

February 2020

Roots in Antiquity: A Comparative Study of Two Cultures

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Roots in Antiquity: A Comparative Study of Two Cultures

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

With a concentration in Social and Political Thought Department of Humanities
University of South Florida

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Date of Approval:
March 6, 2020

Keywords: Arab, Sarakatsan, Muslim, Family, Religious Identity, Cultural Identity

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Abstract

This study was conducted with the goal to provide an in-depth analysis of the analogous qualities of two very distinct yet similar cultures: the Arab and Sarakatsan cultures, with a particular focus on personal matters that deal with family and kinship. Despite the difference in religions, both groups demonstrate a substantive set of similar traits especially in terms of the interactions, dynamics, and functionality of family relations in addition to the highly-esteemed values that dictate everyday conduct. As a first-generation Arab Muslim who immigrated to the United States, I use the culture in which I am entrenched as a basis for providing an insightful account of the experiences that bear similarity to those accounted for of the Sarakatsans. In this way I study and compare a culture outside of mine as a means to augment perspective and analyze the ways in which this comparative culture can relate to my own. Ethnography as well as autoethnography were the instrumental and methodological approaches through which this study was conducted, drawing conclusions from the insightful accounts of the experiences within these cultures respectively. The results substantiate the hypothesis that the two cultures indeed bear strikingly analogous characteristics and functions, despite the geographical, religious, and environmental differences. These findings imply that the commonalities of these cultures stem from a foundation other than religion or ethnicity which provide incentive for further work investigating the source of similarity of these particularities of culture.

Introduction

This paper is a comparative study of cultures, comparing the account of the Sarakatsan culture of the Greek shepherds and their mountain community in Campbell's *Honour, Family, and Patronage*- an anthropological classic-- to the analogous traits of the culture of another community on the borders of the Levant: Palestinian Muslims. Campbell's work (1964) is used as a standard, and a means to identify important similarities and common traits, especially those revealed in an immigrant experience, specifically my experience as a Palestinian Muslim female. The specific characteristics of the society and culture I will describe indicate the ways in which Arab culture remains true to its traditional form by resisting change and embracing history Arabs' roots in antiquity. These forms are sufficiently similar to those of the Sarakatsan shepherds to make for a good comparison, but sufficiently different to reveal some of these specific features of Palestinian Muslim culture.

The methodology of this work is a combination of ethnography and auto-ethnography, as I will share my own personal experiences and those of my social orbit. Autoethnography is a growing type of research method that is reflexive and allows for the researcher to fully share his/her personal experience. Hughes and Pennington include the following in their definition of autoethnography, "While related to autobiography, narrative, and ethnography, this study-of-the-self method is unique from a research perspective in that the researcher is the subject of study. We view autoethnography as part of the broader family of qualitative approaches that

includes ethnography, self-study, and narrative inquiry” (2017). Due to conventional research and writing methods, autoethnography is considered a departure from the norm. Wiesner explains, “it is still not easy to depart from the proven methodological standard and analytical way of writing. Especially not for graduate and postgraduate students, whose innovative approach might be often considered to be challenging the status quo of the discipline, departing from the (un)safe boundaries of what the definition of science really is, and placing it closer to the edge of the social science / literary divide” (2018, p. 336). However, autoethnography is growing in its popularity and use, despite conventional perceptions. As Turner asserts, “Constructivist arguments point...to some strategies, such as reflexivity, auto-ethnography (which openly acknowledges and embraces subjectivity) ...With these new or newly reconceived more self-conscious approaches have come new ways of thinking about validity and truth which are self-conscious about the constructed or conventional element itself” (Outhwaite and Turner 2007, p. 459).

This autoethnographical research is aptly instrumental for the purposes of this paper as it draws on personal, firsthand experiences of mine and those whom I have known and interacted with closely.

I chose this book in particular as a standard because of its salience in the anthropological field as well as its relevance to many aspects of the Arab culture to which I can relate. In Schwartz’s review of Campbell’s work, she describes it as a “book [that] combines the rigorous British approach to social structure with an extremely insightful approach to the

various levels of meaning in a cultural system. The product is an elegant analysis of the complex relations between ecology, social relations, and values” (Schwartz 1965, p. 405).

Culture systems are influential in every culture but they are especially important in Arab culture as the line between tradition and culture is often blurred.

Lastly and most importantly, Campbell’s work is most significant in that it contradicts a normative theory that Arab Muslims’ religious and ethnic identity traits are the basis and foundation for the cultural way of life. Prior to starting this research, I was under the firm conviction that many of the cultural features that set me apart from my American peers and colleagues were attributable to my Arab Muslim identity. Growing up, my cousins and I were constantly reminded by our parents, aunts and uncles that as Arab Muslims, we do things differently and have different values along with completely different cultural standards by which to abide in relation to our Western neighbors, friends and influences. “Reputation was a powerful mechanism when women discussed their “American” identity. Images of “bad” community members involved sexual experiences and divorce that were attached to American lifestyles” (Aboulhassan and Brumley 2019, p. 645). This narrative is common amongst Arab Americans and- coupled by the power of community gossip and its direct effect on reputation- it is utilized as a tool for maintaining control by more traditional Arab immigrant parents when raising children. Naturally, as an impressionable and obedient child, this narrative seeped heavily into my thought processes to the extent that I found myself behaving within the confines of this moral code thereby reinforcing this constructed narrative and regurgitating it to my own social circles as a means of explaining our cultural norms. This research has been very enlightening for me as it negates the very premise upon which I was taught to attribute our

cultural norms and calls into question the link between our cultural traits and our Arab Muslim identity by highlighting the substantive set of similarities between the Greek Sarakatsan community and the Arab Muslim community, despite the Sarakatsans' Christian (non-Muslim) and Greek (non-Arab) identities. As this paper will illustrate, the cultural resemblances between the two cultures are often times identical, down to the rituals, dynamics and roles amongst family members which implicates that the source of these similarities stem from factors other than religion and ethnic identity.

1 Kinsmen and Affines

1.1 The Significance of Kinsmen

“The family is, indeed, the centre of the shepherd’s world” (Campbell 1964, p. 38). The focus on the family acts as the foundation and is a salient theme throughout Campbell’s account of the Sarakatsani culture as a whole, founding the base upon which the two cultures bear similarities and shared qualities. “The individual in his work and behavior is entirely committed to his family, whose prestige and reputation for honor are his foremost concern” (Campbell 1964, p. 37). Arab societies are quintessentially collectivist in nature and according to Triandis (1988), collectivism involves a focus on the self embedded in group memberships. In Arab families and communities, the collective identity of the society is what is prioritized by its members rather than any individual identity or component. In practice, the benefits and interests of the Arab community at large trump those of any individual and this is generally the case at all times with little if any exception. It is illustrative of the very essence of a collectivist society in terms of not only its symbolic nature but its functionality as well. The collectivist mentality is the backbone of a traditional Arab’s entire upbringing and remains that way with respect to culture and lifestyle. As far back as I can remember, everything we did had to be considered with respect to what how our community would respond even if that response is concealed and manifested in the form of rumors and backbiting. The irony in this lies in the fact

that backbiting is strictly forbidden in our religion and while we are expected to behave and conduct ourselves as devout and strictly practicing Muslims, sometimes it feels like the god that we are worshipping is the talk of the town and those who partake in gossiping. The gossip or potential threat of it is extremely important in our society, not the least of which because it keeps people particularly mindful of their actions and words. No one wants to be the talk of the morning over mint tea.

Prestige is the sought-after trait creating competition amongst communities (Campbell 1964, p. 39) Campbell frequently discusses prestige throughout his work and the vital importance placed upon the incessant drive towards prestige for Sarakatsans. Indeed, the mountain community is in competition for status and prestige writ large. Likewise, there is generally a largely concerted effort towards hob-knobbing as class anxiety and moving up in the elite world are common endeavors amongst Arab American communities. Amongst Arabs and especially amongst Arab families, it is seen as a waste or a tragedy for the child of an immigrant to underachieve, underperform, or come up short in any social or professional setting, especially given the geographical advantages and opportunities granted to immigrants and thus their children, who also obtain the advantage of language and familiarity in the host country. Growing up, it was assumed that my family is simply driven and ambitious, with very high academic and professional standards as milestones. However, I began to realize that many of my minority friends suffered from the same type of peer or familial pressure and this led me to wonder if this were a common thread amongst immigrant families to put such high expectations on the children that are applicable to most if not all measures but specifically and especially the success. Immigrant parents or first-generation parents as we often call them

dream of nothing more than the day they get to boast to their peers of their children's above-average accomplishments. Noteworthy themes shared by both the Sarakatsans and Arabs come into play here including the collectivist features of both societies. Although it may seem that professional, financial, and academic ambition are characteristic of an individualistic society, the fact that the incentive behind achieving these is the sought-after prestige and admiration of the society renders it a collectivist feature. Furthermore, the importance placed on the opinions and reputation further underscore the collectivist traits of both societies.

The significance of kinsmen is undeniable in both the Arab and Sarakatsan cultures, providing testimony to the main commonality of collectivism between these two groups of people. Affinal prospects depend on the word of kinsmen in both cultures.

Kinsmen are indispensable in the delicate negotiations of 'match-making'. Before a girl is sought in marriage, very careful inquiries have to be made concerning her virtue, industry, health, and temperament. A kinsman who lives near the girl's family will be in a position to give accurate details; his information will be trusted, and he will treat the affair with the discretion it demands (Campbell 1964, p. 39).

Marriage in traditional Arab communities is a social and communal operation, the involvement of which extends beyond the immediate families of the couple. Before a couple can officially begin formal proceedings to begin the marriage or wedding process, both families must be in complete agreement which traditionally calls for families to complete an informal or social investigation of the partner and family into which their son or daughter will potentially marry. This investigation essentially entails asking friends and acquaintances about the other family and if those friends and acquaintances don't know the family being inquired about personally,

they usually know other friends or acquaintances whose opinions are surely accessible. As implied in the quote, these inquiries for the purpose of marriage are treated with the utmost gravitas. The important role of kinsmen comes into play here as they can make or break a potential affinal relationship, simply based upon the feedback they give in regards to an inquiry. Once again, the role of reputation and the importance of honor which will be discussed further is a prominent theme that intertwines with this process, along with many others. For now, it is important to note the significance that each kinsman has in relation to his community, provided that his reputation and honor are intact.

1.2 The Kindred

Campbell discusses the primal importance of kindred which strongly resembles the closeness Arabs have with their own blood relatives. One of the ways in this bond manifests is the sense of loyalty and obligation towards kindred. "There is always a very strong moral obligation to assist any collateral kinsmen" (1964, p. 42). This assistance can come in many forms including financial, professional, and even personal. It is expected upon the Sarakatsans as well as the Arabs to have a visceral reaction to defend kindred from any non-kindred despite any tense dynamics that may be present due to disagreements over property/land/money etcetera which is quite often among Arab families as they prefer to go into business together despite the potential ramifications and threat this has to familial relationships. However, it often results in a Catch 22 in the sense that while family members feel an obligation to share wealth and business opportunities with other kindred because of a shared and collective incentive to want to raise the prestige and increase the property and assets of the family, this often leads to tensions and friction amongst these very family members which often

contradicts the initial purposes of merging business interests with collective interests at heart. Similarly, as Campbell describes, the Sarakatsans have property and matters of business/shepherding intertwined with kindred out of obligation and a sense of loyalty, which creates complex dynamics amongst kindred.

Campbell employs the example of quarrels at weddings to prove the point of obligation of loyalty towards kindred in the face of an opposing family's threat (1964, p. 43) which is fitting for the purposes of this paper considering that I have witnessed one of these wedding family quarrels myself, and just as Campbell described in his example, insults, curses and blows were exchanged and knives were even drawn and "at once all the relatives of either man range themselves alongside their kinsmen" (1964, p. 43). The Abubakers¹ with whom we are close friends and by whom we were invited happened to be the bride's family and within this rather large family of 9 siblings comprised of 7 brothers and 2 sisters, there were many issues and conflicts amongst the siblings, all related to business. However, this was rendered insignificant in the light of the threats posed by the groom's family at this wedding as all the male children of the siblings came together as a united front against the male members of the other family. Although children often side with their parents in times of interfamilial disputes and friction, these alignments become blurred in the face of an outside threat, and the family suddenly and instantly became one again.

