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ČŪPĀN

ČŪPĀN (or *čōbān* “shepherd”; Mid. Pers. and NPers. *šobān*; Orm. *šwan*, *čupān*, *špōn*; Yid. *čupān*, *xəš(u)wān*; Shugh., *šibōne*, *čupān*; Par. *xuwān*; Pashto *špə*; Wakhi *špün*; Chr. Sogd. *xwšpʾn*; see Morgenstierne, I, pp. 301, 392, 409, II, pp. 202, 270, 542; Bailey, *Dictionary*, p. 434; Horn, *Etymologie*, pp. 171, 287; Doerfer, *Elemente* III, pp. 108-10; Rahmeti Arat, p. 69; cf. NPers. *cūbdār* “sheep dealer,” *šū-bāzār*, name of an old sheep market just outside Shiraz; cf. also Old Turk. *čolbān*; Ottoman Turk. and Azeri *çoban* “shepherd”; de Planhol and Bazin).

Even today the shepherd remains a central figure, in both the technological life and consequently the symbolic life, of all systems of animal husbandry in the Iranian world, in which small livestock, sheep and goats, generally predominates (see dām-dārī, boz, gūsfand). His importance is explained, in regions where pastures rarely reach a capacity that would support one ovine per ha per year, by the necessity for sending flocks sometimes quite long distances to seek nourishment. The shepherd is thus a specialist, to whom livestock owners must be able to entrust large flocks for periods often as long as several months: an average of 200-600 head for one to three shepherds (Digard, 1981; Glatzer, 1977). In some rural regions of Persia there may also be a demand for specialists in other categories of livestock: *ramaḵᵛān* for herding horses, *gāvčarān*, *gāvgalān*, *gāleš* (for this word, see below) for herding cattle.

Among the *čūpān*s properly so-called the most common type is the village shepherd. In the village context raising sheep and goats is essentially a family enterprise, intended, in combination with farming, to provide for family

needs. All or only a group of the heads of families in a given village may combine their animals in a collective flock, which is then entrusted to a shepherd. The latter receives payment from each participant in proportion to the number of animals that the latter owns. The essential element of this shepherd's task is to take the flock to pasture on the harvested fields or common lands around the village (Martin; Rouholamini, passim).

Sometimes livestock raising at the village level can be on a larger scale, assuming a clearly commercial character: Some large sheep raisers from the villages of Kermān or eastern Azarbaijan, for example, send flocks of several thousand head, accompanied by numerous shepherds, to summer as far away as the Zagros or Kurdistan. In a few regions there are more specific sociocultural configurations. In the Caspian provinces, where cattle raising is predominant, the *čūpān*s constitute groups specializing in the raising of small animals and are clearly differentiated socially and culturally, on one hand, from the *gāleš*, cattle owners who summer with their flocks on the lower slopes of the Alborz, and, on the other, from the rice growers on the plain (Bazin, pp. 6-8; Pour-Fickoui and Bazin, passim).

The shepherd plays an even more important role among the tribes, which depend for their livelihood on their flocks of sheep and lead a type of life particularly well adapted to this activity, that is, a nomadic life based on migration to different altitudes according to the seasons. Shepherds are generally recruited from junior lineages and employed by the chiefs (khans, *kalāntar*s, *kadḵodā*s, etc.; see ʿašāyer), who generally own the largest flocks. Their work is thus closely related to the tribal structure but may also serve as a not unimportant means of upward social mobility (Balikci; Beck, 1980, Black-Michaud; Bradburg, 1980; Glatzer, 1977; Tapper),

Among the nomads, even more than elsewhere, the shepherd must be physically and psychologically hardy and always on duty. Usually he is a young (between twelve and thirty years old) celibate, who uses this means to accumulate the *šīr-bahā* (bride price) in cash, animals, or both, which is necessary before he can marry; in rare instances he may be a genuine professional. He must be competent, however: The necessity of having to face alone all sorts of demanding situations requires a highly developed sense of initiative and a wide range of skills (meteorological, botanical, zootechnological, veterinary, etc.) that cannot be improvised; these skills are acquired "on the job," during several years' apprenticeship with an experienced shepherd.

The shepherd's special knowledge is all the more precious in that his material equipment is extremely rudimentary. As he is obliged to move with his flock continually, he must be able to carry everything himself or on a donkey. His strictly professional equipment is limited to a knife, thread, a sling, two sticks (a strong *gorz* "club" to defend himself and another, lighter and longer stick to guide the flock), a felt mantle in which to sleep and shelter from the rain (see clothing xxii), a supply of salt for his sheep and of flour to make bread for himself and his dogs. These dogs, large mastiffs that must be of a size and aggressiveness sufficient to serve as a deterrent, play a major role in protecting the flock against predators and thieves (but not in herding it, for they could pose a danger to the animals); it is thus incumbent upon the shepherd to watch over their well-being and particularly their behavior, which is no small task (s.v. dog; Digard, 1980).

Important responsibilities, sometimes harrowing work (notably in the lambing season), spartan living conditions, and prolonged isolation are the lot of the shepherd. It is not surprising therefore that his salary is high relative to the normal pay scale in rural Persia. It is generally fixed by contract and includes a sum of money, a share of the produce from the animals (milk, wool), a portion of the new lambs, or some combination of the three; in addition, the shepherd receives various other payments in kind: food, batteries, a certain number of pairs of light cotton shoes (*gīva*, *malakī*), clothing related to his work, like the felt mantle, and so on. There is considerable variation in these arrangements (see, e.g., Papoli-Yazdi, pp. 327-28).

Shepherds' salaries increased approximately tenfold between 1354 Š./1975 and 1364 Š./1985, and they continue to rise, as good shepherds become ever more scarce. The reasons for this decline in numbers are related as much to the spread of elementary education as to the attraction for young adults in southern Persia of well-paid jobs in the Arab emirates on the Persian Gulf.

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