Research Paper: Sources of Conflict in Pastoral Lands: A Case Study in the Milan tribe in the North-West Region crossMark of Iran



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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Sociologically, conflict is a "struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources". Land, as a most valuable asset and a source of wealth and power, a basis for livelihood, a subject for geopolitical purposes, a matter of territorial importance, and a substance for cultural identity, is introduced as a subject of conflict in communal pastoral lands of the Milan nomadic tribe in North-west part of Iran. Three actors are recognized in the field that have conflict over the lands; the State, nomads, and peasants. The main objective of this article is to understand contradictory interaction among the actors and analyze the source and dynamics of social conflict among them. To pursue this objective, theories of conflict including Dahrendorf (1959) and the differentiated meaning system approach are adopted.

Methods: Applying the Qualitative method, six sub-tribes from Milan (located in winter pastures) and three peasantry villages (located in summer pastures) were selected as samples, and deep semistructured interviews were conducted.

Results: According to results, it is revealed that conflicts are concentrated around economic, historical, and political incentives, but differentiated meaning systems are also the source of conflict and inconsistencies among the actors.

Conclusion: Our study showed that pastures had a variety of meanings and values for actors: for the State, pastures had political, environmental, and economic importance while for peasants, they merely had economic importance and for nomadic groups, economic, cultural (identity), and territorial factors were prime impetuses. For actors, sources of conflicts, their solutions, and reconciliation strategies are also different and in most cases, they are contradictory.

Keywords:

Conflict, Perceptions, Milan, **Pastures**

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1. Introduction

ran with its unique geography is most suitable for migratory nomadic form of subsistence and has been a country of nomads throughout its history. The power and political influence of nomadic tribes in the Iranian political arena was so great that from the 11th to 19th centuries, "with the exception of Safavids (1501-1722) who themselves were not nomadic but whose access to power was aided by nomadic tribes, all dynasties [eleven out of the total twelve dynasties] had nomadic tribal origins" (Moghadam, 1996, p. 20). Even several of Iran's royal houses ascended the throne through tribal power (Issawi, 1971, p. 4).

Sharing the power with tribal authorities was not pleasant at all for central governments and nationalists of contemporary Iran; so, "the suppression of the tribes was an indispensable element of their larger project: the construction of a modern, centralized state, with a culturally homogeneous population" (Cronin, 2007, p. 16). In the white Revolution of the 1960s and afterwards, the Islamic Revolution of 1979, the States captured the pastures of tribal chiefs completely, demolished the chieftaincies entirely, and leased the lands to individual nomads. But, on the other hand, peasants in some regions also seized the pastures in the absence of chiefs without any official permission for grazing.

As a matter of fact, in the chieftaincy system, the chief was an unchallenged authority in relation to pastoral lands and the only source of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. In the case of any deviance, he was the sole person who decided about the issue. Therefore, the management of pastoral lands was such a concentrated and integrated system, but due to the subsequent events, the State substituted the chiefs. Henceforth, a complex and truly vague form of interaction appeared among the actors; in the previous system, the land had a specific owner (the chief), but after the decay of the system, the ownership of pastoral lands has been declared as national but utilization of them has demonstrated a situation of ambiguity. According to reports, tensions occurred between tribes, peasants, and the State around the pastoral lands and led to severe problem.

This work studies Milan as one of the most notable nomadic tribes of Iran who have migrated between summer and winter pastures for a long time. Due to the existence of conflicts in the region over the pastures, it was important for us to understand the sources of discontent among the actors to identify the phases of evolving relationships between adversaries, and to study the very nature, causes, and dynamics of the conflicts. However, the main objective in studying Milan is organized around the following initial question:

What are the sources and dynamics of conflict among the main actors of Milan's pastoral lands?

For probing the question, we took a political position in social anthropology and considered conflict theories of Dahrendorf (1959) in sociology and social cognitive theory in the field of social psychology which focuses primarily on differentiated meaning systems.