"Property and prestige" and how they are passed down are discussed in detail and great length by Campbell, as these are prominent themes for Sarakatsan kindred just as they are for Arab kindred. "Property is itself an element in prestige, while wealth without prestige loses its

¹ Name has been changed to preserve anonymity

significance” (Campbell 1964, p. 43). Property and prestige are passed down to and shared amongst kindred in the Arab culture as well, and in Palestinian culture specifically there is a strong tie to the land therefore the language is spoken to reflect its land-centricity “Wein aradeek?” Literally translates to Where is your ground/your land? This is to ask “whereabouts are you these days”? Or what’s going on, what’s new, how are you, etcetera. In similar fashion, kindred and familial ties play such a significant role in the culture of Arabs, that it is tied into the everyday language as well.

In the Palestinian *being* culture, the first question after hello is, ‘What family are you from?’ or ‘What is your family name?’ After that, the follow-up questions may be, ‘Are you related to so-and-so? I knew so-and-so from Beirut,’ or ‘Is your grandfather so-and-so? I am sure my father must know your grandfather (Zaharna 1995, p. 94).

“Individual and family reputation, is a self-evident value; without it, social life has no meaning. This prestige is inherited both from the father’s family and the mother’s family” (Campbell 1964, p. 43). Growing up, my siblings and cousins and I were under constant pressure to continually uphold the pristine nature of our reputation and heed warnings received from both of our parents to preserve the family’s name as it was described to be the very existence of our social standing in the community. Without the strength of our family prestige and reputation, we had no base for any standing, and this was instilled into my siblings and me at a very young age. My mother would be sure to remind me of how big and powerful her family is and how well-accomplished and successful they are; she is proud of how prestigious they claim themselves to be and she is sure to remind me of the family name every chance she gets. Similarly, my father would constantly lecture me on the importance of upholding the family

honor, prestige, and name. Any chance they would get they would be sure to mention how successful and well-known their family is. Then they would turn to me and my siblings and say “this is where you come from, you should be proud!”

It is true that the prestige of paternal connexions is greater, but the quality of the mother’s family of origin is also critical, for criticism of the mother, who contributes important moral quality to the characters of her children, is a peculiarly effective method of denigrating a family. The individual, of course, may increase or diminish his reputation by his own acts but it is on the basis of a reputation inherited from both parents that he at first faces the judgments of the community. And if this inherited reputation is unsatisfactory, it will be exceedingly difficult for the individual by his own efforts to redeem it. It is partly for these reasons that the choice of a wife is a matter which is approached with delicacy and deliberation. Many personal qualities of a prospective bride are taken into consideration but invariably the crucial question to be debated is the quality and prestige of the girl’s family and close kin (Campbell 1964, p. 43).

This is precisely the case with Arab societies: insofar as the reputation of the parents is unquestionably honorable and respected, the prospective bride or groom will liken and increase his/her chances of successful betrothal in that a union or marriage will occur- this is not to indicate or speak to the stamina or long-term success of the marriage, although this is usually taken for granted as eternal, as will be discussed later.

In Arabic culture, the husband’s family is always prioritized, reifying the patriarchal structure deeply embedded and salient within Arab culture and linking the similarity to the

Sarakatsan culture in that the “paternal connexions are greater” (Campbell 1964, p. 43). In Arab culture, patriarchy is a very prominent and salient theme and is practiced openly to this day, especially among traditional families (Said-Foqahaa, 2011; Aboulhassan and Brumley, 2018). This patriarchy branches into many areas of life but in the kindred aspect, it is manifested in the form of favoritism shown towards the paternal side of the family. Campbell lists its bilaterism when discussing distinguishing features of the Sarakatsan kindred and this applies to Arab families as well for the paternal side of the family is socially and culturally entitled to a privileged priority. In theory, this system is taken for granted and ideally allows for a seamless and copasetic process when it comes to carrying out familial obligations and tasks. For example, during Eid, the order in which family members are visited is important as those whom assume priority are visited first. In Arab culture, this means the paternal side is generally chosen first and among them, the eldest are prioritized.

2 The Extended Family

2.1 The Status of the Bride

For many women immersed in Western culture, being a bride represents a happy, anxious, yet exciting time in a woman's life but for a Sarakatsan or Palestinian Muslim female however, it is usually an anxious time with much uncertainty as to what the future holds. For one thing, divorce is virtually not an option; because divorce is such a social taboo and carries shameful connotations, a Muslim female has a one and only chance to marry into a decent family and she believes that her only power is to pray to Allah that she has good luck and marries into a good family. An Arab woman fears the risk of being trapped into a marriage with merciless in-laws, and this revelation won't happen until after the marriage as this is usually when a bride is able to really learn the ways of her new family. The standards as perceived by the West for traditional Arab in-laws are relatively low given that there have been stories recounted of Arab daughters-in-law being struck physically as well as exposed to other forms of abuse, especially in the beginning of the immersion process, immediately following the wedding as this is the period where most of the friction takes place as the bride is still mourning the loss of her family in a sense and the new family is adjusting to the new family addition. We Arabs say it's like a watermelon-you don't know what you'll get.* In many cases, the new

* The inside of a watermelon for Arabs is a metaphor referring to the sweetness of the watermelon which is unknown until it is sliced into. Similarly, Arab females do not really know their in-laws and even the husband until after the marriage.

family/groom's family develop a stern predisposition towards the newcomer, predicated upon the belief that they must set a particular precedent as to the work and non-nonsense policy they wish to convey and instill within the newest member of the family. Although Arab Muslim females all view marriage as a rite of passage, many associate this period with trepidation and uncertainty, due to the lack of clarity of the dynamics and type of family into which they are marrying.

"It is not only that it causes individuals real psychological distress when a girl at her marriage must abandon the family of her birth or when another family must receive a strange woman into the circle of their close and exclusive relationships." Campbell says. (1964, p. 59) For a strange woman or even strange man to enter any family, even Western families, there is bound to be friction and an adjustment period so to speak however this is more so the case in the Arab culture as Arabs tend to be very collectivist and family-oriented therefore the presence of in-laws is constant. The new bride is expected to instantly prioritize her new family above the old one in terms of with whom she spends her time, holidays and big events. For example, if the newlyweds live in a different city and come back for a visit, they are expected to pay the husband's parents their hierarchical due respect by staying at their house and giving them the majority of the couple's time. The bride's family falls secondary and this is for the most part an accepted way of life in the Arab tradition. This bears similarities and lends credence to the assertion that the paternal side of the Sarakatsan family has greater connections, as Campbell put it in the Kindred section quoted above.

To a woman in the traditional Arab Muslim culture, going from single to married symbolizes the crossover from childhood to womanhood and in that transition, the female

must leave her parents' home in which she has lived since birth and adapt to her husband's family's home, and although she doesn't always live with them inside the same residence, the nature of family ties in traditional Arab culture Muslim culture is one of extremely close in more ways than one and the family is almost always very involved in the husband's life. This commitment of taking on the entire family of in-laws and adapting to their culture and ways of life is separate from the marriage which in itself is daunting, especially if the marriage was traditional and arranged by family. The bride is meeting a different version of her husband and at times the husband will reveal a different version or trait of him or his family that was concealed during the engagement period. This binary of personalities has gone so far as to lead to immediate divorces, and for those divorces in which the bride claims to have never been touched i.e. had consummated the marriage, they are necessarily explained to the community in the form of the gossip so that it becomes common knowledge although discreetly spoke of and this transparency is justified as an attempt to preserve the chastity of the bride so that she may preserve her chances of remarriage, as it is common knowledge amongst Arab societies that traditional men prefer an untouched woman i.e. a virgin.

The virginity cult encourages the perception that a female is a burden on the family and society to be discarded as soon as possible. Early marriage is projected as a solution to the onerous existence of a female, thereby furnishing spousal incompatibility and conjugal dysfunctionality. The very rationale of the virginity taboo is the preservation of an unbroken hymen to ensure the marriageability of the females in the family. While marriage is socially projected as a reward for the virgin, the same cultural system encourages patriarchal marriages predicated on gender inequality and unbalanced

share of responsibility for domesticity. Family arranged marriages come at the expense of initiating love marriages, thereby compromising marital stability and meaningfulness (Ghanim 2015, p. 153).

Jomana (age 29) describes herself as unlucky for the watermelon she was dealt at age 24. “He asked for my hand after seeing me almost instantly. It was love at first sight, I felt. We had an engagement and a wedding but then when it came time for us to consummate our marriage which I was already feeling very nervous about, I was shocked to discover that he refused to touch me. In fact, he paid for two hotel rooms during what was supposed to be our honeymoon! He let me know that I was free to do what I want but requested firmly yet clearly to refrain from telling anyone that we had not had intercourse. He had his own vacation while I cried myself on the hotel bed.” Afterwards, it didn’t take long for Jomana to end up back at her parents’ home. She said that the worst and most degrading and humiliating part of this entire experience was having to go to a doctor in order to have her virginity confirmed and to prove that he in fact did not touch her, while her brothers, father and mother stood outside to await the results. She was told the medical procedure was necessary in order to put down “bikr” which translates to virgin on her divorce papers. Jomana still remains unmarried to this day and this incident happened in 2015. She says although it was a traumatizing experience for her, she still prays and has faith that Allah will send her the man of her dreams. I asked Jomana why she was waiting on a man to rescue her and why she could not rescue herself by going to school and focusing on building a career. She said it is useless in this society because it is a strict culture and she was just allowed to go to college after several years of attempting to persuade her parents. “At 31, it’s not very normal to be a freshman in college but it’s a start.”

For an Arab Muslim young woman, marriage is a substantial form of social validation, despite the conflicts and adversity encountered throughout the process and despite the expectation and obligation to give up her own family in a sense. In traditional families and those who aim to uphold what they view as pillar values, expectations are placed upon daughters once she is near completion of her secondary school to begin considering suitors for engagement/marriage. Therefore, many females find themselves experiencing emotional ambiguity towards the prospect of marriage. On the one hand, it is instilled within a woman the values of marriage and the importance of it but on the other she knows she will be at the complete mercy of her new family/in-laws. A newly married bride may likely find herself in a transitional limbo: emotionally attached to her original family while trying to acclimate into the new family. This transition and the stress entailed has been the source of anxiety for many new marriages. Typically, the bride conceals her anxieties and displays what appears to be a seamless transition to the community despite the conflicting dichotomy- and this presentation is very important as it preserves the reputation and honor of both families: the bride's and the groom's.

In a formal sense the elementary family is established on the day of marriage when the groom and his retinue of kinsmen and affines arrive to claim the bride at the huts of her father. After the celebration of the religious ceremony of betrothal in her own home the groom and his train escort the bride and her dowry back to the huts of the groom's family; ...None of the bride's family or kindred accompanies her to the home of the groom or witnesses the marriage service. The physical severance from her family and kinsmen is complete and dramatic, the more so when it is remembered that since the

day of her birth feelings of affection, co-operation at work, and even ordinary conversation, have only been possible for her inside the circle of the family and her kindred (Campbell 1964, p. 59-60).

