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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

INTRODUCTION 1

Chapter

I. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE 7

Review of the Literature: Urbanization and the Position of Women
The Model of the Social Field and its Components
Liberation and the Sexual Definition of Roles

II. THE URBAN NICHE 32

Coastal Settlement and the Growth of Accra
Expansion: the Site of Adabraka
Components of Neighborhood Life
Foci of Daily Life in Adabraka
The Urban Compound

III. THE URBAN FOLK 74

A Profile of Differences
The Sample
The Basis for Oneness: A Cultural System of Attitudes

IV. NEW SOCIAL IDENTITIES: OPTIONS FOR CHANGE 136

Education
Occupation
Income
Draw of the City

V. PRIMARY IDENTITY RELATIONSHIPS: THE TRADITIONAL 194

The Interplay of the Physical and the Social Structures
The Daily Routine
The Wife
The Mother
The Member of an Extended Family

VI. NEW IDENTITY RELATIONSHIPS: THE TRADITIONAL CONFIRMED . . 265

Relationships with Women -- As Neighbor
Relationships with Women -- As Friend
Relationships with Women -- As Rival
Relationships with Men -- As "Friend" and As Wife
Alternate Life-Styles: Ideal Versus Real

VII. CONCLUSION 327

APPENDICES 343

I. Methodology
II. Schedule of Questions

NOTES TO THE CHAPTERS 364

BIBLIOGRAPHY 378

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure

1 Storied House-Type 47

1a Floor-plan 48

2 Storied House-Type 47

3 Bungalow House-Type 49

3a Floor-plan 49

4 Chamber-Hall House-Type 50

4a Floor-plan 50

5 Sample Compound 51

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1 Distribution of Census Population in the Five Sample Areas . . 79

2 Ethnic Integration in Compounds (Census of Female Residents in Sample Areas 80

3 Birthplaces and Respective Dominant Ethnic Groups of the Census Population 83

4 Detailed History of Ethnic Groups Represented 87

5 Age and Level of Education 90

6 Correlation of Occupation and Ethnicity 91

7 Listing of Occupations and Their Proportions 93

8 Employers of the Women 94

9 Distribution of Educational Background by Age 143

10 Distribution of Educational Background by Ethnicity 144

11 Distribution of Occupation by Ethnicity 158

12 Distribution of Educational Background by Occupation 159

13 Distribution of Occupation by Income 179

14 Room Apportionment Among Sampled Women and Their Room-Mates 204

15 Cross-Tabulation of Occupation by Ethnicity 353

LIST OF MAPS

Map

1 Accra, 1826 40

2 Accra, 1903 40

3 Accra, 1957 42

4 British Townsite of Adabraka 52

5 Street Map of Adabraka 78

6 Census Map of Local Authorities 84

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INTRODUCTION

Anthropological research has typically made short shrift of women. In West Africa, where the context is that of male-dominated authority structures, this is no less true. Here, either the power that women might exercise is ignored, as it does not derive from "legitimate" authority; or, it is non-specific power and therefore exaggerated by the reports. The latter point, the myth of the power of the urban West African women, forms the basis of this dissertation.

In coastal West Africa, and Ghana in particular, the essence of a modernizing society is the diversification of roles and spheres of activity. Men and women have always had their respective roles. The question is: to what degree is an expanding society accomodating to its growing female constituency?

The lure of the urban center is the promise of greater opportunity. The modern system preaches easing of the old constraints and allowance for new freedoms. Thus, with education, an individual gains skills which outfit him for a broader range of employment. Mobility is increased: very often the urban sector holds the key to job opportunities. Contacts with different kinds of people increase. The neutral position of the urban center, the new system of values, the English language all work toward levelling background differences among participants in the developing society.

Members of the urbanizing sector hail from traditional societies,

and they carry with them the old system of norms, values and behaviors. As Foster points out (1965), traditional societies were structurally well-integrated and organized along the lines of lineage. Status was tied to ascriptive criteria of age, sex and lineage origin.

> . . . nearly all groups demonstrated a capacity to compromise between purely ascriptive criteria of recruitment and achievement criteria of personal fitness for the role . . . however . . . to a greater or lesser degree achievement recruitment has received an explicit ideological charter in the Western world, a factor that was virtually absent in traditional society. (Foster 1965:32)

This applied almost equally in all sectors of life. None of these societies gave rise to urban groupings on their own. This was fostered by colonial governments, who also introduced a Western system of institutional differentiation and recruitment, awarding individuals on the basis of achievement.

Thus, living in the city took on the appearance of Western style, without relinquishing attitudes and behaviors fundamental to traditional lifeways. The Western introductions have neither displaced the old nor been well-incorporated. There is selected espousal and practice of old and new, which generates contradictions. The power of selection lies in the hands of the authority structure.

In point of fact, in Accra, Ghana, the women have the worst of two worlds. No matter where they come from, when they come to the city they are forced into the same old roles, sexually-defined: mother, wife, mistress, girlfriend. Their major economic role, much touted in the literature, is also traditionally female -- that of the market woman. The expansion of liberties and opportunities advertised for all who come is closed to them. But to exacerbate matters, they are robbed of the

traditional buffers which supported them in the hometown. Formerly, they may have been cloistered, but they lived within a culture of women, of family and familiars. In the new environment, they live amongst strangers, isolated from family. There may be a greater number of arenas for expression, but they tend to be closed to women. The single woman can intrude herself just so much before she is labelled; and a married woman, once the romance is over, is stuck away. The consciousness of monogamy relieves her of the hassles of co-wives, generally; however, in an as yet polygynous society, monogamy has functionally associated with it customs of mistresses, girlfriends and prostitutes. A woman does not have equal access to education. Her adult female role is tied to her being tied to a man, with evidence of offspring.

Therefore, the women must adjust their expectations. Being thrown together with other women, from far-flung places, in the daily compound living situation, they must learn new forms of interaction. And being deprived of the rights preached to new-comers, finding themselves dependent upon men for status and for basic economic subsistence, they learn to manipulate the system of relationships with men. The overt powerlessness of women is adjusted to the values and norms of Establishment West and an insidious strategy used to intrude their interests.

No matter how diverse the backgrounds of the new urbanites, as women, they have more in common than not. They have always had certain roles to fill, without a great deal of leeway. The more Islamized the hometown, the more sequestered the woman, and the more limited her options. Once in the city, however, particularly a non-traditional coastal city like Accra, the mere factor of heterogeneity is confusing.

New situations are inherent to such a situation. A whole new world of opportunity awaits. If, however, the fact of being female is inhibitive, there is nothing that a woman can do "to pass." Her options for achievement revert to being a function of an ascribed role.

This is my thesis. It is a staggering statement. It is based upon fieldwork carried out in a sub-area of Accra, Ghana, from September, 1970, to November, 1971. Adabraka is neither clearly-bounded, isolated nor self-contained in the way that a rural village is. Just as my informants' work, friendships, organizations took them to other parts of the city, so did mine. I visited with families of some of my informants in their hometowns. I left my house open to anyone who wished to visit. I became involved in negotiating family disputes. And, as a single woman, I spent a lot of time with Ghanaian men. Thus, many of my observations are culled from Accra at large, and substantiated by my Adabraka women. (See Appendix I for the specifics of methodology.)

Ultimately, the major focus is a sample of women in this inner-city area. I am not generalizing from Adabraka to Accra, in the sense of Adabraka representing a microcosm of the city at large.[1] Adabraka, however, is a sub-system of it, with linkages to it. It is equipped as a city area, with paved streets, street lights, a few traffic signals, specialized shops in place of, and in addition to, kiosks. The intricacies of the social system of Accra are also reflected in the behaviors and attitudes of Adabraka residents. Thus, the intangibles, such as loyalties, and the tangibles, such as primary institutions, both of which foist cohesion, are lacking. Situational identity is superceded by hometown allegiance, and identification with the people there. When

one's neighbors happen to be of the same hometown, social and spatial differentiation may have a bearing.

Consequently, the protagonists of this study were chosen on the basis of length of residence in Accra.[2] They were approached both formally and informally; alone and in the company of others. They were asked to discuss their options in daily life, both old and new; their relationships with men and women, family and friends; their reasons for coming to the city; the control they possess over the different sectors of their activity; the new roles, uniquely suited to the urban scene, which they have had to learn.

The implication throughout this study is that the change in locale (from rural to urban) and the socio-cultural, political and economic attributes of the city, in concert with the protagonists themselves, have had a measureable impact on the content of roles. As such, the implicit baseline for change is the traditional pattern, as practised in hometown areas. Three sources have been used: the ethnographic literature, as well as archival material; verbal accounts by informants, and assorted others (men as well as women); and visits to traditional areas.

The chapters fall into two major sections: Chapters I, II and III introduce the reader to the problem, as it has been dealt with in the literature, and its theoretical basis; to the physical context of the problem, which includes written and oral historical material, as well as the fieldworker's depiction of the local scene; and to the population, in terms of general demographic characteristics and the code of traditional attitudes which guide their behavior.

Chapters IV, V and VI present an analysis of field data: the

importance of education, occupation and income in the modernizing urban sector, and the reality of their accessibility to the Accra (Adabraka) woman; the fundamental nature of traditional female roles, inhibiting participation in other areas; and the "new" identity relationships, with men and women, primarily carry-overs from the traditional while unfolding in the manner of idealized Western form.

The whole is drawn together in the Resolution and Conclusion, through the ideas articulated by one of the informants and the synthesizing eye of the anthropologist.

CHAPTER I

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Review of the Literature: Urbanization and the Position of Woman

The urban experience has an irreversible impact on newcomers from the bush. Urbanization has been defined as "a process of movement and change; its essence is that it creates the possibility of discontinuity with some pre-existing set of conditions." (Epstein 1967:248) The town's social matrix is new, and its social institutions have little carry-over from the bush. Urbanization has reduced the primacy of traditional institutions, making way for the gradual acceptance of a new system.

In Ghana, Westernization is synonomous with urbanization. As in other parts of Africa, urbanization is a mixed blessing: it has introduced a new system of institutions and values, while the old have not been totally discarded. Selective espousal of both old and new generate contradictions. These emerge on normative and structural levels, but the two systems must not be seen as non-connecting. The differences lie on a continuum and derive from scalar growth.

Gaston Bardet has coined the phrase "urban texture" to connote "the ways of living which are distributed and woven in different ways according to the scale of the community and the social degrees of rhythm, structure and scale." (1961:370) Thus, the essential difference between

traditional and modern societies is one of size. Complexity does not develop out of a void. The traditional societies, despite anthropology's preoccupation with misconceived simplicity and homogeneity (Despres 1968), are complex themselves.

> The argument is that the range of variation of behavior in simple societies is narrower than in 'complex' societies and therefore, the modal forms of behavior are more easily distinguishable. It may well be that the social situations in which a town-dweller interacts are more varied than those in the life of a tribesman, but, so far as sociological analysis is concerned, it seems that the behavior of a townsman, in a given social situation is not likely to be more 'complex' than that of a tribesman in a rural situation . . . In fact, from one point of view, since social relationships in tribal areas are more likely to be 'multiplex,' it may be that from an analytical point of view they are more 'complex' and hence more difficult to analyze. (Mitchell 1966:41)

Once there are more than two traditional groups sharing a common yet neutral ground, the range of interaction simply expands. In the urban setting, populations are larger and more spread out. With an increase in scale, as the society, its groups and individuals extend the width of their relations, the quality of the relations will change. The boundaries of a given society may be judged by the relations directly realized by its inhabitants. With an increase in the range of relations, there is bound to be a decrease in the dependence upon neighbors and contemporaries. (Wilson and Wilson 1945) The expanded populations generate specialized organizations and associations to take over the functions once fulfilled by such groups as tribe and lineage.

Inter-ethnic differences have been acknowledged and accounted for as long as cross-ethnic interaction has existed. The new factor is that the common meeting ground is neutral. Another new and perhaps more crucial factor is creeping Westernization. Urban and rural may not be

discontinuous social systems; however, the proper blending of essential folk beliefs and superficial features of Western life has not yet been reached. There is no uniquely Ghanaian or Accra 'urbanness,' and consequently, no role models either. The old and the new are in juxtaposition: the old not being paid its proper due and yet functioning in an out-of-awareness realm; the new, meanwhile, is accorded the highest of status, but for the sake of appearance. The stranger to the milieu is caught up in the confusion, and at this point in time, this includes everyone.[1]

West African societies are noted for their traditional urbanism. (Viz. G. Balandier 1956; W. Bascom 1955, 1959, 1962; H. Kuper 1965; K. Little 1959, 1965; P. Lloyd 1959; P. Marris 1962; W. Schwab 1965; R. Simms 1965) These societies, however, are predominantly inland. Modern West African urbanism is a product of social changes resulting from Western contact. Thus, the sharp contrasts to which Mitchell speaks between urban and rural life are not out of place along the coast.

The effects of industrialization and commerce are numerous. Rapid population growth, congestion, ethnic diversity, ethnic groups following specific lines of work, a large proportion of strangers, a numerical preponderance of males over females and young over old; small domestic units; tribal diversity in the same housing; men marrying later than women; growth of non-kin associations; concubinage; conflicts in attitudes to marriage; change in status of women; and the growth of a system of stratification based on occupation, income and education, with social status and prestige evaluated in European terms. (Little 1959a:7-11)

Mitchell's observations are clearly appropriate.

> Insofar as most thriving African towns have come into being or are expanding today because of modern commercial and industrial enterprise depending on international trade . . . the focus of sociological interest in African urban studies must be on the way in which behaviour of town-dwellers fits into, and is adjusted to, the social matrix created by the commercial, industrial, and administrative framework of a modern metropolis -- having regard to the fact that most African town-dwellers have been born and brought up in the rural hinterland of the city in which the cultural background is markedly dissimilar from that of the city itself. (Mitchell 1966:38)

Prior to the arrival of the Europeans, Accra possessed no urban tradition. The Ga are indigenous to the downtown area, and yet they seem the least urbanized of Accra's citizenry.[2] They are urban insofar as they live in high density and within an urban sphere. In actuality, their native neighborhoods lie on the geographic and social periphery of modern Accra. Accra has grown up around and beyond them, without razing the traditional in its wake. Two systems are at work simultaneously, their difference both manifest and insidious.

Westernization carries the notion of change. In Accra, the new system is Western (in form), bearing a modern institutional structure, and an attendant system of values, attitudes and behaviors. In content, however, the operation is traditional. The ingrained nature of the formal patterns that people have learned as children in the hometown, and the informal patterns that they have incorporated along the way, continue to operate, Westernization notwithstanding.

Accra's physical appearance is deceiving, as is the functioning of its imported institutions. The British/Western method has been appended to the traditional, personal way of doing things. For example, there is an explitic codebook and a form to follow in bureaucratic dealings. Anyone

wishing to see the Principel Immigration Officer at the Ministry of the Interior must be referred by one of the lesser officials. The Principal Officer handles only special cases and only after the preliminary leg-work has been done. If the dossier in question has not been located or dealt with according to the prescribed form, the interested party has no recourse but to wait. So the ruling goes.

Cross-cutting these technicalities, there are traditional patterns at work -- ethnicity and patronage among others. Behavioral responses are not programmed to the role/relationship, if the person in charge wishes them not to be. As Principal Officer, he knows that his job entails carrying out x, y, and z. There are many occasions, however, when he chooeses to do otherwise. Traditionally-patterned responses enter, as when a fellow ethnic or the son of a friend is involved, and technical form be damned. Rules are selectively enforced.

The urban sphere is often portrayed as a leveller of differences, where enculturation and assimilation proceed apace. Urbanization is yet a fledgling process in Accra. An urban mode of existence, with a social system which is inherently Ghanaian and can be accounted for and adhered to by an urban populace, has yet to unfold.

The European model does not always leave room for the traditional. There are too many status contradictions. In Accra, the standard of conformity is that which closest approaches the European way. Few Ghanaians would admit to a desire to live abroad. However, the "been-to"[3] has a status all his own. (Armah 1971) He has gone away and brought back the Gospel. He has learned the etiquette contingent to acceptance by Westerners. What happens to Ghanaian, or culturally unique, tradition?[4]

Two different situations have been created. One is what happens to the second generation urban-dweller, who has learned snatches of traditional behavior; out of the context of the hometown and a traditional system in its entirety, such an individual is often caught unawares, because the context is the city. This might include transgressing or innocently disregarding time-honored customs. The second is the selective acceptance of Western ways which are appealing in appearance (e.g. pro forma behavior) and can be adapted to reinforce traditional manners in a peculiarly modern style. For example, Armah (1971) depicts the calculations that Efua and her mother go through in deciding when to have Efua's newborn son's out-dooring.

> 'I thought there were fixed times for those things,' Baako said. 'Like a week or a month or whatever it is after birth?' Neither his mother nor his sister seemed to have been listening.
>
> 'An outdooring ceremony held more than a few days after payday is useless,' Efua said.
>
> 'Totally,' Araba agreed with great enthusiasm. 'Ghanaian men get broke so fast these days it isn't funny.'
>
> 'You're right,' said Efua. 'The only sensible time is the first weekend after payday.' (1971:131)

Consumerism has also taken on a life of its own; it is a pervasive ethos, which carries over from personal appearance to social interaction. A woman wearing Manchester cloth (England) or Dutch Wax (Holland) carries more status than a woman wearing local Tema cloth. The social scene in Accra is bound up with Western imports; first the body beautiful, and once that is achieved, extensions such as home or automobile. The distinction is sexual. For both, the Western is invariably accorded

greater worth than the indigenous. Watches, which often do not keep time, are worn as pieces of jewelry; they are symbols of status. Women carry purses, often empty, while they tie their money in the corner of the skirt cloth, as done traditionally. The spirit of the time is "if you've got it, flaunt it."

Armah's anti-hero Baako engaged in a brief exchange on an airplane returning to Ghana from abroad with a veteran Ghanaian "been-to." Baako asks, "And you still don't find it hard going back?"

> 'Oh no. No. But I understand you. I have learned to take precautions myself. There are important things you can't get to buy at home. Every time I go out I arrange to buy all I need, suits and so on. It's quite simple. I got two good cars on this trip . . .'
>
> 'You see this.' Brempong had brought out his lighter. 'Where in Ghana would you find a thing like this? Sharp eyes . . .' He leaned back completely and his voice relaxed to a quiet sound just above a whisper. 'You just have to know what to look for when you get a chance to go abroad. Otherwise you come back empty-handed like a fool, and all the time you spent is a waste, useless.' A loud, forced guffaw broke the easy tenor of his voice. 'But if you come back prepared, there's nothing to worry about.' (1971:73f)

To all appearances, Accra cosmopolites have embraced Western ways. Yet, in the Ga traditional areas, or even Ga family compounds, traditional constraints still hold. To continue to live according to the dictates of tradition, as such residents do, new ways must be held at bay, lest they become dysfunctional to the life-way. Staying within the "hometown" in most cases assures maintenance of traditional patterns. Those who have left the area have the alternative of conforming to such Western norms as nuclear family residence and marriage patterns. (Kilson 1967) This is no less true of other ethnic groups in the country at large.

Hall (1959) speaks of informal patterning in terms of imitation of models. Is there an urban or modern model in Ghana? The group is said to set the pattern of behavior and mores for the individual. Which group is this in Accra or Adabraka? Even if the new set of norms and values is still in the process of formation, and old enough to be somewhat established among a given segment of society, while new enough to discomfit the majority -- if the espousing members represent a status group, the others will try to follow suit. Yet, the new does not provide for proper fulfillment of traditional obligations, nor has it evolved a system of informal learning and behaviors. Traditional customs continue to insinuate themselves into the daily pattern.

According to West Africa urbanization literature, a primary advantage to city life is that it affords alternative life-styles and an escape from the traditional control of the lineage; new social, economic and legal statuses are accessible to women. (Baker and Bird 1959) Indeed, it is said that with the widening of the urban network, the influx of both men and women to the city, equal access to education for men and women, new employment opportunities as a result of greater contact with the international community, the increased acceptance of English as the language of daily life, and generally, the easing of traditional restraints and proprieties -- women are facing fewer restrictions in the occupational, domestic, recreational and political domains. (Baker and Bird 1959; Little 1959; McCall 1961; Southall 1961)

As a consequence, they continue, the kinship network continues to wield influence, but its functions have been modified to suit the changing scene; this is accompanied by the breakdown of the extended family,

no longer adequate for satisfying its members' needs. (Aldous 1962, Marris 1962, Izzett 1961) In Ghana, the family traditionally has been the basis for political, legal, economic and social action. (Omari 1960) Thus, if such a transition is taking place, the role of women should be changing as well.[5] The nuclear family form, in conjunction with social mobility (via education), encourages monogamous unions. (Jahoda 1961) Monogamy, in turn, ties in with financial strains and educational advance. (Clignet 1970) But, as will become clear in the body of this thesis, tradition, still very viable, continues to support the extended family.

In urban West Africa, particularly in the coastal cities where foreign impact has been greatest, education, Christianity, the Western way, imbue women with the desire to wed by Ordinance. This, one would think, presumes monogamy. In a society, where polygyny is still philosophically adhered to, such is not necessarily the case. Thus monogamy, as it is written on the books, may not, in practice, work to the benefit of the woman. It does assure her of Western-style respectability. In the words of a Ghanaian woman, it means that she may call herself "Mrs." Divorcees wed by native law cannot lay claim either to inheritance or child support. (Archives Case No. 480/1905, ADM 11/1457)

Foster (1965) examines size, heterogeneity (inter-ethnic ties, voluntary associations in place of tribal ties) and occupational differentiation as the factors most likely to give rise to a system of social differentiation. The new system is based upon criteria of occupation and education, rather than descent.

> At present in the towns, social structure is a bewildering compendium of status variables based on occupation and education but shot through with ties based on ethnic, clan, and lineage loyalties. All that can be safely said is that education, through its increasingly close association with the process of occupational recruitment, operated throughout the colonial period and continues to operate as an increasingly significant variable in emergent conceptions of social status. (Foster 1965:131)

Foster does not include sex in the category of descent. Thus, when he tosses out descent as the primary avenue to mobility, he implicitly allows women parity.

Dr. Aggrey, the Ghanaian educator, once said "If you educate a woman, you educate a nation." This has been taken to indicate the importance of women in the social structure. Education exists on several levels, as do positions of power. Men are the caretakers of cultural knowledge, holding the key to its origins and development. Women are the disseminators of this knowledge, passing it on to their children, in the forms of values and rules of behavior. They guard the status quo, which the men have legislated.

Western education of women lags behind that of men, due to social and cultural pressures. Women need education and/or technical training if they are to be full participants in the economy. In Dakar, for example, women tend to be engaged in weaving, sale of fish and market-garden produce -- traditional activities. In terms of the modern sector " . . . existing patterns of social organization and stratification as well as the capital required limit the entry of women in this field and force most of them to remain in the subordinate wage-earning occupations." (Grandmaison 1969:152; see also Kilson 1969; Evans-Pritchard 1965)

The Western press proclaims that African women are achieving

recognition in public positions. The major factors are education, modernity, mobility. The women have achieved Western markings of success. Those publicized are the eloquent, urbane figures -- the token successes. In Accra, they include a member of Parliament, judge, university professor. How representative are they of the "everywoman?" Their novelty is clear from the good copy they receive in the press.

In the past, when Western observers have exalted the initiative of women, they have generally used spheres of activity traditionally in female control to support their contention. (A. Cohen 1969; K. Little 1959; Nadel 1942) They use the term independence to capture an essence which they feel characterizes the women of the societies under study. McCall (1961) suggests that among Ghanaian women, there is a cultural expectation that after marriage, they want economic independence. Armah (1968) claims that they demand it. In Accra, married women are both prolific and economically active. When asked if wives are encouraged to work, the Gbese Manshe (Ga sub-paramount chief) exclaimed -- "Hey, you must work to eat."

Furthermore, McElrath has found that female employment is positively related to less financial and social dependence upon the husband, and that more egalitarian conjugal partnerships emerge. To speak of such in a polygynous society is not appropriate. The girlfriend syndrome is so common, that a wife may see her husband only to fulfill the most basic of wifely duties. And wifely duties continue to hold top priority. Control of the domestic mechanism and child-rearing is important, but neither bespeaks instrumental power.

The involvement of women in trading has been heralded as the sure

sign of independence -- as assertiveness, economic mobility -- even when, in the same breath, women are held to comply with norms of reticence in other spheres. In 1925 and 1929, Nigeria experienced serious incidents of women's protest.

> During this period, the market women were aggrieved over certain 'unfair' practices of the colonial regime. They formed organizations and displayed unity of action as well as an unusual degree of political sophistication. (Coleman 1958:194-5)

What is the history of the Ghanaian woman's participation in trade? Coastal West African (and Ghanaian) women are and always have been encouraged in active economic pursuit. However, they have also been limited in general to those pursuits with the label "woman" attached, particularly trading. At least since the mid-15th century, there has been evidence of much coastal trading. (Sai 1971) Because men needed weapons, and because they took prisoners to exchange for goods, the men did much of the trading. The women stayed at home, minding children and farm. Surplus foods were traded for other foodstuffs.

As larger exchange groups developed, and communities no longer satisfied each other's needs, markets were created. By 1889, gold dust was too precious and currency was introduced. Until coins were minted, cowrie shells were used, overlapping with simple barter.

The markets began to expand in goods. The women expanded their goods accordingly. With European colonialism, clerical jobs were created and accorded top status. Women did not have access to them, because of their illiteracy. But men did. With the growth of urbanization and the money economy, market trade blossomed. With men taking specialized jobs,

the market was left to the women. Pure female involvement came at the turn of the century. At first, women hawked the produce of their husband's farm or the fish netted. Similarly, in cases where the man was a craftsman, such as a goldsmith, his wife sold his goods. Both cases still hold true.