2. Literature Review

The bulk of literature in Iran confirmed the approximate failure of settlement projects and the resurgence of migration by nomads and increase of pressure over pastoral lands after settlement (Shateri & Hajipour, 2012; Abdollahi, 2007; Tavakoli & Zia, 2007; Mahdavi, Rezaei & Ghadiri, 2007; Rezvani & Derikvand, 2006) Additionally, most evaluations also presented a condition of severe degradation due to overloading of the pastures by stakeholders (Esmaili Verdanjani, 2003; Shahraki & Barani, 2012; Moein-oddin, 1993; Salampour, Yazdanipour & Khederli, 2018). The human nature of degradation in pastoral lands and the socioeconomic factors such as severe dependence of nomads on pastures, poverty of the region, one-dimensionality of policies, marginalization of stakeholders from rangeland management, lack of knowledge on pastoral laws, and stakeholders' greed, have more precisely shaped the content of Iranian literature on the pastures, but footprints of climate change can also be traced in this issue (Asqarnezhad & Heydari, 2017; Ghasemi et al., 2017; Karimi & Dehkordi, 2016). Very few Iranian researchers have considered the conflict in pastoral lands. For them, stakeholders are in conflict due to differentiated interest systems. The existence of conflict around natural resources highly affects the subsistence of villagers and sometimes obliges them to migrate from the region (Ghasemi, Dehkordi & Ebrahimi, 2018; Ghasemi & Dehkordi, 2017).

The literature review shows that land ownership is an important issue in common resources in most parts of the world. In most parts, there is a competition over land between farmers and grazers. Grazers claim that farmers encroach on grazing lands and farmers claim that grazers frequently drive their cattle into farms, streams, and rivers to graze or drink the water (Asong, Anchang, & Shu, 2016; Neudert, Didebulidze & Beckmann, 2020).

In some cases, due to ownership of lands, villagers are those who created access and withdrawal rules for mobile livestock keepers, but still, the interaction is partly a source of conflict between them (Neudert, Didebulidze & Beckmann 2020). Conflicts over natural resources are sometimes so hostile that cause problems for people in peripheries. Pas in his research shows that people in frontiers of Samburu [in Kenya] do not live there anymore due to conflicts between the Samburu and pastoral Borana and Turkana communities (Pas, 2018). Oyama believes that "traditionally, nomadic herders and farmers living in villages establish mutually beneficial relationships. Although farmer-herder relationships have historically involved periodic violent conflicts, they are also characterized by symbiotic, nonviolent interactions" (Oyama, 2014). In some studies, land management policies (political and economic management of common grazing lands) are presented as the source of pressure on pastoral lands (van Dijik & Haler, 2016). Lack of information on pastoral laws among pasture users, pasture committees, enterprises, district and national administration, etc. is another source of conflict; therefore, training and awareness-raising campaigns are the core of the prevention and response to different conflict types (Mestre, Ibrahimova & Azhibekov, 2018).

Theoretical Debates

Without tracing back into purely theoretical ideas of conflict in the works of Hegel, Marx, Spencer, or other thinkers, we refer to the application of the idea in recent urban studies by American thinkers of the Chicago School during the 1920s and 1930s. They used ecological concepts such as human ecology, diversity, abundance, competition, and the struggle for survival, in their analysis of urban issues (Lutters & Ackerman, 1996; Athens, 2013; Kivisto, 2015). "Cities for them have always been centers of conflict, change, and transformation... Cities are revealed as the result of a historical process full of contradictions, conflicts, and struggles" (Misoczky & Misoczky de Oliveira, 2018).

Theoreticians of conflict "generally see power as the central feature of society, rather than thinking of society as held together by collective agreement concerning a cohesive set of cultural standards, as functionalists do" (Allan, 2007, p. 213). According to conflict theories, as power initially derives from scarce resources such as material means of production, capital, socio-political status, and so on, and as these resources have been distributed unequally, therefore power has an unequal distribution too.

Resources –material or immaterial – resulting in power are not been distributed abundantly. Due to their attraction and scarcity, many try to seize them. Therefore, "A shortage [in terms of economics] occurs when the quantity demanded is greater than the quantity supplied" (Heyne, Boettke, & Prychtiko, 2005, p. 109). Here the value of things is highlighted so that the amount of scarcity as the central criteria indicates the value things have. Scarcity and value here are linked to conflict so that any shortage of strategic resources such as oil, raw materials, land, water, etc., can unleash bloody conflicts among the nations and communities (Allio, 2020). This is true in a general sense but there is a difference regarding the concept of value between social relationships and economics. Georg Simmel in his glorious work The Philosophy of Money explores the ways objects gain value. "Value, for Simmel, is never an inherent property of objects but is a judgment made about them by subjects" (Appadurai, 1986, p. 3). Distance between objects and subjects is, in fact, the source of value (Singh, 2016). It means that the closer the objects are the lesser the values they have and vice versa.