It is important to explain the difference between dowry and the bride-price system which is what is practiced amongst Arab culture. "Bride-price and dowry can be seen as contrary to one another only insofar as the direction of the gift giving is concerned. Bride-price is a transmission of goods from the kin of the groom to the kin of the bride in return for which certain rights in the bride are transferred" (Randeria and Visaria 1984, p. 648). In other words, if the bride's family is paying, it is defined as a dowry and if it's the groom's family paying for the bride in a sense, the process is considered bride-price system. For Arabs, the bride-price system is practiced while for Sarakatsans, the dowry is the custom or tradition. In Arab culture, the higher the bride-price, the more prestigious this looks for both the groom's family and the bride's family. The bride-price is paid in yellow gold usually or if the bride and her family have a different preference such as white gold or diamonds, that is sometimes done as well however the yellow gold is known to be the traditional currency for the bride-price system as it is not only symbolic of wealth in Arab culture but it is also known to retain its value more than other types of jewelry. Often times the groom's family will also purchase a new wardrobe for the bride which is included in the bride-price. For wealthier families, the bride-price has been known to include cars, houses, and even housekeepers. In any case, the bride's family and the groom's family come to an agreement as to the number or "price" prior to the commencement of official marriage procedures. This discussion is part of the preliminary proceedings because it is a significant phase in the process as it sometimes leads to a parting of ways in the event that

the bride's family asks for more than the groom's family is willing to give. On the other hand, the Sarakatsans' bride's families are the ones to gather together a dowry and pay it to the groom's family when an affinal union and proceedings begin to form. In Campbell's depiction of this subject, he describes an angst formed on the part of the bride's family that comes with the pressure and obligation to gather the dowry to give over to the groom's family. However, in the Arab culture, this same type of angst forms for the groom's family especially if a bride's family requests a bride-price that exceeds the groom's family's capabilities.

Campbell describes the ritualistic process by which the bride is taken from her family's home on her last night to her husband's family's home. During this ritual, "repetitive, intensely sad songs" are sung by the bride's family to symbolize the "departure from the only home she has ever known" (1964, p. 121). In the Arab culture, we have our own form of "abduction" to symbolize the momentous event including sad-toned songs that are sung repetitively. This process of separation and the symbolic step of picking up the bride from her family's home is very dramatic for the bride's family. There are a lot of tears involved as the bride, her mother and sisters crying.." In my previous marriage with an Arab man, the wedding began with a long line of about 20 cars or so, comprised of close friends and family of both sides, to collect me from parents' house or my old house. This move is very symbolic as it socially represents the transition from an unwed young woman to a married woman therefore girl to woman. Furthermore, this train of cars symbolizes the importance of this moment as well as the prestige of the bride's family and the groom's family: the bride's family is considered important enough to bring so many cars to and the groom's family is united and large enough to come together as such a large group to pick up the bride her final time. Before she is picked up, a pre-

wedding takes place contained some of our closest friends and family in my parents' house huddled together, singing, clapping, dancing, in the living room while I was in my dress watching it all take place.

Campbell describes the Sarakatsani way of viewing this family merge as contractual and as mentioned previously, quite often possessive language is used and this is not one-sided or patrilocal; this possessive language goes both ways, for the family of the groom and bride. Similarly, Arabs use this vernacular much like the Sarakatsanis "we have him as a bridegroom" or "she is our bride"." People do not ask whom a man has married, but whose daughter has he taken (1964, p. 120). This is a similar reflection of the type of affinal jargon exchanged in Arab Muslim culture. "You are one of us now" I often heard told to me by my new in-laws. "We would never give you to them" was what was once told to me by my mom about a family whose son was interested in asking for my hand in marriage, however my family did not approve of their credentials. Similarly, this possessive language exists in the Sarakatsan culture as well: "She is, as they often say, 'our bride'" (1964, p. 64).

The aftermath of the transition consists of an adjustment period in which the bride is expected to earn her keep.

In summary, then, the first phase of the development of the elementary family is a latency period in which conjugal solidarity, although gradually developing, is subordinate to the sibling solidarity between the husband and his brothers and sisters.

In general, it is said to last until the birth of the first child (Campbell 1964, p. 69).

This is spot-on traditional Arab culture. The bride is treated as a stranger or outsider in the beginning and not yet established her credibility amongst the family until she mothers the

offspring of her husband. A close family friend named Amina who confides in my mother often would share her experiences in horror as she suffered through the beginning phases of her adjustment period with her in-laws. She was required to live with her in-laws for years and serve them and clean up after them and basically mother the entire family and sometimes his brothers and their families would come over and she would have to host them as well. She feels as she has now definitely earned her keep in the family and with 5 children and decades of marriage behind her, she proudly proclaims herself a veteran.” Campbell describes a very similar process for the Sarakatsans:

After one or two years most brides have become mothers. This, naturally, brings about a great change in the bride’s position in the extended family. Previously, although full membership of the group was extended to her, yet in an affective sense she remained a stranger even in the eyes of her own husband. After the birth of her first child it is said that the new bride ‘takes root in the new family’. Not only does she take root, as it were, in the extended family but more significantly the new elementary family, consisting of herself, her husband, and the infant child takes a definite form (Campbell 1964, p. 69).

Much like the Sarakatsans, Arab wives’ begin to earn their respect only once they procreate and from then on, their credibility increases with the amount of children they have as well as the number of years they last in their marriage, provided that they remain relatively peaceful and subservient. Therefore, the respect and credibility of the bride received by the in-laws is not inherent, rather it is earned with time and effort, as is the case with the Sarakatsans. “Indeed it is only as a contract between two families of origin that a marriage arrangement has immediate

significance, for, in effect, there is no real recognition of a new family until the first child is born.” (Campbell 1964, p. 120). This is exactly the case for traditional Arab women as well which is why for so many women, it is of ultimate importance to bear children and become pregnant immediately upon marriage, for it is a type of validation of the bride in the eyes of the in-laws or affines, as well as the community.

2.2 Brothers and their Wives

Brothers in traditional Arab and Sarakatsan cultures are very tight-knit and involved in each other’s personal and financial matters. Campbell goes on to describe the inner conflicts and friction manifest as he witnessed:

Although brothers in an earlier phase of the extended family’s development willingly delegate the control of a common purse to the senior brother, they find this arrangement less congenial at a later stage when the pressure of anxieties about the future of their families of marriage begins to be felt. The different spending habits of the brothers, which within limits were formerly merely an incident in the identification of siblings, later become difficult to ignore (Campbell 1964, p. 75).

Likewise, my father described to me the discomfort with which he had to witness family friends of his who are brothers argue vehemently in regards to money. The brothers all had access to the family money pot or as Campbell put it: “the common purse”. (1964, p. 73) “Before you knew it,” Babba² said, “they were all pointing fingers and criticizing one another for their frivolous spending habits.” My father found himself on the more modern and individualistic end of the spectrum when it came to financial matters. He didn’t understand why they were

² Babba is term of endearment for a father in Arabic; it translates to Dad or Daddy in English

involved in each other's money like that. However, this arrangement is typically a traditional Arab way of money management and it traces back to land ownership and property which is still prevalent to this day especially among Palestinians. My father's closeness with this family allowed him the access to view the friction and matters of dispute unfold before him however traditionally, Arabs are expected to maintain a façade of peace and cooperation before the community and this expectation is present in the Sarakatsan culture as well, as Campbell "never observed a fight but friction is evident" (1964, p. 73).

Just as the brother's wife becomes in a sense enslaved to her husband's family in the Sarakatsan culture, the Arab wife is expected to be at her new family's beck and call as well. Upon visiting the home of my newlywed brother and his wife (whom at the time were married for two years), it came to my realization that the Arab culture contains within it a rigid hierarchy that is mostly prominent for and applied to by older folks than the younger generation. This hierarchy is based on age as your status rises the older you become. While the older more seasoned Arab members enjoy the advantages of being at the top of this structure, the younger generation must endure what the elders believe to have once been their inevitable own rite of passage and the work entailed that it takes to reach the top. Ideally, Western households partake in a collective effort during Thanksgiving especially when it comes to cooking and preparing and a proverbial "all hands-on deck" mode is assumed and all willing participants lend a helping hand. Although a stereotypical scene would likely involve mostly women handling the cooking aspect of the feat, how equal the responsibilities are between men and women ranges from household to household. However, in a traditional Arab household, the gender roles are more defined, thus the women are more than likely to be found in the kitchen

and this is hardly ever contested, disputed, or even negotiated as it is predominantly taken for granted. As mentioned, women are expected to be in the kitchen: that's a given. But to dive deeper, this invisible hierarchy implicitly mandates that the daughter-in-law single-handedly provide a memorable feast for her "new family" as she continues to try impress and cater to them time and time again. What this looked like in practice for our family was my mom and my sister-in-law's mom sitting crossed-legged on the couch watching my sister-in-law stress/cook/prepare while they sat around and had their conversations and enjoyed their leisure time. While some may have felt a tinge of guilt for not contributing or being helpful, older Arab women view this privilege as their right as they have now "graduated" from this phase in their lives, so to speak, as they were once in my sister-in-law's place, cooking and slaving away while feeling the pressure of impressing their in-laws. According to them, it is now their turn to sit and bask in the advantages of having successfully survived that period in their lives with their social reputations still intact. The challenge lies in remaining subservient, respectful, and even somehow pleasantly warm and hospitable despite any provocation or disturbance the presence of in-laws may cause. Older Arab women in general do not hold back on how much more difficult a time they had with their own mothers-in-law (whom, in Arab culture, are stereotypically known to be critical, demanding, and possessive of their sons) as generally speaking, the more recent generation of daughters-in-law tend to have it easier given how generally more progressive and democratic the world thus people have become. Therefore, you will often find an Arab mother-in-law rationalize her own behavior by comparing it to how she was treated by her own mother-in-law, convincing herself that her treatment is far less severe. An interesting point here is that the mothers are more likely to find ways to

justify perpetuating this behavior rather than discontinuing the cycle and treating their daughters-in-law in a manner in which they themselves longed to be treated in the past: with respect and equality.

A noteworthy theme the subject of the brother's wife touches on especially as it relates to Arabs is the dichotomy of traditionalism versus modernity. We have discussed in some detail the culture and customs of a typical traditional Arab family; however, while Arabs tend to preserve their traditions and customs, the extent of each household's traditionalism differs from one family to the next. This evolution is naturally tied to globalization and concerns not only those Arabs who have immigrated to more Western and progressive areas of the world in which they may experience culture clash or shock as they are exposed to new practices and lifestyles, but also those Arabs who live in more urban parts of Arab countries. I was surprised to find that upon moving to Jordan in 1997, many of the Arab peers with whom I socialized in private schools were allowed to partake in more Western practices such as dating, school dances, co-ed sports, etcetera. Therefore, in parallel to Arab immigrants in Western countries, an evolution is undergoing the Middle East area as well, as globalization continues and the internet is relied upon for virtual access to and information on other parts of the world. One might find it interesting to see an Arab dressed in the most fashionable and trendy way while still adhering to the most traditional of customs and practices, that are considered by most Western natives to be antiquated. Boşca dives into the debate between tradition and modernity among Arabs when she discusses Modern Arab Thought in her essay. A couple of the main things she attributes Modern Arab Thought to are industrial and democratic revolutions, positing that it "shaped deeply the map of the new civilization inaugurated at the end of the

19th century.” (2014, p. 57) She further breaks down the process of enlightenment, naming a phase of a “disenchantment of the world and of man himself” (2014, p. 57-58). If this is a rite of passage, then we are bound to be on either side of the partition, which is subjectively determined.

If the evolution or transformation from traditional to modern is a personal one, it is bound to lead to problematic social situations. In Boşca’s words, “even those who had tried hard to apply old patterns and Islamic ways of thinking, linking them with cultural, economic, political and social paths of development of the West, failed in explaining to followers of Islam how to be both Muslims and modern” (2014, p. 59). I will always see my mother in a sort of hypocritical light: she follows and wears the latest trends in fashion, celebrates Thanksgiving annually, yet prays, fasts, and regularly cooks and prepares my father’s meals while tending to his laundry and cleaning up after him as well. She has a Snapchat account yet still expects her daughter-in-law to cater to her subserviently. It doesn’t stop there. I have witnessed several people over the years argue their position on their own spectrum of traditionalism versus modernity. Growing up, I remember a popular topic amongst traditional Arab was the controversy of Arab Muslims selling liquor in their stores/establishments despite calling themselves and behaving like practicing Muslims. Or you will find the Muslim father who is strict with his own daughters as far as their conduct and freedom, but is an avid gambler despite gambling being strictly forbidden in the Muslim religion. When it comes to being modern, most Arab Muslims will choose to draw the line somewhere, so to speak, while rationalizing other behaviors and there will always be someone else whose values do not align.

