulted in an increased use of trucks and pickups for transporting animals and goods to and fro from the pastures and summer and winter residences of the pastoralists including the Galesh. However, these transport innovations had also negatively impacted upon the nomads’ traditional lifestyles even though the modern forms of transportation had helped the nomads adjust to the changing political and economic conditions.

Pastoralism in other parts of the World

According to Kohler Rollefson (1992), pastoralism was necessary to sustain the environment and reasoned that in Germany, when people stopped grazing livestock in the forests, there was a change in vegetation that altered the landscape.
The government now actually pays herders to graze their animals in the forest. Currently, the trend towards globalization of the market, with pastoral lands increasingly being commercialized and / or turned in to national parks; problems for the pastoralist have grown. Due to neglect by officials and policy makers, pastoralists face denial of their traditional and customary rights in these grazing areas. The political marginalization of pastoral communities has paved the way for their forcible eviction from their lands and restriction on their movements. Paradoxically, the demand for products of pastoralists has gained unprecedented popularity.

As a signatory to the United Nation Convention on Biological Diversity, several countries committed to respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity. Therefore, the governments are obliged to consider recognizing and protecting the role of pastoralists and conferring certain rights that will support their livelihoods and community conservation of domestic animal biodiversity. Similarly other governments should also restore traditional grazing rights in forest areas including wildlife sanctuaries and national parks and in those areas earmarked for grazing purposes in village common lands.

Desta and Coppock (2004), in their treatise on Pastoralism Under Pressure: Tracking System Change in Southern Ethiopia, contend that even though economic development has proven elusive in African pastoral systems, change is pervasive. The majority of the Kajiado Maasai, for example, had endured marked declines in per capita livestock holdings and other aspects of human welfare over the past 50 years. They continued, “Once viewed as the epitome of sustainable pastoralism, the Borana system now confronts numerous challenges. Decline in per capita cattle holdings has spurred household-level diversification to include maize cultivation and camel husbandry in some areas. Resource pressure has encouraged local annexation of some formerly common access grazing areas”.

They assumed that their results suggested patterns of internally induced socio-economic change due to population pressure in such semi-arid systems which were broadly predictable, and that development intervention priorities merely reflected system dynamics and addressed emerging issues. They felt that a “focus on
improving risk management by facilitating household economic diversification and restoring some aspects of opportunistic resource use may be the most appropriate development options among the Ethiopian Boran at this time”.

While the pastoral peoples of arid and semi-arid Africa primarily raise livestock to produce milk for household consumption. These livestock also provide a means for wealth accumulation, meat production, and cultural expression. Attempts to “develop” African pastoral systems with western production models and infrastructure have typically failed over the past 40 years for various (sound) reasons (Behnke, 1983; Coppock, 1994; Jahnke, 1982). Lack of impact from economic development, however, should not imply that pastoral systems do not change even though -indeed, change is pervasive. The Maasai of semiarid Kajiado district in Kenya are perhaps the most thoroughly documented pastoral group in East Africa (Campbell, 1999; Coast, 2002; Evangelou, 1984; Fratkin, 1994; Galaty, 1994, 1992; Homewood, 1992; Kimani and Pickard, 1998; Meadows and White, 1979; Rutten, 1992; Thompson and Homewood, 2002; White and Meadows, 1981; Zaal & Dietz, 1999). The overall pattern of change for the Kajiado Maasai pastoralists over the past 50 or more years can be simplified and summarized as consisting of:

1. A decline in the ratio of cattle to people, largely a result of periodic limits on animal numbers imposed by natural resources and combined with a steady increase in the human population;

2. The need for people to then seek food sources to augment a declining per capita supply of cow milk, creating pockets of agro pastoralism, wage employment, and increased market participation to facilitate exchange of livestock products (including insufficient milk supplies) for more calories as cereal grains;

3. Increased internal pressure to control or privatize resources as resource competition is intensified;

4. Loss of key grazing or water resources to land annexation or ecological degradation;

5. Shifts for households to keep more small ruminants (relative to cattle) as the forage base is altered, people become more sedentary, and women assume
larger managerial roles as a result of men seeking outside employment; and, with some exceptions,

6. A spectre of increased poverty and food insecurity, especially for the poorer segments of the population when linked to other economic sectors is tenuous. The ultimate internal driving variable for this sequence is human population growth (Boserup, 1980), and this is often manifested in pastoral zones when people have limited opportunities for emigration. Local population and resource factors serve to filter or mediate effects from national and international phenomena that drive markets for critical variables such as livestock and land (Campbell, 1999; Evangelou, 1984; Rutten, 1992; Toulmin and Quan, 2000).