Observers tend to make no distinction between trading in the market or on the street -- hawking -- and all other commercial transactions. The former is handled entirely by women. The distributing and sales in stores, shops, supermarkets and street stalls -- the more lucrative in the long-run -- has a great deal of male involvement. If, in a cash economy, trading is the major occupation open to women, and every other woman is trading in the same limited stock -- food, textiles, petty goods -- for any one person to make a killing on the market, she must be acutely shrewd, unique in her approach, or an early arrival -- or, have a great deal of starting capital.

In describing a woman as a trader, the question of how the woman went about getting her capital or chose which merchandise to sell, if it was her own decision, if she needed another's permission, is left undiscussed. All of the stringency which has been insisted upon in description and analysis of the stuff of society, is not followed through. The latter material is the domain of men. (Evans-Pritchard 1965; Mills-Odoi 1961; Kilson 1968) Hearsay of male informants is accepted uncritically, in conjunction with Western notions of success. Why would anyone continue to work, day in , day out, twelve hours a day, five and a half days a week, if she was not doing well?[6]

The Model of the Social Field and its Components

Goodenough (1965) considers dimensions or spheres of activity as categorical social positions, and he calls each a social identity. The individual's role, in this sense, is made up of a composite of social identities. Social identity "is an aspect of self that makes a difference in how one's rights and duties distribute to specific others," (1965:3) and every person has a number of social identities, corresponding to the specific interaction.

In rural communities, each social identity tends to be more diffuse, while in the city, each is more specific. Identity selection may be determined by such features as the interaction or the setting. In accord with Evans-Pritchard's principle of situational selection, the same individual participating in several situations may exhibit inconsistencies in behavior: "the individual may act as a tribesman in one situation but not in another . . . This inconsistency is possible, because all the values and beliefs in terms of which the individuals interact in daily activities are not operative at the same time." (Mitchell 1966:57)

> Thus the social field as the bounded field of study is made up of sub-sets of relationships which are internally closely interconnected but which are relatively autonomous as regards one another. The domestic set of relationships, for example, is partly independent from the industrial or political set of relationships. But nevertheless, all these 'sets' constitute one field in which action in one set may feedback into the others and influence them. (Mitchell 1955:57)

By regarding sub-sets as autonomous, observers have been able to speak of traditional female activism in one sector, and reticence in another.

The duties of an identity relationship (that is, with another person) are owed to the social identities, not to the individual. This means that, in different words, roles are complexes of expectations, separate from individuals, who activate them. (Bohannan 1963) They are the poles of social relationships. The particular duties depend upon the identities taken together with status or duty dependent upon which social identity is being assumed (activated). Moreover, there are rules for identity selection. If, in an interaction, two identities do not match, there is social confusion. Inasmuch as an individual manifests several identity relationships simultaneously, his total being may be conceived of as a composite of the several identities appropriate to the situation. Goodenough calls this composite the "social persona."

Our social field is Adabraka. A primary assumption has been that, as part of an urban center, it offers great situational diversity. In the past, the young woman coming to Accra has been depicted as seeking and finding financial independence, such that she can change her relationships. (Baker and Bird 1959) Then, free from traditional (lineage, family) controls, she can live her life as an individual with personal freedom. She can support herself and her child. She need not compete with co-wives and mother-in-law for support; she need not re-marry or depend upon the in-law lineage for maintenance.

Occupation is only one of a number of different dimensions of activity. I touched upon it first, because it is used most frequently and facilely to "prove" that these women are independent. Putting together the multi-dimensionality of daily operations and relativity of independence or control over one's own actions, I pose the question: a

woman's roles in Accra differentiated, in accordance with a differentiated society? Do her options differ, in accordance with her background and urbanity? In other words, is she still tied to her traditional role?

Liberation and the Sexual Definition of Roles

Banton (1965) envisions a role continuum; the roles are distinguished in terms of differentiation and may be activated independently of one another. The more complex the society, the greater the compartmentalization and manufacture of roles. The continuum starts with basic roles, based primarily on sex and age. It goes through general roles (occupational) and on to independent roles (recreational). What interests us here is the notion of "basic role" and the degree to which an urban Ghanaian woman can operate, independent of (or in spite of) her basic role. Can she participate in identity relationships, irrespective of her sex? It seems that her basic roles leak over into the others, thus affecting the attributes, or determing them. "A woman's basic roles tend to be founded upon her relationship to the male members of the society. A man's basic roles stress age much more and set less weight upon marital status . . ." (1965:73)

Does an urban Ghanaian woman have ready access to independent roles? Have her basic roles become less well-defined, or more confined, so that she can enlarge her daily arena of activity? What kind of statuses accrue to her? In fact, where does she get the status of "adult woman?"

I hope to show that today, in modernizing Ghana, the liberation of

women from traditional spheres and into new spheres of endeavor is equivocal. The fact of a woman selling on the street, or attending a place of business, reflects nothing more than that; just as the fact of a man and woman co-habiting says nothing of the content of their relationship. (Clignet 1970) The "new woman" comes armed with her commercial training which she has no occasion to use in her hometown. Perhaps she finds an office job. Her victory is Pyrrhic. Ultimately, she is locked in by virtue of her femaleness, in the traditional sense and with none of the traditional benefits.

"Liberation," particularly in the Western world, is a loaded term. It does not denote an absolute, for it is problematic to speak of the total liberation of the human being. Indeed, in the West, the cause for a woman's liberation movement grew out of the increasing feelings of disenfranchisement and deprivation that women experienced, vis-a-vis the situation of their male counterparts. Even on a more specific level, within the life of any one woman, her "liberation" in one sphere is measured relative to the same in another.

This was what I had in mind when I first began this study -- namely, to investigate the notion of a woman's decision-making powers differing, in her different spheres of activity. "Independence" or liberation was tentatively defined as the right to make decisions and implement them. Furthermore, independence implies option -- to do or not to do a given thing.

Liberation carries with it the connotation of change. In a given society, there is a code of behavior, which incorporates norms, values, and so on. Such a code, which we might consider to be "culture," in fact

is manifest in the individual's expected or appropriate responses. Thus, culture forms a baseline for change. In this sense, liberation connotes a move away from the accepted norms, a move toward a state of normlessness. But as I said earlier, liberation is a relative state of being; thus there is a range, both within and between spheres of activity. The section on the economic activity of coastal West African women exemplifies this. Because women have the mere freedom to pursue an occupation, they are freer or more liberated than if they are sequestered. And because some women do exhibit a drive toward success in their economic endeavors, they also exhibit a greater independence from certain strictures.

My belief, at the inception of this project, was also that a woman's options vary, depending upon which persona she desires. Along with this, I posited that new social identities should be forthcoming, and old restraints on the ebb, if not already gone. For the new urban woman, this would mean that new spheres are open to her, and that she is able to set up new identity relationships, different in context and content from the old. Closely tied to this would be her option of graduating from those social identities which are bound to her basic role as female; she would be given an equal chance (i.e. parity with men) at playing roles on the basis of capability.

What I have discovered, and what I keep returning to throughout this dissertation, is this: a consideration of alternatives and conceptual categories as indices of the individual's sense of her own power or free will. This is how liberation is construed: the notion of choice, options, rationality of decision. There are two major aspects,

which concern the individual's consciousness. One is the notion that there are options, or alternatives; the other is that, if there are, the choice is dependent upon the status that the woman wants, in terms of broad definitions of adult possibilities.

What I kept coming up against, in my research, was the absence of conceptual categories. Thus, when I, as an outsider, came in to see an informant and try to elicit a response, I was not always successful. It became clear to me that the powers of imagining alternatives, of fantasizing options to subsequently act upon, were either absent or well-concealed. It also became increasingly apparent to me that the impetus for change, for liberation, is consequently lacking. This is closely related to the thesis which Sartre develops in Being and Nothingness (1971). He speaks of any act or state (be it the social structure of a society, or the psychological "state" of the individual) coming about in reaction to what is not -- the paradox of being growing out of nothingness.

> There is a factual state -- satisfying or not -- only by means of the nihilating power of the for-itself [human being]. But this power of nihilation . . . is the organized form -- worker-finding-his-suffering-natural -- which must be surmounted and denied in order for it to be able to form the object of a revealing contemplation. This means evidently that it is by a pure wrenching away from himself and the world that the worker can posit his suffering as unbearable suffering and consequently can make of it the motive for his revolutionary action. This implies for consciousness the permanent possibility of effecting a rupture with its own past, of wrenching itself away from its past so as to be able to consider it in the light of a non-being and so as to be able to confer on it the meaning which it has in terms of the project of a meaning which it does not have. (412)

The individual who cannot imagine has no claim to freedom. Action, change

comes from imagining that which is not, imagining the possible. My own style of research is phenomenological, and I sought out the "every-woman's" imaginings of her alternatives, as well as the actualities of her life-style. To act is impossible, if the option to act is absent from thought. This is the path of inquiry I pursued, this is the aspect of liberation I follow. And this, tied into the code of traditional attitudes, is the backbone of this study. For the urban milieu has been envisioned as the location, and impetus, for the change in women's role options.

Location and impetus are themselves tied to the developing system of stratification. Weber (1946) distinguished three basic criteria, which stratify a society simultaneously: the possession of economic goods and opportunities, i.e. class, the possession of social honor and prestige, i.e. status, and the possession of political power. "Class" is distinguished from other forms of strata by "mode of recruitment" (Tuden and Plotnikov 1970) -- the ideology of such a system holds that social position is earned through achievement, as distinct from ascription. Linton defined the two, in terms of status, as follows:

> Ascribed statuses are those which are assigned to individuals without reference to their innate differences or abilities . . . The achieved statuses are, as a minimum, those requiring special qualities, although they are not necessarily to these. They are not assigned to individuals from birth but are left open to be filled through competition and individual effort. (1936:115f.)

Ascription, as noted earlier, is based upon the criteria of age, sex and ethnicity. The general criteria of traditional roles derive from the same three. (Apter 1968) Consequently, a new pattern of role definition through achievement is a kind of liberation from the past.

In Accra, the power lies in the hands of the men. By the same token, access to new roles goes first to men. In a pluralistic society, such as Accra, Western-style urbanization helps to meld differences among participants. But this is true only when all of the potential participants have equal access to the tools which equip him (her) for full participation. Ethnicity has played a selective role in employment. The colonial administrators, when first setting up the educational system, gave certain ethnic groups an edge in access to education. (Foster 1965) Thus, the way was paved for occupational stratification based on ethnicity. Under Nkrumah, nationalism was promoted at the expense of tribal ethnocentrism. The base for achievement was broadened.

Both under the colonial government and the first independent regime, policy was directed toward the male populace. To that degree, a woman's background had little bearing upon her achievement. Currently, the same is true. "Education, greater political freedom, a money economy, and increased convertible wealth, greater purchasing power for the individual and greater mobility, all influence social and personal adjustment in a changing Ghana." (Omari 1960:197) The stratification system is based upon Western forms, and as in the West, women are given token involvement.

Women are <u>still</u> last to be equipped for participation in modern positions. The system of stratification applies to women just as it does to men, except that the women are considered <u>after</u> the men, if at all. Age and ethnicity continue to carry some weight, for example in job recruitment. However, they present less of a barrier to the out-group

member (e.g. "wrong" ethnicity) than does sex. This is because sexual discrimination is on a different level than the other two. For example, if Ewe tend to be discriminated against, and then become more "acceptable," it is the male Ewes who are first accomodated.

". . . In most societies, the economic criterion in terms of occupation and wealth has been a crucial index of class position and a determining influence in the transformation of the individual as he moves vertically or horizontally in the stratification structure." (Porter 1963: 109) The beginnings of the stratification system in urban Ghana were based upon economic class. In an earlier section in this chapter, I spoke of the emphasis that researchers have put upon the economic independence that Ghanaian, and most coastal West African, women have. It is not unlikely that this is tied to the same intellectual tradition which formulated theories of stratification and through logical extension, becomes proof of the woman's participation in the modernizing sector.

The opportunities for mobility, from one class or status, etc., to another may be explained by Weber's criteria of class, status and power, as well as the vertical mobility patterns of the society.

> In addition to these factors operating in the process of mobility, there is the socio-psychological dimension. How people perceive their chances for mobility affects their movement or stability almost as much as does the presence or absence of the opportunities . . . When an individual changes his position it is firstly because he wants to, however unconsciously, secondly because he is able to change it, and thirdly because the opportunity for change exists. (Porter 1963:76f.)

Thus, there are two levels of analysis: that of the class structure and its changes, and that of the individual in terms of his own adjustment.

The concern herein is with the latter -- the perceived chances, and

the actual behaviors, of a group of women, but considered by the researcher in the context of the social system. This relates back to Sartre's negatité and freedom of imagination. (1971) I contend that women's mobility is inhibited on all fronts -- societal, social, psychological. One might say that the achievement of men is due in part to their sexual membership; and that the achievement of women is despite it. Both the individual's (or her referent group of women) conception and the society's allowance of her opportunities are constrained by deeply entrenched traditional attitudes. There is a range in ambition and self-assertiveness, but primarily in prescribed areas and following prescribed ways. And these do not preclude her fulfillment of the woman's basic role.

If she wishes the status of "adult," she must operate in a tight market. She must strike a bargain. Homans (1958) notes that behavioral responses are a function of certain values; behavior incurs costs and there are different behaviors open. A woman must decide how much she is willing to pay (e.g. in acceptance or rejection of her basic role) and balance that against what she will receive (e.g. in autonomy of decision-making and activities): she must balance what she conceives as an alternative against what is socially acceptable or accessible.

Thus far, it has been assumed that the roles which the women play are not identical with the players of the roles. The roles are the activities proper, played out in separate domains. It is furthermore assumed that the role is dyadic -- the two poles make up a social relationship. Following this, a variety of interactions are possible, with behaviors appropriate to each. The selection among alternatives of

role behaviors is in a sense a form of bargaining. "In his personal role system, the individual faces the same problem he faces in his economic life: he has limited resources to be allocated among alternative ends." (Goode 1960:488) He (she) must evaluate his (her) role/relationships to determine their price -- how much to allot to each and what to expect in return. One's bargaining power may be delimited by a third party.

Furthermore, there is a very peculiar quality to relationships in Ghana, which makes more sense when the notion of role-bargaining is employed. As Goode points out, " . . . we must remain in the role market: we need other people, and they demand us." (f.n. 11, p. 487) In Ghana, all interactions are, to a certain degree, contracted in consumer terms. This means, for example, that a value is placed upon a relationship in terms of what the contracting party feels that she can exact from the other, and what she must give in return. The specifics of the relationship are given support from a more generalized rule of reciprocity.

In Ghana, the women exhibit a range of alternatives in their quest for mobility. They have learned to wield power covertly, through the traditional institutions of market and home. However, it is in accord with the Western modification of both spheres: the international market and the city compound. Women from more urban and less urban areas, with greater and lesser urban experience, from different ethnic groups, pursuing different occupations, having received varying amounts of education, basically differ in the quantitative -- not qualitative -- manner of manipulating the system.

When it comes to her social persona, her generalized status as an

adult woman, her bargaining power must really be brought to bear. She follows an appropriately Ghanaian way, which is in consonance with the syncretism that urban Ghanaians have fashioned out of their traditional values and behaviors, and more flagrant aspects of Western culture. She sells herself to the highest bidder. The price corresponds to the bargain contracted.

The new, Accra woman is very much a product of her society. Her specific behaviors, and behavior patterns in general, are interrelated with the physical setting. The modern scene has an history to its development. The physical setting is part and parcel of the social structure; human and non-human environment feed into and exert controls over each other. To properly place the player in her context, we must begin with the mise en scene.

CHAPTER II

THE URBAN NICHE

A theme to be picked up and returned to throughout subsequent chapters is that of the interplay between the human and non-human environment, the interconnection between the physical and the social space. This chapter sets the stage, going from the very general to the very specific. It opens with a short history of the migrations into Ghana and the formation of Accra; Accra's speciation into smaller areas, of which Adabraka is one; highlights of Adabraka, as the foci of daily activity; and finally, the housing situation of the urban compound and room arrangements.

Historical material has been included for two reasons: the first is that it helps to explain the flavor of modern-day Accra, and Adabraka -- the locale of this study. Accra was not a fount of traditional urbanism. It is the product of a confluence of factors -- much of its development, and the direction of such, is a result of European interests. Behaviors have been strongly influenced by the Western model. At the same time, diverse peoples continue to migrate to Accra, many unversed in urban living. Thus, there is a continuity to the unfolding of the urban system, as it acts upon and is acted upon by a heterogeneous population.

The second reason relates to the sources consulted and the focus of the historical discussions. Only the short account of indigenous

migrations and European incursions is history-book fare. This has been tapped for a general stage-setting. The bulk, however, derives from oral accounts provided by long-time residents of Adabraka, and archival accounts housed in Accra. Neither has been used previously, and both are directly relevant to Adabraka, the immediate context of this study -- its socio-physical foundation and development, its population and its character.

Coastal Settlement and the Growth of Accra

Accra sits on the Atlantic Ocean, at the base of the Akwapim-Togo mountain range. Much of her distinctiveness is tied to the history of settlement of Ghana's coastal areas in general, and hers in particular. (See Acquah 1958; Amoah 1964; Bosman 1967 ed.; Church 1960; Claridge 1915; Fage 1969; Foster 1965; Ward 1948) The Gold Coast's period of great migrations, in the fifteenth century, coincided with the arrival of the first Europeans. Until that period, the coast was virgin territory; the only known settled inhabitants of the south were the Kpesi, who lived in the Accra plains.

The white man heralded the opening of Afro-European trade. They had come strictly for economic gain. Although they ultimately had a large part to play in the decline and rise of tribal powers, they avoided direct administrative or governing responsibility. The Africans were in the process of establishing territorial rights, as well as internal and inter-tribal pecking orders. Early empire-building was greatly influenced by who could set up the most extensive trading links with the Europeans. At the same time, the European powers were vying amongst themselves for trading hegemony.

During the thirteenth to fifteenth century, the ancestors of the Guan, Fanti and Twi-speakers (all Akan peoples) migrated south from Gonja. Late in the fifteenth century, the Gas, of whom the Accras form one group, arrived from Nigeria. They came along the eastern coast, in extended family groups, founding villages among the Kpesi. They were concentrated around Ayawaso, eight miles north-west of modern-day Accra. The Ga Manshe (Ga paramount chief) located his family on Okai Kwai Hill. The town which grew up around it was Great Accra, while its coastal sister was Small Accra. (Amoah 1964)

The first of the Europeans to arrive were the Portuguese, in 1470. In 1494, papal award gave them a monopoly on African trade. This was, however, disregarded by the English (arrival 1553), Dutch (1595), Swedes (1640), Danes (1640's) and Brandenburgers (1683). The Europeans built castles on the coast to strengthen their positions. It was customary to request permission from the native population before building. The Portuguese built the first castle at Elmina, in 1481-2. By the middle of the sixteenth century, they had a reputation for brutality. Consequently, there was native antipathy to the forts, and the Dutch had difficulty gaining permission from the Ga chief to build even store-houses. (Claridge 1915)

European forts became centres of economic and political power, often stronger than the traditional capitals. For example, the Ga chief agreed to the conversion of Dutch store-houses into a fort, to protect his people against their neighbors, the Akwamus. This was called Crevecoeur (re-named Ussher Fort by the British) and finished in 1650. Two other forts were built up in Accra: James Fort, 500 yards from

Crevecoeur, was built by the British in 1673. Christiansborg Castle, three miles east in Osu, was built by the Swedes in 1657; it became Danish headquarters and is currently the office of Ghana's Prime Minister (See Map 1).

Not long after settling at Ayawaso, the Accras moved their capital to Small Accra -- the area between the not-yet-constructed James and Ussher Forts. Here, it was hoped, there would be better trade possibilities with the Portuguese, hostilities notwithstanding. Other Ga tribes accepted the Accra supremacy and moved as well. By 1600, Accra was on the way to becoming capital of a Ga federation, which extended from the plains to the Volta River. (Ward 1948:52) When the Europeans first arrived, they traded with the Gas, who were "zealously guarding their monopoly of buying from the foreigners." (Acquah 1958: 17) Until the nineteenth century, Europeans traded from their castles, while their African middle-men foraged inland for them.

While the Accras were enjoying prosperity, the Akwamu moved down from the north, establishing their headquarters on a hill in modern Akim Abuakwa. It was a good location -- easily defended and in command of the main trade route from Accra inland. They looked over the Akwapim ridges to the peopled plains of Guan villages and isolated Ga towns. On the seashore, there was a string of fishing villages.[1]

By the latter seventeenth century, coastal trade had grown and the Portuguese monopoly was broken. The immediate hinterland and its trade with the coast was controlled by three major states -- the Akwamu, the Akim and the Denkyira. In the 1640's, the Akwamu began to expand, and to control the trade routes. They occupied the state of Accra (at Great

Accra) from 1677-82. Towns were burned, land laid waste, plantations destroyed.

> The Accras were completely crushed, and their country was reduced to the position of a tributary province of Akwamu. Those who had escaped the victorious arms of the enemy either found refuge in the European forts or fled to Popo (modern Anecho) . . . Little Accra, the town under the Dutch fort, was burned to the ground and some of its inhabitants removed to Soho under the walls of James Fort . . . (Claridge 1915: 121)

From 1680-1730, Akwamu authority went unchallenged. In 1733, two Akim groups and other neighboring peoples took on the Akwamu. "The truth is that, as the Akwamu themselves relate with a sort of gloomy pride, they had been thoroughly bad neighbors to all around them, and every neighboring state jumped at the chance of expelling them." (Ward, 1948: 104) The war lasted fifteen months, and ended with Accra having recovered her independence.

The Ga family groups reorganized themselves into nuclei of towns, of which Accra became one. Accra was divided into three villages, each of which lay in the shadow of a castle. Labadi, two miles east of Christiansborg, is another Ga town. Unlike the three Accra villages, it was spatially removed from European influence.

> It was a walled village protecting itself from raids by the Akwamus and contained people devoted to the traditional occupations of food cultivation, animal husbandry, fishing, and the extraction of salt from the nearby lagoon. As many of the inhabitants of the villages near the forts were busily engaged in a lucrative trade with Europeans, the Labadi population in supplying the needs of the garrisons at the forts found a ready market for their sheep, goats, foodstuffs and salt. (Acquah, 1958:16)

Ga unity for defense was clearly advantageous, and the nuclei of Ga towns invited stranger-groups to join them. These groups retained their respective

traditions and helped keep up numbers and strength in the event of a hostile incursion. (Amoah 1964) Seven towns were formed and remain still -- Accra, Osu, Labadi, Teshie, Nungua, Tema, Kpong.

Growth of European influence on the Gold Coast corresponded with the increasing number of European powers involved. The forts to the east and west of Accra carried on the really significant trade -- gold and slaves. Legitimate trade -- palm oil, palm kernels, spices, ivory, gold dust, copra -- continued through Accra when the slave trade was abolished. In fact, it was the profit of slave-trading which introduced greater European competition. Most of the castles were built in the 1600's to accomodate the slave trade.

European trade competition saw to the construction of twenty-five forts and the same number of smaller lodges. And the forts kept changing hands, as powers grew and fell to each other. For the better half of the eighteenth century, gold and slave trading was held by the Dutch and the English, the English finally rivalling the Dutch. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, the gold trade was worth $1 million. Towards the end of the century, it declined: " . . . the increase in the strength and prosperity of the Akan states meant that their people required to keep a higher proportion of the gold for their own purposes." (Fage 1969:74)

The eighteenth century witnessed the consolidation of the great Ashanti empire. An Akan people, the Ashanti settled near Lake Bosumtwi, eighteen miles south-east of Kumasi, the present capital of Ashanti. The Akwamu, Denkyira and Akim never consolidated their holdings on the coast because (1) the Fantis, in 1720, founded a strong confederation, and (2) they could not centralize sufficiently to hold together their conquests.

Ashanti developed into a military league, and an organized state. By 1742, Akwamu had been defeated, Akim overrun by the Ashanti and the coast was dominated by the Ashanti -- excepting the Cape Coast area of the Fanti confederacy.

By mid-eighteenth century, almost all of the slaves and gold on the coast came from Ashanti. European alignments were between ethnic groups: Dutch supported Ashanti; British supported Fanti; meanwhile, both the Ashanti and the Fanti were interested in a maximum of profit from trade and security for their people. The Ashanti provoked a war with the Fanti in 1806, and came face to face with the British -- the first time an African state was challenging a European power. It was not until 1831 that a treaty was signed, settling relations between the British and coast peoples on one hand, and the Ashanti on the other.

The British Government could now withdraw, but merchants objected. A token administration was set up, with Maclean as the first Governor. Maclean was fully supported by native public opinion, and the gradual development of British authority grew out of his person. In 1850, the Gold Coast was separated from Sierra Leone as a distinct colony; the British purchased Danish forts which remained, and Danish influence was passed on to them. The Governor and his administrators resided at Cape Coast. In 1874, the Gold Coast was officially declared a Protectorate of the British Crown.