Being that this is a personal process, there is bound to cause some type of clash with a fellow Arab of differing views.

The common theme of hierarchy in Arab culture and the traditional versus modern dichotomy mentioned above are both in addition to the inevitable generational culture clash inherent in every relationship that contains a relatively noticeable discrepancy in age. As we can see, these clashes arising amongst intergenerational Arabs are dimensional and different sets of expectations are a result among others. In Campbell's *Honor, Family, and Patronage* (1964), much of the Brothers and their Wives discussion revolves around the logistics and hierarchy of a polygamous setup, the likes of which in an Arab setting would defer entirely to the matriarch in terms of leadership and power just as it would among the Sarakatsans. Campbell explains that the son/husband is not expected to move out until after his second child, giving way for the mother/matriarch to bask in complete control for a reasonable amount of time. Though the brother's wife becomes a fixture in the family after bearing children, the case to be made on whether or not she is ever completely considered to be part of the family can be argued as she doesn't necessarily become fully accepted in every situation, and the friction that arises from the forced adoption of the new member in all her habits, mannerisms, and ways becomes problematic in many instances. As described above, this phase is a state of disconcerted instability for the wife. Though effectively she becomes a part of her husband's family- legally, socially, geographically, in most cases the bride mentally and emotionally clings to her own family as she longs for them but can no longer prioritize them. In more traditional and lower socioeconomic families, the bride moves in with the entire family whereas nowadays most newlyweds have a residence of their own which they live in privately, without any other family

members but in exceptional cases where the parents are too sick or incapable of taking care of themselves, our culture expects a certain level of filial piety which in this case would call for taking the parents in and the child that bears the responsibility is decided amongst the siblings and family but typically it falls on the eldest son and his wife: “the daughter-in-law, together with the son, fulfills the lion’s share of the caregiving in her new family, as part of her normative responsibilities and obligations to her new husband’s parents” (Lowenstein & Katz 2000).

2.3 Separation

At some point in the Greek Sarakatsan culture, the oldest brother must separate from the extended family and this is true also for the Arab family thus for both cultures. This separation is a turning point because the oldest brother plays a significant and influential role in the nuclear family but once he starts to have a family of his own, his nuclear family becomes his extended family as his nuclear becomes his wife and children. His time and attention that are not spent on his work are now reserved for his new family leaving comparatively less time than before for his extended family. In my family’s case, my mother was extremely irritable and nervous all the time about my brother’s separation- physically, and later emotionally- although she would never admit that as the reason for her anxiety. He had set this precedent of always being available and accessible when it comes to us especially for my mother and then not suddenly but gradually and eventually he started to become distant, not answer our phone calls all the time or take a few days to return them rather than right away. Furthermore, he drastically altered his spending habits and decreased the rate at which he would give my mother financial handouts when once upon a time he was sure to give her a significant amount

each month regularly, like another utility bill or a monthly expense. My mother quickly began to take notice and panic about this shift because I believe that she had associated a connection or correlation between the resources that were once taken for granted by us and his love or devotion to us, despite the fact that he was experiencing a very natural transition and restructuring of priorities.

The marriage of the sister represents for the brother the successful and honourable accomplishment of these tasks: her virginity has been conserved intact and the dowry has been handed over...Ideally, it is held that all sisters in a family should marry first, before even the eldest brother takes a wife. In this way, duties which a man has in the role of brother in family of origin do not come into conflict with his duties as a father and husband in the family of marriage. Generally speaking, men marry when they are about thirty or thirty-one years of age, whereas their sisters hope to find a bridegroom when they are in their mid-twenties (Campbell 1964, p. 82).

This excerpt bears much resemblance to the traditional Arab culture in that the marrying off of sisters is considered an accomplishment in itself for reasons of honor and reputation. Because marrying off the females is such a feat, the families aspire to get that out of the way in the Arab culture, much like the Greeks: "It appears, then, that the solidarity of the sibling group, as this is manifested in the obligations of brothers towards sisters, ideally demands that all sisters should be married before any of their brothers" (Campbell 1964, p. 85). Moreover, the age trends at which marriage prevalently takes place among the Sarakatsans bears striking resemblance to the trends of the Arab Muslims in terms of the ages at which they

tend to get married, although more traditional Arab Muslim families are open to marrying off their daughters at a younger age.

“Naturally, under these conventions, a sister may sometimes find herself without an unmarried brother to act as guardian of her honour.” (Campbell 1964, p. 85) Brothers in Arab culture play similar roles of theoretical guardians of honor, especially during the initial and very brief “courting” period in which a prospective bride and groom are to have a cursory and private but supervised interaction in order to establish whether or not they have enough of a connection to want to get married. The supervisors come from the bride’s family and at times the “supervisor”, who is usually the unmarried brother of the bride or “guardian of her honor”, will come chaperone the date. More modern families usually have a brother who will agree to accompany the pair under the guise of a chaperone but instead finds alternative plans with which to occupy himself in order to give the prospective couple more privacy. This is obviously done in moderation meaning the brother will leave them at a coffee shop for example and then come back and meet them later.

Much like the Sarakatsans, Arabs have a certain order as far as to whom the priority is given and at what point the extended family’s priority gets passed onto the nuclear family, and this is usually upon having children. Once the brother has children of his own, his priority is no longer the extended family’s namely his siblings and parents to a lesser extent. By marrying off their sisters first, the male siblings can rest assured that they have fulfilled their duties to their family before beginning one of their own. However, what Arabs call “*Naseeb*” or Destiny/Fate sometimes interferes and maybe one or two male siblings get married first. “Secondly, brothers, although married, must remain as a united extended family until their sisters are safely

married. This, of course, reflects the original unity of the sibling group” (88). In the Arab culture, the marriage of the sisters is the top priority however this is usually the case because of the general urgency when it comes to marrying off the females in the Arab families. This urgency stems from an earnest attempt to preserve the honor as much as possible. The sooner the young women are married off, the less likely a young woman is to fall weak to any temptations, as traditional Arabs see it. Although there are nuances that have probably evolved over time, Arabs and the Sarakastans show similarities in terms of a system of values in which order of priority is constructed. The knowledge of this axiom does not necessarily acquit families of adversity upon transition of priority, nor does it relieve them of tensions once male siblings set precedents that make it difficult to accept the change once it begins to occur.

3 Collateral Kinsmen

3.1 Cousins

For Arabs as well as Sarakatsans, cousins are very present and involved. Campbell describes the significance of cousins in the Sarakatsan culture, and breaks down the different dynamics amongst the collateral kinsmen as he discusses the “variation in the degree or quality of solidarity between various categories of cousins” (1964, p. 102). There are certain rankings and an order of priority within Arab collateral kinsmen as well, specifically the priority is reserved for the patrilineal side of the family in other words the father’s side of the family takes precedence over the mother’s side. Practically speaking, this order of priority translates into the father’s family being the first in line to get visits, calls, even down to the most mundane details such as who gets served first at a dinner party. This preferential treatment is informally taken for granted as in an unspoken cultural law. However, it is not always adhered to in any strict or unwavering fashion. “Uncles who are fathers’ brothers are known better than brothers of the mother but they are not always loved better” (1964, p. 105). Although it is common knowledge amongst Arabs in Palestinian culture that the patrilineal side is formally and practically prioritized, children often become closer to the mother’s as the mother is the primary caretaker so her circles and orbit becomes those of the children’s.

Campbell touches on the distinction cousins have in comparison to someone of no kin, and the immediate privileges inherent in being a cousin including but not limited to the degree

of honesty and confidentiality amongst cousins when it comes to conversation and disclosure of intimate matters.

Cousins are the most significant of a person's collateral kinsmen both for purposes of practical co-operation and for simple companionship. This is particularly true of the periods immediately before and after marriage. For these are the years when the individual's social reputation and prestige are judged by the community, and when the problems and difficulties of establishing a family require the practical assistance and moral support of a wide circle of kin...The essence of cousinhood, as indeed of all collateral kinship, is that measure of confidence and altruism. (1964, pp. 99-100)

Certain topics are broached with cousins that may never be brought up otherwise. There is even a general order for topics of conversation and the flow of this conversation as it tends to develop, beginning with the inquiry of health of the family. This applies to both the Sarakatsan and Arab culture, as health and well-being are always primary concerns and therefore, addressed first. Furthermore, there is a degree of camaraderie that is allowed amongst cousins not afforded elsewhere amongst social circles, therefore rendering these cousin relations the sole cross-gender social interaction for Arabs and Sarakatsans alike. With Arabs in particular, cousins or collateral kinsmen in general play a significant role in the way Arab Muslim families' lives are shaped as the culture tends to be very communal and family-oriented. The lives and personal updates of the community are the scale against which mothers gauge the success of her children as she and other members of the family are constantly tuned into the news of extended family.

3.2 The Effective Kindred

Despite kinship distance as the primal measure of obligation and solidarity between two kinsmen, there is a space for the effective kindred which is a testament to the flexibility of kindred in the Sarakatsan culture. Effective kindred differ from ideal kindred in that the effective usually provides more use and convenience and does not necessarily bear a close genealogical connection, meaning a third or fourth cousin. However, the discrepancy in genealogical relation does little to affect the camaraderie and quality of the relationship. "The trust which is the basis of kinship relations is an axiomatic value in Sarakatsan life which is never questioned" (Campbell 1964, p. 111).

This goes for Arab culture as well, as the quality of the relationship is the sole determinant of the closeness despite the formal yet informal hierarchy in terms of preference to kinsmen based on their closeness in genealogy. Campbell uses invitations to weddings amongst other things to measure the popularity of a particular kinsman (1964, p. 109) as do Arabs; furthermore, the transparency of your lineage is something that is vital to being accepted within the community as Campbell demonstrates with the case of the Pistiolis father on the same page. It can be inferred then that the more effective kindred you gain, the more popular you become and the more you are invited to community events. Similarly, the gossip and updates of the personal lives of the community is a relevant factor and recurring theme in the commonalities between Sarakatsans and Arabs as this falls under the heading of honor and reputation. "It seems most unlikely that these affairs, if protracted, can ever remain secret in a community where there are so many questioning eyes" (Campbell 1964, p. 110).

The possibility of losing the moral and practical support of kinsmen, perhaps for ever, is clearly a most powerful sanction of the norms of kinship behavior and the values of the wider community. If Nasios, a poor man who herded the sheep of villagers, had possessed a substantial flock and had therefore been dependent on the help of kinsmen in a 'company', this estrangement from his kinsmen would have affected him even more seriously than it did. It is also evident that the application of this sanction by the kinsman is itself sanctioned by the threat that a man and his family may lose prestige if he does not temporarily abandon the evil-doer. Since the interests of the family always take precedence over obligations of individual collateral kinship, there is never any doubt that a man will conform. We see, not for the first time, the connection between prestige values and the isolation of the family; for these values necessarily threaten the solidarity of any personal relationship or social grouping which may conflict with a man's duty to uphold, or promote the prestige of his family (Campbell 1964, p. 113).

This passage relates to Arab culture in several different ways as there is much covered here including the gravitas with which the responsibility tied into the link of kinship as well as the social standing at risk which is of much value. Arabs and Sarakatsans alike value reputation and social standing within a community greatly and the honor of being able to hold your head high figuratively speaking goes a long way socially which in the Arab culture is very important and viewed as vital in terms of the wellness of an individual. "Campbell shows how the unique values inherent in the Sarakatsan moral order transform a mundane struggle for subsistence and economic survival into a social system predicated upon incessant status competition." (Schwartz 1965, p. 404). Much like the Sarakatsan culture, the Arab community is in incessant

status competition and strive to be known as exemplary in terms of financial stability, honor, adherence to traditional values and reputation.