This interesting summation of changes experienced by Nomadic populations described by the authors (Desta and Coppock, 2004) as the ‘Maasai model’ comes very close to explaining social and cultural transformations and constrains experienced by various nomadic populations across the world but it will be incorrect to suggest that its is comprehensive enough to explain all processual changes that every nomadic population in the world is witnessing today. However, the model provides, as contended by the authors, a very useful template for theory refinement and comparative analysis. Given this premise researchers working on the pastoral segment of Borana society, therefore, are expected to see trends such as (1) declines in the ratio between cattle and people; (2) increased household emphasis on food-crop cultivation and livestock diversification; (3) increased food insecurity, and (4) decreased access to grazing land. If internal system dynamics were found to be somewhat predictable, this could have important implications for pastoral research and development priorities in any part of the world. This model provides important guidelines for any future study on nomadic pastoral populations in the world and will be useful in understanding the dynamic of change among the Galesh in the present research work.

Another interesting study located in the Andes is that of Pilpichaca nomadic group. The majority of Pilpichaca’s population consists of pastoralists who care for their own or their family’s flock using a system of reciprocity without the use of salaries. However, a few hire herders who are paid with a salary. The origin of
livestock accumulation varies: inheritance, acquisition through marriage or by purchase with money saved from working (coastal agribusiness, mining, construction, selling wool). The resulting social differentiation is expressed politically. To be an authority is to affect decision-making about resources management (such as access and control of pasture and water) and the setting of internal and external community borders. For instance, herders who do not have livestock cannot request pasture. Therefore, they have limited influence over the community, barely participate in community assemblies, and rarely are made community authorities. This dynamic is also related to an individual’s ability to write, read, and speaks in Spanish for administrative purposes; this implies literacy is needed, although members of families with better socioeconomic conditions only achieve it. The amount and composition of livestock found in Pilpichaca is consistent with the observations of Bustamante, who found that households with higher socioeconomic status have greater amount of livestock owned and also tend to have a greater diversity of species.

The decision to sell, barter, or use a product is based upon a desire to maximize profits. In the best-case scenario, sellers hope to obtain more for the good than the cost it took to produce it. In this regard, estimating the conjectured cost of production means including the cost of the pastureland used, rent of land, cost of the animals, cost of labour, cost of transportation, etc. While most of these factors are part of household or community resources (as lands and labor), they still imply a subsistence cost for the worker, or a communal cost in terms of access to lands. However, pastoralists and most Andean peasants have a strategy of livelihood diversification so that they do not depend heavily on any one resource (Alberti and Mayer, 1974; Golte, 1980; Mayer and de la Cadena, 1989; Murra, 1975). They also avoid involvement in the market economy if their costs are higher than their potential profits (Golte et. al., 1983) or in order to enjoy fixed exchange rates instead of changing prices of the market (Orlove, 1982). According to the information obtained in this study, Pilpichaca’s household’s economic decision making is based upon a combination of variables that include access to and control over land, labour force and means of production, and if the production is for subsistence or for market. This rationale has been described for a number of other agro pastoralist Andean communities (Golte et. al., 1983).
Andean pastoralism transforms (and is transformed by) its environment in a dynamic interplay with climate change. Livestock husbandry implies mobility patterns that take into account the need to feed both the family and the flock, and on occasion the need for goods from outside the community. Thus, pastoralists travel to different areas depending on what they want to obtain in exchange for their products. These journeys usually require travel of more than 100 km.

Pastoralists of the Himalayas

There are about two hundred tribes almost comprising six per cent of the country’s population that are engaged in pastoralism (Source: Pastoralism in India: a scoping study by Sharma, Kohler Rollefson and Morton, 2003). Indian pastoralists can be divided into groups that practice horizontal movement and vertical movement like in the mountainous regions. Nomadic pastoralism is prevalent in the dry lands of western India, the Deccan Plateau and in the mountainous regions of Himalayas. India has one of the largest livestock populations in the world. Livestock contributes about 25 per cent of India’s agricultural GDP. Livestock provides local people in isolated areas with milk, meat and wool. Pastoralists use marginal, otherwise uncultivable land, increasing the amount of land available to an already expanding population. They also rear indigenous animal breeds, retaining their rich genetic variety.