Anyhow, what is important is that people are always in a competition (positively or negatively) to acquire valuable things and resources to get more social power. This is an inherent characteristic of all behaviors which arise from the scarcity of means to achieve given ends. It is 'rationality' of humankind that "is best conceptualized as any activity or institution primarily concerned with the production and distribution of material goods, activities, and institutions with... stark inequalities in the control of productive assets" (Klein & Lee, 2019).

Sociologists have always considered competition for scarce rewards or resources in definitions. Boulding defined conflict as a "struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power, and resources" (Jeong, 2008, p. 5). They insist that societies can be better understood if we realize that different groups have different interests and the relationships among them usually concern power and unequal distribution of power resources (Robert, 2009, p. 42). According to Dahrendorf, the distribution of power is the crucial determinant of social structure. He defines power as 'the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests' (Wallace & Wolf, 1986, p. 114).

There is intergroup and intra-group conflict. "Conflict within a group ...may help to establish unity or to re-es-

tablish unity and cohesion where it has been threatened by hostile and antagonistic feelings among the members" (Coser, 1956, pp. 151-57). Conflicts arising between members of a group when some seek to accomplish their objectives, are called intergroup conflicts while "intragroup conflict is defined as the process that emerges when group members experience differences or incompatibilities" (Tafvelin, Keisu, & Kvist, 2020). Gluckman also believes that conflict among tribal groups has integrative consequences. For him, conflicts in one set of relationships over a wider range of society or through a longer period of time, lead to the reestablishment of social cohesion (Gluckman, 1955, p. 2).

Equilibrium between population size and capacity of food production is a determinant factor in conflict analysis in the Malthusian idea (Green, 2005). Generally, in classical economic theories, it is insisted that the value of goods goes up as they become scarcer. In this case, incentive for their exploitation also increases because the profit potential is much more, and therefore, the competition gets intensified over the goods that are scarce (Gendron & Hoffman, 2009). Collier and Hoeffler argue that most rebellions appear to be linked to the capture of resources. They show that some countries return to conflict repeatedly because conflict generates grievance and grievance generates further conflict, and hence, more resources are obtained (Collier & Hoeffler, 2000).

Perceptions are important in conflict analysis. A type of perception that contributes to conflict-promoting interactions is suggested by the social-psychological concept of relative deprivation. "Conflict occurs when there is a perceived blocking of important goals, needs, or interests of one person or group by another person or group. When this occurs, people tend to respond with the intention to remove the block in order to satisfy the need" (Vecchi, 2011). Our perceptions are highly affected by the socio-cultural environment we live in so, as Edwards also indicated, cultural values have specific effects on the perceptions we have of each other and situations (Edwards, 1941). Provocations can be sources of conflict too. "In provocation, there is intentional or unintentional harm to other persons or groups. Harm might take the form of insult, deception, thievery, physical injury, etc." (Nye, 1973, pp. 83-84).

3. Methodology

Study area

West Azerbaijan (Figure 1) with its mountainous area, has about 13 nomadic tribes that migrate between summer and winter lands. Figure 2, the small map, shows the territories of these tribes across the province in different colors.

The northern part of West Azerbaijan is the main nomadic region of the province. According to the 2008 census, the majority of nomadic groups of the province –around 41%- are in this region. The area zoomed out in the following map shows the sample sub-tribes and villages under study in Poldasht, Shot, Maku, and Khoy counties.