No one wishes to be shunned as this not only has psychological effects but as discussed throughout, the community is a fundamental source in the life of a Sarakatsan or Arab, and without it you are lost, without a foundation or as Arabs put it “broken off of a tree like a lone branch”. “Maqtoo’ min shajara” (Kassicieh 2015). In as much as Nasios’s livelihood was affected as a result of his lack of familial and community support, Arabs with substantial kindred foundations and extensive family roots who are well-known throughout the family tend to do better in business as their names become circulated amongst families in terms of marriage and common acquaintance. Honor and reputation go hand-in-hand in Arab culture and Arabs feel an inherent responsibility to uphold the pristineness of their family’s name and reputation or honor. This tends to fall predominantly on the females. Being that reputation must remain honorable, any potential threat to that as in an association with those less than honorable is a form of social suicide. In 2000, when I was 16, a well-known family of our Arab Muslim community endured the running away of one of their daughters; they had two daughters and two sons and the daughter was always considered amongst her family and the community to be rebellious. Upon turning 18, she ran away from her home and left behind a note telling her parents what she had done. She instantly became the pioneer of shamefully renouncing herself from the religion, culture, and familial pressures of being an honorable Arab Muslim young woman and following the traditional guidelines and expected agenda: marriage with an Arab Muslim man of acceptable reputation and family status, kids, etcetera. Hanan immediately became the prototype for girls who betrayed their religion, culture, and most of all family i.e.

the community by tarnishing her reputation and not only running away, but to add insult to injury it was revealed that she married a young African American man she knew from high school with whom she had proclaimed to have fallen in love. She is still married to him today meaning they have been together for 20 years now. She knew she would be disowned from the family because in attempts to muster what tiny bit of honor they still could, her family knew they had to make a statement proclaiming their stern disapproval of her actions and maintained their distance and interaction with her. By remaining estranged, they chose to preserve their honor. Hanan's father then became ill with a heart attack, and his deteriorating health condition helped to improve their relations but by a certain point in time Hanan's father was too ill and passed in 2014.

3.3 Expressions of Solidarity

Invitations to weddings and the unlimited hospitality with which a kinsman takes in his relative are prominent examples of expressions of solidarity in the Sarakatsan culture. "Although wedding invitations are sent out to all consanguineal and to a large number of affinal relatives, not all of the more distantly related of these persons will attend, and it is always recognized that whether or not an invited kinsman comes to the wedding is an indication of the effective solidarity, or absence of solidarity, between the invited man's family and the family of the groom or bride. Naturally the whole of the kinsman's family cannot attend a wedding together...But one member at least is expected to go as a representative." This statement is equally true for Palestinian weddings and the invitees; traditional Arab families do everything in their power to make it to weddings and engagements and formal events especially those that involve the marriage or union of two people. Kinsmen view it as an honor to be invited to and

represent their families. “In the holiday atmosphere they are hospitably welcomed and their company and conversation give pleasure to their hosts. It makes no difference whether visitors are near or distant relatives; the more visitors a family entertains the more its prestige increases” (Campbell 1964, p. 115).

I was invited to my second cousin’s engagement party along with my nuclear family i.e. my mother, father, and siblings. I was in town staying with my in-laws at the time and so decided to tactfully decide to invite my in-laws and while I did the polite thing and requested permission from the bride- my second cousin- along with her sibling, I knew that my in-laws would be more than welcome and that it in fact be encouraged to be present and represent the bride’s side of the family. The concept of strength in numbers applies here, and for similar reasons: the more people attend, the better it looks for the side of the family for whom they are attending, and it is important that the status of each invitee is taken into consideration, for quantity in itself is not just the main factor but quality as well. In this way the pool of invitees serves as an asset to the either the bride or groom’s side, depending on which side has the better outcome. Being that the invitee turnout is instrumental in providing prestige to either the groom or the bride, the invitation is known to be taken very seriously amongst Arab families. This knowledge is the case in Sarakatsan world, as well:

An invitation morally obliges a family to send a representative. It is not a question of whether a man can afford the time and expense to go and enjoy himself for three or four days, but rather that it is his duty to attend and support the family of the bride or groom simply because the members of that family are kinsmen. A man may pay a visit to a kinsman or assist him in some way out of motives which are in part practical and

ulterior, but he goes to help a kinsman at his wedding without such utilitarian interest...he may be poor while the wedding guest may be rich. It might perhaps be argued that a man stands by his kinsmen at their wedding so that in return they will support the weddings in his own family. For it is true that if a large number of kinsmen come to a wedding the family gains prestige. But more important than this outward sanction is the inner concern for, and interest in, the personal affairs of a kinsman... In this matter as in the other moral obligations of kinship the Sarakatsani advance no explanation of why they must act in a particular way...In discussing solidarity of the kindred we are dealing with self-evident values which appear to a man to be sentiments innate in every Sarakatsanos (Campbell 1964, p. 116).

This passage reveals the very essence of solidarity and its seriousness in terms of how the Sarakatsan families view their familial obligations; likewise, the Arab culture follow very similar protocol in terms of wedding and social obligations. Very often Arab family members will make it a point to fly out and take time off from their careers to make it to a wedding, engagements, graduations, or otherwise considered serious social function for a family. The objective here is to show up and prove your willingness to support by being present and it is an obligation inherent in our culture that is taken for granted. This tradition of making sure to attend social functions not only is a display of familial support but also provides an opportunity to maintain family interaction and socialize. There are certain customs in the Sarakatsan culture alluded to in Campbell's work that bears an uncanny resemblance to those traditions of the Arab marriage festivities such as the shaving of the bridegroom, the display of the bride's dowry, or in Arabs' case the bride-price/gold, slaughtering of the lamb, and the confirmation of

virginity which has evolved significantly over the years however the antiquated customs of this practice were once as transactional and what would be likely considered unconventional as described in Campbell's work (1964, p. 118). "In standing with him at this ceremony the company of kinsmen witness their certain knowledge of the bridegroom's nobility and their belief in the bride's virginity. Only the joining of these qualities in a marriage celebrated before God makes possible parenthood with honour" (Campbell 1964, p. 119). During these marriage festivities, men discuss their work and business projects and prospects while women get to know one another through conversation and social interaction, sometimes even dancing. The dabke is a traditional Palestinian folkloric dance which has an "evolution from folklore to staged dance, from an expression of social solidarity to protest, and from a popular social dance to a tool of political identity" (Rottenberg 2011, p. 306). It entails a chain of men linking hands and performing a synchronized step dance. Women perform dabkeh as well. Sometimes it's even co-ed, in more reformed less traditional circles.

Boundless unchecked and open hospitality is expected amongst kinsmen and is considered to be a substantial sign and display of solidarity amongst both the Arab and Sarakatsan culture.

A man, of course, may visit a kinsman at any time; in his huts he will always find shelter and hospitality for the night. But these visits are unlikely to be merely social and the main purpose of the journey is generally the arrangement of some business (Campbell 1964, p. 115).

When it comes to traditional Arab kinsmen, there is usually no question as far as where one can stay. Accommodations are accounted for and the more traditional the families, the more set in

stone this is.³ Foreigners find Arabs' hospitality to be one of their more outstanding traits (Feghali 1997). "Certain occasions require elaborate displays of hospitality" for Arabs, Feghali explains (1997, p. 353). As Feghali explains, "Arabs expect hospitality from others, and one's personal status and reputation may be affected by the absence of such behavior (1997, p. 353). This was the case when my parents would visit from Jordan. They were reticent to admit to the community that I was as they viewed it unwelcoming and morally deficient as I did not let them stay with me in my 2-bedroom condo that I shared with someone else. At the time because I had a roommate who was paying to live there, I felt I was not in a convenient position to accommodate them. However, the expectation in Arab tradition is to bend over backwards figuratively speaking and go the extra mile to be able to accommodate guests, especially when these guests are your own family, those closest to you genealogically and therefore traditionally considered an obligation to not only accommodate but to also perform other dotting gestures when possible that are symbolic of respect and deferment to the parents and uncles/aunts or any kinsmen but especially those considered of genealogical and social significance.

³ There is no black or white with how traditional Arabs are, it is important to note. It is more of a spectrum rather than a clear-cut classification. Realistically, everyone is gray in that most people prefer to retain some traditional traits while evolving or Westernizing others.

4 Affinal Relations

4.1 Betrothal

When it comes to the initial agreement part of the betrothal, most female Arabs are not forced to betroth although pressure from the family can very likely play a role. A pillar in the cultural standards of Arabs is the filial piety as an obligation towards one's parents. The filial piety a member may feel in terms of succumbing to pressure can be very strong and varies depending upon the closeness of the family among other factors. However, being that most Arabs are communal and very involved with the family and the community, the family's approval of whatever marital path one decides to take is a must for most Arabs. As with the Sarakatsan culture, "virtually all marriages are arranged." (Campbell 1964, p. 120) The families and their support are needed in order to proceed with traditional marriage customs therefore it is imperative that the parents and relevant family members approve, as the family members are a vital part of the marriage process.

Complications that arise in the Sarakatsan culture are similar to some of those that occur in the Arab betrothal process. For example, there is a pressure and unspoken obligation amongst families to marry off their daughters however not all of them are always fortunate enough to be desirable to grooms. Therefore, families have been known to mislead grooms in ways such as refraining from disclosure of all the health or psychological complications- these are issues that would only become prevalent upon interaction, time and proximity with the individual, however being that these marriages are mainly arranged often times the

characteristics the groom deems undesirable and was not privy to manifest only after marriage has taken place. This naturally causes tensions and animosity between families. However, there are complications because marriage is high stakes for both of these communities and as mentioned, divorce is usually avoided at all costs. The groom is pressured in these instances to concede to his Fate and carry on in his marriage.

If he withdraws from this agreement, not only does he break his pledged word but he damages the girl's reputation in a way which makes it impossible for her to make an honourable marriage in the future. For it will be said that a man would not lightly or without reason change his mind on so serious a matter if he had not discovered some grave moral or physical deficiency in the girl. No man of worth is likely to choose a girl whom another has previously rejected. She can only hope to marry a widower or a poor man from a despised family. Therefore to break an engagement is a violent affront to the honour of all the members of the bride's family... It is mainly to avoid these risks and difficulties that, today a bridegroom often will not allow the formal approach to be made to a girl's family until he, or a trusted brother, has had an opportunity of secretly appraising the appearance and bearing of a prospective bride. For the same reasons, families with daughters of marriageable age try to display the more attractive girls and prevent their ugly or sick sisters from being seen at wells or in other public places...young men look forward to these occasions as opportunities to assess the

virtues of unrelated maidens. But in whatever way a man succeeds in seeing the girl, his purpose must remain secret (Campbell 1964, pp. 128-129).

The discretion with which Sarakatsan prospective bridegroom is presumed to use in his approach is an expectation in the Arab culture as well. Similarly, the bride who enters into a situation she was not completely privy to due to a lack of disclosure on the part of the groom's family is often inclined to accept matters and continue on in her marriage for the sake of preserving her and her family's reputation. The seriousness of these matters is not underplayed in any capacity as most community members acknowledge the gravitas in matters of betrothals, beginning from the starting point of meeting of the two individuals.

4.2 The Element of Hostility: Marriage and the 'Return'

As touched upon, the merging of two traditional Arab families entails a potentially hostile situation in which there are tensions which entail concerns on the part of the bride's family for the safety and well-being of the bride. The bride's family therefore feels ambiguous towards the groom's family: on the one hand, they are grateful for their role in elevating the family's status and reputation by marriage and on the other, they feel cautious and wary as to what type of environment awaits the bride. Nevertheless, the families are officially related and tied to each other upon marriage of the couple and must therefore comply with traditional standards of etiquette and social expectations. These dynamics are mirrored in Sarakatsan culture, as Campbell explains below.