In 1877, the British transferred their administrative headquarters to Accra. Growth of population, a function of migration to this new centre of business potential, necessitated expansion of both business and residential space. As Accra expanded, neighborhoods grew up. They are

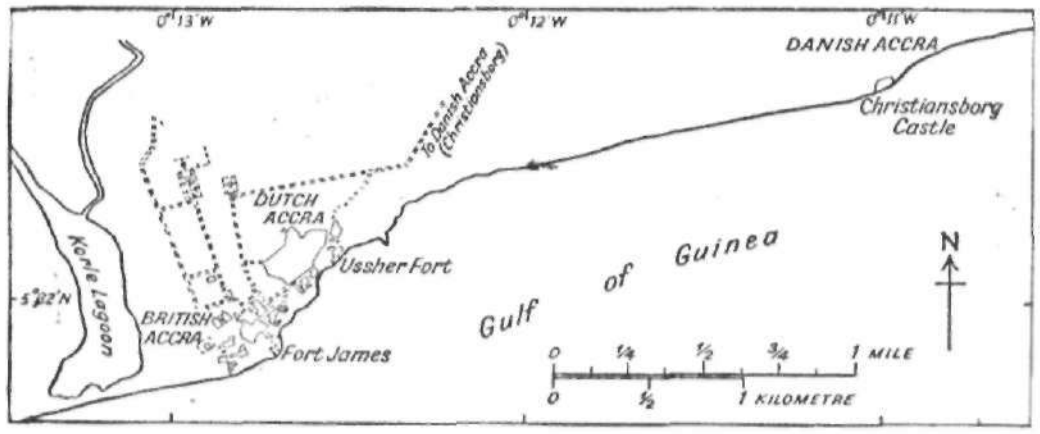
not dissimilar from the old Ga towns, in that they have distinct locations and names. The Ussher Fort-James Fort area are the oldest part of town (See Map 1). Once Accra became the capital, Victoriaborg was built between Ussher Town and Christiansborg, and behind the cliffs (see Map 2). This was begun as an European quarter.[2] Accra now occupies 87 square miles, and her population has grown from 60,726 in 1931, to 135,926 (with 54 percent native born) in 1948, to 492,000 as of 1969.

The British were not unaware of ethnic conflicts. How much they capitalized on them is a talmudic question. Apparently they engaged a constabulary force of Hausas for the native Ga areas. On one occasion, the James Town people used the Ussher Town people's ritual bell. When a fight broke out among them, the "Captain of the Hausas" was called in.[3] There were also occasions when the Hausa Constabulary were accused of beating up civilians in the market.

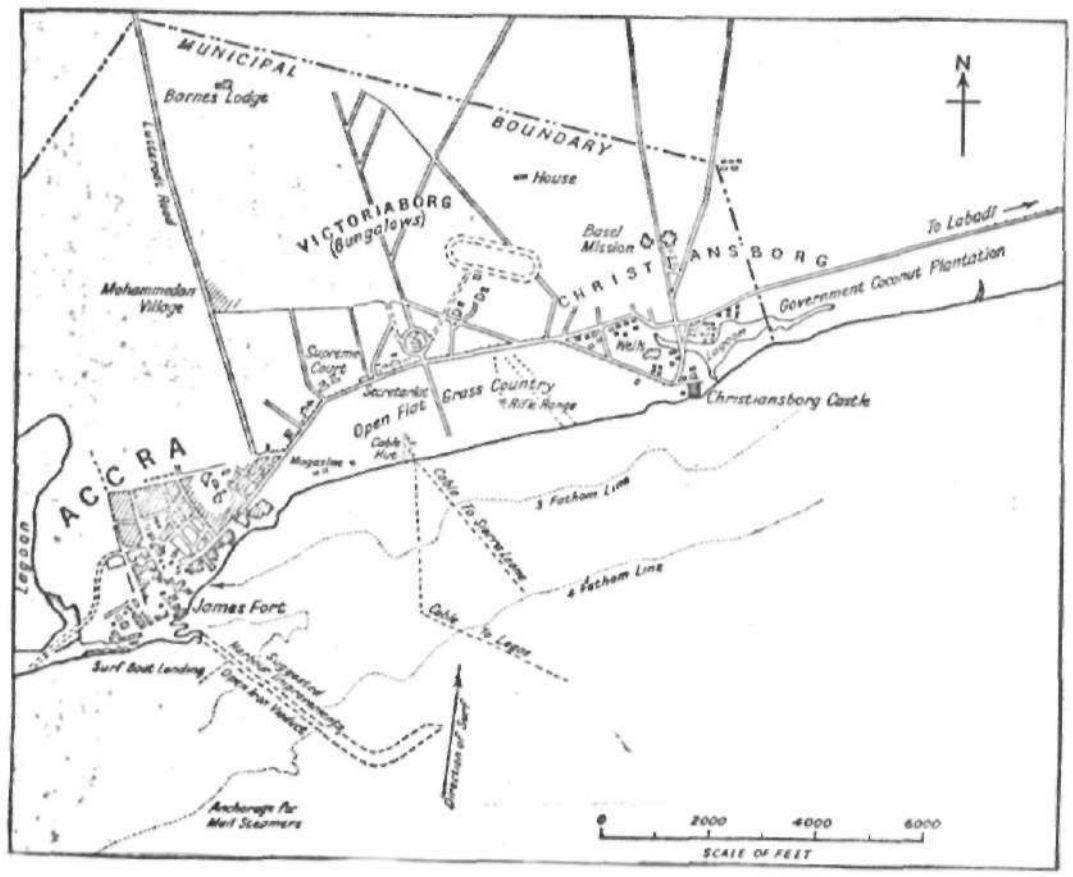
Yorubas were often confused with the Hausas by the British, since both were Muslims. They, too, were given policing assignments. In 1903, the Gbese Manshe (paramount chief of the Gbese Gas) complained to the Governor that on the yam festival, ". . . the Yoruba constables used to humbug the bush people . . . The policemen, especially the Yoruba people do not understand English of Accra [Ga] and so trouble people unnecessarily . . . They do not arrest people on good grounds." (SNA 1806: Extract from an interview at Christiansborg Castle, Chief Okaja and others with the Governor; 8-12-1903).

There were also daily rivalries. The Hausas violated Ga traditions continually, and the Gas complained to the British. They were killing crocodiles in the River Sakum; they were cutting down mangrove trees at

Map 1. Accra, 1826
(Acquah 1958:17)



Map 2. Accra, 1903
(Acquah 1958:25)



the same place. They ". . . had gone against the native custom of Accra, which forbids fishing by means of baskets or any other thing besides net alone in the River Sakum." (Ibid.: Extract from a report of Chief Tackie's complaints, 1-27-1893)

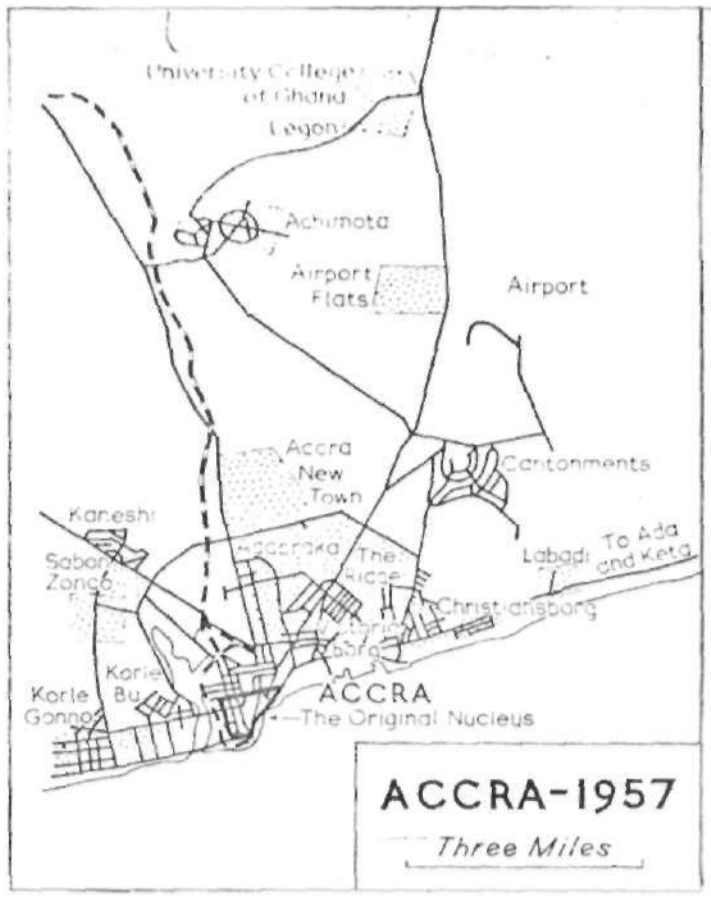
In addition to outright ethnic conflict, the British became aware of subtle and not-so-subtle differences when they were considering amendments to the Marriage Ordinance. This involved consulting native law codes, traditional and community leaders and also governments of neighboring countries. It is therefore not peculiar that in planning for the expansion of Accra, the Colonial Government thought along the lines of ethnic communities.

Expansion: The Site of Adabraka

Adabraka is one of the town sites which the British mapped out. It was conceived as a kind of Zongo (stranger quarter), but the immediate impetus was concern about sanitary improvements in the city. In 1908, the Governor, Sir John Rogers, laid out a number of town sites in an instruction paper for the Colonial Secretary . Adabraka lies on the Nsawam (Kibi) Road, which runs north from the native Ga area. (See Map 3)

> Round about 1914, 1916, there were wolves after 6 o'clock round about this side. I actually heard them when my grandmother was staying in one of the wooden structures here. At that time, I used to come on week-ends to visit her. At 6 o'clock, the doors shut and you heard the wolves . . . Everybody is frightened. Gradually, the road was repaired and people travelled on it to Nsawam, and the animals were frightened away. This was in '16 and '18. And during that time, water was scarce in Accra. And people came all the way down to this side of Adabraka, called Anetaibu. There they collected water . . . And at 12 midday, you see that the whole place is damp. There are so many wells, and people used to go there to collect water . . . At that time, there were not many people living here. The whole of this side was bush. Then,

Map 3. Accra, 1957
(Boateng 1966:148)



> people begain to build and all of this gave way to modern houses and Adabraka began to look like as you see today.[4]

Before the planning of Adabraka was on the drawing boards, people had already begun to filter in. With the abolition of slavery in Brazil, many of the Blacks returned to West Africa, many of them to the Gold Coast. They called themselves the Tabon and claimed African heritage. They continue to maintain their identity today. Their Queenmother, Mrs. Bossman, lives across the street from Mr. Annan. She, too, is an Adabraka old-timer. Her great-uncle Nelson was one of the first of the repatriated slaves to return. "Although they were absorbed in the Gas, they were vanguards whenever there was a war[5] and fought valiantly, so that they mattered."

Technically, the Tabon claim Ga citizenship from the Otublohu -- one of the Ga peoples[6] -- and it is amongst them that the Tabon first resided. It was the Otublohu who embraced them when they arrived, eventually giving them land and a stool.[7]

> Unfortunately, it [the land] fell into the wrong hands before the people know. Then their land was nothing really. And it was just a little city far away from here. But the Brazilians dug wells here. More than 20 of them came here -- all the way from Accra. They divined water and dug wells -- deep wells for the Ga community. So when there is a scarcity of water, everyone comes to the Brazilians in the neighborhood. It's for the whole of Ga.[8]

The Tabon made their farms and stayed. This was late nineteenth -- early twentieth century.

In 1907, the Governor expressed concern to the Ga Manshe about the living conditions in Accra. "In Accra, the houses are hardly fit for human beings to live in; the only good native houses seen in the town belong to lawyers, and none of the Chiefs or their people have any proper

residences." (SNA 65/07: Excerpts from an interview granted by the Governor to the Ga Manshe; 8-3-1907) Ironically enough, at that time, banks willingly advanced loans to doctors and barristers only. This meant that anybody else had to go to a financier -- ". . . where they're all Shylocks -- they give you and take 100 percent."[9] Clearly this mitigated against much building. The only people in Accra with real capital were foreigners. This meant that besides Europeans, other foreigners did well. For example, the monopoly on cattle was held by one Yoruba man and a few of his countrymen.

It was around this period that some Hausas drifted in, much as the Tabon had. As the story goes, the Hausas would wander about with their hand out, saying "adabaraka," i.e. "give me little" (literally, "for the sake of blessedness"). They became known as the "Adabraka people" and the area took on the same name. The Hausas did not live in communities as such; each man built his house, lived with his wife and children and worked a small farm on the spot.

In 1908, there was an epidemic of the Bubonic Plague in the old section of Accra. The Government wanted to demolish some of the houses to make room for ventilation. They felt that sanitary improvements were de rigeur if another epidemic was to be avoided. Some Gas did re-settle in Adabraka. The Government actively encouraged re-settlement by drawing up plans and speaking to the local chiefs. Adabraka was formally established.

The scheme was spelled out in a areport from the Acting Director of P.W.D., Edward Hall, on 24 April,1910. It was conceived to accommodate "two Hausa tribes viz.:- the Fulanis and the Yorubas and also

dispossessed Ussher Town [Ga] people." Most Ussher Town people were not inclined to settle there. Two years later, the Sanitary Engineer remarked that such people

> . . . are nearly always of the poor class, or of a class such as the fishermen whose occupations confine them to the town. It can be seen from the type of houses now being erected that those who do go are of a better class, who appreciate the advantages of a healthy well laid-out township. (SNA 1348/12: Sanitary Engineer L.C.S. Wellacott's remarks; 12-4-1912)

The large plots (160' x 82') were left with room for extension southward ". . . as those are the only ones for which there is likely to be any demand." (SNA 1348/12; letter/report of Mr. Hall; 4-27-1910) And the smaller depth (58'6" x 60') of the plots for the Hausas and Fulanis was thought necessary ". . . in order to limit the number of buildings on a plot and successfully cope with the tendency of the Hausas to overcrowding." (Ibid.)

The move to re-settle was not taken up with avidity by those for whom the area was originally set apart. A major complaint voiced by the Hausa chiefs was that the plots were too small for the better-type houses. Furthermore, the house type planned by the Colonial Government was expensive.

When the British began to divide the land into plots, some civil servants built houses. The Government built a few standard patterns, on which others modelled their own; one compound house and two single houses, with a slanted roof; a small house, with one bedroom, hall, kitchen, and bath; and another -- bedroom and hall, with enclosing verandah. It was only in the 1930's that architects came in with different plans. It was then that the well-constructed storied buildings were introduced. The

small tin-roofed structures came first, but they were not wooden, they were sun-dried bricks. Wooden structures were not allowed, ostensibly for fear of fire -- at least until the CPP (Convention People's Party) era. And then wooden ones were erected next to the more substantial houses. (See Figures 1-5 for floor plans and exterior views.)

The Muslims were not building on the plots set aside for them.[10] They wanted to put up houses like those of the Hausa Zongo at Sekondi. The Chiefs said that if that compound type of house was permitted at Adabraka, the people would build. (SNA 1348/12: Senior Sanitary Officer, Victoriaborg; 7-15-13) This was okayed. The same Muslims, according to Chief Braimah, ". . . would welcome the idea of unoccupied plots in the Hausa and Yoruba section being sold to dispossessed Gas from Ussher Town." (Ibid.; Letter to the Colonial Secretary; 11-12-12) Thus, five plots at the south end of the Yoruba section, fifteen in the Hausa section, and an unspecified but large number in the Fulani section, were left open for Ga re-appropriation. The Ga area was increased by thirty-two plots and eleven small ones, if needed.

As Mr. Annan recalls, there were no houses on the east side of the Kibi Road, to the north. The people moving in were to live at the southern end (See Map 4). That was the well laid-out, government end. The streets to the east do not cut through to the west of the main road even today. Whether because the Brazilians did not want to give up their land there (local lore) or because the British decided to leave it for grazing ground and for wells, is unclear.

In 1931, it was still bush. The only two buildings along the main road were the police station and the Bossman's house, built around 1925.

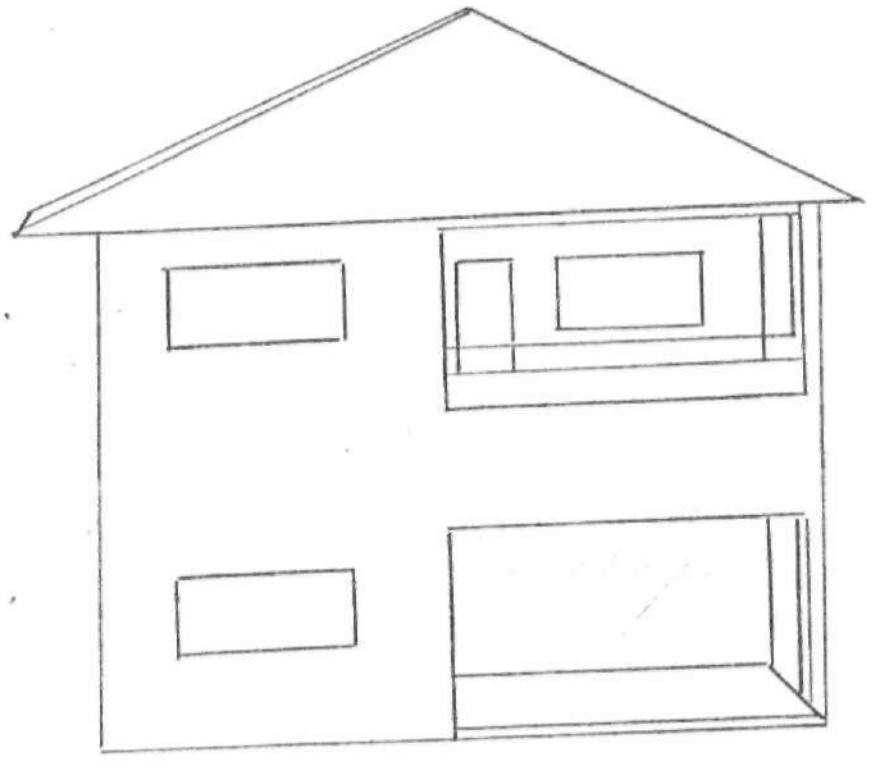


Figure 1.

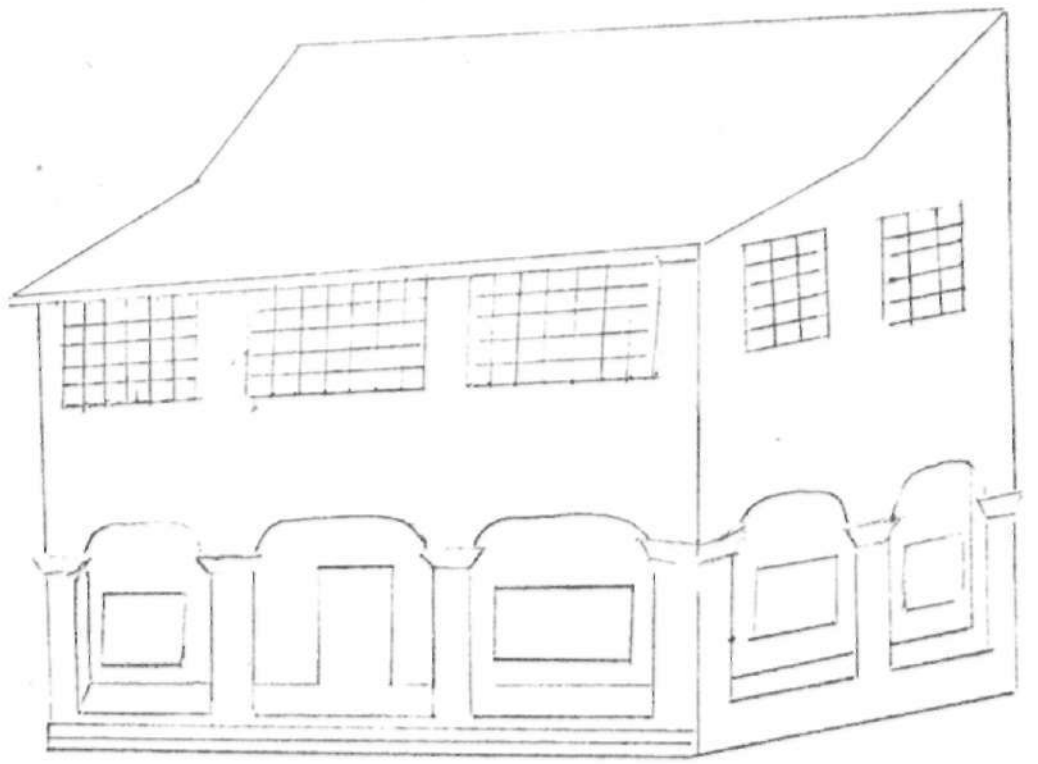


Figure 2.

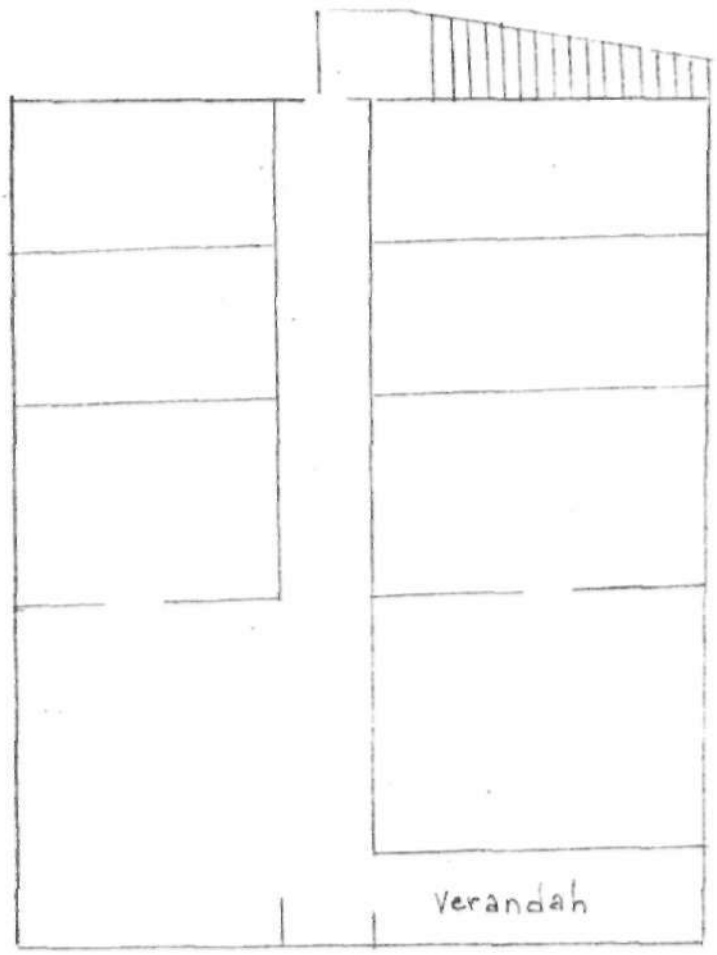


Figure 1a.
Floor-plan

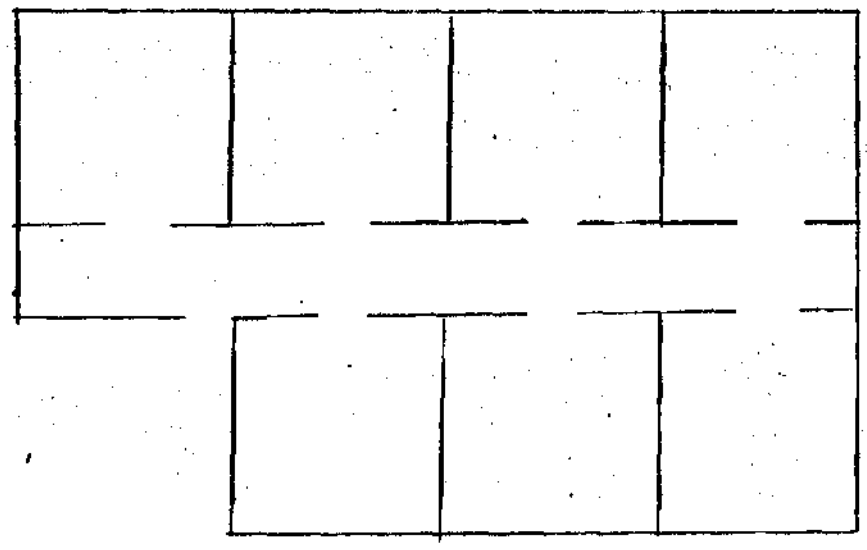


Figure 3a.
Floor-plan

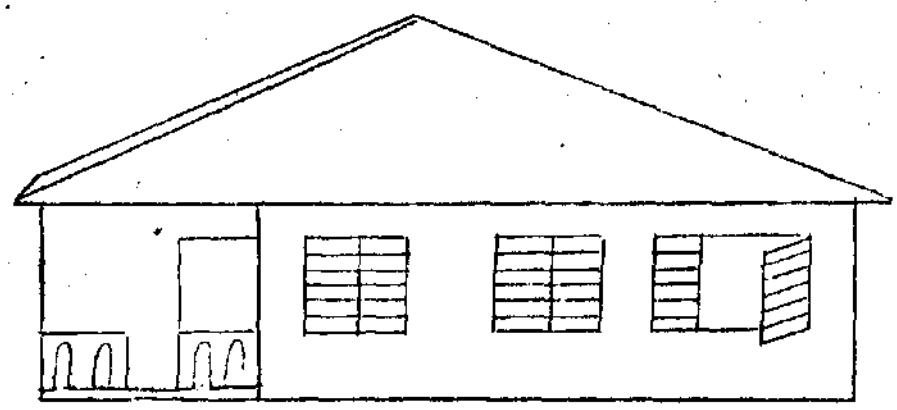


Figure 3.