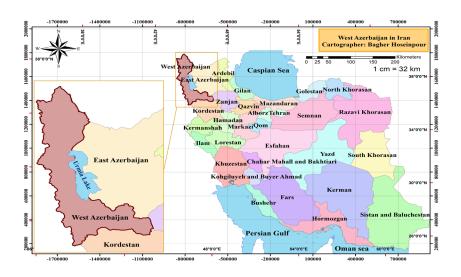


Figure 1. Location of West Azerbaijan in Iran



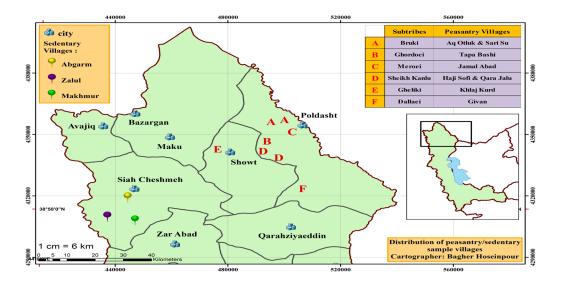


Figure 2. Distribution of the sample villages with respect to their tribal affinities in the region



Assumptions and objectives

- (a) It is assumed that there are three main actors consisting of the State, nomadic tribes, and smallholding peasants in the context of communally used pastoral lands.
- (b) It is assumed that there is a social conflict among the main actors in relation to communally used pastoral lands.

Following these assumptions, the main objective was to find out the resources and mechanisms of social conflict (political, economic, social, emotional, and perceptions: Differentiated Meaning Systems) among the main actors of the pastures of the Milan tribe.

Sampling

As mentioned before, the main actors of pastoral lands were nomadic tribal groups, peasantry groups, and the State. Thus, we were confronted with three social groups quite different from each other. Nomadic tribes were highly segmented communities with clear ties and borders among themselves. For this group, we used the "Maximum Variation Sampling" through which we tried to have representatives from different tribal segments in our inquiries. For the second group, due to the fact that all peasants were not engaged in conflict with nomadic tribes, we used 'Typical Case Sampling' by which only those who had a conflict with nomadic tribes had the chance to be chosen in our sample. And the third actor, the State, on the contrary, was a highly bureaucratic, formal, organized, and dominant institution in the field, so

the best strategy for choosing a sample was the 'Critical Case Sampling'.

Research Techniques, Methods, and Tools

The qualitative method was applied for examining the objectives and accordingly many details were considered including (Rossman & Rallis, 1998):

- a) The phase before entering into the field
- b) The way of entering
- c) Conducting the interviews based on the following strategies:
 - a) Thematizing
 - b) Designing
 - c) Interviewing
 - d) Data analysis:
 - i. Transcribing
 - ii. Analyzing
 - iii. Verifying

4. Findings

This part has been organized in three sections: in the first part, the State, which is responsible for preserving

the pastures and is the sole legal authority in control and management of pastures, will be discussed. The second part discusses nomadic groups of the Milan tribe. They are eligible people who can take their livestock into pastoral lands and utilize them, and finally, the peasants who reside in some villages around the pastoral lands and utilize them despite being prohibited from doing so.

The State

Since the Land Reforms of the 1960s, the State as an ultra-power in nomadic areas replaced the chiefs and achieved authority in the field totally. For the management of the field, it was necessary to establish formal structures (organizations and institutions); therefore, the NRO: Natural Resources Organization (by the Land Reforms) and the NAO: Nomadic Affairs Organization (by the Islamic Revolution) were established to pursue the State policies regarding pastoral lands and tribal groups as the main beneficiaries of those lands. Therefore, these two organizations were set up as the foremost agents of the State in dealing with nomads and peasants as well as the pastoral lands. In this section, we will discuss the interaction they have with two other actors in the field.

Sh. (from the NRO):

The biggest problem we have here is the destruction of pastures... Let me give an example. In 1997 a prediction was made on Makou dam and its life expectancy. The predicted life expectancy was 20 years. It was estimated that after 20 years, 500,000 m3 sediment will be deposited behind the dam. After 10 years (in 2007), experts studied the volume of the deposited sediment behind the dam. They were surprised to find out that there was 2,000,000 m3 sediment deposited behind the dam. It was four times more than the estimations in the middle of the period. This shows that the destruction of pastures and soil is horrible.

As in the quotation above, the environmental destruction is a major problem for the NRO. Using a documented example, the respondent wants to show the intensity of environmental crisis in pastoral lands and its impact on other infrastructures such as dams.