India is home to a large number of pastoral groups – which include Golla and Kuruma of Andhra Pradesh, who move with their cattle and sheep respectively; Rabari and Bharwad from Gujarat, who raise flocks of sheep and goat and cattle and small stock respectively; Kuruba and Dhangar from Karnataka both raise sheep flocks; Raika/Rabari and Gujjars from Rajasthan and Gaddi, Gujjar and Bakarwals of Himalayas moving with their camel, sheep and goats and buffalo and sheep respectively; Raika/Rabari are the most numerous pastoral groups in the western part of India. In spite of being in such a large number, these pastoral communities have very low public and political profile. Scholars have been known to study their almost obsolete forms of production, despite their large contribution to the national economy in terms of production of milk, meat, wool, leather goods and a number of handicrafts and tools. A large part of the pastoral communities of the Indian sub-continent are located in the Himalayan ranges.
The practice of collective movements of sheep and goats as a form of pastoralism is a constant feature of traditional mountain societies. Gaddis, Gujjars, Bakarwals, Kinnaurs, Kaulis and Kanets of the north Indian Himalayas, Bhotias of Garhwal Himalayas, Bhotias and Sherpas of Khumbu valley of Nepal, Kirats of eastern Nepal, Monpa yak breeders of Arunachal Pradesh, Bhutias of Lachen and Lachung, Sikkim and Changpas of Changthang, Ladakh are some of the very well known, studied and written about pastoral communities of the Himalayas. These pastoral communities of the Himalayas make use of resources like High Mountain pastures in three different ways that have come to be recognized as their characteristic mobility patterns, socio-economic organization mechanisms and allocation of particular property rights. There are nomads like Changpa of Changthang in Ladakh, whose economy is predominantly based on animal husbandry; and there are the agro pastoralist groups like Gaddis of Bharmour, Himachal Pradesh and also the Bhutias of Lachen and Lachung in Sikkim, who practice marginal agriculture and raise herds of sheep and goats and yaks (Bhasin 1988, 1989, 1996). Thus the interaction of altitude, climate and soil fertility have been known to set the upper limits on the practice of agriculture and pastoralism as also within the parameters of agriculture, the actual upper limits on the types of crops that would be grown for consumption by the people and their flock as also sold as cash crops (Uhlig, 1976). Transhumance with or without agriculture becomes profitable where high pastures are available. Transhumance practitioners that migrate from summer pastures to winter pastures with their flocks have some sort of living arrangement at both the places and use tents as shelters during ascending or descending.

Each household grazes its own animals but with the gradual increase in size of flock and the advent of contractual and professional shepherding came up as an economic necessity. Where people have regular summer and winter pastures, to supplement their resources they start growing grains or vegetables at or near the winter or summer pastures. Among the agro-pastoral Gaddis of Bharmour, Himachal Pradesh, India, although agriculture provided the bulk of staple food, Gaddis themselves give major importance to the care and value of their sheep and goats. From animals they obtain additional food in the form of meat and milk, wool for clothing and cash for buying other necessities.
Salzman & Galaty (1990) documented the patterns of shift from nomadic to sedentary residence in two cases of the south Surat Bharawad and the Umarpada. The two Bharawad groups illustrated the ways in which herding caste groups have revised their adaptive strategies, reorganized their economies from subsistence to market-oriented dairying and reoriented their life patterns. They were of the opinion that the Bharawad cases cannot be assumed as typical of other pastoral herding groups in transition, but they can be regarded as representative in their openness to socio-economic opportunities and their voluntary selection among variable course of change.

Agrawal (1998) examines the question as to why Raika migrant shepherds in Western India travel collectively during the annual movement cycles rather than as individual households. The answer hinges on economies of scale that collective mobility makes available to shepherds, but even more significantly on the ways in which collective movement allows shepherds to address security risks in an uncertain and transient environment. In exploring the economic benefits of collective migration, he presents fresh evidence on the ways in which participation in markets is crucial to the survival of migrant pastoralism among the Raikas. The substantial literature on mobility among pastoralists has enhanced our understanding of the many reasons behind mobility. His article addresses an important aspect of migratory strategies by focusing on why and under what conditions mobile populations might select a collective strategy rather than one that is individually oriented.