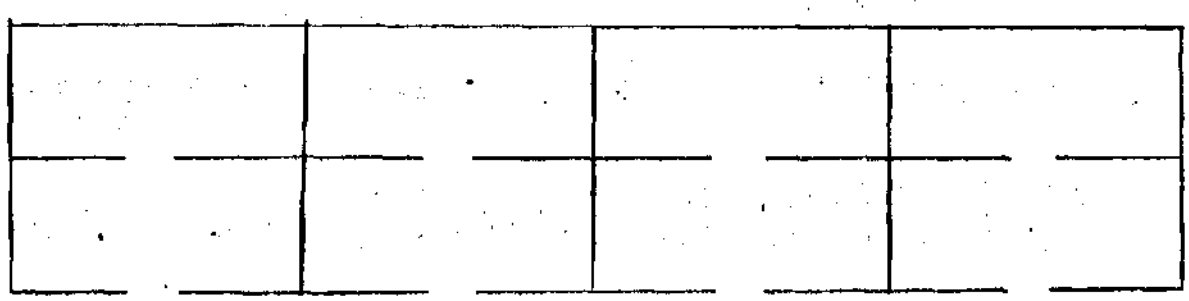


Figure 4a.
Floor-plan

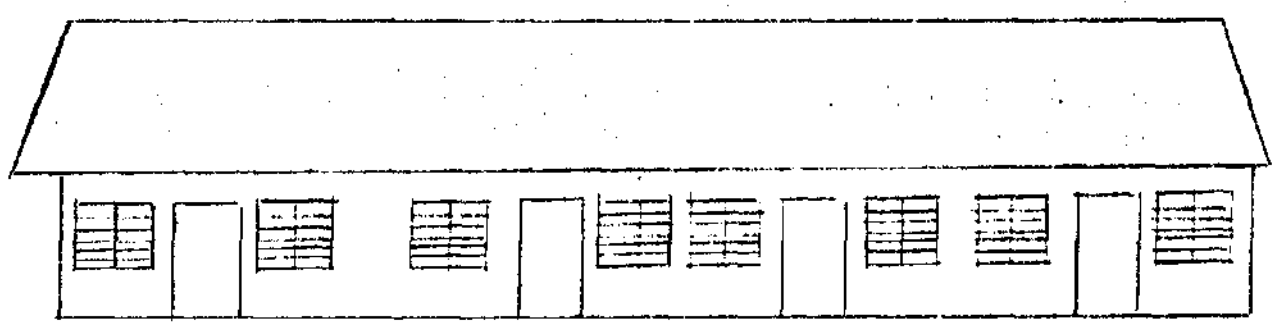


Figure 4.

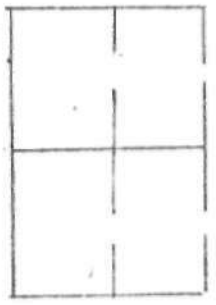


Figure 4a.

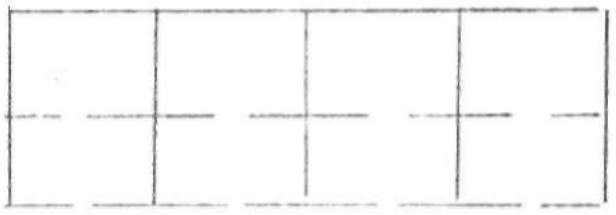


Figure 4a.

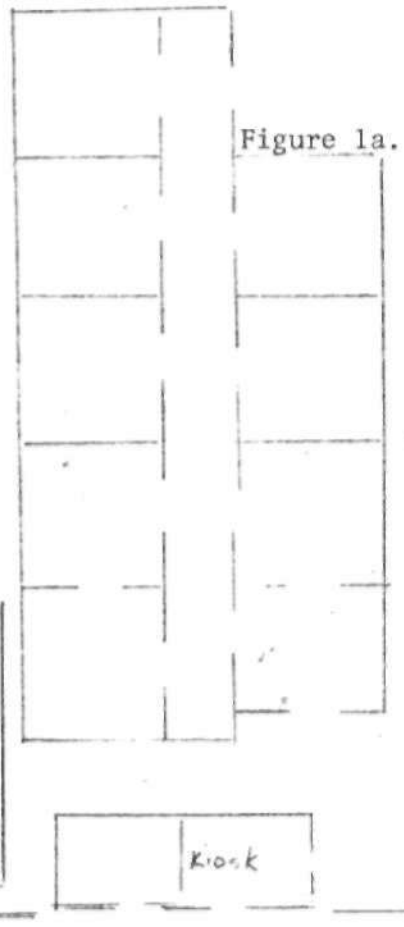


Figure 1a.

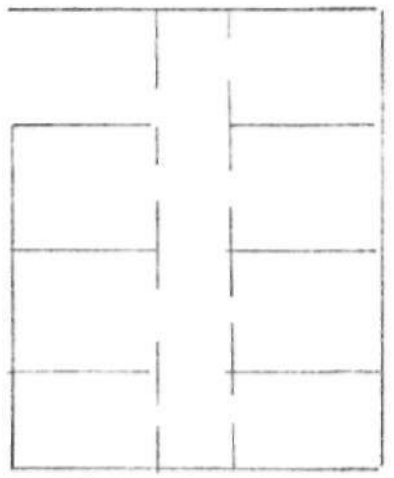
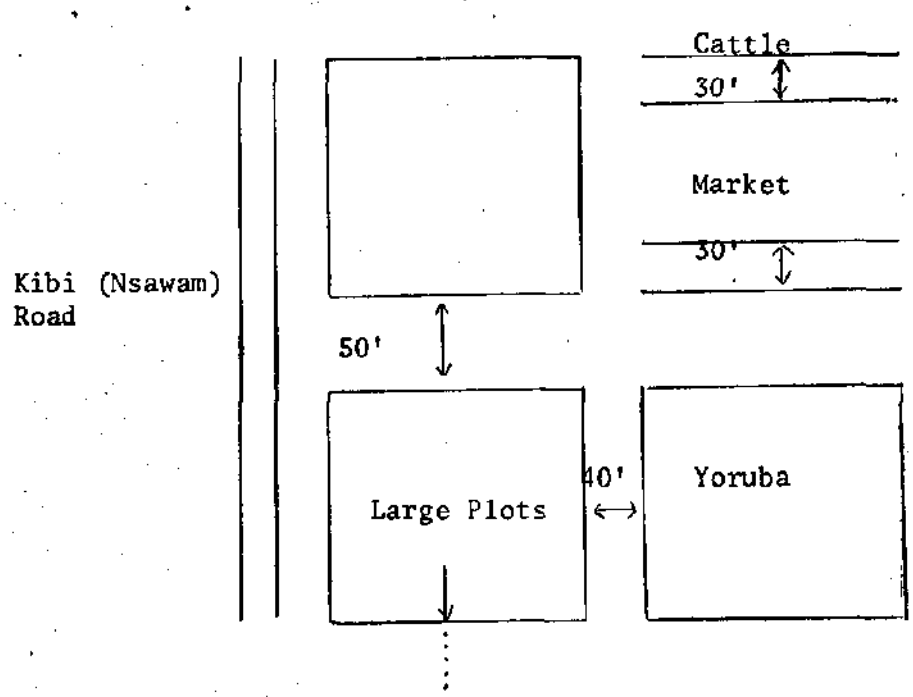


Figure 3a.

Figure 5. Sample Compound

Map 4

British Townsite of Adabraka



The Kibi Road had not yet been tarred, and during the day maybe seven lorries would pass. The market was a quarry, for breaking out stones to make a break-water for the Jamestown Beach. In 1923, Korle Bu Hospital was opened, and in 1925 Achimota School founded. Korle Gonno, a town site south-west of Adabraka was developed, bridging the lagoon. This helped to house some of the workers who had been brought down. Adabraka was situated in between the two new institutions.

It was through the influence of A.K.W. Kojo Thompson, while he was a member of the Legislative Council, that Adabraka Market was actually built. This was 1926-27. Kojo Thompson's rationale was that Salaga

Market, in the old Ga area, was too distant. Makola was fairly new and not yet as popular, having been inaugurated in 1922. The women of Adabraka, however, refused at first to sell their wares at the new market -- they preferred going down to the main one.

Adabraka became a very mixed community. Anybody could buy a plot. People who wanted to live a quiet life, for the most part civil servants, began to buy there. Later on, others came as well. "For instance, my grandmother was advised for health reasons to live at Aburi [twenty miles north on the Akwapim Ridge]. But because it was far, the doctor advised her to come to Adabraka because it was airy."[11] A lot of Kwahus (characterized as the Jews of Ghana, because they are good businessmen and have a way with money) and Ashantis moved in because of trade. The Kibi Road (Nsawam Road) was paved. This made Accra easily accessible to residents of Nsawam (twenty-five miles due north) and Kibi (only eighty miles north of Accra). In the early 1930's, there was one shop only, near boundary Road (the other major north-south road running parallel to the Kibi Road), which became United Africa Company.

Adabraka is probably so popular now because of convenience. It is as much the centre of town as any part of Accra could be.

> Before, by 6 o'clock, you can't come from the central to Adabraka, because there were robbers on the way to take away all of your possessions and go away with it. But now, people walk up and down all through the night. It is only in recent years, from the 1930's when the city began to expand, has Adabraka been anything other than residential. It was with people flocking in that it became a commercial centre. Before, it was impossible to do business here -- you had to go to Accra. It was only getting to the '40's and '50's that you begin to see shops. When the road to Nsawam and Kumasi were paved, and also when congestion got too bad, people began to flock in. Quite a lot of shops, petty petty shops, were opened by the indigenous people themselves.

Components of Neighborhood Life

All societies evolve a set of institutions which are congruent with the socio-cultural system. The institutions, and the behaviors promoted, gain credibility from tradition. By the same token, they operate to support the system, providing the model for behavior, while incorporating the interactants. The urban social system is still in the process of developing. It is based upon a different set of norms, values, etc., than the hometown system. Consequently, its institutions and behaviors should be different.

According to stratification theory, spatial differentiation of city sub-areas is not arbitrary. It ties in with social factors. The mechanisms of spatial isolation and differential association will vary with respect to scale. (via. Clignet and Jordan 1971; McElrath 1964) Following this thread, total societies are composed not of series of communities, but of community units. The latter ". . . come into being through their recognition by a wider society . . . [T]he community is not a little society but a form of social differentiation with total societies." (Suttles 1972:257) As scale increases, the central control system of the society expands, spatially, temporally and functionally. (Clignet and Sween 1969) Social differentials, therefore, result in residential clustering of homogenous groups.

The hometown community is a whole, characterized by familiarity and kin-type relationships. In fact, the kinship metaphor provides the model for interaction, as well as the mechanism for incorporating newcomers. Within the hometown, or any traditional setting, there are both physical

and social institutions to foster a sense of cohesion. Institutions -- such as the market, annual festivals, the political hierarchy -- and behaviors -- based upon primary family relationships, -- function to tie the members together as part of an extended kinship network. Homogeneity is the norm, and activities and interactions are contained within the bounds of the physical plant.

Urban life, on the other hand, is fundamentally different. Much of its appeal is due to the inherent anonymity and compartmentalization of people and activities -- an escape from the traditional, all-encompassing kinship system and the town where everyone knows everyone else. The local sense of belonging may not only be absent -- it may even not be promoted.

In Adabraka, there are many distinct groupings, but they do not necessarily cluster accordingly. As in Kampala, the physical and social characteristics present ". . . an interesting panorama of a community in transition from a rural background to one in which the residents have acquired urban habits and have a longing for those advantages which only an urban area can provide." (Gutkind and Southall 1957:92) Thus, the consciousness-of-kind so evident in traditional areas is not present in force in a city like Accra. But neither is the new consciousness-of-kind of city-dwellers. In the case of the former, ethnic and lineal membership provide the individual with an identity that is reflected in where she/he lives; in the latter, social and psychological trappings of socio-economic status dictate a different set of concerns with location.

The neighborhood may be clearly delineated, or it may exist as an

intangible essence. It may be "a fluid, vaguely defined subpart of a town or a city whose boundaries are only vaguely apparent and differently perceived by its inhabitants." (Keller 1968:12) If the neighborhood is less clearly defined than the area of origin of an individual, then it is perceived in a different manner, with respect to what it offers and how it can absorb its residents. One would expect to find evidence of structures which are appropriate to this style, which accomodate the participants. To that extent, we would not expect institutions which promote cohesiveness and solidarity.

What is Adabraka to its inhabitants, and what are the inhabitants to each other? Adabraka is a location within Accra; it bears little resemblance to the zongo planned sixty years ago. Adabraka lies within the urban boundary, and it is convenient to Accra Central. It is continuous with the urban system in space and time. Like the city as a whole, Adabraka is populated by diverse people. Personal repertoires of familiars are far more limited than in the hometown. The city promotes a scattering of people, places and things far more than does the hometown. The urban space sets limits, or non-limits, on networks. With the fragmentation comes also the possibility of mobility. Anonymity allows for greater leeway in behaviors. Perhaps this is the clue to city-life: a new living situation creates new life styles.

The residents of this city neighborhood have not yet made the total leap to urbanness, but neither have they remained "bush people." To this degree, there is a conglomeration of physical, institutional and behaviorial inconsistencies. Adabraka is in the tradition of Gutkind and Southall's "urban village" -- ". . . more urbanized than the

ordinary rural village, but still not strictly a 'town'." (1957:100) It lies on a point along the urban/rural continuum; but, to repeat, it exists as part of a developing urban system, hence its appeal.

Adabraka provides an introduction to urbanism for the new-comer, and a continuation of the process to the longer-time residents. He/she learns what to expect both in the physical and the social sphere. The city, and Adabraka as a sub-part, has unique services not present outside. By the same token, it lacks many that are inherent to small-town life. Relationships in the city are diffuse. In the Wilsons' term of scale (1945), dependence upon others is more spread out in the city.

There are a majority of first- and second-generation residents in the neighborhood whose ties to respective hometowns are still strong. Loyalties to Adabraka, therefore, are not primary. As such, the desirability of unifying institutions may be equivocal. Life here is fragmented; days are short, with much to do. And just as Plotnikov remarks (1967), in Adabraka as in Jos, if a woman derives from a town twenty-five miles away, she is not an Adabraka woman -- she is of that other town, and her allegiance belongs there. The more accessible the town, and the more flexible her schedule, the more often she will travel. In a sense, this splits her existence; more often than not, given the choice, she would have stayed in her hometown, where she is an integral part of the institutional and behavioral network.

Foci of Daily Life in Adabraka

When one enters a traditional hometown for extensive transactions or with a desire to settle, it is customary to formally greet the chief; it is in his power to facilitate one's acceptance within the community. In Adabraka, there is no patron along these lines. There is an Accra-wide Hausa chief, who presides at festivities (and adds further support to the cohesion of the Hausa). Other immigrant groups have come without traditional figures. Technically, Adabraka falls within the jurisdiction of the Gbese Manshe.[13] His territory, however, runs all the way up to Achimota, some twelve miles distant, and he does not have any sub-chiefs whose immediate responsibility lie beyond the native quarter of Gbese. Consequently, Adabraka's neutrality (in heterogeneity and location) is maintained. As is the anonymity of the newcomer.

We have remarked earlier that in West African urban areas, traditional structures have been replaced, that in their stead voluntary associations have sprung up to guide the newcomer in her adjustment to the town. These may be traditional, modern, or a combination of the two; religious, social, benevolent, to name a few. (Little 1965) Adabraka does not circumscribe any associations, which are exclusive of non-residents.[14] It is not a settled community, to that degree. There are religious groups, affiliated with individual churches, such as the Presbyterian Women's Fellowship. But neither are these churches exclusively local.

There are several churches within the neighborhood bounds -- Presbyterian, Methodist, Anglican, Roman Catholic, Christian Scientist, and several revival sects, to mention a few. The membership is city-wide,

and neighborhood people, by extension, worship elsewhere. Recently, a Twi-speaking congregation of the Presbyterians was established in Accra Central, parallel to another already active in the outlying area of Kaneshie. Many Twi-speaking people attend, because they complain that the service in the local church is too long -- with a congregation of about 700, more than half of whom are Ga, the service is conducted in English and Ga, and the announcements are made in English, Ga, Twi and Ewe. Two blocks north of the market there is a mosque and Koranic school, frequented in the main by Hausas and other northerner. Whereas, e.g. Twi-speakers, may belong to any one of ten or more religious sects, all Hausas and northerners, who are observant, generally stay with Islam. The Adabraka mosque is a neighborhood structure, to the degree that a select group of neighborhood people attend.

Commercial activity thrives; but most of the shop-keepers commute. There is no neighborhood association, for example, or neighborhood merchants. That one shop near Boundary Road has multiplied by hundreds. Within an eight-block square area of Adabraka, a minimum of the following are represented: provision stores, drinking bars, chop bars, tailors and dressmakers, photography studios, carpentry shops, beauty salons, cleaners, petrol stations, plywood stores, radio/television/photography mechanics, car mechanics; record kiosks; as ever, each block has its share of prepared food sellers. All along the streets, there are women selling prepared foods. It may be something as simple as roasted plaintain, with groundnuts on the side; or kenkey[15] with fish and pepper; or rice and stew. There are also all manner of fried snacks, most of which are heavily flavored with pepper, some with ginger, and all fried in copra oil. One

could eat an entire meal by stopping at several road-side coalpots or tables.

There are also petty traders; small kiosks selling everything from needles and thread to Heinz' salad cream and nightly fresh bread with margarine; and itinerant tradesmen, such as watch repairmen, shoemakers, upholstery repairers, who set up work on the side of the road or under a tree. Some of these small businesses duplicate market items -- that on the chance that, for example, a woman might need two tomatoes for her stew after the market has closed for the day. The majority of the neighborhood merchants (as opposed to traders or hawkers) are men -- 80, out of 139. For men and women alike, the ethnic groups which predominate in trade are Kwahu, Ewe, Ga and Fanti. These numbers do not take into account the women who appear on certain corners at odd times, or different corners at whimsical times. If one does not run a business from within walls, but merely sets up shop on a card table or next to a coal pot, hours tend to be flexible. Furthermore, there are businesses run from compound yards, such as the trade of the local kenkey seller, and these are not visible from the street.

The market is the omnipresent neighborhood institution -- while small businesses and trading ventures come and go, the market remains. Stalls are not as difficult to rent as in the main market in town; but generally, once a woman has set herself up, she does not relinquish her spot without good reason. The neighborhood shops are generally the domain of men. Female involvement in market trade came about at the turn of the century. As the markets began to expand in goods, the women became more involved.

Adabraka Market is centrally located, vis-a-vis the bounds of the neighborhood, it is one-block square, esconced behind stone walls. The street to the south, on the market side, is lined with women selling foodstuffs. The other side of the street is lined with small shops: Nat's Electric Shop, Namko Krandeng's Dressmaking Shop, Madame Christiana Brankua's Provisions Shop (just barely meeting costs, because it was robbed and Madame Christiana could not afford to restock the store), Kotoka Tailor's Shop, Clinic of the Ghana Psychic Traditional Healing Association, two more provision shops and a bar, and a fish store (a cold store, as distinct from a provisions shop).

The market is not paved, and during the rainy season it runs with water and mud. It is arranged in north-side aisles on one half, and east-west on the other. There are entrances on the north and south sides. The only closed structure is near the north entrance -- the meat section, operated mainly by Hausa or northern men. They are the only males working at the market, other than the charcoal sellers. They bring with them the traditional Islamic imam skill of slaughtering, hence their monopoly. Fishermen and fish mongers tend to be Ga, a function of the sea-side location. This notwithstanding, the market reflects the ethnic diversity of the neighborhood.

To one side of the meat there is a chop bar, to the other the charcoal stalls. The women all sit under stalls. In the east-west division, they sell fruit, vegetables, smoked fish and shellfish, petty goods. In the north-south stalls, they sell all of the starches -- plantain, yam, rice, cassave, maize, etc. -- and oil. Cloth sellers wander about; a few have stalls, although the main cloth market is opposite Makola in town.

There are a few seamstresses sewing, and other odds and ends, such as pots, being sold. It is interesting that the market transaction is so engrained in the minds of the women that, even though they can go to UTC or GNTC (United Trading Company and Ghana National Trading Company -- both department stores) and pay less than street prices for certain items, they prefer the market.

The market supplies all of the fresh goods that a woman generally needs for meal preparation. Most families still do not own refrigerators. so the market is open the week-long and women go daily. Just as women resisted selling at Adabraka Market when it was first opened, so now women hesitate to shop there. The market as an institution is no less popular; but many women who have the time prefer going to Makola, Salaga or even Lagostown. They complain that Adabraka is too dear, and the selection, as in any local outlet, somewhat limited. Even when they do go regularly, they do not necessarily patronize the same women who sells, for example, plantain. Women trade with whomever has the best product at the most reasonable price. In point of fact, a given individual will not patronize the same trader daily, because she fears the day will come when that trader either will have poor produce, outrageous prices, or nothing at all. Then, others may refuse to sell to her.

What about services offered? To the east of the market and alongsides sit the public toilets, an eyesore and olfactory disgrace. An adequate description of Adabraka, Accra, and most of British West Africa, must give prominence to the system of sanitation. Every street is lined on either side with an open drain. The drains play an important part in daily life. They substitute for facilities lacking in many compounds or

public spaces. Adult males and non-adult males and females use the gutters to relieve themselves. Children bathe, or are bathed, alongside the gutter in front of the compound wall. It is common to see a frothy body or two, bucket of water in tow, in the early morning or late afternoon hours.

The gutter also serves as a garbage disposal -- people walk along the road from food-seller to food-seller, stopping at one or several. The accumulated garbage must be deposited. A woman, sitting within the confines of her compound, finishes cooking a meal. After cleaning the utensils, she tosses the dirty water and scraps over the wall and into the gutter. During the rainy season, home-made toys may be floated in the running water. Or, in a moment of boredom, a treasure hunt may turn up items of interest.

Sanitation problems are far more evident than they would be if there were flush-toilet facilities. Most of the compounds in Adabraka still have latrines. If there is any lapse in the pick-up schedule of the night-soil collectors, the air becomes heavy. One week they went on strike. A young neighborhood boy was caught with his pants down near the lagoon. His mother, a local fried plantain seller, was fined N¢20 ($20). Prior to the Business Promotion Act, the night-soil collectors were Liberians. Given the distasteful nature of their job, the old regime kept them well-paid and properly equipped. When all non-nationals were expelled, the job was taken over by Northerners. They walk through the streets, every few nights, in khaki shorts, bare-footed, with a tall bucket on their head. Remuneration no longer makes up for the nature of the job. They are employed by the city and live predominantly in Nima, known for its hideous conditions and rampant disease.

Many houses (compounds) do not have a water pipe in the yard. A common neighborhood sight is the self-employed, slim, khaki-garbed, barefooted Northerner, struggling along under the weight of two water buckets, which hang from a pole across his shoulders. He wanders through the streets, selling water which he has drawn from public taps, of which there are a few. Children use the water taps in the same way they use the gutter. Frugal women who do not have a spigot at home carry their own water, either from the public tap or from a neighbor's yard.

Adabraka is never free of odors. The gutters, latrines and heavy pepper content in cooking all contribute. Moreover, there are the lorries -- the local, common form of public transport, colloquially known as "trotros," since they used to cost thruppence ("tro") to ride. They are of an average age, which outdistances most old vehicles. Steaming radiators and burning oil add another layer to the odors. And there is a great deal of traffic. Three of Accra's six or seven traffic lights are within Adabraka.

As for recreation, the Roxy Cinema, purveyor of popular Indian and spaghetti-Western films, also hosts live concerts of popular African groups. There are many local drinking spots. Indeed, drinking is the social outlet. Dan's Milk Bar, Ghana's only ice cream parlor, was built on the main road in 1970, and it has become a gathering place for the younger set.

Adabraka is Accra. As such, it should exhibit many of the primary characteristics of the city. Certainly its institutional structure in no way sets it apart as a distinct entity. There are no particular features which promote cohesion -- such as a local political system,either

traditional or modern; a business structure, self-sufficient neighborhood market; voluntary and religious organizational structures are not localized; the physical plant, such as housing features. If anything, the broad spectrum of differences is the common denominator. Neighborhood people come together through common roots and participation in a nascent system. There are no loyalties encouraged. People come and go; in-migration to Accra from all over the country is characteristic of the pull which budding commercial and industrial activity has.

The Urban Compound

As people come into the city, they must find a place to live, one which does not commit them to long-term stability. The city situation is a transient one; great investment need not be put either into one's living space, or the people with whom one interacts. Not only might a woman find herself in a new home, away from her family, in a strange city, in the largest city; but she is also in a living situation over which she has very little control. She lives wherever she can find a room.[16] She must alter her behavior to cope with distance, in both physical and social terms.

She may narrow down her choice to a particular section, such as Adabraka, because of convenience, ease of transportation connections, friends, etc. Renting rooms is through informal networks -- someone hears of something, or someone in a compound moves out and a friend of someone else is told and moves in. Or someone merely walks up and down the street, knocking on doors and inquiring after vacancies.

Ties to neighbors are analogous to ties to the neighborhood. In

urban Adabraka, face to face encounters continue in form. The content, however, is far different from that of the rural area. In the city, neighborhood and neighboring go together; the neighboring role, however, does not come out of a void. It must be learned, and furthermore, it must be and is differentiated from that of friend and relative.[17]

The types of accomodations in the neighborhood reflect this. The houses in Adabraka were not built with the thought of making family houses. A man would buy a plot of land, where he and his wife and children could live. He would leave it to his children, not to his brothers and sisters. Everybody has a family house, but most people complain of troubles. So, for example, a cousin from the maternal side, or a cousin from the paternal side, may move in and problems crop up.