The NAO, from quite a different perspective, cares not about nature, but the nomadic tribal community in general:

Gh. (from the NAO):

Migration causes many problems for nomads and also for us. Now in the modern era, migratory life is meaningless. We try to settle them in some proper sites...

Animal husbandry –in the traditional form –is the main reason for the destruction of pastures according to the NRO. Weak economic structures of the region lead most people to the pastures:

M. (from the NRO):

[Destruction of pastures]... by animal husbandmen is the most important issue. 90% of our peasants are animal husbandmen. In "Chaldiran" city also the main occupation is animal husbandry and agriculture.

H. (from the NAO):

The State is responsible for the destruction of pastures. How is it possible to keep the nomads away from the pastures while they have no choice other than pastures?

Sh. (from the NRO):

We have also organizational problems. Our structures are too weak... so, it is clear that we face shortcomings.

Besides poverty as a reason for nomads' over-utilizing of the pastures, it is impossible for the NRO to control all the pastures. The incompatibility of organizational resources with the size of the activity area makes it difficult to control the pastures efficiently. Expelling tribes and livestock from pastures is a golden dream for the NRO.

Due to the insufficiency of administrative resources for controlling the pastures, they heavily fine those who violate the prohibitions set forth. They believe that by enforcing heavy fines, they will be intimidated, and the number of violators will drop to lower levels.

A basic problem with communally held pastures is their management. For the NRO it would be desirable if a plan could be designed through which only one person made decisions about a piece of pasture.

Sh. (from the NRO):

A pasture must be in one person's hand. With group utilization, it is not possible to improve the pastures quality. Most of the nomads must be settled down.

For Nomadic Affaires Organization, voluntary settlement is the best plan for resolution of the problems. They

try to find proper sites in winter territories that are communally accepted by tribes. Albeit, preparing these sites is not easy, because, in addition to local agreement, there must be adequate farmlands and water resources too.

Nomads

The main actors in pastoral lands, undoubtedly, are nomadic tribal groups. The Milan tribes that have resided in the Poldasht region, often migrate to Chaldiran region pastures to utilize them every year. In so many cases, it happens that families from the Milan tribe who are permanently living in cities such as Maku, Poldasht, Khoy, etc., even take some livestock to summer pastures during the grazing seasons. By the following quotations, we discuss problematic issues they have, or perceive, in relation to pastures and with two other actors.

Father of Khalis, 70:

...they [pastures] were very good. In Yaylaq (summer) and Qishlaq (winter), the pastures were adequate for our animals... but now, we cannot feed them well... In those days, we had definite tribal roads and intermediate stations for settling down... Now there is no path. Everywhere has been cultivated by peasants and we have to move just through the roads. No one is responsible. Some nomads, who try to move their herds on the roads, are in danger of being hit by the cars passing the roads. How can we go there? By plane?! Where are our ancient tribal roads?

Migration routes (tribal roads) were customarily defined as the roads through which tribal groups moved their livestock towards the summer pastures and vice versa, but today, they have been destroyed completely.

Degradation of pastures is another important problem, as they stated. But the fact is that their complaint is not merely about nature, but also livestock starvation indeed. Another point is that they are satisfied with the 1984 grazing permissions.

Since they have lost their right to ranches, peasants still have claims over those lands, but as they are not authorized to utilize them overtly, they use them while nomads are away.

Behnam, 40, nomad:

...To be honest, peasants always bother us. 'Makhmour', 'Sidir', "Khan", 'Yousufs', all of them. For example, at the moment we are not there in yaylaq, and they are busy grazing our lands... We have to hire a watchdog for pastures.

The State is primarily responsible for the problems according to the Milan nomadic tribes. From different dimensions, they attack the State's policies in pastoral lands. In their opinion, the regulations developed by the State are not fair.

Faris, 62, nomad:

Every year, the State receives some money from us for grazing permission but offers nothing in return. Just knows how to fine us for different reasons. [Interviewee got angry and continued]: there is no one to hear and help us. No one wants to remedy our pains.

Nomadic tribes generally believe that settlement is the best solution, provided that adequate farmlands are given to them.

Behnam, 40, nomad:

The capacity of the grazing permission we have is just 450 animals for the entire pasture while we are four families who communally use the pasture. How can 450 animals be sufficient?