Nautiyal et al. (2003) studied Tolchhas (Transhumant pastoralist) of NDBR (Nanda Devi Biosphere Reserve) in U.P. (now Uttranchal). They highlighted that in the past, transhumant pastoralists in the Indian Himalayas used resources available in various subsystems for their livelihood. But, recent sedenterization of a section of the transhumant pastoralist’s population resulted in competition with the existing sedentary population for resources in some areas. They analyzes the impact of loss of grazing area on transhumant pastoralism, the current state of monetary return from livestock rearing, and the output-input ratio in terms of energy currencies in villages inhabited by transhumant pastoralist populations and villages now practicing sedenterized lifestyles. The lifestyles of transhumant pastoralist population (Tolchhas) are undergoing changes to adjust to growing employment opportunities under government sponsorship and increasing constraints on traditional transhumant
pastoralism. Finally, they came to the conclusion that revitalizing the production system and reducing unproductive animals among sedentary populations to reduce grazing pressure in winter settlements would provide the sustainable livelihood of transhumant pastoralists in the buffer zone villages of the NDBR, a World Heritage Site.

**Pastoralism and the Dynamics of Environment**

The most important aspect of pastoral studies is the relationship that the pastoral nomadic populations have with the environment. Nomadic-pastoral life is factually dependent on climatic variations. The review of literature clearly suggests that nomadic populations across the world understand the dynamics of their environment and establish close ritual and pragmatic relation with it. There are recent studies conducted in the Andes that use remote sensing to understand vegetation dynamics and climatic variations (Bradley and Millington, 2006; Bustamante Becerra, 2006; Millington and Jehangir, 2000), and pastoralist societies (Alzéreca et. al., 2006), there are fewer studies examining land use practices of mountain pastoralism. Methodological problems related to the topography of mountainous landscapes, to the mobility of the pastoralists (i.e., transhumance or nomadism; or to the marginal importance of mountains within urban-oriented policies may partially explain the lack of research.

Climate change (both the current situation and its potential impacts) in habitats traditionally occupied by nomadic-pastoral communities still needs to be studied in detail; however, none of the ‘outside world’ agents of change either in the government agencies or the NGOs in most study areas have not included climate change as a variable in their projects. The weather (usually rainfall) is considered as a condition that may affect pasture and crop growth. The national and regional governments could design programs to monitor glacial retreat and water (both surface and groundwater) availability and to predict impacts on both the ecology of the mountains and the human groups along the nomadic routes. This becomes imperative as Potential water scarcity may impact agriculture and can negatively impact urban water use, as limited water will restrict availability of drinking water and hydroelectricity. The needs for evolving integrated programs that combine research, development activities, and policy changes, which include local, national and international stakeholders, are often
recommended by ethnographers working in these areas. They also reason that native populations of these habitats have been coping with climate and social changes for centuries using local knowledge; this local knowledge can be used to supplement technical knowledge to generate a more comprehensive understanding of problems resulting from climate change.

**Overgrazing and Environmental Concern**

One of the essential preliminary concerns for pastoral life is ‘overgrazing’. Grazing is a multifarious set of interactions between great varieties of species in many different conditions (Crawley, 1983). The concept of ‘overgrazing’, when applied to domestic herds and its necessary corollary ‘carrying capacity’ beyond which there is overgrazing are by extension, also complex but to a degree that is intensified by their centrality to the survival of some human communities.

The ‘mainstream view’ or old paradigm of Pastoralism (Sandford, 1983) emerged from mutually re-enforcing exchanges between three groups: ecologists, economists and authoritarian government. The ecological element was the succession theory of Clements (1916), which was quickly translated into rangeland policy (Sampson, 1917). Despite an equally quick protest (Gleeson, 1927) and constant re-specification (Pickett et al., 1987) the theory came to be entrenched in range management (Westoby, et al., 1989). The model assumed grazing management to be a trade-off between the animal crop and the maintenance of stability, stability being a major goal. In ancient pastoral cultures, where most pasture is common, the ecological model found a partner in the theory of common property resources, most often associated with Hardin’s (1968) ‘tragedy of the commons’ in which the prime example was common pasture. Individual pastoralists, Hardin maintained, would maximize profit by fielding as many cattle as possible on common pasture; this damaged grazing and jeopardized the collective good. Hardin’s ideas, like Clements’, were very influential in deciding policies in different countries to determine policy initiatives for granting grazing rights in government lands. A central theme in the old paradigm was ‘carrying capacity’. Certain excellent analyses (Behnke and Scoones, 1993) allows the concept to be reviewed here only as an example of how the paradigm was sustained, oblivious of scientific debate and of folk knowledge. The theory and the methods with which the concept was applied paid scant attention to some crucial environmental and
cultural features of diverse grazing systems. It is now proved beyond doubt that grazing, as an activity does not challenge the carrying capacity but it is rampant commercial activity that destroys these natural habitations.