Currently, housing in Adabraka is predominantly rented compound rooms. There are houses like that of Mrs. Foulkes-Crabbe, built primarily for the immediate family. Most, however, also incorporate strangers. Mercy Foulkes-Crabbe, an esteemed and established resident, is one of Adabraka's picturesque folk. She has always been a force in educational reform and Accra-wide community functions. Four years ago, at the age of seventy, she founded the Women's Society for Public Affairs -- which is attended by women who are anxious to promote the cause of women in all sectors of public life.[18] Mrs. Foulkes-Crabbe's house is a large and gracious British Colonial structure, which sits a block south of the Adabraka market. At first, the compound housed this one building only; when its landlady retired from her job as school head-mistress at Cape Coast, she built a second and then third building, with renting out rooms in mind. Which in fact she has done. All of the tenants are strangers

to her. Her compound is no different from most. The composition of the houses reflects the heterogeneity, strangeness and indeed remoteness which characterize relationships in general.

In the Enumerator's Manual of the Ghana 1960 Population Census, a house or compound is defined as

> . . . a self-contained building unit. It is a structurally separate and independent place of abode. The essential features are separateness and independence. An enclosure may be considered separate if it is surrounded by walls, fences, etc., so that a person or a group of persons can isolate themselves from other persons in the community for the purpose of sleeping, preparing and taking their meals or protecting themselves from the hazards of climate such as storms and the sun. (Caldwell 1967(a):63)

This definition was useful in the urban areas, where streets and houses are marked. Street names, however, are not heeded and most people do not know the number of the house they live in.

The basic impression a compound conveys may vary in terms of its size, the number and style and age of buildings it contains, the floor of the yard -- if it is concrete or dirt and rocks -- the color of the houses, the location of laundry lines, the presence of shrubbery and trees, the type of physical closure -- a wall in front, or a small kiosk -- the occupational paraphernalia -- a kenkey seller's soaking maize and large cast iron pot, or the baker's igloo-sized and shaped clay oven -- and of course the physical variety of occupants and their idiosyncracies.

Most compounds usually contain more than one building. The main building, generally well-built, is often storied and always has electricity. The auxilliary structures are not necessarily electrified and are often tin-roofed. The compound might or might not be paved. (See Figures 1-5) A compound yard serves any number of functions. It is a general socializing space, enclosed by the buildings and/or a wall.

If a woman selling prepared food lives in a given compound, the yard surely serves as her kitchen and very often as her take-out shop as well. Every block or two, for example, there is at least one kenkey seller. Most of them do not bother to go out on the street to sell -- their residence is known and patrons come there. Thus, the yard smells of cooking and fermenting maize.

The yard is also a playground for the children who, in any case, find themselves perfectly at home wandering in and out of peoples' rooms. Compounds resound with children playing and at least one radio blaring. Typically, all of the doorways have a curtain hanging. The population density in one room is high. (See Chapter V)

In most cases, the compound -- a large, central living space -- substitutes for indoor living space. The nature of interaction that it contains varies with the relatedness and ethnicity of the residents, and with the physical properties and layout. The compound chamber/hall arrangement is quite small -- about 4' x 10' (see Figure 4). Inside, it is crowded and hot. Outside it is airy and roomy. It is rare for residents to do much visiting in each other's rooms, unless it is a family house, or there are kin living there. Besides the discomfort of cramped quarters, one is surrounded by strangers. People have been thrown together by the renting situation. Thus, it is not strange that visiting in rooms does not prevail. Private corners outside are easy to come by. Even outside, when women cook, they rarely do so ensemble. Unless they are intimates or kin. Ruby, a Kwahu woman, had become best friends with her immediate neighbor. Both of them lived with spouse and children in respective chamber/hall arrangements. They enjoyed sitting together in

the afternoon and cooking in front of the house; until the first woman's husband separated them, she knows not why. To his mind, she was violating a rule of role.

The small size of one's room and the intense heat and humidity of Accra impel most people to spend a good deal of free waking-time outside. In any multiple set-up of rooms, none is used as kitchen or bath. The compound is every woman's kitchen; each occupies her respective area. There are some which have either a lean-to or a proper building, subdivided into a few rooms, each of which functions as a kitchen and is usually shared. Generally, these are for storing utensils -- very few women cook indoors because of the heat. Their stove is a small coal-pot -- a wrought-iron container, on one foot, which is stoked with coal. The pot for cooking is then placed on the red-hot coals. It is similar to a hibachi. Rarely far afield is a large wooden mortar and pestle, used for pounding fufu.[19] Another is for pounding palm nuts, to prepare palm nut soup.

Because of the heat, shutters and doors are left open as late as possible, and then closed only out of fear of thieves.

> In the olden days, say in the central area there, my grandfather had built a house. Say about four or five rooms. He gave each of his children a room. They would marry and have children, and if they liked they would build an extension to the house. And stay there, because in the good old days, they would say -- 'What, you going to stay outside? At night when the thief comes in, and you shout, who will hear you? Who will come to your aid? So, build near us.' That is the reason for the slums in Accra -- and in the whole country. For fear of thieves or anything that can break out during the night . . .[20]

There are those who will not travel, because they are afraid of thieves breaking in. And although it is in the interest of everyone in the

compound to go after a thief -- still, people do not owe their first loyalties to compound-mates. People look out for each other to the degree that a very ritualized etiquette demands.

When there is a water pipe in the yard, it is generally to one side of the compound. This promotes that much more interaction. When one has to go to the toilet or bathe, he again must cross the yard. Bathing is done out of a bucket. The shower room has a hole in one of the corners for the water to drain -- this also serves for urinating. Despite the procedure involved in bathing, Ghanaians are fastidious about it and most bathe twice a day. With so many of the house's facilities centralized for all to share, visual interaction at least is great. This is further underlined by the size of the rooms. Furthermore, the more rooms one can afford, the more bourgeois and thus the more furniture to take up space. Even larger rooms as a rule do not have more than two beds, which means that children sleep on the floor on mats. In a storied building, an individual usually has a chamber only; indeed, an entire family might share one chamber. All of the chambers lead off of a long hall. Where the room is in a long, narrow bungalow, the rooms are adjacent to each other. There is a door leading in to a hall for each, and there is a chamber beyond. In both cases, occupants need not feel that they are impinging upon each other, in oging from one's own room to the latrine, or shower, or whatever. All of the cases of women living in multiple-room arrangements refer to European-style family houses. Those living in bungalow-style family houses, despite the relatedness of the residents, consider as their living quarters only the room within which they sleep and keep their possessions. (See Figures 1-5)

In a family house, or among family rooms, there is a lot of traffic, as a matter of course. Rooms tend not to have the same connotation as in purely rented quarters. In the latter, neighbors may visit within rooms if, for example, there is a television on the premises. The same is true for neighbors coming by at a family house. In a sense, this is a gimmick which allows for altered behavior. Generally, there is not the tradition of sitting around and socializing in one's room.

Living here is with people, and privacy is a very relative thing. Given the physical lack of privacy, it seems judicious to consider a loud radio as a barrier. Besides providing entertainment, it also muffles sounds. No compound is without at least the GBC (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation) box radio. This is wired to receive one station only and goes on and off periodically during the day. It is left open, so that when broadcasting begins at 5:30 a.m., it comes on automatically. A private radio, in addition, carries prestige in this very consumer-oriented culture. Other than the radio, a cotton curtain in every doorway is the only impediment to intrusion -- when an occupant is in the vicinity, the door is at least unlatched, if not open altogether.

In a stranger-compound, the majority of people a woman entertains in her room are family, or friends who live elsewhere, less so co-residents. This is particularly so, because of the climate -- it is more comfortable to stay outside, and intrusions are unlikely. Since the day begins early, it is not uncommon to have visitors at 7:00 in the morning; by the same token, it is unusual to have visitors much past 9:00 in the evening. Thus, visiting hours tend to be during daylight hours. This is another reason for remaining outside -- there is no need for artificial light.

Some, but not all, compounds have an outside light. The sun begins to set a bit past 6:00, and within ten minutes, it is night-time. The coal pots, used for cooking, give off enough light for outside eating and chatter.

In every compound, someone owns a Ludu board. Ludu is a game, which is played with great zest, particularly on Sunday afternoons when people have free time and it is light out. The board is brought outside, used, and taken back inside when the game is over. It promotes interaction among compound mates. It is one of the three major leisure-time activities around the house, the other two being chatting in the yard and retiring to bed, perhaps to read the paper or a story-book.

If there is little commitment to the place, there is bound not to be an attempt to commit oneself to the people, and vice versa. Much of the physical layout of the home is very similar to the old -- except that it houses unrelated people. There are traditional reasons for building rooms off of a long hallway, of keeping the center space free for outdoor activities, of walling properties off from each other. Because traditional life-style is still so much a part of current behavior, albeit out-of-awareness, these have been incorporated. The people, however, bring with them traditional suspicions of outsiders, suspicions (ethnocentrisms) which they have been socialized into. These suspicions fit into the stereotypic urban pattern of behavior -- which is reinforced or inculcated by the heterogeneity of the compound. The composition of the compound reflects that of the city, the behaviors are appropriate to the city. Thus, it is the introduction and teaching agent for the new-person-come-to-the-big-city: in the compound, she learns that she can

live with those she trusts, and those with whom she is not familiar. She is eased into the role, perhaps not on home ground, but at least in a small spatial area where she does have some sense of a home, a room of her own.

To summarize briefly: this chapter opened with an historical sketch of Accra, and its sub-division Adabraka. As an inner-city neighborhood, Adabraka exhibits continuity with the larger whole. Its physical layout, the history of its settlement, and its current offerings provide the backdrop for the observations and analyses of the protagonists of this study -- a group of adult women.

Currently, Adabraka functions as an address of sorts; it is a physical location with a name, composed of a loose conglomeration of individuals. Some are very recent arrivals, some are long-time residents. Newcomers move in as beggars more than as choosers. The common denominator amongst strangers is the need for housing and employment. Adabraka is highly tenanted,and it is close to Accra Central, where there is the greatest abundance of jobs.

For many it is not the primary source of identity -- they simply live there. It has been shown how Adabraka has not yet found it functional to develop a local institutional structure to incorporate residents into a coherent whole. People come and go. Ties are tenuous.

Adabraka is a stopping-off point for many new arrivals; its compounds socialize them into the offings and workings of the urban system. Some folks pass on to different places, some settle in the neighborhood. But all learn a new set of behaviors, appropriate to the new set of circumstances.

CHAPTER III

THE URBAN FOLK

The last chapter was an introduction to the place; this chapter is an introduction to the people -- specifically, the women. The presentation of the material follows the progression of starting with the very general, and working down to the very specific.

The first section opens with a quantitative overview of the population, a kind of profile of differences. It is a statistical description of these urban folk -- their places of origin, ethnicity, occupations, etc. The data derive from a series of questions asked in a census of all[1] adult women living in houses chosen for the first sample. It is not intended to paint a picture of the "everywoman"; the area is too diverse and traditions too varied, with no real model as yet developed, for an ideal type to even by postulated. Rather, this will give some idea of the range of variation, as well as providing a sociological definition of the neighborhood.

In the second section, the reader makes the acquaintance of the sub-sample of women, drawn from the original census population. The emphasis throughout this study is on qualitative, in-depth analysis; this group of women are the source for the data in the balance of this chapter and those which follow.

The third section goes on to present another overview. This one is

of elements of the belief system, which appear to cross-cut the differences in people and provide the basis for the hypothesized oneness of urban Ghanaian women. The responses of the small group of informants, along with informal observation, were looked at as a whole. From them, I singled-out five traditional attitudes -- reciprocity, polygamy, seniority, lability and fatalism. They are interwoven into a shared system, adhered to by the individual and reflected in the society's institutional and role structure. In my analysis, I suggest that the tenacity of these pensées sauvages accounts for the non-differentiation of women and their subordinance in the authority structure. This supports the contention that the milieu is irrelevant, for women share the same ascriptive role definition -- that of female, sexual being.

To portray the traditional base-line, I often borrow from the ethnographic literature; in the main, however, the base-line derives from the image that the respondents have of rural life. It is this that continues to guide them in their patterns of behavior and decision-making.

A Profile of Differences

In order to introduce myself to the community, as a modus vivendi for initiating the study and for a generalized picture of these urban women, I carried out a superficial census. (See Appendix I for methodology) Extrapolating from the answers given, it is possible to also sketch out the urban traits, or attributes of urbanism, which the women possess. Thus, traditional versus urban consciousness, at least in terms of physical and social clustering, is also ascertainable.

The census schedule devised asks ten questions:[2]

1. House number -- every compound was given a number for the 1970 Population Census; this was painted on either the wall of the compound or one of the buildings within. Most people not only do not know the name of the street they live on, but also do not know the compound number. It was useful, however, in locating the sample and for return trips, until I got to know the area.

2. Name -- invariably, the women gave me their Christian name; this caused a great deal of confusion when I returned, because very few of them in fact go by that name. Rather, they continue to use their Ghanaian day-name, and most compound-mates do not know them by their Christian name.

3. Ethnic group -- this was narrowed down as much as possible -- for example, insisting upon the sub-grouping if a woman identified herself as Akan, giving the example of several possibilities to trigger her response.

4. Birthplace -- <u>not</u> hometown. The distinction is not just academic, because one might well never live in the hometown, the location of the family house and/or ethnic group origins.

5. Education -- in grade or number of years.

6. Age -- many women estimated, without too much difficulty, at least by determining the age of children and working back from that. In the few cases of very old women who could not approximate, I used historical dates, such as the pre-, post-Ashanti War.

7. Source of income -- whether the woman was employed outside of the house or not, and if so, in what occupation.

8. Amount of income -- when the woman was willing to respond, the answers were fairly accurate, i.e. there was no obvious attempt on her part to lie; she might, however, insist she did not know.

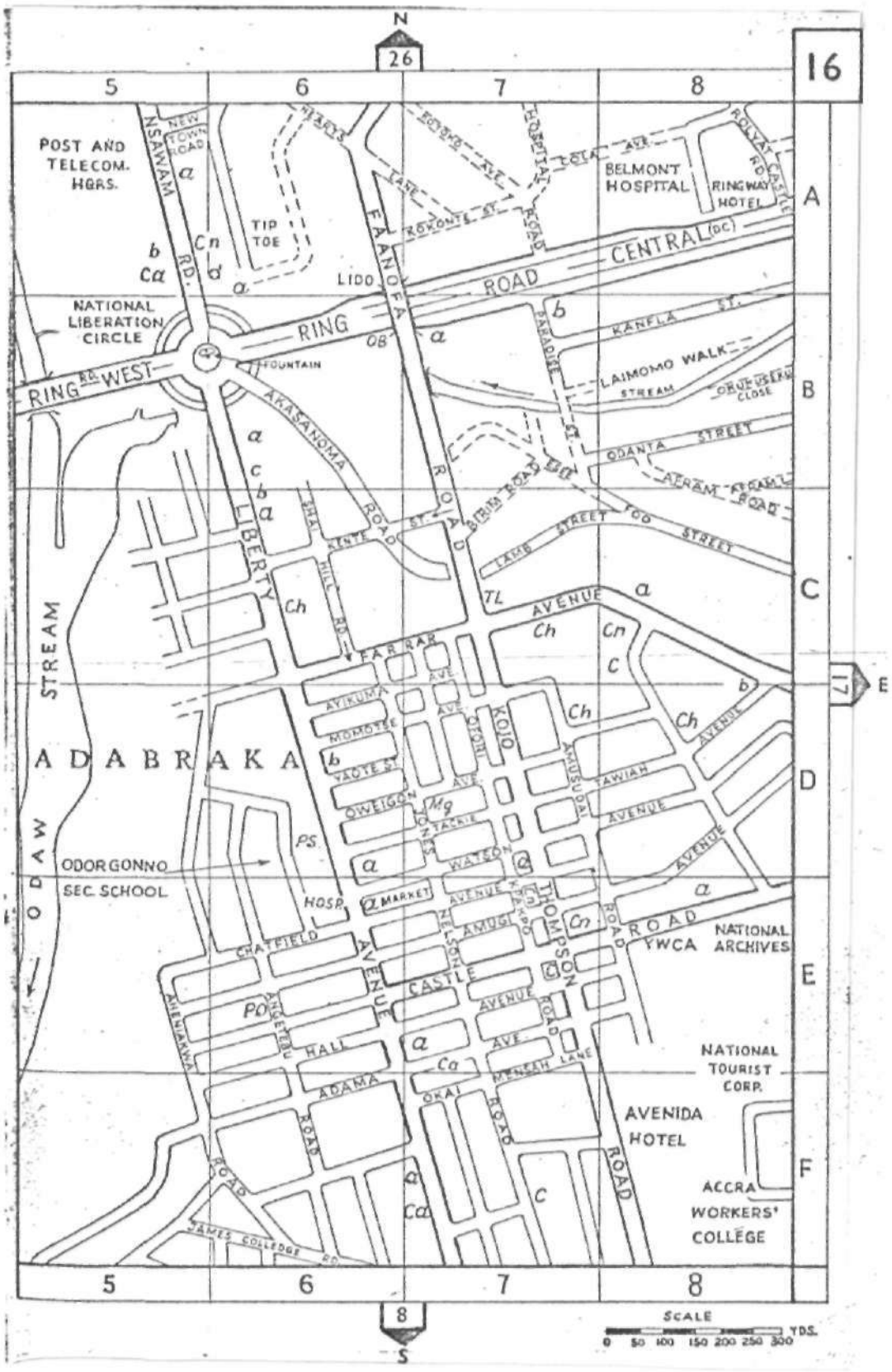
9. Length of residence -- in Accra.

10. Literacy -- English-speaker or not.

Adabraka is composed of sub-areas. This study was carried out in five of them (see Appendix I for specifics): 1) Obuadaban Terrace, named after a house on Liberty Avenue, one of the major north-south thoroughfares in Accra leading to Ring Road. It is an area of untarred roads. 2) Liberation Circle, named after the circle a block away on The Ring Road. The name Liberation Circle commemorates the coup on 24 February, 1966, when Kwame Nkrumah was deposed. The Circle area proper is always bustling with activity -- the Orion Movie theatre is located there, and there are a number of kiosks, shops, spots for food-sellers, and the Lido Dance Hall. 3) Tuxedo Junction, named after a local bar, and 4) Adabraka Market, its referent obvious, border each other, about five blocks south of the Liberation Circle area. Both of these are far more congested than the others -- they fall within the bounds of the original site plan and construction, whereas the first two are of more recent vintage. 5) Finally, Asylum Down, which lies across Kojo Thompson, the other major north-south Accra thoroughfare. Asylum Down takes its name from the local, and sole, mental hospital, which is situated on a road incline. Asylum Down has many unpaved roads, and much of the housing is quite new and more European in appearance (see Map 5).

The census sample indicates that 467 adult (i.e. eighteen years

Map 5. Street-map of Adabraka
(Halakan 1969:16)



of age and older) women live in the five sub-areas:

Table 1

Distribution of Census Population in the Five Sample Areas

Neighborhood	No. of Houses	No. of Individuals	Percentage
Obuadaban Terrace	15	106	22.7
Liberation Circle	14	78	16.7
Adabraka Market	24	129	27.6
Tuxedo Junction	15	102	21.8
Asylum Down	18	52	11.1
TOTAL	86	467	99.9

Table 1 shows that the women are distributed in eighty-six houses, an average of 5.43 per house. Needless to say, such an average does not show that, in one house for example, there are sixteen adult women, whereas in another, there is only one. Furthermore, it does not express the fabulous admixture prevalent in Adabraka within single compounds, individual blocks, and sub-areas. This is detailed in Table 2.

The number of people-per-room, and thus of people-per-compound is on the average higher here than in the bush; this is true, despite the fact that it is not a homogeneous group, where interaction would be a matter of course. In the city, people live in close proximity to one another, to people one would not traditionally have to see on an open road, let alone live with in cramped quarters. The new situation necessitates nothing more than facility in the arts of working relationships -- maintaining cooperation in those areas where a modicum of interaction or mutual understanding is of the essence, such as compound duties. Such an art, however, is adjudged to be an index of urbanity.

Table 2

Ethnic Integration in Compounds (Census of Female Residents in Sample Areas)

Obuadaban Terrace	Ethnic Group								
House No.	Ga[a]	Adangme[b]	Kwahu	Fanti	Other[c] Akan	Ewe	North & Foreigners[d]	Others[e]	House Total
1	1				1		2		4
2	1		1				5		7
3	2	2	1	1	3				9
4	1			1	1		3		6
5	4	2		1	1	2			10
6	11 1/2	2	1	2	1/2	1			18
7		1	1	4					6
8	1				1				2
9		2	6			1			9
10	1		3	1	3			1	9
11	2				1				3
12	4	1		1		1			7
13			4		1				5
14				3		3			6
15			4		1				5
Total	28 1/2	10	21	14	13 1/2	8	10	1	106

(a) In the question of double affiliation, e.g. the situation in House #6 of one-half a Ga person, one should be able to say that the offspring of such a union is such-and-such. The women are cognizant of some rules, such as the fate of children after a divorce which is discussed in Chapter IV. But in the survey responses, there is no pattern. Consequently, I simply noted half-ethnicity when it was given as a response.

(b) Includes: Krobo, Shai, Adangme.

(c) Includes: Akwapim, Akim, Ashanti and Nzima.

(d) Includes: Hausa, Wangara, Dagbani, Dagomba, Grushie, Mossi, Beregu, Buzanga, Yoruba and Huida.

(e) Includes: Akwamu, Guan, Enum, Efutu.

Liberation Circle	Ethnic Group								
House No.	Ga	Adangme	Kwahu	Fanti	Other Akan	Ewe	North & Foreigners	Others	House Total
1	5								5
2	5		1	1					7
3	1			2	1				4
4		2		1					3
5	4								4
6			1				3		4
7	1								1
8	1/2				1/2			3	4
9	3			1					4
10	1/3		1	1 1/2	1	8	1		13
11		5	4		1				10
12					2				2
13	1	1	7		1				10
14	1	2	—	———	3	—	—	1	7
Total	22	10	14	6 1/2	9 1/2	8	4	4	78

Adabraka Market	Ethnic Group								
House No.	Ga	Adangme	Kwahu	Fanti	Other Akan	Ewe	North & Foreigners	Others	House Total
1	3				1	4			8
2					1				1
3	3				1				4
4	1			2			1		4
5	2								2
6	4			2	1		2		9
7			1			2	7		10
8	1	3				4			8
9	1	2				1			4
10	10								10
11	1	1			3	2			7
12	4						1		5
13			1		2				3
14				9					9
15			4		1		2		7
16	4						2		6
17	5						2		7
18			6		3				9
19			1	1	4				6
20				1					1
21	1	1				1			3
22				1	1				2
23	1								1
24	2	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	3
Total	43	7	13	16	19	14	17		129

Asylum Down	Ethnic Group								
House No.	Ga	Adangme	Kwahu	Fanti	Other Akan	Ewe	North & Foreigners	Others	House Total
1						2			2
2					1				1
3					3				3
4					3				3
5	2								2
6			2						2
7	1								1
8	3	1	1	1	3				9
9					1				1
10					1				1
11	1/2				1 1/2	1			3
12	1								1
13					1	6		1	8
14						2			2
15			1		4	1			6
16					1			1	2
17						2			2
18			3						3
Total	7 1/2	1	7	1	19 1/2	14	--	2	52

GRAND TOTALS

86	128 1/2	35	69	41	72 1/2	70	42	8	467

Asylum Down stands out significantly. There are a few reasons for the lower number of women here. First of all, the housing is newer and much of it built to accommodate nuclear family arrangements, so that there are fewer people living in many of the houses. Secondly, it is far less densely built-up. Thirdly, sections of Asylum Down house Lebanese and Indian families. It is one of the few inner-city neighborhoods considered acceptable to Europeans.[3] Consequently, when I visited the houses chosen at random from the Enumerator Books, I found that some were inhabited by aliens. Since this piece of research is not concerned with the perceptions of non-Africans, they were omitted. Ruth Simms Hamilton (1966:51) notes that Adabraka "is a good residential area. It is occupied by a number of Syrians, Lebanese, Indians, and a smaller representation of Europeans and Americans. They live in the Northern segment where most of the large modern homes are located." Given the fact that my work was initiated almost one year after the enactment of the Aliens Act, when almost one and a half million people were deported back to country of origin, I did not find Hamilton's description to be accurate. The area she was referring to is that of Asylum Down. Adabraka in general is now known as a popular living area, African in character and population.

It is, however, appropos to note that in the north part of the neighborhood, and around Liberation Circle, there are a number of good African craft shops; a French restaurant, run by a Lebanese man and patronized in the main by non-Africans; one of the three movie theatres patronized by the expatriate population, the Orion. Further south, in Adabraka, there are a few "boutiques," carrying European clothing and

shoes. And there is one other French restaurant alongside Asylum Down. Which came first, the services or the residents, is hard to say. It is a very convenient area, and en route to Accra Central, but easier to navigate.

The migration process has been significant in molding and transforming the character of the urban demographic structure. Indeed, one of the prominent features of the southeastern landscape of Ghana is the movement of people into, through and around the urban system (McNulty 1966). Of the 467 women in the sampling, 187 (40 percent) were born and bred in Accra. The balance (60 percent) arrived at the average age of 12.5, and they have been living in this city for an average of 20 years. In comparison, Hamilton shows that five years earlier Adabraka's migrant population was 72 percent, as compared with 57 percent for the city as a whole. I suspect that in 1970-71, the migrant population for Accra was smaller -- most of the non-Ghanaians (even those who had been living in Ghana for a few generations) were deported in accord with the Aliens Act (see N. Addo 1970).