The other solution by nomads is the increase of the capacity of grazing permissions; otherwise, they will pave the way for violations. The nomads who have larger herds believe that the State must cancel the permissions of small herds. They say: 'husbandmen of small herds are problematic factors in pastoral lands because they are not as responsible for pastures as we are.

Peasants

Summer pastures are all located in mountainous areas, and the surrounding villages have very small or no agricultural flatlands. The gradient lands cannot be irrigated and only in soft slopes, it is possible to do dry farming. Therefore, the peasants living there tend to use pastoral lands for the purpose of livestock grazing. Meanwhile, pastures, ironically, belong not to them but to migratory tribes. Consequently, inhabitants of the villages confront problems concerning utilizing pastures and consequently their subsistence. The following quotations are related to this group of people's main challenges concerning pastoral lands, nomads, and the State.

Mahir, 60, peasant:

This village once belonged to Haji Jafar (Landlord). After the land reforms, he left us the village and the pastures, but after the Islamic Revolution, we lost the lands...The State seized our pastures and offered them to migratory nomads ...

In interviews with peasants, many details have been declared about the problems that they have for subsistence. They complain about inflation and the pressure it imposes on their life. According to peasants, animal husbandry is a disadvantageous activity today because there is no pasture to feed them. Some have claims over pastures and believe that they once belonged to them but now have been transferred to migratory tribes.

Salam, 49, peasant:

...we are here in cold winters and any other bad condition, but nomads come here in the best time [spring]. They bring their livestock from a very distant place to our neighboring lands while these lands are forbidden for us.

As seen, peasants consider a latent right for themselves in pastoral lands, and therefore, their anxiety arises from this issue.

This statement has an important implication: the State is to blame for offering them (tribes) pastures while they live far from the region and denying peasants access to pastures while they live in the region, and this is an unjust behavior according to them.

Ghotb-addin, 36, peasant:

...all of them are due to poverty. If there were good job opportunities here or if there was, for example, a "Border Market", we would never turn to animal husbandry.

Ghadir, 35, peasant:

...the only way is that the State must bombard the region by chemical bombs. There is a famous proverb that says; 'Unless one dies, the other one will not become alive.'

Aziz, 38, peasant:

...One way is that they must plant new grasses in their pastures to revive them. But, unfortunately, no one does this,.

All peasants asserted that the State is responsible for the issues concerning pastures. In fact, the State is responsible for all options (providing jobs, opening up the borders for smuggling, sacrificing people in favor of pastures or vice versa) and peasants have nothing to do with them. If the State stands by and does nothing, pastures will be completely destroyed.

Not only the material but also differentiated meaning system factors are sources of conflict. As our study revealed, a diverse and yet, incompatible collection of understandings exists among the actors of pastoral lands. Hence, for the explanation of conflicts over communal rangelands, we must go beyond the material incompatibilities and extract contradictory knowledge, understandings, and priorities that involved parties have concerning the matter (Pankhurst, 2003, p. 78; Adams, Brockington, Dyson, & Vira, 2003; Bernard, Duke, Byrne, & Davidson, 2007; Wentura, 2019).

Land as the subject of conflict among the main actors of pastoral lands, potentially, comprises of a variety of values that we discussed before. In the case of our study, the motive(s) for actors to conflict over pastoral lands was in question. Pastures could be valuable for their economic values, or cultural (identity), political and territorial dimensions, or even a combination of these values. Even besides the material value and differentiated meaning system factors, historical barriers and structural orders can trigger conflicts among the groups too.

5. Discussion

In Iranian literature, except for a few cases, there is nothing about the role of conflict in communal pastoral lands. In most studies, the destruction of pastures has been examined from the climatic change point of view or some cliché factors such as mismanagement of pastures, overload, poverty, dependence on livestock, greed, etc. Our research has nothing in common with this group of works. The few others are those that have studied the conflict over natural resources as a factor that undermines the local community. This also differs from the aim of our inquiry; our work is focused not on the impact of conflict on the community, but rather the pasture. The same trace was also found in the literature in English but a bit different; conflict was a subject matter for some researchers of communal lands and using a method similar to ours, they studied the conflict between actors of natural resources and its impact on nature, but still, there is a difference with our work; dynamics of conflict and stress on the mechanisms such as differentiated meaning systems and paradoxes in the State policies are some novel aspects of this research.