The day of the wedding marks an important change in the relations between the two groups. On this day the two sides formally enter into affinal relations, and a daughter leaves her home. The feelings of the girl's family, especially of her parents, are mixed. On the one hand there is relief and self-congratulations that they have succeeded in guarding her reputation unblemished and arranging an honourable marriage. But there is also true grief at the loss of a daughter, a loss which is harder to bear because of their anxiety about how the strangers will use her. It is easy to observe the strained expressions on the faces of the bride's brothers as they watch the grooms people boasting in loud voices and strutting about the homestead. But self-restraint must be exercised in dealings with affines, if only for the sake of the bride. The exchanges between the two groups, when the group arrives to take away the bride, vary between the openly expressed hostility which sometimes occurs and a formal display of amity which is, in fact, a controlled hostility cloaked with fair words (1964, p. 132).

This quote is an accurate description of the complex dynamics amongst affinal families. Very often, energies of opposing sides of the family clash and do not mend well causing tensions and animosity between the sides of the bridegroom and the bride. However, the bride's family is pressured to downplay these issues in order to mitigate the marriage of the bride, salvage the bride's reputation, and not risk ruining her one-time opportunity at an honourable marriage. "Midway between these extremes is the ambivalence of certain marriage customs which

express the mutual antagonism between the two sides and its limitation within conventional bounds” (Campbell 1964, pp. 132-133).

As discussed dancing is a symbolic ritual in Arab weddings and a way to express love and celebration for the family members who try to remain dancing as long as possible as a means of expressing and displaying their support and love for their daughter/sister/cousin. Members of the family are encouraged to take the dancefloor and this is a common sight to see in engagements and weddings: the confident ones who don't mind the attention taking to the dancefloor and trying to encourage those who are perhaps more bashful or reserved to do the same. Likewise, the Sarakatsans seem to connect with and value a symbolic significance in dancing in a similar way. “The bride’s family...insist that she goes through the lengthy ritual of dancing for the last time with each member of her family” (Campbell 1964, p. 133).

Regardless of any tensions, animosity or status rivalry that may exist between the families, the overarching theme is to promote peace and bury the proverbial hatchet in order to facilitate the lives of the new couple and family-to-be. In Arab societies it is of grave importance to at least forge a bridge of mutual respect and cordiality because Arabs are a social people and it is expected that the new bride and groom will be hosting dinner parties to which each of their families will be invited. Therefore, they will cross paths inevitably and because of this expectation, it is common knowledge on both sides that cooperation and tolerance is required.

These expressions of amity indicate the readiness of each side to co-operate in establishing the new relationship and in supporting the children of the new family, on the

understanding that the other side will also play their part. For the contract which is entered into at the betrothal is not confined to co-operation in the arrangement of the marriage, it also foresees the future obligations which the two families must assume towards the new family group in which both will have a common and balanced interest. (Campbell 1964, p. 134)

Campbell's excerpt demonstrates the basis upon which the Arab families on either side of the newly married couple derives motivation to keep the peace. With the Sarakatsans, the "return of the bride i.e. her first visit to her family as a married woman, is a distinctive event as it is the first interaction between bride and her family post-marriage and even with the observing eyes of the members of the family of the groom, the bride will usually manage to relay some bits of what each family hopes to be reassuring updates concerning the account of the treatment of her new husband's family. This "return" of the bride is significant in the Arab culture for precisely the same reasons.

4.3 The Obligations of Affines

Campbell often refers to the concept of doing favors for community members and how that translates to an expression of solidarity or duty or obligation towards kinsmen or affines. In the Arab culture, the obligation often is in the form of deference expected to be shown towards elders (filial piety). In the Sarakatsan culture, "cousins are able to emphasize in their behavior the altruistic qualities of collateral kinsmen, particularly in the performance of free favors" (Campbell 1964, p. 122). These "free favors" are also performed by brothers towards their

sister's husband and family much more than what they receive in return, especially in the first few years of her marriage when "the bride is still unsure of her position in the new family" (Campbell 1964, p. 139). Regardless of the recipients and the motives behind the free favors, both cultures express and respond to obligation towards family members in the form of free favors, and the affinal family is anything but excluded from this custom. For Arabs, these favors can come in several different forms including accommodation, transportation, administrative tasks, to name a few.

Campbell describes the animosity and tense dynamics between the new member of the family, the bride, and her new family that bear a striking resemblance to the same conflicts encountered amongst new brides and their in-laws in the Arab culture. With reputation at stake for both families: the bride's and the groom's, there are tense relations as a result of the implantation of the new bride into what is essentially a family of strangers. There is sure to be a culture clash as the bride's perspective is limited due to her having only known a certain lifestyle i.e. one home all her life. Now this bride has a completely new home with full access into their personal lives and could possibly reveal a lot of confidential and sensitive information and this also goes for the new family as they find themselves now getting to know her in a more intimate sense. Campbell describes a similarly tense dynamic amongst Sarakatsan in-laws:

In the early years of marriage, the nostalgia of the wife for her family of origin and her old home is not easily appeased. The physical separation of affines does not make visits to

her parents very easy, and in any case, as we have seen, her husband and his brothers are not pleased if communication is too frequent. (1964, p. 139)

As mentioned, the reputation of the bride is at stake therefore, she is expected to refrain from speaking ill about her new family. Therefore, the bride will take careful measures to ensure that she either remain tight-lipped or that the sources to which she may reveal any discretionary information are trustworthy and reliable i.e. that they will be careful with this sensitive information not to let it become privy to the wrong people meaning people who may allow it to circle back around to the in-laws. This hypothetical situation would reflect badly upon the bride who is expected to remain honourably taciturn when it comes to divulging all of the newfound and private information. These dynamics typically describe a traditional Arab Muslim situation in which the bride moves in with her in-laws and learns to coexist with them while the groom's family monitor and control her communication with her family, with particular emphasis in the beginning.

Sarakatsans also have very similar dynamics in terms of how the bride's family acts towards the bridegroom:

For their part, the family of the bride both for her sake and the sake of her children try very hard to please the 'bridegroom'. 'The father-in-law must entertain the bridegroom and keep him content', they say. When the bridegroom comes on a visit meat is always killed, an honour which is not automatically accorded to a blood kinsman however close. After the passage of some years and the establishment of the new family, relations

between the husband and his wife's family of origin become less tense and formal, and if the bridegroom is an honourable man, his father- and brothers-in-law may eventually trust him with some of their secrets. Yet even after the passage of years, close affinal relatives of the same generation must behave in a dignified and restrained manner in each other's presence. The easy familiarity between cousins of both sexes finds no parallel in the case of affinal relations. Affines do not laugh and joke together (Campbell 1964, p. 140).

Campbell's description of this degree of formality between affines closely resembles the dynamics between Arab Muslim affines. The bride's family is sure to show respect and deference to the bridegroom, even more so than is shown to your average kinsman, as the bridegroom is known to be treated in a special and preferential manner. Similar to the Sarakatsan culture, Arabs show their reverence by serving a relatively ample amount of meat whereas the Sarakatsans kill it themselves but in both cases, the offering of the meat serves as a symbol of respect and veneration. It is in the benefit of the bride's family to ingratiate themselves with the bridegroom especially, as the happiness of his bride is mainly in his hands. Also, in both cases, the relationship tends evolve to become less formal over the years as bridegroom and bride's family become more acquainted and comfortable with one another. However, as comfortable as they may become, there is still a baseline level of formality expected between affines therefore their level of comfort will never reach that of the cousins' and this standard applies to the Arab as well as the Sarakatsan culture. Furthermore, as stated

by Campbell, “A man never entirely trusts his affines. Yet precisely because of the co-operative compact which has been established and their equal concerns for children who will claim both sets of affines as blood kinsmen, close affinal relatives must give positive proof of seeming to trust one another” (1964, p. 145). Similarly, in the Arab culture, appearances must be made and maintained that paint the picture of a very cooperative and friendly set of in-laws, despite whatever the actual situation may be.

Another striking similarity between the Sarakatsan and Arab culture is the notion that the father and brothers relinquish their power over the bride upon marrying her off, meaning she is at the complete mercy of her new husband and his family. This change is drastic considering they were in complete control of the young woman prior to her marriage but the switch symbolizes the transition from one family to another. Campbell explains, “When a father or brother has given his daughter or sister in marriage, he is quite powerless to interfere directly if the husband maltreats her” (1964, p. 142). In the Arab culture, this transfer of control sometimes is used to women’s own benefit as a means of patriarchal bargaining (Kandiyoti 1988) and acts as the very incentive for which marriage occurs for those who marry to escape the strict rules and regulations of their original family. “Within patriarchal bargaining, women submit to specific gender rules that disadvantage them, strategizing to gain social or economic benefits while unknowingly re-creating the system of patriarchy” (Kandiyoti, cited by Albouhassan and Brumley 2019, p. 641).

5 The Family: A System of Roles

5.1 Husband and Wife

Greek Sarakatsan Shepherds have kinship institutions much like the Arabs. The structure of the family is an established theme and the roles of each family member and where that family member falls in terms of his/her place as it relates to the other member. Each role differs in terms of how that relative relates to the next kinsman, essentially who is shown the deference in the relationship and the general rule is for that is the elders and the husband's family are always shown difference. For example, the aunt of an Arab on his father's side would take precedence over the aunt on his mother's side. Another example is the elders are always the ones to be respected and called first or visited first, so for example, one is obligated to pay their deference to say aunts/uncles and relatives older than he/she, but those on my father's first of course- before the mother's family. These structures and dynamics as well as the significance behind them are discussed further below.

As in the tradition Arab culture, the Sarakatsan couple it is rare to find a relationship comprised of husband and wife without children. Marriage and parenthood go hand in hand. For Arabs, the purpose of marriage usually is to procreate and have a family. Campbell asserts that "a woman realizes herself in marriage and motherhood" and "to remain unmarried is failure and the admission of some grave moral or physical deficiency" (1964, p. 150). Arabs give marriage and procreation the same weight especially as it relates to females and the view that the label of a divorced or unmarried woman carries negative connotations is analogous with

Sarakatsani views. This expectation and pressure to become married and have children is also the case with a man however to a lesser extent and this proves to be true both in Arab and Sarakatsan culture as Campbell touches upon the significance marriage carries for a man in that it plays a vital role in establishing his social personality, "Both the man and the woman, therefore, become mature social personalities in marriage directed to parenthood" (1964, p. 150). As serious as entering a marriage is for Arabs and Sarakatsans, nullifying or ending one is considered to be of more graveness and it is traditionally looked down upon and in some cases a call for disownment and shunning of divorced women but for men it is not as disgraced.

Roles of the husband and the wife are delineated respectively for both traditional Arab and Sarakatsan cultures.

The roles of the husband and wife are complementary, and generally restrict each partner to a particular sphere of activity. The role of the husband is representative and protective...He alone handles money, negotiates with officials, and takes definite decisions about the marriage alliances of his children...The wife's role is domestic and expressive. Her activities center in and around the huts where she cooks, spins, weaves, and cares for her children (Campbell 1964, pp. 150-151).

The typical traditional Arab family has a setup very similar to this one in which the gender roles are very defined and the roles rarely intersect. The mother is the caretaker, the nurturer, while the father's role is delineated and restricted to financial matters, providing for the family, being the "head" of the family or the representative as Campbell words it. With Arabs, it is the father who asks for his son's bride's hand in marriage and it is the father who gives his daughter's hand away, although it should be emphasized here that these are more descriptive of

traditional Arab families who practice centuries-old traditions and pride themselves on perpetuating traditions. When it comes to taking the reins of children's marriage proceedings, more modern or evolved Arab Americans tend to have a "generational attitude shift" and "findings show that over 80% of participants did not want to interfere in their children's partner selection." (Yahya 2014, p. 759). However, in traditional Arab families, this type of control exerted over the children remains strong. In many cases, children are often taught to mimic and replicate these same roles and characteristics as they develop into their own versions of adulthood due to a focus on perpetuating and promoting tradition as it is a tenet of the Arab culture and identity which are concepts that traditional Arabs value and hold in high regard.