Where do my 60 percent hail from? They come from towns large and small, near and far, and they bring with them a variety of customs. They speak different languages and maintain different ethnic heritages. Table 3 gives a general idea of the size of the towns from which the women have emigrated.

Slightly more than 55 percent of the migrant women come from towns more than 100 miles away; 22.7 percent come from towns 51 to 100 miles away; and slightly less than 20 percent come from 16 to 25 miles away. Many came from towns which would classify as urban centers -- population

Table 3

Birthplaces and Respective Dominant Ethnic Groups of the Census Population

Dominant Ethnicity		Region and Town*	Number of Women
		Accra Capital District	
GA		Ashieve (1) Ayikuma (1) Dodowa (2)	7
		Accra (6) Achimota (2) Nungua (2)	191
		Eastern Region	
AKAN	Akim	(Kibi (3)	2
		(Nsawam (4) Pampamso (1)	8
	Akwapim	(Akwapim Ridge towns: Abome (1) Aburi (2) (Adeisu (1) Adukurom (2) Akropong (3) (Ahwerase (1) Dawu (2) Larteh (3) Tutu (2)	30
ADANGME	Krobo	(Big Ada (2)	15
		(Odumasi (2) Somanya (3)	5
GUAN	Guan	Enum (3)	6
AKAN	Akim	(Ada (1) Jumapo (2) Koforidua (5)	13
		(Begoro (3) Kankan (2) Kukurantumi (3) (Old Tafo (3)	8
		(Asamankese (4)	1
	Kwahu	(Kwahu: Mpraeso (3) Nkawkaw (4) Obo (2) (Twennuruase (1) Abetifi (2) Pepiase (2)	50
		Volta Region	
EWE		Anloga (4) Anyako (3) Tegbi (3)	8
		Keta (4)	13
		Aflao (3) Denu (2) Dzodze (3) Wuti (2)	4
		Dabala (2)	2
		Anfueta (2) Ho (4)	3
		Peki (3)	8
		Dodi Mempeasem (1) Likpe Mate (2)	3
		Western Region	
AKAN	Fanti + Nzima	Nzima (3) Sekondi (5) Takoradi (5)	4
		Axim (3) Prestea (3)	3

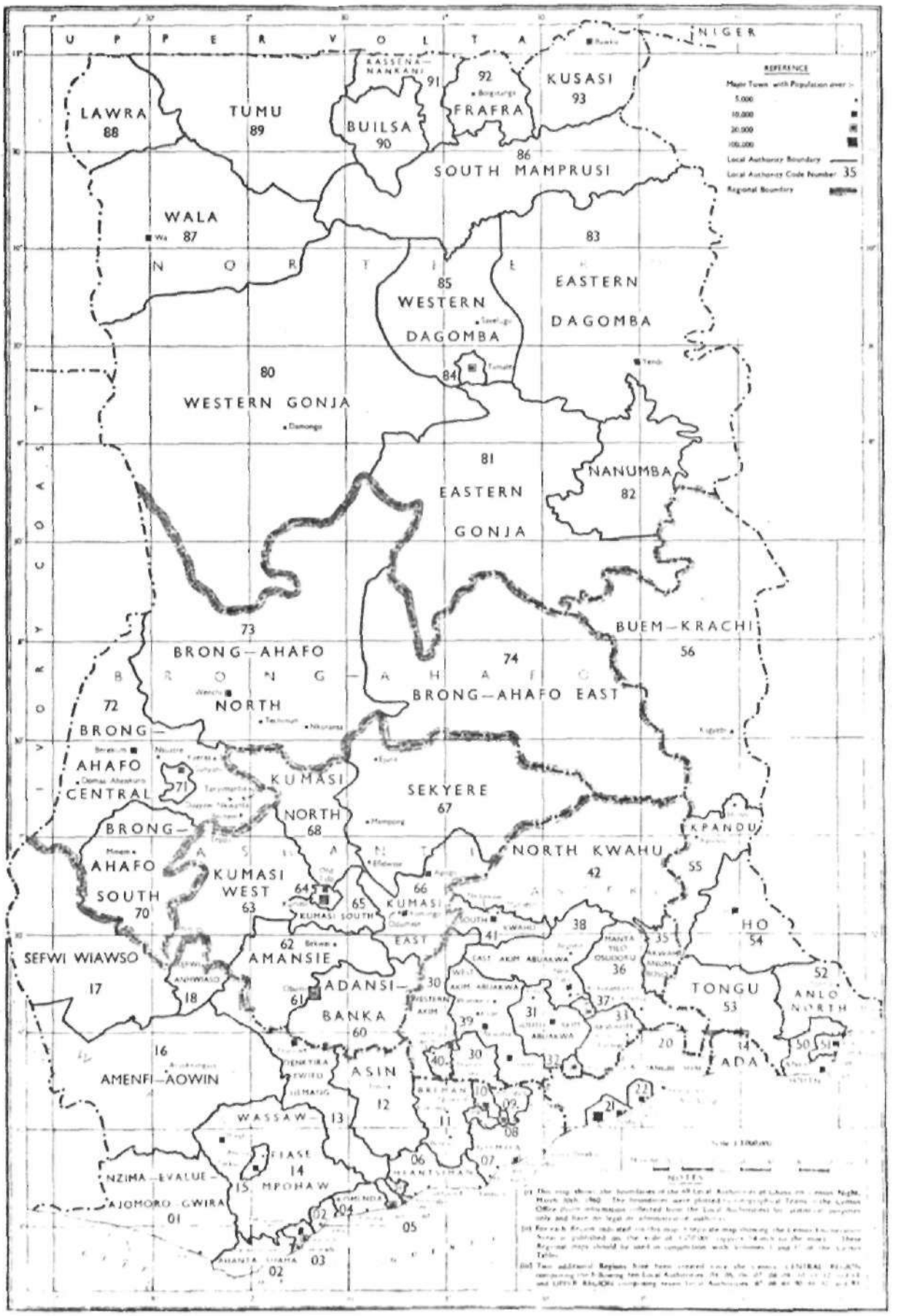
		Central Region	
AKAN	Fanti	Elmina (3) Komenda (2)	**5**
		Cape Coast (5)	**6**
		Edumafa (1) Kuntu (1) Saltpond (3)	13
		Winneba (5)	**3**
		Swedru (4)	**2**
		Denkyira (2)	**1**
		Dunkwa (4)	**1**
		Ashanti Region	
AKAN	Ashanti	Obuasi (5)	**3**
		Anyame (1)	1
		Kane-Amo (1)	1
		Kumasi (6)	**11**
		Konongo (4)	3
		Senchi (2)	2
		Brong-Ahafo Region	
AKAN	Brong	Bidiana (1)	2
		Northern Region	
	Dagomba	Yendi (4)	**2**
	+ Hausa	Tamale (5)	**2**
		Outside Ghana	
		Togo, Lome (5) Dahomey, Ouagadougou (4) Abidjan (6)	13

*Number of parentheses next to town name stands for the population, according to the 1960 Ghana Population Census:

1 = 1000 or less
2 = 1001 to 5000
3 = 5001 to 10,000
4 - 10,001 to 20,000
5 = 20,001 to 50,000
6 = 50,001 and above

The grouping of towns is not arbitrary; it following the grouping used for the 1960 Census, as found on the Census Map of Local Authorities (see Map 4).

Map 6. Census Map of Local Authorities
(1960 Population Census of Ghana: IIa)



20,000 and more. Accra is not the only very large urban area -- as of 1960, Kumasi had a population of 180,642, and 4.7 of the newcomers to Accra come from the Asante capital. There are at least seven cities represented as birthplaces, with populations of between 20-50,000 people. They account for 15.8 percent of the women; 14.8 percent are from towns of 10-20,000. And 31 percent come from towns with a population of 5-10,000. Thus, the remaining 33.7 percent of the migrant women, i.e. only 19.7 percent of the entire sample population, were born in towns smaller than 5,000 people.

The important point to remember is that the majority of the women did not arrive in Accra totally ignorant of city offerings, even if on a less sophisticated level than Accra. Also germane is the variance in ethnicity of Accra-born and migrant women. In Adabraka, members of different ethnic groups not only live side by side, but among each other. Objections against strangers or outsiders, which are natural to everyone's ethnocentric convictions and vocabulary[4] do not necessarily figure in importantly in daily small-group level of functioning.

To what extent do these women possess a tradition of urbanism? The fact that a person is born outside of Accra does not divest her of urban experience. It is a relative quality. "While urbanism, or that complex of traits which make up the characteristic mode of life in cities, and urbanization, which denotes the development and extensions of these factors, are thus not exclusively found in settlements which are cities in the physical and demographic sense, they do, nevertheless, find their most pronounced expression in such areas" (Wirth 1938:7). Many of the Adabraka women come from outlying areas, which may not be

metropolitan, in the sense of throbbing economic centers like Accra, but which may be regional centers, or places that may possess the numerical size and density to qualify as cities. (At the time of Wirth's writing, the census definition designated a community of 2,500 or more as urban.) In this sense, they are not totally unprepared for the urban condition. We have already seen from Table 2 and the accompanying discussion that this measure of urbanism is strong.

Urbanness is also a function of those with whom one has direct contact and experience in dealings. Typically, in an Adabraka compound, contact is with diverse types of people. By extension, the same is true for the larger street and community area. An obvious, and traditional, technique for dealing with heterogeneity is to avoid it, for example, ethnic groups forming their own clusters. Yet, there is no ethnic clustering of an entire street. It does occur in family houses, though rarely in exclusion of anyone else. Currently, many family houses do have a few tenants, often of diverse background, for financial reasons. In mixed compounds, residents often do not know the names, origins and ethnicity of fellow residents.

When a given compound is composed of a few ethnic groups, clustering may be physical (with respect to room location) and/or social (with respect to social ties). Lizzie, a young lady of twenty-one, moved from her Kwahu hometown to Accra, a distance of one hundred miles, when she completed commercial school. She came to Accra for work, to Adabraka because her sister lives here. That same year, her mother's second husband died; the older woman left the hometown and she, too, moved in with her elder daughter. The latter has a chamber/hall in a

Table 4

Detailed Listing of Ethnic Groups Represented

		No.	%	Hamilton*	Current Group Totals
Local:	Ga	129	28.0		
	Adangme	23	4.6		
	Krobo	7	1.5	28	35.2%
	Shai	5	1.1		
Dominant Matrilineal:	Ashanti	20	4.3	21	
	Akwapim	38	8.3		
	Akim	13	2.8		39.1%
	Kwahu	69	14.8		
	Fanti	41	8.7	10	
	Nzima	1	.2		
Stranger:	Ewe	70	15.2	16	15.2%
Miscellaneous:	Guan	6	.9		
	Enum	1	.2		
	Akwamu	1	.2		
	Efutu	2	.4		
	Dagomba	3	.7		
	Dagbani	3	.7	8	
	Grushie	2	.4	(Northern	
	Mossi	1	.2	Tribes)	
	Hausa	23	5.0	6	10.5%
	Yoruba	2	.4	(Nigerian Tribes)	
	Beregu	2	.4		
	Buzanga	2	.4	7	
	Huida	1	.2	(African)	
	Wangara	1	.2		
		467	100.0%	96	

*Based on a 10% sample; balance is non-African (1966).

bungalow building (see Figure 5). Lizzie moved upstairs, to the main building, which houses Ewes and a few Kwahus. Her mother moved in with her sister. That, and the other two adjacent buildings contain Kwahus only. The landlady is a Nigerian but lives elsewhere. She apportioned the three sets of toilet and shower facilities according to ethnicity. While Lizzie lives upstairs and her mother, sister and niece and nephew down, all of her social and domestic activities within the compound focus around her sister's room and the Kwahu concentration.

Unlike any of the other ethnic groups, all Hausa (and the smattering of other Nigerian groups and Northern immigrants) are of the same religion, Islam. This gives them a cohesiveness which no other ethnic group in Accra, even the indigenous Ga possess. Most holidays and rites de passage bring together many of the same people. Thus, their togetherness obtains, despite being scattered throughout the city and despite dwindling numbers.[5] The Adabraka Hausa are no more a corporate group, locatively and socially, than those in the city at large.

In the Adabraka Market area for example, there are many, presumably because of the mosque and Koranic school, or vice versa. This area is known as a Hausa area, but clearly they have no exclusive claim. For example, directly opposite the mosque there are three compounds: one is composed of Ewes, Hausas and Buzangas; one is an Adangme house, with Twi-speakers, Ewes and Gas as tenants; and the third is a Ga family house, exclusively so. Furthermore, a given compound need not accommodate Hausa only. A few doors from the mosque there is a Ga-owned house, where rooms are rented by Hausas and Mossis. The house owner, a retired school teacher, is rumored to be a witch -- this information was offered up

gratuitously by a teenage neighborhood boy. It is said that if anyone takes a mango from the tree in her garden, she will work her witchcraft on the guilty party. Consequently, none of the locals will live there for fear of her strange ways. Those who do, rather than being so urban as to be above petty strife, are not yet clued in to the local lore.

This is due partially to ignorance of any southern Ghanaian language and keeping to themselves. Ethnic solidarity, indeed, might well be nothing more than convenience of a common language. Many times, a response to the person's ethnicity was "she is a Twi," meaning a Twi-speaker. Most, if not all, persons so identified are Akans. Twi-speakers include fifteen distinct ethnic groups, under the general rubrics of proper Twi or Fante. Many women continue to interact with or seek out others with whom they have a mother tongue in common.

The positive side of urbanness shows up in the newly proselytized values and attitudes, culled mainly from the West. It has been noted that one of these is higher education. The literacy rate is defined as the percentage of the population with the ability to read and write a simple message in only one language. According to Ruth Hamilton (1966), for 136 countries, Ghana ranked 80th with a score of 25 percent. The country had the highest value for any West African country.

In Adabraka, in 1970, the census population of women fell into the following degree-of-education groupings; none, 187 or 40.8 percent; some, 50 or 10.5 percent; middle school, 147 or 31.9 percent; and specialized (including secondary school, commercial and teacher training), 76 or 16.5 percent. One would expect the education quotient to be higher, corresponding to exposure to urban life and lifeways. And in fact, on

the other hand, 55 percent of the census sample speak English. Age and level of education are significantly related.

Table 5

Age and Level of Education

Age	Number	Percent	Uneducated
18-23	130	28.2	15.5
24-30	121	26.2	
31-49	153	33.2	48.1
50+	57	12.4	

English fluency is similarly related to the age/education correlation; younger, better-schooled persons tend to be English-speakers, moreso than older, uneducated ones.

As of 1960, the population in Accra Capital District was 261,547 male, 230,270 female. Up to age 14, there were more girls than boys and over 60 years of age, more women than men. The greatest difference in male/female numbers fell in the 20 to 44 year age groups. The age distribution and figures on school attendance, by sex, shows that despite the higher proportion of middle-school-age girls, fewer attended school. This is not peculiar, given traditional attitudes about proper training or women. These are dealt with in the second section of this chapter; Chapter IV presents an extensive discussion on the question of education.

Kenneth Little (1959) has pointed out that as a"bush"person becomes urbanized, he ceases to depend upon the economic and social system of his tribe, gives up extensive tribal loyalties, and becomes an individual

citizen of a larger world. A major reason for coming to the city is the opportunity advertised for employment. In the past, there was an acknowledged association between ethnicity, sex and occupation. Thus, for example, as of 1954, three years before the Gold Coast became an independent Ghana, occupations in Accra followed these ethnic lines (Acquah 1958).

Table 6

Correlation of Occupation and Ethnicity

Occupation	Ethnicity
Agriculture, fishing	Ga-Adangme
Manufacture (skilled and semi-skilled)	Southern Ghanaian, Asante
Building trades	Southern Ghanaian, Asante
Commerce	Africans, aliens
Domestic Work	Northern Ghanaians
Public Service	Northern Ghanaians
Police, unskilled worker (no education)	Northern Ghanaians
Clerical, Administrative (educated)	Southern Ghanaians, Asante
Unskilled	Northern Ghanaians, other Northerners

In turn, women were predominantly traders, and most of those trading illiterate. Very few educated women were professionals.

It seems not unreasonable that in a developing country, where there is promotion of nationalism over tribalism, education for all, generally

the attribute of a modernizing society, homogenization of opportunities would be manifest. In fact, this is not yet true. Certain ethnic groups simply will not touch certain occupations, and others simply do not have access to others. For example, night-soil collectors are assumed to be northerners (prior to the Aliens Act, they were predominantly Liberians), and most night-watchmen are from Mali and Upper Volta, slowly being replaced by Northern Ghanaians, e.g. Fra-Fras, perhaps one of the most discriminated-against Ghanaian ethnic groups; they are easily recognized by their feather-like facial scarification. Similarly, Ashantis do not engage in manual labor. These are common categorizations, articulated by the common citizen. By the same token, women as a group, suffer the same fate.

What do the Adabraka women do? Most of these folk hail from agricultural communities; most, however, have not maintained ties with soil. Chickens may be tended; cocks crow from scattered compounds; goat kids commonly frequent streets, particularly in unpaved areas. They are tendered by "husband-women." This provides part of the bush flavor of the city, elevator-buildings notwithstanding.

There is a broad range of occupations (see Appendix I), concentrated in the traditionally-female areas -- trading and domestic crafts. Salaried work in some of these areas gives a modern twist to traditional work -- for example, working as a seamstress in a department store factory. Of the census sample, 23.9 percent claimed to be non-employed. This includes housewifery, for which there are 62 women insisting they do not work (i.e. "work" meaning salaried employment). As I found further on in my research, such work was often cyclical, depending upon

season, personal inclination, financial need, pregnancy, and simple ommission of fact -- i.e. a housewife might consider that as her primary role, even if she worked outside of the house part-time. Furthermore, not infrequently a respondent answered a question according to what she thought would be most desirable or appropriate to the questioner's mind.

For the purposes of the neighborhood profile, the occupations fall into the following categories.

Table 7

Listing of Occupations and their Proportions

General and petty trade	21.9%
Food sellers	17.1
Salaried (sales, bank, air hostess, secretary)	10.0
Salaried (manual, factory, domestic)	5.4
Crafts (baking, brewing, sewing, hair)	14.8
Professional	6.5
Non-employed	23.9
No response	.4
TOTAL	100.0

A superficial scanning of Table 7 suggests that women have not branched out much. This receives further support when ranking the occupations pursued according to attributes of Westernization -- 302 or 69.5 percent are traditional, 127 or 30 percent non-manual but Western, and only 2 or .5 percent manual. And it is bolstered even further when occupations are classified by employer.

Table 8

Employers of the Women

Husband	20.81%	77
Government	9.18	34
Large firm	5.13	19
Small firm	4.82	18
Self	47.10	174
1 or 2 individuals	4.32	16
Apprentice, learning	6.21	23
Family member	2.43	9
TOTAL	100.00	370

If the amount of money earned through employment is at all indicative of her freedom, each of these women is a prisoner -- of sex, given a discriminating social structure. The average reported income is N¢ 20.70 per month ($1.00 = .98 N¢ or 98 pesewas, in a bank exchange; or N¢ 1.25 to 1.50 on the Black Market). The responses, however, are skewed, because almost 50 percent pleaded ignorance. For many, this is a fact: they do not keep regular accounts. For many, fear of revealing this information translated as "do not know." Therefore, in considering the 238 women of the total who did respond, the percentages are as follows: 9.5 percent report no income, 20 percent earn between N¢ 2 to N¢ 20 per month, 13.2 percent earn N¢ 21 to N¢ 40 per month, and 8.9 percent make N¢ 45 or more. The specifics of occupation and income are analyzed in Chapter IV.

Throughout the foregoing, an attempt was made to give the sense of

the range of variation of the women at large -- through some of the indicators of urbanness. The traditional/modern dichotomy so often employed tends to be either overly specific or ambiguous. One useful indicator, impressionistic rather than statistical, has to do with the nature of life-style -- with respect to material show. Using the urban-rural continuum, the range of adaptation emerges with the primacy of ethnicity (traditional indicator) or class (modern indicator). I said earlier that urban ways are much a function of the people with whom one comes into daily contact. This is clarified in interior design. For we must keep in mind that basically, the options for choice in residential style are slim.

Status symbols are chosen to represent one's station in life -- hoped for or real. The fact that a woman lives in one room with three children and her husband, in a fly-infested compound, need not imply poverty or near-poverty. In England, identification with the middle class is publicized by keeping an aspidistra in the window (Orwell 1954). In Adabraka, the key indicator to bourgeois aspirations is the vase of artificial flowers. A close second is the photograph album, readily accessible in the event of a visitor. White walls are rare, both inside and out. Houses are usually brilliant shades of green, blue, yellow or pink. Rooms are drab shades of the same. Wall spaces exhibit calendars or a classic portrait of Jesus ("Christ is the unseen visitor in this house, the welcome guest at every meal"). Outside graffitti on the houses and compound walls -- "Go Muhammad Ali" "shaking it with soul."

The more Westernized, and moneyed the greater the variety of electric/electronic equipment -- radiogram, phonograph, refrigerator.

These are invariably the possessions of the husband (in the case of married couples), as are the hard furnishings. The fact that one couple owns all of this by no means necessitates their moving out of one-room accommodations. And they quite possibly live adjacent to a couple with nothing more than the barest of furnishings, i.e. something to sit on, a bed and a wardrobe. And, of course, the woman's "boxes"[6] which are piled in a corner of the room, a pressed starched cloth between each.

Money is not the only differentiation. Ethnicity, even amongst long-time urban-dwellers, often anticipates the decor. It is traditional among Hausas for a mother to give her daughter upwards of fifty porcelain tureens when she marries. These are piled atop the wardrobe. Although they are a form of ready cash, they are sold only in extremis.[7]

Among the Gas, M. J. Field (1940) notes that the compounds are ugly and that there is no cultural baggage. Their fishing boats, in contradiction to those of the Fantis, are not painted. A sophisticated man might cram European junk, like Victorian vases, into a spare room. He might put out money for a "fine" compound for himself, but certainly not for his wife or women-kin, and the latter never do so for themselves.

The Sample

In the first section of this chapter, I outlined an overview of the neighborhood women, describing their range of variation. Since the range is great, and some measure of similarity -- other than that of being female -- was needed, and since the effect of the urban setting on role differentiation is an issue, length of residence in Accra was used as a kind of common denominator of women eligible for the intensive

sub-sample. In so doing, I set the scene for a study of homogenization -- if such were to be the case. The fact remains that, despite the range of variation among these womenfolk, they all fall within the same kettle.

The stuff of behaviors and attitudes which make up the balance of this thesis, was drawn from informal observation -- a function of living in and among the people of Adabraka; and from extensive, structured interviewing of a sample of the women, drawn from the original census population (see Appendix I). In this section, I deal with the basis for behavioral similarity among these different women. This takes in observations of earlier ethnographers in more traditional settings, attitudes mouthed by my informants, and my own interpolations from general observations. This will lead into the modern carry-over -- the context of the (to my mind) traditionally-grounded woman in the modernizing city, and the dialectic set off by the inherent contradictions of such a coming-together.

The sub-sample originally consisted of fifty women. Unfortunately, the careful planning in drawing a proportionate representation (for ethnicity and occupation) went askew. This was due in part to incorrect responses from some of the women on the original census -- e.g. a housewife neglecting to add that she sells fruit full-time -- to changes in the life situation of some during the period intervening between my initial talk with them and my return -- e.g. moving elsewhere, because the house was torn down -- and to my miscalculations -- e.g. how long it would take to carry out the research.

Thus, the final sample is made up of thirty-four women. There is also some interview information from another five women, and wherever I

have pertinent data from them, I include it. This explains the discrepancy in numbers of responses at different times. To introduce the individual members of the sample, I shall briefly locate them in their physical and social spaces, adding a few of my own remarks.

Nine women live in Obuadaban Terrace, in six different compounds. They are Joanna, Auntie Atta, Fatima, Ekua, Florence, Felicia, Lizzie, Benedicta and Aggie. Joanna and Auntie Atta are compound-neighbors, as are Felicia, Lizzie and Benedicta. Most of the nine fall in the twenties age group, with one in her thirties and one forty-five.

Joanna and Aunti Atta are both Kwahu, as are Lizzie and Benedicta; Felicia is Ewe. Of the rest, three are Ga and Ekua Ashanti. Five have lived in Accra all of their lives, while the others have migrated from hometown areas in recent years. Most are fluent in English; the three illiterates (one a Ga from Accra) have had no schooling. (Educational background, occupation and known income for these, and all of the other sample women, are contained in Tables 9-13 in Chapter IV.)

Only three -- Lizzie, Felicia and Benedicta -- have not yet married; all are young -- nineteen to twenty-one -- yet the latter two each has a child. In fact, all of the women, except Lizzie, have children; Fatima, at forty-five, and Auntie Atta, at twenty-six, are both widowed.

This group includes some of my most articulate, as well as some of my least responsive, informants. Joanna, Florence and Lizzie went our of their way to accommodate my interviewing, and periodically spent time with me informally. Lizzie took me with her to her hometown family house; this provided basic insights into traditional Kwahu family and

town life (as compared with Accra). On the other hand, there were difficulties in getting together with Felicia (whose mother found something for her to do almost every time we had a date to talk) and Fatima (a kenkey-maker and seller, whose schedule was exhausting and who felt uncomfortable talking at the same time[8]).