Table 1. Summary of findings

Result	Contradictory interests in pastoral lands- Incompatible understandings and perceptions around problem definition, problem analyzing and problem resolution- Chaos in pastures- Over-utilization & destruction of pastures- Conflict and struggle between the actors				
Peasant	 Land has livelihood importance (wealth) 	Land shortage Access to pastures is forbidden Poverty of the region (lack of job opportunities) Inefficiency of State management in pastures	 Loos management of State administrative in pastoral lands Un-just land rules Nomads are foreigners in pastures that must be fired 	Firing the Nomads from pastures Benefit from the right for land use in pastures (for Peasants) Introducing job opportunities in the region	After Land Reforms of 1960s and Islamic Revolution of 1979, and in the absence of Nomadic chiefs and chaos in pastures' ownership, peasants invade into pastures and even captured tribal roads.
Nomad	 Land is territory Land has livelihood importance (wealth) Land is identity 	Limited access to pastures due to legal restrictions Encroachment on pastures Destruction of tribal roads Inefficiency of State management in pastures Poverty of the region (lack of job opportunities)	 Loos management of State administrative in pastoral lands Un-just land rules Peasants are encroachers on pastures 	 Benefit from agricultural lands (for nomads) Firing the peasants from pastures Firing the small scale stakeholders from pastures 	By absence of tribal lords and chiefs in 1960s, Nomads got access to pastures easily. This got more intensity after 1979. In the absence of tribal chiefs, pastures became open access for all groups of stakeholders
State	 Land is national asset Land has environmental importance Land is source of wealth Land has political dimension 	 Degradation of pastures Under-development of Nomadic tribes 	 Over-utilization of pastures by Nomads & Peasants Migratory form of animal husbandry 	 Arbitrary settlement of migratory Nomads Introduce land use limitations on pastures Use of obligatory methods for controlling the pastures 	Detribalization Sedentarization of Nomads Nationalization of pastures Interstate paradoxes: establishment of organizations and institutions after the Land Reforms of 1960s and Islamic Revolution of 1979 that had quit paradoxical missions; for instance, NAO.& NRO.
	Interests in lands	Problem Defini- tion	Problem Analyze	Problem Resolution	Historical events

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As is summarized in Table 1 and illustrated in Figure 3 we have three actors in the field of pastures who have specific perceptions about the lands and about each other. Their interests are also different and mostly antithetical and accordingly they experience conflict over the pastoral lands.

Our study revealed that pastures have a variety of meanings and values for actors: for the State, pastures have political, environmental, and economic importance while for peasants, they merely have economic value, and for nomads, economic, cultural (identity), and territorial factors are prime impetuses. Therefore, despite the differentiation of incentives, the economic source

is the common item over which actors are in conflict. This is not to say that in the absence of any common incentives, conflict will not appear. A field such as the pastures here can be an arena for conflict based on the differentiation of incentives too. As we mentioned, each one of the actors tries to seize pastoral lands to serve his own interests.

The economic incentive is the most common one and yet the central factor that causes a conflict between the actors. While this capacity is limited, any increase in one's portion will be at the expense of others. Therefore, limitation of pastures concomitant with a greedy desire for utilization of these lands by nomads and peasants, on the one hand, and the State's interventions for protecting pastures on the other hand, in line with our propositions about the economic source of conflict, have led to a condition of severe conflict.

Problem-solving process has generally three stages: At the level of 'problem definition', degradation of pastures is an evident problem for the State, but supporting the nomads is also on the table. Therefore, the main challenge for the State is the preservation of pastures but not at the expense of the community. For nomads, legal restrictions of their access to pastures, encroachment of peasants on their lands, destruction of tribal roads, inefficiency of the State management, the inadequacy of grazing permissions, and lack of job opportunities are the most important issues. For peasants, the same prob-

lems exist. They suffer from landlessness and seriously pursuing the ways that enable them to access (legally or illegally) the pastoral lands.

As it is obvious, each one of the actors' success requires the failure of the other two actors to achieve their objectives, because they are inconsistent: the success of the State in controlling the degradation rate necessitates the reduction of the size of herds and expelling so many stakeholders from pastures while nomads can attain their ends through secured and convenient ways; security for them means to intercept the peasants from pastures and by convenience, they refer to a condition in which they could easily migrate to the pastures without any interferences. For the third actor (peasants) also success means gaining legal property rights over pastoral lands.