Another dynamic between husband and wife that is often perpetuated in both Arab and Sarakatsan culture is that "ultimately, the authority of the husband over the wife is absolute" (Campbell 1964, p. 151). There is a saying among Arab societies that although the husband is the head, metaphorically speaking, the wife then is the neck who controls in what direction that head turns. This common Arab adage indicates the extent to which women have accepted and even further embraced the male figure or the husband in the household as the lead or face of the family- and it bears the trappings of patriarchal bargaining. In other words, it is what Said-Foqahaa refers to as the "'women's invisible authority' [which] has been addressed in different writings" (2011, p. 239). "The wife submits herself completely to her husband because she accepts her position as part of a natural and inevitable order" (Campbell 1964, p. 153).

Although this dynamic with the power hierarchy placing husband on top is formally known to be the case in Arab tradition, there is naturally a wide range of nuances that give way for variations but generally speaking, a traditional Arab couple will usually try to formally appear to

function with the husband as the ultimate decision-maker and authoritative figure. This was definitely the case in my family although my mother played a very important and involved role in our upbringing and family decisions; however, her influence was far more indirect as it was my father who actually implemented the discipline, rules, and official matters. My mother just like most other Muslim Arab mothers will always maintain that it is my father who is the head of the family and this authority over her is absolute, just as the Sarakatsans. Being that Arab women either remain under the control of their fathers or are controlled by their husbands, Arab women find challenges that impede them “from fully participating in decision-making processes”. Arab women experience what Said-Foqahaa calls a as gender-based dual deprivation defined by “multi-layered circles surrounding their abilities to make decisions concerning their own lives on the one hand, and restricting their capacity to delve into established institutional mechanism of decision-making, on the other hand” (Said-Foqahaa 2011, p. 234).

This “dual deprivation” not only isolates women from decision-making processes, even on issues directly impacting their lives, but also denies them the ability to act as agents and create an empowering environment, due to women’s absence from the decision-making positions...Findings show some progress despite its insufficiency, confirming that authority is still patriarchal in Arab countries (Said-Foqahaa 2011, p. 234).

Patriarchal bargaining again comes into play for these women as their only relief is to have sons of their own to escape the patriarchal authority, and this applies to both the Arab and Sarakatsan culture alike. “Only as the mother of adult sons does she, to a degree, emancipate herself from male domination” (Campbell 1964, p. 150). Furthermore, a wife and mother gains

credibility and an increased amount of respect to an extent from her husband, children and in-laws with the passage of time and while seniority is a factor, respect for elders and filial piety are reverberating themes within Arab lifestyles and family culture. This goes for Sarakatsan mother wives as well, as Campbell puts it:

But the wife's acceptance of subordination and physical hardship is also made tolerable partly by her relative independence in her own domain, and more particularly by a consciousness of the significance of her position as wife and mother in the family, a position which relative to that of her husband increases in importance with the passage of the years. Therefore, a wife accepts her husband's authority, shows respect and esteems him, if he proves himself able to protect her children and herself and if he uses his power over the family with a measure of justice. The husband reciprocally approves of his wife if she cares for her children with love and faces her physical labors ... The striking complementarity of the roles of the marriage partners (and therefore their mutual dependence), and the unquestioning acceptance of the husband's authority by the wife, partly explain the impressive strength of Sarakatsan marriages. But in the Sarakatsan family the obligations of the parents toward their children transcend all other considerations. It is their duty to bring them up in an honourable and integral family group. Divorce is not possible. Consequently, the marriage bond, if for no other reason that its position within the total complex of family relations, is an indestructible tie. The husband and wife, through their categorical obligations to their children, are compelled to an almost complete identification of interests (Campbell 1964, p. 153).

5.2 Parents and Children

For both cultures, the love, adoration concern and attention children receive from their mothers is abundant and this love does not taper off for the most part- this attitude ties into the closeness and tight-knit family theme. Just as in Arab families, for the Sarakatsans “this intense attitude of love and concern for the child on the part of all members of the extended family does not change as the child grows up” (Campbell 1964, p. 154). However also with both cultures, at some point the mother’s love in particular towards her sons begins to work against them in that the males begin to have an aversion towards this sensitivity and become repelled by the affection as it goes against the very manliness they aim to master and emit. Campbell describes it to take place usually around the last two years of school for boys that he “begins to resent his brother’s acts of protective care and love...he no longer suffers his mother’s caresses.” Furthermore, Campbell notes that the sons will begin to rebel with outbursts and abrupt behavior. “By this abruptness to the women of his family he hopes to give a further demonstration of his growing manliness” (1964, p. 164). I still see signs of this aversion take place between my brothers and mother till this day despite my brothers having reached their mid-late twenties in age. One brother who is 27 and unmarried whereas the other is 29 and married and both of my brothers have communicated to my mother repeatedly via explicit verbal and nonverbal cues to cut down the affection and physical demonstrations of love which often come in the form of kissing the face randomly, holding the face between her two hands, and other gestures. As for my married brother, he has had to become particularly assertive in regards to this type of uninhibited affection from my mother as he has been married now for 3 years therefore it is of particular discomfort for him when his wife witnesses this type of

affection for reasons unnecessary to explore for this discussion. Suffice it to say that whether or not the son is married, even as an adult, he is likely to have an Arab mother who gives him inundated affection.

Reciprocally then the love and respect from the children to the parents is intense and prioritized both in theory and in practice; Arabs and Sarakatsans alike believe and practice in filial piety towards their parents. For Arabs, placing a parent, grandparent, or any other elder no longer able to take care of one's self in a nursing home or elderly/retirement home is rarely heard of.

For centuries, the elderly in traditional Arab communities in Israel have been supported by the family. The care provided for Arab elderly parents by their adult children is considered a normative cultural custom (Jeraissy and Rizek, cited in Khalaila 2010, p. 356). The literature shows that parents in various societies expect a high degree of filial piety and adult children see the care for their elderly parents as a duty taken for granted (Blieszner & Mancini; Brody, Johnson, & Fulcomer; Finley, Roberts, & Banahan; Kao & Travis; Lee, Netzer, & Coward; Peek, Coward, Peek, & Lee; Van der Pas, Van Tilburg, & Knipscheer; Walker, Pratt, Shin, & Jones, cited in Khalaila 2010, p. 356). In traditional societies, such as Asian communities and Arab communities in Israel, the daughter-in-law, together with the son, fulfills the lion's share of the caregiving in her new family, as part of her normative responsibilities and obligations to her new husband's parents (Kim & Lee; Lowenstein & Katz, cited in Khalaila 2010, p. 356).

This reverence towards elders also ties into the family-oriented values. These customs and traditional values of the Arabs continue to support the claim that the Arab culture bears an

analogous nature to Campbell's descriptions of Sarakatsans, in this particular example, with reference to the obligations the children feel towards their parents past a certain point or age. "The obligation to support aged parents is absolutely binding on children" (Campbell 1964, pp. 166, 161).

Respect and obligation extend to a particular type of filtered behavior around the father and this applies to either gender differently. For the females, it is the avoidance of the topic of sex or anything close to it around both of her parents. For the sons, this respect and filtered behavior manifests in the form refraining from smoking for Arabs and Sarakatsans, coffee shops (a common place to spend leisure time for young Arab men), or swearing (Campbell 1964, p. 160). Growing up, it was a typical reaction to flip the TV channel or fast-forward through scenes with nudity or sexual content, however scenes of violence or cursing were permissible. Once many years ago while watching a movie called "Father of the Bride", Steve Martin's character makes a joke to his daughter and new boyfriend to "fasten your condoms...I mean seat belts!" At the time I didn't know any better so I asked my father what condoms meant and he curtly responded by claiming that I was too young to learn about that and closed the topic of conversation immediately. I distinctly remember his tone, one of sudden seriousness that let me know I had entered forbidden territory by asking. Tension and awkwardness around the topic of sexuality was an issue that arose often as we grew in in the United States and immersed ourselves to an extent in the culture (movies, TV, media).

This expectation upon children has always been instilled in me and my siblings by my parents, particularly my mother as she tends to be the more traditional and expressive parent. However, her communication is high-context (Hall 1976, pp. 91-101) which is the preferred manner of

communication for Arabs as opposed to low-context, as Arabs tend to be a more of a collectivist society as opposed to an individualistic society as will be discussed in Community section below. “Nonverbal systems are closely tied to ethnicity- in fact, they are of the essence of ethnicity” (Hall 1976, p. 71). My mother has mastered the skill of saying something without really saying it. This type of communication is the embodiment of low-context communication which is often associated with more ethnic communities. “A culture’s dominant communication styles are linked to cultural values. People from collectivistic cultures tend to use high-context communication to preserve harmony in their groups (Gudykunst, cited by Panina and Kroumova 2015, p. 1) and maintain the face of oneself and others” (Panina and Kroumova 2015, p. 1). In the particular case of my mother and her attempts to guilt us into filial piety, her high-context communication manifests in the form of recounting several anecdotes of the many people she knows or is related to in some form (as our community and the gossip it spurs is mostly her frame of reference) and relaying what to her are nightmare stories she hears from relatives and friends of the divine repercussions of those who did not abide by this obligation to a parent. Much like the Sarakatsans, my mother believes strongly in a metaphysical energy and she links this to religion or specifically Allah, therefore she and most other Arabs believe in concepts such as a higher power, the devil (Campbell 1964, p. 154), a divine justice, the evil eye (Campbell 1964, p. 165) and a “prophylactic wrath of God” (Campbell 1964, p. 167) just as the Sarakatsans. Often times Arabs will attribute events of fortune and even misfortune to divine judgment, and this is something my mom is known to do frequently. Sarakatsans also share this line of belief: “It is thought that God often punishes a man in his children, a belief which finds expression in another proverb, ‘The sins of parents torment the

children’.”⁴ Furthermore, the evil eye and the consequences and potential power of the evil eye represent a common theme in the Arab culture. It is a widely-held belief that the risk of an evil eye can exist or come from anywhere, even those from whom you’d expect it least.

Another similarity between the Sarakatsans and the Arabs in regards to parents and children is the expectation of defined gender roles placed upon the children as they grow. The boys are groomed to learn and take over the ways of their father while the girls are trained to follow the footsteps of their mother (Campbell 1964, p. 156). Similarly, the husband and wife have respectively defined roles that complement each other in their function: the mother is the nurturer while the father is the disciplinarian.

The intimacy of the relationship is antithetical to any very strong element of authority.

Whatever ability a mother possesses to make a child of any age conform to her wishes, is the result of a response to her free and unquestioning love and acceptance. Unmotivated love is the true basis of the bond between a woman and her children. Whereas the relationship of the father with his children is characterized, ideally at least, by respect; but in this there is the hint of the external sanction of the father’s power, and the child’s fear of it (Campbell 1964, p. 167).

Although my mother had a very strong presence domestically in terms of her authority, my father was the ultimate disciplinarian. In times where my mother felt she was losing control, specifically my rebellious later years of “childhood” and living under my parents’ roof, my father was there to take the reins and implement ultimate authority and parental control. However most of his time and energy were applied towards his role as the breadwinner or provider;

⁴ Not a demotic proverb but often quoted by the Sarakatsans (cited by Campbell 1964, p. 167).

rarely did he wish to be bothered with domestic matters. A traditional Arab man aims to have a copasetic and smooth-running home with little to any adversity that may cause him stress. He expects the mother to handle this and only call on him upon a dire need for reinforcement.