Working schedule and/or fluency in English do not appear to be significant in affecting the ease with which contacts were made and maintained. For example, Ekua speaks no English and works six days a week from 6:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. Yet she made herself accessible on Sundays -- the one day during the week when she is free to do the wash and other household chores.

Another eight women interviewed live in the Liberation Circle sub-area, each in a different compound. They are Auntie Viv, Auntie Elizabeth, Dora, Faith, Ellen, Bebbe, Hope and Cecilia. Most fall within the nineteen to twenty-four age range, with one in her thirties, forties and fifties, respectively. The four Ga women were born and bred in Accra; the other four all migrated from ethnic hometowns, at least nine years earlier. Dora is half-Fanti, half-Krobo, born in a Fanti town, and living in her Fanti-father's house (yet, she originally identified herself as Krobo); Ellen is Ashanti,Bebbe Adangme (Shai) and Hope a Kwahu.

Everyone of them is fluent in English, and all have minimally completed Middle School. The exception is Dora, who became an unwed mother in the penultimate year of school. The three others who have not yet married are also childless. Of this sub-group of four (ages nineteen to twenty-four), three are in the process of becoming betrothed.

All of these women lived within a block of my house, and my relationships with them ran the gamut of regular visiting to a minimum of contact. Cecilia allowed me one short interview; after setting up subsequent appointments to continue, she absented herself, leaving the excuse-making to her elder sister. Consequently, I received very little information from her. At the other extreme, Auntie Elizabeth, a cake baker, was always at home to me, made little gifts of baked goods and kept track of my comings and goings. Sitting in her yard, I met many neighbors and learned a great deal about the trials in raising daughters. Faith was pregnant when I first met her; after she gave birth, she invited me to the baby's "out-dooring." While she was on maternity leave, we often ran into each other. And Dora was one of my favorite informants. She worked hard for her mother (a bread baker), yet her father persuaded me to hire her as a housegirl because "she will learn from your ways." Dora took me to her mother's hometown of Somanya, to observe part of the "dipo" ceremony (Krobo puberty rites for girls). Our working arrangement came to an unfortunate end, when it became clear that she felt beholden to her mother and the latter's work took priority.

The Adabraka Market sub-area, adjacent to Liberation Circle on the east side of the main road,houses ten of the women interviewed, in seven compounds. They are Maame Afua and Regina, Aba and Hope, Lydia and Martha (each pair living in the same compound, the third for family only); Adisa, Amawkaw, Akwele and Ruby. They span the ages of eighteen to thirty-six, in a fairly even distribution.

Seven women were all born in Accra -- Aba, Akwele, Regina, Lydia, Martha (all Ga), Amawkaw (Ga-Adangme) and Hope (Ewe); the balance --

Akwapim, Kwahu and Buzanga -- moved to the capital about forteen years previously. The only English-speakers of the ten are four of the Ga and the Ga-Adangme woman. As in other cases, those illiterate have had very little or no schooling.

Eight of the ten are married; only Adawkaw and Aba are not and never have been. Both of the latter are in their twenties, but both are almost engaged. Aba, however, also has a little girl. All of the married women, even eighteen year old Martha, have children.

Maame Afua was available for one meeting only; she was cooking soup and not answering correctly because, she said, she was distracted. When I returned, she was again busy and had to be ready to go out with her husband; and soon after I left Ghana, so our interaction was short-lived and the interviewing unfinished.

Most, however, were helpful in the extreme. Akwele, who speaks no English, told us (interpreter and me) how much she looked forward to our visits. The same was true for Adisa (a Buzanga) and Hope (Ewe), both of whom are also illiterate. This was a pleasure, because, for example, in the cases of Ewes, I was warned (and oftimes found it to be true) that Ewes are clannish and antagonistic toward outsiders. Amawkaw (the grand-daughter of a wealthy woman) at the young age of twenty-one has already been abroad, yet she is very much her grandmother's dependent. She brought a great deal of insight into the conflicting obligations of "modern" and "traditional" lifeways, as well as articulating her perceptions ably. Lydia was one of the most verbal and open of all of the women in the entire sample; she is not highly-educated, but her responses carried a note of wisdom. She and Martha are cousins and

compound-mates in a Ga family house; Lydia provided a good comparison to the other in her manner and her tidiness.

In the Tuxedo Junction sub-neighborhood, eight of the respondents live in six compounds. They are Amina, Jeanette, Ema; and Adawkaw, Auntie Rose and Faustina (all cousins and living in the Ga family house); Georgina and Gloria. Their mean age is thirty-two, with the majority being older rather than younger women. The four Ga (Emma is the fourth) and Georgina and Kwahua, were born and bred in Accra; the other three -- Dagomba, Ewe and Adangme -- have lived there about fifteen years.

Gloria, Faustina and Georgina (Ewe, Ga and Kwahu, respectively) are the only English-speakers; although Faustina is almost the same age as Adawkaw, and they have had the same upbringing,[9] Adawkaw is illiterate. The non-speakers have not been to school; and Adawkaw had to leave school when she became pregnant. Only Georgina, at the tender age of nineteen, has neither husband nor child.

Both Amina and Emma were willing respondents at first; but then they reneged. With Amma, a Northerner, it might have been because many Northerners were affected by the Aliens' Act, and she feared that I had connections with the Government and implementation of the Act. She was straight in refusing to see me. With Emma, it was different. We had a very successful session by her stall at Adabraka Market; and then she gave me the run-around. When my interpreter finally contacted her, Emma berated the girl for the questions and said she was "fed-up." The same might have been true for Adawkaw and Auntie Rose, except that Akwele turns out to be Adawkaw's bosom pal and convinced her to cooperate, which she did. And Faustina is Auntie Rose's intimate, persuading

her to meet with us. Working with three women in the same family house provided a well-rounded picture of each, of the family and general life-style. Unfortunately, I became acquainted with Georgina only towards the end of my stay; she is an ebullient young woman, talkative, and the source of much of my information on be-friending married men.

The last sub-group to meet is the four who live in Asylum Down, east of Liberation Circle. They are Vivian and Helena-- twenty-six and twenty-five years of age -- and Akosua and Hilda -- forty and sixty-four. Each lives in a separate compound, on a different street. The two younger women are Ewe and Kwahu respectively; the former has lived in Accra for ten years, the latter born there. The older women are Nzima and Ga; the latter is a native of Accra, the other a resident for eighteen years -- and neither of these two speaks English. Both of the younger women do, having been through Secondary Form 5.

Only Vivian is unmarried and without child; she has been one of my most valuable informants, as well as a good friend. She is one of the tiny minority living on her own; yet, she found herself caught off-balance by traditional obligations. Helena, despite her education and apparent sophistication, at one point refused to see me, because her husband (an erstwhile university student) did not understand the purpose of my work and forbade her to answer anymore questions! After clearing my purpose with him, I regained entry. Hilda balked at some of the questioning (my first interpreter thought that it was because she, Ramatu, is Hausa), only finishing up the session because her son was there and goaded her on. She was not home for subsequent visits.

In the chapters that follow, these women will become personalities

unto themselves -- some moreso than others. Part of this has to do with the individual's loquaciousness, part of it the tenor of the relathipship with me. Most of their views are honest, reflecting their individual reality worlds as they choose to present them to an outsider.

The Basis for Oneness: A Cultural System of Attitudes

It may still be true that a woman, born and bred in the middle of Adabraka, who has continued to live on in the family house even after marriage, is provincial in outlook and life-style. It seems that this is even true for the population in the country at large: there is a continuity of attitudes, based upon time-honored concepts, common to all, which translate into rules for role models. They currently weigh heavily on the actual differentiation of roles in the unfolding urban system.

Evans-Pritchard (1965), in his general observations on women as members of societies with simple technologies, provides an overview of "the" traditional situation; this facilitates the conceptual breakdown that follows. Marriage exists as a given: there is no such thing as a never-having-been-married adult woman. She has no choice between marriage and career; she has little time for social activity; and there are given duties assigned to married life. But, she does not desire otherwise. And every woman can have a husband. In the marital relationship, she is above all a wife. No woman is willingly childless. Romantic love has no place -- a girl has few illusions about marriage, thus she does not suffer consequent disappointment. Indeed, the sexes do not intrude upon one another: outside of the home, they operate as independent entities,

and there is a clear division of labor between the sexes. The sense of companionship is weak, with much less merging of personalities.

This ties in with the relative lack of intensity in family relationships -- presumably tied to the kinship systems, extended links, and so on. There is no family exclusiveness.

Authority lies in the hands of the men. Even amongst matrilineal peoples, the mother's brother is the final single authority figure. Matrilineal groups, however, are not among the more complex (sic) and in the simple society, the male's authority goes unquestioned (cf. Biery 1971). As to her attitude: she may complain if she feels a lack of respect. But she does not feel that her status should be changed. "It is for her less a matter of level, than of difference, of status" (Evans-Pritchard 1965:52). In a word, men are always in the ascendancy.

Such a system of attitudes has been broken down into a few constituent elements which seem particularly fundamental. They are considerable in their ramifications on the modern, behavioral level. For the purposes of an introduction, they are considered as discrete units. But, as will become apparent, in this and the following chapters, they are intricately interwoven in the structuring of relationships.

The continuity of such attitudes is partially due to the continuity of rural-urban exchange. Through the persons of migrants and traders, rural people have experienced exposure to urban lifeways; consequently, if and when they come to the city, they have had previous acquaintance with urban practices. By the same token, the exchange has kept the city-dweller in touch with his origins. As such, tradition has maintained a tenacious hold, even if out of awareness. As, for example, traditional

obligations associated with the traditional pattern of life often intrude as a surprise, feeding into one's mastery of the roles of the immediate situation.

What I wish to show is that reciprocity, the traditional etiquette, ensures that each person receives her/his due. Polygyny, the second, places power and authority in the hands of the male populace, where it has always been. The duties, privileges, obligations and expectations that inhere in a particular station in life (with respect to active participation in the society) ultimately derive from male prerogatives. Third, seniority accords first priority -- in deference, decision-making, behavioral interaction -- to the elder. Lability, perhaps more obtuse than the others, connotes a certain emotional instability, a peculiarly opportunist and ephemeral assessment of, and relation to, people; the mutability of relationships with others may be the natural outcome. And finally, the element of fatalism, or undying patience: that unquestioning acceptance of the status quo -- "that's the way things are." And, if they are to change, one must have patience.

The remainder of this chapter will show how these generalizations have been carried over from the countryside and are interwoven into a system of behavior. The chapters that follow show how the system applies to life in Adabraka.

In Accra, men and women alike accept their lot in life, awaiting hand-outs, rather than actively asserting themselves to change, for example, a work or family situation. The "go-getter" who moves into a new area of endeavor is unusual. The natural order of things is accepted by Adabraka women. Most work -- they have their traditional occupations,

taught them by mothers or female kin. Categorically, domestic responsibilities are beyond the pale of a man's domain and abilities; for a woman, they take precedence over all else.

Ghanaians have a great sense of hospitality, courtesy and cooperation. Essentially it comes down to the maintenance of contracts, or reciprocity. In the folk setting, it is maintained with the respect that one accords any hollowed tradition. As one walks to market, she passes many people, with whom she has a history of connections, both direct and indirect. It is rude to pass by without acknowledging them; and they in turn must respond in kind. The model for such interaction is the family.

In the olden days, when one stayed in the hometown the majority fo the time, those with whom he or she came into contact would be mainly kin. When friendship came into play, the kinship metaphor would be extended to cover the relationship. Behaviors associated with the defined kin relationship became a matter of course. Over time, the person might become incorporated through fictive kinship (viz. E. Evans-Pritchard 1940) and over the years, all traces of the original relationship would be buried.

With the family as the primary group of identification, the behaviors learned through formal teaching and informal imitation become automatic (Hsu 1963); they are passed on and thus may be also extended to others, hence fictive kin relationships. It is the natural way to enlarge the primary group; such, indeed, is the case with rules of exogamous marriage: given the need for larger groupings, marriage is an obvious mode of incorporating outsiders (Fox 1967); fictive kinship is a second.

In both cases, the rule of reciprocity applies. The new member receives his role, with full knowledge that certain behaviors are expected in return. In the city, the rituals of meeting and greeting, taking leave of people, and so on, are studiously maintained. This seems peculiar to outsiders, only insofar as it is incongruous with theories of urban alienation. In Accra, however, the ritual is hollow. One never neglects to greet a familiar or a neighbor or a friend. It would be rude to do otherwise. But it is pro forma behavior.

It is always curious to see what happens when institutions are introduced out of context. So, for example, with reciprocity: in its most crass form, it imputes a concrete value to any transaction or interaction. If one party gives or does something to (for) another, there is an equivalence of return. One does not receive something for nothing. All is quite concrete, or given a concrete worth, which is pretty much the same thing. Reciprocity, by definition, implies a return; inherent is the quality of trust -- trust in a just return.

Daily life-style in the room, compound and neighborhood continues to follow tradition, as adapted to city life. The values implicit in the term akwaaba (welcome) carry over. The compound originated as the home base of the extended family. There was always room for one more, as there continues to be. If there is a shortage of beds, there are mats for sleeping; foods can always be stretched. Another child may not be wanted, but when conception occurs, it may be accepted happily. For in the family circle, loyalties go not to one person, but to many. "One person brings forth, but not only one person nurtures or educates the child," in the words of the Gbese Manshe. Every family has its room(s),

but it does not live behind closed doors. A hanging curtain, a radio provides privacy without cutting off the sense of contact. Children grow up in this spirit of openness and welcomeness, enjoying free reign.

Etiquette carries through from this code as well. Not to welcome visitors is an insult; if there is work to do, it is not dropped. By the same token, visitors immediately upon sitting down reach for either the omnipresent picture album or a stray magazine. There is an internalized system of filtering out disturbances; life is with people, and life goes on in accommodation to that fact. When Sonny Liston lay dead in his room for days on end, it was an enigma to Ghanaian city-dwellers. Even in the city, where one is a stranger, how could anyone live in such isolation?

In terms of the family versus the individual, priority goes to the former. Just as one is always welcome in the family home, in the hometown, so one must always welcome hometown kin if they appear on the scene. Ties are kept up with the family; children are pivotal to maintenance of the cycle.

Thus, the kinship metaphor, derivative of extended family relationships, and prescribed behaviors, based upon a contract of just return, carry through in Adabraka first, in one's expectations of and obligations to the family -- through visiting, financial help (and general be-gifting) and not least, the fostering of children; second, to one's friends, primarily between men and women, though currently among women as well as they develop the concept of "friendship"; third, to strangers, as they develop the concept of "neighborliness."

Women in Accra are aware of the special rights that their husbands

and boyfriends possess, by virtue of being men. And that they, as women, do not possess analogous rights. They accept it; that is the way things are. Polygyny is basic to much of traditional life. Southall (1961) uses it as a differentiating factor between the urban and rural sectors. Thus in rural areas, men see it as their right to have access to many women, yet insisting on a standard of chastity for women. In the city, for example, Koforidua, he goes on to say that women live alone, economically independent. In contrast, I would maintain that modernizing Ghana continues to be a polygynous society, the encouragement of monogamy notwithstanding.

There is no question that the double standard is institutionalized. But as long as the man takes care of the basic needs of the woman, in accordance with tradition, she has little recourse to action against him. The husband or brother (in cases of the avunculate) is the fount of authority. As reciprocity derives from the kinship metaphor, one could argue the same case here. Men go out with many women, and the women say that they have no say in it. "They say they are men. They will look after you. But you -- you never look after them. If you go out with men [as a married woman] it's not nice." "God made it that men can marry so many women . . . "

"Men are different. Men are so jealous, he will prefer to go with you. Maybe you have some society, like Zumunchi, all women. But if some young men, husband will be jealous." "A woman with a husband can't flirt with other men . . . Men are jealous; women are also jealous, but men moreso. Man can get two, three wives. Women can't."

As long as the man provides for his wife . . . Even today,

according to native law (e.g. for Ga, Field 1940), a woman who does not receive proper support from her husband may summon him before arbitrators. Once married, a woman is locked into a relationship devoid of companionship. Man and wife have a reciprocal economic relationship, both literally and figuratively. He has given her status, through marriage; she has given him the same, through maintaining his household and bearing his children. He in turn maintains her household expenses and extras, and she maintains the home. Once the first child is born, whether the marriage is polygynous or monogamous, the husband begins to wander. But the wife may not. This behavior cross-cuts the urban sector, ethnically and socio-economically. Man and wife rarely party together. The married woman's place is in the home. The companion for revelry is the girlfriend. Given the polygynous underpinnings, there is nothing adverse about a man being seen with another woman. If anything, the peer group encourages such behavior.

Clignet (1970) has noted similar behavior in Abidjan, where there is institutionalization of male preeminence. Kilson (1968) notes that in Ghana, within the total society, men are superordinate. Women have authority within their own sexual groups, but they are jural minors within the total society. Linguistic characterizations among the Ga express this: female things have the pejorative label of "left-handedness." The whole concept of man and wife sitting down together to a meal is foreign to the traditional Ghanaian mentality.[10] In Adabraka, the houses are not designed with either kitchen or dining area in mind. The married woman's culinary responsibility is not to be taken lightly. So, for example, most of Adabraka's residents are God-fearing persons,

and many attend church regularly. Yet, if one's husband puts in a request for Sunday dinner, she must stay home (or, she feels that she must), cool her irritation, and prepare a meal. Whether the two cohabit is irrelevant. Cooking is a wifely duty and as sacrosanct as the monthly rent and chop money (food allowance) handed over from husband to wife.

No matter how autonomous and seemingly beyond the reach of their husbands, and, no matter how modern the husband appears to be in education and employment, if they live within the rented compound-room lifestyle of Adabraka, they exhibit vestiges of respective male and female culture. At meal-time, when food is ready, it is made available. Because food is eaten in any degree of warmness, mealtimes are flexible. Children are fed on demand from birth; and a hungry child can always find something to eat, if not from his own mother, then from someone else's. If, however, the husband is present, he is allotted his portion first. Whether she has friends and/or neighbors (generally women) eating at the same time, or not, her husband often takes his meal alone. It is demeaning for him to eat in the presence of women.

Amongst the Krobo (an Adangme group, feared for their fighting might), there is a proverb: A woman does not own (or inherit) a house; i.e. she is inferior, since she cannot become the head of a kin group (Huber 1963). Similarly, among the Ga, the major lineages have male and female sections: the male head is representative, with respect to other lineages; old, respectable, versed in customs, he receives rents and lineage profits. The female head, on the other hand, is responsible for household order; she settles small disputes and takes large ones to

the male head (Mills-Odoi 1961). However, the Krobo woman is honored by kin for house rituals which older ladies perform, as well as the "important" roles of housewife and mother. Her status accrues with respect to that of her spouse (Huber 1963).

Currently, the same continues to be true. More important to the thesis at hand is the fact that any husband is better than no husband, as far as her adult status is concerned. The masculine authority again comes out when one considers that a woman's role is defined by him: her tie to him, her obedience to him. Nkrumah (1957) mentions that in the 1930s, the woman who says to her husband "don't be silly" is providing him with grounds for divorce. For his control over her work, the adult status accruing to her upon marriage to him, her procreative powers -- all reflect upon him. In the positive vein, they bring him a good name; in the negative, they are justification for divorcing her.

Traditionally, the domains of the sexes are kept separate. In Accra, the same is essentially ture, though appearances often belie this. The division of labor, which became formalized through the years, had as its outcome the differentiation between men's and women's work. In Akan farming, the man clears, the woman plants and harvests. The food is then 1) for home consumption, with 2) surplus sold, by the wife, who need not account for it. The man must supplement this with things that cannot be obtained from the farm. Also among the Akan, as well as the Ga, if a man has a profession and his wife is free to participate, she is given the opportunity -- e.g. in fishing and gold and silver smithing (she selling) and farming (harvesting and selling), especially cocoa. If the relationship is cordial, she is given an equal share;

if not, and there are other wives, there is bargaining (personal communication from Professor Frances Agbodeka).

Perhaps as a consequence of polygyny, women found it to their advantage to find some outside employment, to supplement meager funds. Formerly, they were married to home and family. The extended family provided a way to get around child-care, if they wanted to work outside of the house. The household, however, came first. This is beginning to break down as more go off to work though, again, the primary allegiance remains.

In accord with the principle of polygyny, a man and a woman alone together are assumed to be sexually involved. Alongside this, there are traditional fears of and tabus about menstruating women -- contact is absent. This is sacrosanct in traditional hometown areas to this day. Among Akans, the unclean woman traditionally was to stay out of her husband's sight. She might oversee preparation of his meals, though she could do none of the work herself. At the end of her period, she must go through a ritual cleansing. Since one never knew when a woman was impure, she was kept apart, particularly as concerned ritual matters. It was to the man's advantage here, as in farming, to have another woman in reserve.

Gas have always tried to keep their families together, depending upon rooms and resources. Yet, according to the Gbese Manshe, men and women have lived separately because of polygyny and because one must be in his own room "and come and do the usual thing." The senior wife, for example, could be in one room and the junior in another, "but, hey, jealousy!" In Adabraka, the wives of polygynously-married men are

generally housed apart. Yet, the English word used for co-wife is "rival."

Polygyny exacerbates the potential for rivalry among women. This includes women who stand in the relationship of co-wives, or that of wife and girlfriend. The basis for rivalry is competition for the man's favors; for he is the authority, he dispenses the "goodies." Thus, the women must compete by nature of the structure. Furthermore, women confine their outings with female friends to certain occasions. As was mentioned in the introduction, women are not public persons, as defined by their sexuality, unless defined by their sexuality. Thus, it is also not unusual to see one man accompanying more than one woman, for example, to a local dance spot. If an unattached male wants to dance with one of the women, he will ask the permission first of the male escort; and, in return for the favor, send to the man a prestation, generally a bottle of beer. (Chapter VI has an extensive discussion on male/female and female/female relationships in modern-day Accra.)

The women may be enshrined in tradition; for example, in the Ga area, "the fetish does not possess a fool," only women are possessed by the fetish, and the fetish speaks only through them, as the wiser sex. Despite such examples, they have been pushed aside in current times through subtle means such as education and finances. And even traditionally, given their nature and the nature of public life and the authority structure, they wielded their power from behind the throne. They were called upon only when it was deemed necessary or fortuitous.

Men defined women's role: through the necessity of her tie to him, lest she be belittled and sullied; through the necessity of her

marriage to him, if she was to attain adult status; and through her procreative powers, which in turn reflected upon his virility.

Many tribes have no concept of the single adult woman, nor a word for such a state of being. In tune with the theme of this thesis, for a woman, to be an adult is to be (or to have been) married. Thus, in Ghana, amongst the Tallensi, Ashanti. Fanti,celibacy is traditionally non-existent and considered abnormal (Gaisie 1968). Marriage is regarded as "the normal state of life for every adult. They cannot conceive of anyone voluntarily refraining from marriage throughout life"(Fortes,1950:255)The Krobo have a proverb: to marry is the woman's vocation; her status is tied to that of her spouse. Of herself, she is inferior, because she does not head a kin group ("a woman does not own a house") (Huber 1963). Even within the nuclear family, the Krobo woman traditionally may not claim equality: she and her children are generally dependent upon her husband for economic well-being. She calls him "father" or "owner," owing him minimally respect and obedience; between them there are no signs of affection or restraint. Indeed, the sibling bond is far stronger than the conjugal bond.

Thus, polygyny is basic to much of traditional life; men see it as their right to have access to many women, yet insisting upon a standard of chastity for women. In Ghana, the widow or deserted wife has an inferior position; but to remain single is not even contemplated ("African women speak" 1960).

The concept of seniority -- respect for age -- is known the world over. In modern, industrialized countries it may be vestigial only, emerging in the form of proverbs or tales of "how it used to be."

Generational conflicts have grown out of this very principle; noteworthy is the example of first generation immigrants to the city. In the United States, it is usually the "old country" as represented by the older generation, tradition, which has been carried along as part and parcel of the cultural baggage. In a country such as Ghana, where the "old country" is a matter of miles away, the carry-over is even more entrenched. As remarked earlier, there is as yet a steady stream of rural-urban exchanges (or Accra-hometown exchanges), which provide a minimal, and often painful, connection with the past for the migrants, and a heightened sense of confusion for those left behind.

The basis for deference to those older than oneself lies in the ritual of ancestor worship. There is the myth, which provides the rationale, and the rite, which activates the myth (Langer 1951). Through the body of myths, the people have built up the credence of the overseeing powers of the ancestors. By maintaining proper homage and respect, one would enjoy the recompense of weal. Again, a reciprocal arrangement, albeit posthumous. The duty of respect followed from the same behavior and stance when these now-dead men were alive. For in life, they were the venerable sages.

Sagacity came with both age and its concomitant experience. No matter how highly-placed the individual, be he chief or commoner, he was always beholden to a more aged, and hence wiser, being. Thus, the mythic basis for the practise of deference and demeanor. The behavioral manifestation of the veneration of age has both its sacred and profane aspects. The former deals in the magico-religious aspects of the culture, and usually lies in the hands of the men; women function in the realm of

the common, the profane. This of course goes back to the vast number of customs associated with menstruation and the sequestering of the menstruating woman. There are the oft-noted examples of women who are called upon in the sphere of ritual. Such women, however, are no longer sexual beings and thus no longer potentially contaminating. The counselling of such women was seen as an element of peace and harmony. Note the qualifier in the proverb "We are going to consult the old lady" used at traditional meetings.