Furthermore, there are divergent opinions at the level of 'problem analysis'. Actors identify the source of problems differently: over-utilization is a fundamental factor that results in the degradation of pastures according to the State while for nomads, it is the State that causes the problems. Loose management of the State administration predisposes the peasants to encroach the pastoral lands. For nomads, administrative rules are not realistic and just produce a variety of problems. In the same manner, peasants also direct accusations towards the State's rules concerning land distribution.

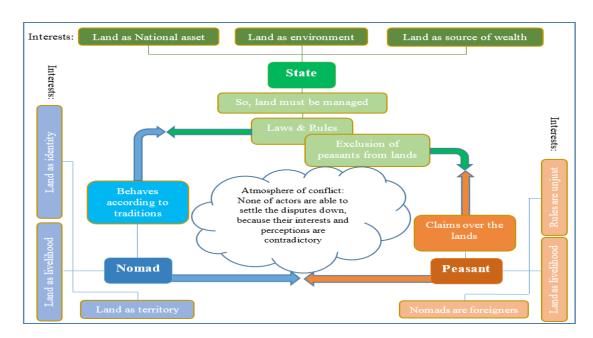


Figure 3. Schematic model of relationships among variables and concepts of the research

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At the level of 'problem resolution', there are also heterogeneous methods among the actors. The state pursues a path in which arbitrary settlement of migratory nomads has crucial importance but besides, it follows a path to restrict utilization of pastures and enjoy the advantage of heavy fines as well.

Solutions for nomads are somehow different. They believe that farming is good and complementary to animal husbandry if it (farmland) is offered by the State, but animal husbandry is also necessary. The best way is to expel the owners of small herds from the pastures and lead them to other forms of economic activities and support the rest by an efficient governmental regulation and control of the pastures.

In the case of peasants, the solution was concentrated on redistribution of lands. They have land claims over the pastures and object the leasing of pastures in their peripheries to nomads. According to them, the only solution is firing the nomad groups from the pastures through the settlement projects and offering the pastoral lands to the local dwellers of the region.

Based on the data we presented, it is evident that the main actors of pastoral lands have incompatible understandings and perceptions of reality. Their ideas and opinions are so biased towards their group interests. They observe the facts so that they may secure their own interests in the field. In this sense and in line with our proposition about the meaning systems, the conflict over pastoral lands is partly rooted in differentiated meaning systems between the actors, but additionally, historical events or obstacles may create or intensify conflicts among the groups too. The literature review and interviews done in this study indicated the impact of a series of historical events on the current conflict among the actors in pastoral lands.

And finally, as mentioned in the previous pages, tribal confederations had always had a role in Iran's political arena and had claims to power. Historically, it was a dream of Iranian states to control and diminish the tribal confederacies' power because they pestered the States with invasions or disobediences. Reza Khan was the first statesman whose main priority was weakening tribal powers in the recent century. His detribalization strategy is well-known as "Takht-e-qapo" through which many tribal lords were killed or arrested and their tribes were fragmented across the country and then, sedentarization became the prime impetus for him. For the establishment of a modern State, the same strategy was pursued after him to the extent that Land Reforms of the 1960s were

introduced to dispossess the landlords of their properties. For pre-revolution States, tribes were political organizations that questioned the authority of the central states, but after the Islamic Revolution, and as Tapper stated, tribes were officially redefined as cultural rather than political groups (Tapper, 2011). From that historical point on, revolutionary states no longer felt threatened by nomadic tribes. Their nature has been transformed into a cultural-economic existence with no claims to political power. The fact is that the State-nomad contradiction did not disappear by removing the political dimension of tribal groups; it simply changed into an economic factor. Distribution of lands for them, either through legislative reforms or illegal seizure by individual nomads, was not a just act. Therefore, many nomads failed to receive any pieces of land, some received only small pieces and some others acquired larger shares. Therefore, nomads raised claims over the pastoral lands and invaded them by force when they received no proper response to their demands. And the pasture was the only side that lost the game.

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Conflict of Interest

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