6 Patronage

6.1 Community

Arabs are a collectivist and ethnocentric people whose characteristics as a group of people resembles those of the Sarakatsans in several significant ways, not the least of which is the contradictory and complex role the community plays in the culture as it is needed by people not only to serve as a leisure and a social supplement which also contributes to wellness but also to serves as a medium through which honor of a family is determined. Campbell says, "Honour is an aspect of the integrity and social worth of the family as this is judged by the community" (1964, p. 193) and "her honour depends upon the reputation which the community is willing to concede, not upon the evidence of facts in any case difficult to determine" (1964, p. 270). This mentality is prominent within traditional Arab culture. Because of its function, the presence of and involvement within the Arab and Sarakatsan community is necessary although it acts as source of control therefore fear for most people because of its potential power, for no family wishes to be tainted with the slightest threat to their reputation and honor. For an immigrant whose world is usually split between his/her culture at home and an opposite culture at work/school, this culture of valuing honor and reputation exists mainly within the ethnic/native culture meaning it is more ethnocentric. When it comes to an immigrant's experience, the traditional Arabs keep foreign communities or in this case the natives i.e. Americans in my case at a safe distance. Westerners and Americans in particular

have a more individualistic culture which is in stark contrast with the collectivist Arab culture, therefore traditional Arabs tend to stick to one another and remain tight-knit in terms of expanding past their own cultural horizons however as the generations pass, there seems to be an emergence of more reformed Arabs who find themselves somewhere in the middle of a spectrum. Every Arab family has one or two black sheep in the family who have fallen off the Arab spectrum entirely and transformed into full American, denying and avoiding their roots and all things Arab. In many of these cases, the culture and generational clash combined conflated to cause enough trauma to steer the fully reformed Arab Americans clear and far enough as much as they can help it. These stories become legendary and are relayed amongst those whom partake in gossip, which is a big factor in the community and works as the very instrument or tool through which the honor is tainted.

Arabs interact and socialize with other Arabs regularly, however this is usually in the form of having mint tea at someone's house. Rarely does this quality time/socializing take the form of bars/restaurants or other public places. Traditional and less reformed or Westernized Arabs prefer to spend company at different families' homes' because most of the time, they have the means to create their own familiar atmosphere, such as if the family has the means, they make sure to enjoy the luxury of satellite television so that they can stream Arabic television/channels. As mentioned, mint tea and also Turkish coffee are usually both served, along with a dessert of some sort. Many families invite other families over for entire meals, in which case the tea-coffee-dessert ritual comes after the meal. Very similarly to the Sarakatsans, the matter of who invites whom is very symbolic, as it represents not only the dynamics but the

politics of those involved- another example of the high-context feature of the Arab community which is a characteristic of collectivist cultures (Gudykunst et al. 1996, p. 510).

This tendency of Arabs to remain ethno-centric and limit their voluntary social interaction with non-Arabs parallels Campbell's assertion that Sarakatsans' "hostility to villagers is not only a question of conflict of interests but also a difference of values" (Campbell 1964, p. 213).

Growing up an Arab Muslim in the United States, my siblings and I were constantly reminded that Americans were different than us in their values and interests. General panic lingered constantly that we would somehow become infused and corrupted or swayed by American values and replace ours with theirs.

6.2 Honor

Honor killings were and remain rampant in Arab countries as well as other parts of the world. Honor killings are still very much practiced today, despite the progress Arabs have made in weeding out the more what mainstream considers today senseless and outdated traditions. However as recent as in 2019 women are being murdered and gruesome and horrifying deaths in the name of honor (Outrage over alleged honor killing sparks Palestinian legislation 2020). Honor killings are also practiced widely amongst Sarakatsans. (Campbell 1964, p. 199). Honor as it is viewed and portrayed in the Sarakatsan culture resembles many of the prominent themes as they relate to honor in the Arab culture, including the expectations placed upon women and sexual shame.

The quality required of women in relation to honour is shame, particularly sexual shame. Subjectively the woman's sexual shame is not simply a fear of external sanctions; it is an instinctive revulsion from sexual activity, an attempt in dress,

movement, and attitude, to disguise the fact that she possesses the physical attributes of her sex. Maidens must be virgins, and even married women must remain virginal in thought and expression...she protects her honour most effectively by conforming in every outward aspect of her deportment to a code of sexual shame. The woman who succeeds in this is honourable and honoured. (Campbell 1964, p. 270).

However, women who are not honorable are the notorious proverbial black sheep in the family and they are gossiped about endlessly amongst local and known communities in the Arab culture. It is this very talk and absent-shaming that traditional Arab families live to avoid and therefore this notoriety propels the honor killings in most cases. "Anthropological literature claims that offenses against 'ird [honor] are only punished when they become public knowledge." (Ginat 1982, p. 184). Therefore, honor or 'ird is dependent upon the community as discussed previously. The gossip is not limited to one gender for as Ginat points out, "Men gossip no less than women" (1982, p. 196).

In as far as community talk can reach, gossip is a powerful tool which has the potential to either raise or lower an Arab woman's position in society and how highly she is held in regard socially in her family and within her community. Given the importance of this qualification, Arab females generally take great caution in terms of how they carry themselves lest they be perceived as sexual creatures. As mentioned above in dynamics between parents and children and the respect expected upon children towards parents, sex is considered a taboo subject and therefore avoided at all costs and this is especially true with respect to females for reasons touched on in Campbell's quote above regarding sexual shame. It didn't take long for me to catch on while growing up that I was not to discuss or touch upon matters of sex around family

or Arab community. Traditional Arab females are taciturn if not completely mute when it comes to topics of sex with many married women choosing to speak in code amongst their own friends and circles when discussing sex, lest it be relayed or disclosed to others that they openly divulge such morally and socially reprehensible topics.

The kind of shame is a quality that is thought to descend in the female line from mother to daughter, but its loss always implicates the honour of the men of the family, reflecting on the manliness of the husband, and, more generally, on the whole social personality of brothers and, particularly, sons...Clearly manliness and shame are complementary qualities in relation to honour (Campbell 1964, p. 271).

This type of mindset was prevalent in our upbringing whether we were living in the United States or Jordan. The pressure and burden is especially placed upon females of the family as they are considered to be the “objects of honor” (Aboulhassan and Brumley 2018) and this was a notion that I wholeheartedly rejected and fought against regularly growing up, especially after I moved back to the Jordan the first time at the age of 12 (since being born in Amman and staying only for a few months), at which point I had already had significant exposure to the polar opposite Western ways of American culture by attending American public schools and these views and mindsets I believe influenced me and resonated more with me as they were comparatively and significantly less rigid and more progressive, especially as it related to views of proper decorum for females. My two brothers, who are younger than me by 9 years and 7 years respectively, were not only allowed a considerably more amount of freedom than their older sisters, but they were in fact encouraged by my parents to date, and were not bound by the curfews and restrictions that my sister and I were tethered to. It was

these pronounced discrepancies that I found to be questionable and unjust as I believed that genders were not to have double standards and that I was deserved more freedom than my brother 7 years my junior. I personally believe that my exposure to Western society for the first twelve years of my life, along with the type of personality that I have led me to be very skeptical of the values which we were expected to accept and blindly follow. How was it that even though I was older, I had to oblige by many more rules and regulations including stricter curfews, and a much more closely monitored social life in terms of places I went and friends I made? As a female raised in the United States up until this point, I was confused by this scenario as I found it to contradict the values and beliefs to which I more closely related, despite being raised in an Arab-American environment. Furthermore, my brothers started to develop mindsets that led them to believe that they had control over my sister and me. Their honour and that of their family's became an extremely important factor and weighed heavily on their minds, bearing a striking resemblance to the way in which the Sarakatsans value honor: "Honour is something which most families are presumed to have, but which they may very easily lose if they do not guard it with all their resources of courage and self-discipline." (Campbell 1964, p. 272). In one specific instance, my brothers were expressing to my parents, my sister and me the frustrations they felt when we would leave our homes wearing short-sleeves and other types of attire they considered to be disgraceful and conspicuous to the Arab community and public. What I found to be equally infuriating if not more was the pride my parents seem to have at the time watching their "young boys" develop a traditional Arab stance, despite any Western influence to which they had been exposed. This personal example supports Aboulhassan's and Brumley's assertion that "reputation extends beyond the

individual. Cultural norms expect women to sustain the reputation of their family, ignoring personal conditions and acting on forms of self-sacrifice to benefit the family” (2019, p. 643) and it parallels the Sarakatsan views and attitudes towards honor. The descriptions of how big a role the system of social values and the themes of honor and pride play in guiding the behavior and dictating the lifestyles of the communal life bears a striking resemblance to the characteristics of the communal life and social systems of Arabs.

7 Conclusion

The vast amount of resemblances between the Sarakatsan and traditional Arab culture provide testimony to the long-term and influential effects of culture despite constantly evolving circumstances and changing times. Al-kandari and Gaither outline resistance to change or attachment to history as one of the five primary cultural values to study Arab culture using the cultural-economic mode (2011, p. 268). Most Arabs live in an urban setting and no longer shepherd as a means of survival or livelihood, however as this paper reveals, many of these same practices and ways of life are still applied today by families despite having moved to and been exposed to the West.

Keesing (1974) argues that culture provides its members with an implicit theory about how to behave in different situations and how to interpret others' behavior in these situations. He contends that culture is shared in 'its broad design and deeper principles', but 'that not every individual shares precisely the same theory of the cultural code' (p. 89). Members of cultures learn their implicit theories of their cultures when they go through the socialization process (Gudykunst et al. 1996, p. 512).

One of the more distinctive features of these cultures is their collectivism: the Gudykunst et al. study the effects of independent self construals and individualistic values and interdependent self construals and collectivistic values and whether or not they mediate the influence of cultural individualism-collectivism on the use of low-context communication and high-context communication respectively. For Arabs, high-context communication is the primary type of

communication and this proclivity coupled with the collectivist feature of the Arab society plays aptly into Gudykunst et al.'s premise that "individualism-collectivism has a direct effect on communication styles and an indirect effect that is mediated through self construals and values". In this paper, the collectivism and high-context communication are recurring themes as these features play a significant role in shaping the Arab culture along with those distinguishing features that are analogous with those of the Sarakatsan culture.

A significant example of one of these analogous features is the weight given to the community gossip and the power it has over individuals and their lives. In Aboulhassan and Brumley's work, it was found that "most women stated that reputation is an inescapable social reality" (2019, p.643) and that reputation is gendered, which is also the case with the Sarakatsans as Campbell discovered (1964). This particular feature is an example of how culture and religion in fact contradict one another as it is strictly forbidden in the Islamic religion to gossip or backbite, and is in fact likened to cannibalism (Islam Warns About the Dangers of Gossip and Backbiting, 2020) which lends credence to the argument that religion is ruled out as far as being the basis for the Arab lifestyles. Therefore, the conditioned contention that what differentiates us Arab Muslims and our cultural norms from the rest of society is our Arab Muslim identity in itself bears no foundation as the Greek Sarakatsans are neither Arab nor Muslim yet share an outstanding common ground of cultural qualities.

This implication leads to the ability to explore other potential correlations such as the Mediterranean roots of both peoples, as a basis for these cultures' analogous traits. Furthermore, the common ground of shepherding or Bedouin roots of the Arab society

paralleled by the Sarakatsan shepherding lifestyle can be considered as a strong contender to tie these sets of similarities together as a prospective correlation. As mentioned, Arabs have an established trait of preserving tradition along with an attachment to history and this feature builds the argument that another prospective contender tying the cultural traits of the two societies together is the time factor. Essentially the two cultures compared have a significant time discrepancy as Campbell's work was in 1964 and much of the analogous traits of the Arab culture to which it is compared are more contemporary. As an antiquated culture, Arab Muslims in a sense can be linked chronologically-speaking to the Sarakatsans back in 1964. This chronological overlap would support Mintzberg's theory (1979, p. 228-230) that the age of the organizations factors into explaining the sets of similarities among them, and thrusts forward and into the spotlight the Arab culture's roots of antiquity and its characteristic of preserving traditions, ritualistic customs and lifestyles. These are mere suggestions based on the comparative research conducted, but are sufficient in providing incentive and laying the groundwork for further in-depth research exploring the source of the two people's analogous cultural traits, considering the inference that religion and ethnic identity have been ruled out in light of these findings.

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