**Pastoralism versus Development Interventions**

International development agencies have played an increasingly active role among pastoral populations. Development policies aimed at pastoralists have undergone several transformations. Under colonial rule, policies began as small-scale efforts to improve water supplies, improve breeds and establish fixed or rotational grazing. In the 1960s and 1970s, governments attempted to transform localized subsistence pastoralism into market-oriented commercial ranching on a national scale. Large-scale assistance was provided by the World Bank and bilateral agencies as fixed-term interventions, usually for highly capitalized infrastructural projects including roads, slaughter houses, railway transport, mechanized bore holes, dipping facilities and feed lots, planned by outside technical experts for implementation by national government officers. As with the *Maasai* in Kenya, these projects also supported ‘privatization and individuation of common herding lands’ (Hodgson, 1999).

Although the relationship of herd structure to social structure has occasioned a long debate among anthropologists (Asad, 1979), it is true to say in a broad sense that pastoralists have developed subtle and flexible social systems to accommodate necessary pastoral strategies (Fratkin, 1986). Such subtleties were seldom acknowledged in the prescriptions, including the fencing and ‘privatization’ of pasture, by several development agencies and governments in particular those who adhered to the old paradigm.

Over the past thirty years, East African livestock-keeping peoples have faced large challenges to their economies and traditional ways of life. In the savannah regions of southern Kenya and Tanzania, *Maasai* and other groups have lost land to expanding farming populations, private ranches, wheat estates and the expansion of tourist game parks. National governments, lured by investments and aid from the international donor community, have increasingly privatized formerly communal lands, encouraging the expansion of export and local market agriculture including beef and dairy marketing (Fratkin, 2001). Despite these challenges, livestock
pastoralism has been surprisingly resilient as pastoralists have shown a wide variety of adaptations to change, including periodic oscillation between pastoralism and farming, as well as hunting and gathering and more recently, wage labour (Fratkin, 1997; Little, 1994; Spencer, 1998).

These government interventions, ostensibly for economic development and for improving range management and livestock, have been largely unsuccessful and frequently disastrous. As Swift (1994) observes that land degradation, where it is taking place, has not been halted and has sometimes increased, livestock productivity has not grown although economic inequality has and vulnerability to food insecurity and loss of tenure rights has increased. Faced with the failure of their policies, many major donors have stopped investing in livestock projects and some now argue for a policy of benign neglect towards the dry areas on the grounds that little can be done there. During this same period, anthropologists and others have documented the rich array of customary institutions regulating resource use in pastoral societies all over the world. Development agencies and national governments should seek ways to improve pastoralist production that build on pastoralists’ knowledge and practices. In particular, “this means ensuring access to widely held pastures, improving market conditions for livestock and acknowledging the importance of cultivation to pastoral livelihoods” (Fratkin, 2001).

**Future of Pastoralism**

There are copious suggestions in government records and ethnographic texts that predict annihilation of pastoral-nomadic communities either on account of unsustainable ecology or due to impact of globalization, political pressures and voluntary movement of younger members of the community opting for a more settled lifestyle. Over the decades it has been observed that, traditional pastoral production demands mobility, the sine qua non of dry land cattle keeping. But the governments are in denial and have curtailed mobility. State after state alienated pasturclands and demarcated boundaries for grazing. Fixed tenures for grazing were granted and free mobility of shepherds in these landscapes was restricted. Bore holes were dug in many places and strategies ranging from incentives to punishments were put in place to promote sedentization among these people. Central authority displaced local authority over range and water use. This facilitated formation of strong unions in
An anthropological text usually documents two views regarding the future of pastoralism. The first view shared by many development planners and governments in most countries propagates a position that talks about, ‘abandoning pastoralism altogether’. It encourages former herders to plant forage crops, cereals and fodder to raise livestock in private and sedentary settings. The intent is to make them an integrated part of the larger urban milieu and to bring them into the fold of the market economy. On the other hand there is a strong lobby of anthropologists and indigenous pastoralist associations, who recommend the second view that ‘emphasizes the restoration and protection of traditional pastoral rights, including legal rights to water and pasture resources, guaranteed rights-of-way for herds to travel, rights to unhindered passage across international borders, recognition of pastoralist knowledge of water, pasture and herd management an end of propaganda to sedentarize and the right to run their own local affairs’ (Baxter, 1993; Hogg, 1992).

Coppock (1993) suggests a middle path that proposes gradual merger of pastoral-nomadic populations into the market economy. He talks about increasing population pressures and the need to develop mixed economies that will give greater economic sustainability to many of the pastoral nomadic populations threatened by the loss of space in the competing economies. He recommends ‘promotion of grazing management schemes, fodder storage, improvement of water resources, veterinary improvements and the development of banking and credit associations for pastoralists’. With my experience among the Galesh, I would like to endorse Coppock’s middle path approach. Galesh are under immense threat at the moment and are trying to strengthen their organizational network to consolidate the silent protest that apprehends slow decline of their ethnicity into oblivion.

There is need for those who are trying to address some concerns of Galesh to draw inspiration from Fratkin’s (2001) observations that Commoditization, Sedentarization and Urban Migration are closely related. Establishing the equation he says, “Pastoralists have increasingly shifted their economy from subsistence product on (producing mainly milk for the household consumption) to commercial product on (producing beef and dairy products for sale both to domestic and export...
The sale of livestock is not new to pastoralists. Tanzanian Maasai were trading livestock for grain with neighbouring Arusha in the mid-nineteenth century [Spear, 1997] and Maasai have typically sold 8 to 10 percent of their cattle to purchase grains and other commodities since the 1930s” (Zaal and Dietz, 1999)]. Also the “increased commoditization of the livestock economy has led to a growing polarization of pastoralists into haves and have-nots, particularly in Maasai areas that are close to urban markets. In the Olkarkar group ranch in Kajiado District, Kenya, the top third of households in 1999 owned over thirty-five TLUs per person, mostly in cattle, while the bottom third and less than seven TLUs, mostly in small stock (Zaal and Dietz, 1999). This economic differentiation is also occurring among Boran, Rendille and other pastoralists becoming integrated into the market economy. While those households with large livestock herds remain committed to the pastoral economy, poor pastoralists either work for wealthier kinsmen, adopt agriculture or migrate to towns in search of low-paying jobs, working as watchmen, maids or prostitutes” (Fratkin, 1998; Talle, 1988).

The Fate of the Old Paradigm

The old paradigm predicted the imminent collapse of the traditional pastoral sector but the apocalypse never materialized, despite times when it seemed to be close, as after the Sahel drought of the early 1970s. Even there, herds re-formed after the collapse. In Zimbabwe, where disaster was foretold decade by decade, the herds kept growing (Livingstone, 1991). These recoveries suggest little or no damage to pasture capacity. One of the limitations of the old paradigm was that it did not recognize the subtle difference between seeing cattle merely as a source of consumption and capital, and the indigenous view in which they were also means of social communication (Bonte, 1979). When examined more carefully, of course, cattle in most Western cultures also turn out to be part of rather more elaborate value systems than reductionist range managers care to admit (Strickon, 1965).

There is wide acknowledgement that very few, if any, range-management projects based on the old paradigm succeeded (Bennett, 1988; Bartels et al., 1990). Goldschmidt (1981: 101) called the pastoral development scene one of ‘unrelieved failure’. The pastoralists showed disinterest in, or downright resistance to what they saw as illogical policies. The story of Pastoralism in Iran is no different. It has
survived for centuries and irrespective of political, ecological and so-called development models, the nomadic pastoral populations and their heritage has shown remarkable resilience in sustaining their desire to persist with their traditional mode of production, means of productions of relations, clan solidarity and conformance to traditional almanac practices and cultural attributes. Change is inevitable and generational drift important but to argue for a case that a century old, scientifically arguable mode of production will be wiped out in the 21st century is a non-argumentative judgement. It is with this foresight that the present study on the Galesh nomadic pastoral community residing in the Mazandaran province of Northern Iran is documented.

The presented review of literature on Pastoral-nomadism in general and some detailed case studies not only from Iran but several other parts of the world can best be described as a restricted exercise, given the vast body of literature available on the subject. The researcher admits to several limitations, in particular to a vast body of material available in French, German, Russian and several other languages on pastoral nomadic communities across the globe. Some studies on Galesh are also available in French but not in English and it were difficult to include those in this review. The present review provides a preamble for the analysis of the primary data gathered from the field over a period of ten years. The next chapter examines Galesh pastoral economy exploring its primary formations and adaptations to which the present population is subjected.