As with reciprocity, in common, everyday action, the kinship metaphor is the model for behaviors of respect. There is both the issue of age, and therefore wisdom; but also the notion that your father and mother bore you, so if nothing else, you owe them your life. Parental guidance is always asked for prior to a new venture or even in daily comings and goings. just as a matter of course and basic courtesy. Clearly, if the biological parents are not alive or the individual is living with other guardians, respect and allegiance is owed to them. As Dora's father said: You must listen to your parents; they are gods and their advise should be followed.

There is apt to be some (conceptual) confusion between age and sex. In the olden days, when there was a far stricter division between male and female spheres of activity -- work, home, leisure, religion, and so on -- such confusion was ruled out. As we have seen, women were not accorded equal access by the society. Thus, one need not distinguish between the older man and woman as to which of the two deserved the greater measure of respect. They did not function in the same fields. Even though a family, consisting of the usual male and female members,

lived under the same roof or within the same household, domestic matters were referred to the senior woman. This has not changed, although it is expected to be otherwise; migrants are lured in large part by the promise of the city, the opportunity to branch out. Women, certainly, find this not to be true, hence there is a sense of confusion. We cannot assume that men and women do have equal access to full participation in the world beyond the compound wall. At the same time, the women are on foreign turf; to this degree, women in the city have less autonomy than they did in the rural sector. The alternatives still do not exist, vis-a-vis the power to decide one's own fate. There is always someone older or wiser to consult.

The majority view in Ghana is that parents can expect support in their old age and a fitting burial in return for bringing up their children (Kaye 1962). This expectation has been generalized into the more all-encompassing respect for elders. In the absence of parents, this is tranferred to seniors of the parental generation in the family, and lacking those, to elder siblings. At family gatherings, it is the eldest male (the family head) who pours the libations. When a divorce is desired by either a man or a woman, the plaintiff must go to the senior family person and beyond him, to the elders -- assuming that the marriage was performed in accordance with native law. If the opinion is that the plaintiff has no case, the marriage may not be dissolved. So, for example, if a woman runs home to her kin because her husband has abused her, the chances of her being granted a divorce are slim, if he has fulfilled all of his conjugal obligations to her, such as supporting her basic material needs.

By deferring to another, by showing respect, one is engaging in reciprocal interplay -- e.g. alter supplies the advice, ego shows deference or gratitude by recognizing the other's wisdom. Earlier, it was noted that public demeaning of one's husband through language (calling him foolish) is grounds for divorce. By the same token, one would think twice before doing the same to a lady friend -- only that the consequences are of another order. Indeed, women are equally cognizant of rules of etiquette with other women (this will be dealt with explicitly in Chapters V and VI); it is that when sex is added on, the dimensions of the interaction change. Just as many women address their husbands as Mister (!), to show their respect to them, so they address older women as Auntie or Miss, and their peers as Sister. One of my informants continually shuffled her feet when in the presence of an elder, or whenever asking or answering a question; she always preceded her statements with "please" and explicitly said that in asking a favor of an elder, one should always use the expression "me pa wo kyo" (I beg of you) since you are begging a favor.

It is the confusion of age and sex, vis-a-vis behaviors of deference, which ties together the two principles of respect for age and the male right. As one informant phrased it: "here in Ghana, men they like to think when they say something to woman, the woman must take it more than they think." But on his part, she goes on, she might give him a piece of advice, but he, as a man, will never listen.

Respect for one's elders, when carried to an extreme, rules out any chance of exercising one's free will. Even for mundane matters, such as procuring a new job, there is invariably some one person or

group of persons to approach for advice, permission or mere formality. This sixth sense of proper behavior hangs on, vestigial only insofar as one would not expect it to continue on in the code-book of etiquette. To probe into the depth of such traditional attitudes, I tried to extract information from my informants in the form of hypothetical situations. A significant finding is what I have at times referred to as the inability to deal in the abstract, or, on the other hand, the necessity for dealing in concrete terms. Its significance lies in the way it relates to the current discussion. The power of fantasy, of spinning imaginary tales and situations, connotes the recognition of one's alternatives in action. Such I found to be lacking -- other than in the sense of following some model of cultural practice. One does not determine for herself (or for himself) what is the best avenue or best activity, or, on a different level, what is the best outline of one's life -- how one shall shape her destiny. The latter is an empty category. This is elaborated upon in discussing fatalism, and throughout the chapters to come. The lesser decisions are either left to chance, or sought from others -- who <u>themselves</u> follow a model set down in tradition. Consider marriage: it is accepted as a given and even within the demands of marriage, choice has never been an option: you marry the man your family picks. And <u>their</u> choice is based upon traditional guidelines.

I noted earlier that much of the behavioral patterns derive from the kinship model. Going back to that, I find that it is not just a matter of interpolation. The women are very concrete in their understandings of what is proper and why. Decision-making, or allowing the

opinion of another to influence your decision, is owed first to one's parents or guardians. Only two of my informants said that they would be likely to discuss with or not be influenced by mother and father. About half agreed that they must listen to their husband (in addition to parents), either because he is older or because he is a man; and if unmarried, to a boyfriend for the same reason. "Always listen to those older, because they know better." The position of a senior male (i.e. father or husband) is made particularly secure when one questions the rights of the woman to insult him. For example, it is a sin to call one's husband foolish. Most people, when using the word "foolish" do so only after making apologies. A very small number of women agreed that abusing one's husband would have fewer repercussions than abusing a friend (i.e. lady-friend), because it would probably forecast the end of the friendship. If any one person in the family group holds the majority of the cards, it is the father, for he is older and he bore her. "Maybe he is an old man and old are trouble, but you should take him as your father and if he talks you anything, you be patient." But to insult one's parent is far worse than to insult one's husband, even though most women would agree that the latter is bad. And similarly, the husband must not insult her father, "because the father bore you before the husband married you." Even an older friend generally takes second place to the husband, because "When you marry, he (the husband) becomes your father and therefore it is worse to abuse him." "If she insults her husband, the husband has to sack her; but as for the father, he gave birth to her, she can't do it." Not all of the women would agree that conjugal abuses would lead directly to divorce; rather, it

is a question of listening to one's elder -- one's senior, in age or experience -- in this case a man. The woman, however, who does willingly argue with her spouse and creates waves is not showing proper obeisance, for which she can be divorced.

In fact, marital squabbles over the woman's declaration of rights (from a Western perspective at least) do not occur. All of my informants agreed that if their spouse (or household elder) forbade them to visit friends, or engage in some activity of which he disapproved, they would not do it. There is often a discrepancy between the cultural ideal and the behavioral reality. It is impossible to say whether in all cases this was in fact the case, but, such is almost irrelevant, because the women were responding as one in line with what they felt was correct. The response of every one of them confirmed each other's in terms of what is still acknowledged as culturally correct.

Wife-beating, as such, does not exist. Men do, however, box their women on the ears if they feel that the wives have not behaved in accordance with the rules. Only two of my informants reported that they would leave their spouse if he beat them; the others merely shrugged their shoulders. "So if he beats me, I abuse him" runs one reply. "A husband won't beat you unless you have a boyfriend. If you see a woman whose husband beats her a lot, it means she has a boyfriend."

When would a woman leave her husband? As long as he provided for her material needs, no matter how lacking the relationship in companionship, she would probably stay. Almost across the board, however, the women replied that if their spouse insulted their father, she would leave the husband. ". . . because he bore you, before the husband married you,

how can he abuse him?" Most women agree that impotence does not necessitate divorce. This ties in with the concept of fatalism and the notion of alternatives. Although, from the men's side, the woman who does not produce within a reasonable amount of time is easily liable for divorce. The burden of the blame tends to rest on the woman, who accepts it and the consequences.

Reprisal against visiting one's girlfriends in most cases seems either not important enough to warrant her walking out on her forbidding husband; or, on the other hand, his opinion is so highly considered that she would not think of ignoring it. Clearly, to bar his wife from visiting family would not be to his advantage, since it is the family who can push through a divorce with ease. And, as before, abuse of one's father is not tolerated. Some women would consider discussing it with their husband. Most would consider it blasphemous, for all of the reasons recounted above.

Only a few vowed to leave their husband if he ran after other women -- one being so bold as to insist that she would try to discuss it with him first. But, in a polygynous society, her complaint has no place. Similarly, unmarried women are not constrained, as in the West, in their affairs with married men. Technically speaking, he could still marry his girlfriend, or he could maintain her will full social sanction as his mistress (assuming that she would be willing to relinquish her claim to marriage). In any case, argument notwithstanding, there is not much that a wronged wife feels that she can do against a philandering husband. She cannot tell him what to do, he is her authority figure.

Decision-making in the household falls upon the head -- the elder

of the family, of the house (if it is a family establishment), the eldest resident; in the case of a married couple, it is the husband. This means that that person's opinions would be deferred to. Decision-making in general it was agreed is a function of age. I attempted to separate age and sex; thus, some women felt that if the counsellors are both a man and a woman, and if the woman is older, one should listen to her, for she is older and brings with her greater wisdom and experience. If the man and woman are peers of the woman seeking advice, some would say listen to the one with the greater wisdom, "I would listen to the woman, because women are my mothers"; many would say listen to the man, since "it's necessary for man to advise a woman."

It is my contention that women <u>still</u> go from subordination to one authority figure to that of another -- from the home of the parents to that of the husband. This is perhaps even more true in the city than in the hometown, for there, they are not so desperately alone as the young bride who comes with her husband to a new and strange city. More and more, of course, young women are taking up residence by themselves, upon completion of school and after starting a job. In my researches in at least the inner-city neighborhood of Adabraka, this was far less prevalent than one would be led to expect. Not because there are no places for the women to live or jobs of some sort, but more simply, because there continues to be a strain between loosening of restraints, as society would have it, and the maintenance of tradition -- one such being to remain close to the family and lineage -- as the hometown kin would have it. And most young women and older women would think more than twice before bucking the traditional guidelines. Given the situation of moving

from the hometown to Accra, only three of my informants insisted that they would ignore their parents' prohibition and come. All of the others felt that they are in no position to force it -- unless, if she needed work and there was some in Accra and the family continued to say no, "then I do not understand," and would go. Or, the continued faith -- "maybe you'd [parents] get me a job, that's why you're telling me" thus do not force the issue. On the other hand, most of the women agreed that they would let their own daughter, in the same situation, move -- even if they felt that they, as their parents' daughters, could not. Generally, however, they appended a condition which would justify the move, so that they would know that it was not just a matter of her coming to run around -- e.g. for work, for marriage.

The concept of lability is borrowed from psychology. Traditionally, it is defined as "flexibility" -- connoting pliancy or adaptability (Kretschmer 1972:Vol. 1:379); and as "plasticity" --

> . . . A thought or intelligence factor in the sense of the ability to undergo restructuring; embraces agility in thinking, readapting, discovering and deducing the essentials from stable structures . . . Ability of other parts of the organism to act as substitutes and take over functions where there has been partial failure (Haase 1972:Vol. 3:17--emphasis added by present writer).

And, an individual with labile affect is "easily moved or changed; not stable; not rigid; free in the expression of emotion, or quickly shifting from one emotion to another" (English and English 1958:286).

Drawing upon traditional usage, I have modified lability to connote the actor's ability to substitute one person for another; the freedom to shift one emotion from one person to another. Lability here bespeaks a mutable quality to relationships -- what Evans-Pritchard spoke of as

a lack of intensity. To reiterate Bohannan's position (1963), roles are sets of expectations, separate from the individuals who perform them. As such, the person who plays out the role is identified with it, but may be replaced by any other individual who substitutes, as the role-player.

Within the context of urban Ghana, such a scheme is appropriate. The mutable quality of persons in relationships ties in with the manner of evaluating the relationship -- i.e. its marketability, the interchangeability of persons in roles, and low affect -- roles are roles, rituals of courtest are all form. This, it is speculated, is closely associated with the institution of the extended family.

It seems logical that with extended family interactions, one would have fewer interactions with "central" figures, and thus interactions would be invested with less affect. To carry the thought further: a child steered in and out of several family situations, either as a result of divorce and remarriage, or as a result of fostering, is not conditioned to cathect to once central figure; therefore, he has not the same opportunity to develop affective mechanisms. R. Cohen(1972:46-51) notes the same behavior in Northern Nigeria.

The intense affect which Western parents project onto their children is in Ghana diffused through a whole network of persons. Persons occupying roles are interchangeable. And because there is such low affect, movement from relationship to relationship is not fraught with tension and anxiety.

Children themselves often become pivotal in reciprocal relationships. They may be sent off to a grandmother or to a barren female

relative -- either of whom is only too pleased to raise them. If a child is sent off to a different mothering female at an early age, what is to prevent her/him from relating to that woman as the woman's child, unless instructed otherwise? If the nature of a relationship between a girl and her mother's sister is intrinsically the same as her relationship with her biological mother, why not behave with her, and address her, accordingly?[11] And so the cycle continues

This is not to say that every alter is invested with exactly the same amount of affect as every other, and therefore that every alter is as expendable as every other. Clearly there is a range, just as there is a range in the "liberation quotient" of different women. Given the alignment of loyalty to kin first, it is only reasonable to expect that one's attachment to a family member carries greater weight than, perhaps, to a spouse. All of my informants agree that in time of duress, you can always go to kin, particularly those in the immediate circle. But (as with one's mother's sister) this might not be assessed along biological lines only.

When affective intangibles are removed from the content of the relationships, the interested party is after something other than the whole persona. There is a particular role or activity which is in demand. And it is that which is bargained for. As long as the person occupying the role fulfills his/her end of the deal, the contract is kept intact. When one of the two does not reciprocate in line with the rules of the game, the other can go elsewhere. There is not the sense of binding oneself to one person who will carry out all.

Clignet observed that among his sample urban women in the Ivory

Coast, there are those who "reject the traditional and the modern definitions of the rights and obligations attached to the domestic position of women. They perceive conjugal ties as transitory and invest a minimal amount of personal, economic, social and emotional resource in their marriage. Spouses view themselves as concubines rather than as real partners" (1970:386--emphasis added by present writer). It is my contention that this ability to detach oneself may be a by-product of socialization practises common to the extended family. Children do not lack love and attention, but they are brought up as small human beings once past the age that they begin to fend for themselves. Even as infants, they are given attention, but it is never in the context of "the children's hour"; they are dragged around with mother and training is not relegated to the house, let alone a children's area (see R. Cohen 1972). For example, among the Krobo any nursing woman in the compound may feed a child. Children are the pets of everyone. At least till the age of five, they may take food from anyone and equally be punished by anyone. Children form a link between parents, and the sibling bond is stronger than the conjugal bond.

Just as a child is fed on demand, so an adult can assume that he/she will receive on demand -- it is no cost to try. The persona is not invested in such an exchange, thus one is not necessarily trading oneself for another. There is not the sense of "selling one's soul." In discussing the concept of seniority, I stated that there is absence of fantasy, in mulling over alternatives. This ties in with the notion of placing a concrete value on all articles of exchange, be it a measure of time (as an hourly wage) or a partner to an interaction.

For basically, two interactants are engaged in an exchange. When it is a question of the involvement of two people, the relationship is priced in terms of what the contracting parties feel that they can exact from each other, what they must give in return. The specifics of the relationship are lent support from the more generalized rule of reciprocity. And there emerges a system of prestation -- "show respect to each other" as among the Haida and Tlingit (Mauss:1966). In such a system, there is a

> series of rights and duties about consuming and repaying existing side by side with rights and duties about giving and receiving. The pattern of symmetrical and reciprocal rights . . . pattern of spiritual bonds between things which are to some extent parts of persons, and persons and groups, that behave in some measure as if they were things . . . Food, women, children, possessions, charms, land, labour, services, religious offices, rank . . . in perpeutal exchange of what we may call spiritual matter, comprising men and things, these elements pass and repass between clans and individuals, ranks, sexes and gens (Mauss 1966:11).

In Ghana, the system of prestation is not elaborated to the degree that Mauss describes for the societies he analysed. It does not involve the same grandness in scale of show. But it is certainly part of the traditional foundation. Malinowski used the concept of money to apply to objects "serving not only as a medium of exchange, but also as a standard of value" (Mauss 1966:93, fn. 25). This has certainly always been true of bride price: the more desirable the woman -- the more she embodies revered attributes, or the higher her social status or her family -- the higher the bidding price. It was noted earlier that registered or church marriage carries with it a higher price -- not because of the requisite fees, but because of added status and the

necessity of extra show. And with such a concrete manner of evaluating relationships, alternatives become less abstract and the notion of choice has a basis in reality.

Mauss speaks of a gift as involving a trust. A relationship of trust, a reciprocal relationship, indicates a time lag, during which one person (the recipient) is in a position of debt to the other (the giver). The disequilibrium continues, until alter repays ego. And then the cycle begins anew. This "dashing" or "be-gifting" works like a contract. Breaking faith would be breaking the contract. Thus, there are strong ties in Ghana between mother and daughter; by properly raising her, which includes dashing , she will not suffer in her old age. By the same token, the daughter knows that an occasional dash and proper respect will accord her the right to entrust her children to her mother's care for their upbringing. Not only does a "gift," in Mauss' sense, play into the cycle -- it also accommodates paying respect. There are paralinguistic behaviors of showing respect, such as posture and stance, which accompany the linguistic phrases. They are elements in contractual relationships, even if the latter are formal only. There are also concrete ways of showing respect, such as through dashing.

All of these elements, however, need not be, and in fact traditionally are not, accompanied by an investment of emotion. Courting behavior in the Western world employs much protestation; in a love-relationship, no man would be so crass as to allot his beloved an allowance. Rather, his sentiments and the worth he places on her, are measured in verbal outpourings, the concern he shows, with the understanding that he cares. All of these things are intangibles. Love is

not a business although sex may be, and in that case, one may patronize prostitutes. In Ghana, courting employs prestation. Feelings are made tangible: you pay for what you get, and you get what you pay for (R. Cohen 1965).

Hence, one takes a rather opportunistic approach to life. If a child can be as easily nurtured and raised by one person as another; if in fact many women believe that fostering a child out to female kin is superior to raising her/him oneself -- that the child will learn respect and proper behavior and the destined role; if the strongest bond is that of siblings, of whom there are traditionally several in a family and with whom one has an ascribed relationship; if one grows up learning to depend equally upon any one of several different persons standing in a certain relationship to oneself; if one grows up lacking the role model of conjugal love and affection -- then it is no surprise that affect would be low, that one person would do as well as another with respect to the desirable quantity-quality, and that a system of polygyny would be as easily accommodated for women as for men.

The whole system which is embodied in these traditional pensées sauvages is tied together and perpetuated by the last to be considered -- that of fatalism. On the one hand, it is argued that perhaps the women, whom I would contend get the shorter end of the stick, are wise to the situation and do nothing to change it because they are in fact doing well for themselves. I would argue the contrary. Women have maneuvered themselves into advantageous positions, but they have operated from within the system. There is obviously a cycle, and at any given point one person may have the upper hand, whereas at a later point, the

opposite may be true. The final judgment rests upon the projected goal and whether the means (the process of reaching that goal) justify or are justified by the end: in the current case, whether the attainment of adulthood and what that means in terms of future rights, obligations, self-assertion, is palatable, following the maneuvering involved in the process.

And I have come to believe, from the words of informants and from living in the area, the woman's role, as traditionally defined, has changed very little -- and I would see much of the slight change to her deficit. Fatalism is apparent in such aphorisms as "God will provide." If one has patience, an answer will come to him in the form of a decision, an opportunity, a relationship. In the context of sexual differentiation, there is women's work and men's work (just as there has always been a strict sexual division of labor) and the two often stand quite distinct; there are women's rights and men's rights, again distinct as a function of sex. And a woman more often than not will listen to a man when he tells her to do something. Men and women cannot do the same things. As one woman told me, "A man used to marry, he gets a girl; but you, you don't get a husband, he gets you."

I found it interesting that an immediate response to the query, can men and women do the same things? was invariably negative. And yet, when pushed further, few examples were forthcoming. Those that were usually dredged up traditional role differences (e.g. cooking and cleaning) or those blatantly relating to modernization and/or brawn (driving a truck, building a house).

Typically, questions relating to alternatives within traditional

roles elicited no response. To ask a woman whether she wanted to marry is void of cultural content; to ask her whom she wanted to marry (what kind of a man -- educated, non-educated, professional, worker, handsome, etc.) was greeted in a similar response. Her feelings do not enter. The question of abstract choise has no referent. My interpreter had completed secondary school and was interested in continuing, perhaps coming to the United States. When asked where her interests lay, she responded "you tell me; you know what is good for me."

Just as marriage defines a status in life, so does bearing children. It is part of the life experience. Even to question how many children she wants is irrelevant -- God provides, or how am I to say, if it comes, it comes. In Ghana, children are highly valued for domestic tasks, as a source of status, to carry on the family line. Traditionally, barren women are objects of contempt: "Thus barren women in almost all the tribal societies in Ghana go to the extent of spending all their wealth in order to procure native medicines . . . " (A. W. Cardinall 1931:169). Contraception, on the other hand, is unknown by the majority of illiterates. The Tallensi find it appalling that anyone would consider such an extreme measure; among Ashanti abortificants may be used only if the mother's life is in danger. But for an Asante woman to be childless is the greatest personal tragedy. An illegitimate child always has a home -- Adangme fathers are said to encourage their daughters to conceive, so that the child becomes part of his household and works for him. There is virtually no adoption, other than that of orphans, since children are regarded as too valubale to be given up,

except for short periods. There is no alternative to having children, and if one suffers sterility, she will do all in her power to counteract it.

Polygyny is a cultural given; how can you stop it? A woman's life is controlled by the propriety of her husband's comings and goings, his assignations, his marriages. "If he likes to marry to another woman, how can this woman tell him don't marry. He will happy. Her husband feels to marry, she can't tell him 'don't marry.' She will happy, that's why." And the fatalistic shrug.

Thus, in short, this chapter has introduced the reader to the protagonists of the study in two ways: first, through a general overview of demographic characteristics; this gives some idea of the diverse types who are attracted to Accra. Second, through the words and ideas of the sample group of women -- the system of beliefs which neutralizes the diversity of the women. The thirty-four plus respondents have been described briefly, but take on substance as the analysis is expanded.

It is the acceptance of the traditional attitudes and values that constitutes a basis for the social system, supports its maintenance and is counterproductive to change. To this end, the women are a conservative force. In later chapters, I shall deal with the modern manifestations of the foregoing. The syncretism of old and new is riddled with contradictions, and relationships abound in negotiation and intrigue. It is where roles are developing without a previous model to draw upon, for example those of compound relationships, and the persistence of traditional models that are influential in shaping the urban role structure.

CHAPTER IV

NEW SOCIAL IDENTITIES:

OPTIONS FOR CHANGE

As noted earlier, the modernization literature describes stratification, which is based upon achievement rather than ascription, as the basis for mobility. In turn, avenues to mobility lie in choice of education, occupation and income. Theory holds that diversification along these lines is equally accessible to all -- that the role structure accommodates anyone who has gone through the requisite steps. It is, however, one thing for "society" to preach such equality; it is another for its component parts to accede -- especially if that involves questioning cultural givens, tossing out ethnocentrisms, transgressing time-honored traditions.

> Some social scientists have argued that the cessation of warfare and the economic changes following European contact have led to a noticeable rise in the status of women in Africa. The term "status" is an ambiguous one, having meaning mainly in terms of some referent. It is true that in precontact times women, as well as men, were more restricted to local areas, that danger of seizure limited their mobility, and that their economic opportunities were sometimes meager. Within this framework, their personal influence and place in society varied greatly from group to group, and certainly from person to person. The cessation of hostilities and the opportunities for trade have increased their freedom to move about, to take an active part in trade and other phases of the developing economy, and to increase their economic resources. However, it is frequently difficult to estimate whether they are more or less influential in society at large (Ottenberg 1960:81)

The argument I have posed is that urban women in Ghana are not influential in society at large, insofar as they do not have access to instrumental power; they do not coneive it possible, and they receive no reinforcement from society to the contrary.

Therefore, in this chapter, I shall consider in depth education, occupation and income, as the posited avenues to mobility and change (the ideal) and as accessible to a token few (the real). The first three sections will deal with each respectively, drawing mainly from field data for support, but supplementing this with the literature when relevant. The fourth section brings it all together, first by presenting responses to the query: why did you come to Accra? then by elaborating upon the living situation and the actuality of independence in life-style and a summary of the analysis in the first three sections.

Education

Choice of occupation -- to work or not to work, and in what area -- and income garnered therefrom, relate to traditional models, patterns of behavior and values, and systems of education.

> In the traditional societies of Ghana education was informal and was carried out by the community as a whole, with the child's own family playing the most important role. It was, in fact, identical with the process of socialization by which the culture of the society was passed on to the young generation. In such relatively homogeneous, slowly changing societies such a system was adequate to meet the needs of the socity. Consequently, when the first European type schools were introduced to West Africa there was no popular demand for their services (Hurd 1967:217).

During the first half of the eighteenth century, Europeans were very much of a minority. They were not regarded as a generalized reference group

upon which the African would model their aspiration. They did have a role in influencing the cultural behavior of a tiny African minority in the towns. But such influence was limited.

> In consequence, the demand for Western education did not arise as a result of its 'prestige' or the prestige of European cultural attributes in general . . . Whatever demand occurred it was associated essentially with the vocational opportunities open to Africans, and in consequence it was initially confined to the towns where an economic environment existed in which formal education could be effectively utilized (Foster 1965:69).

By the end of the nineteenth century, however, as a result of political control, the British did come to constitute a generalized reference group. Their range of functions was limited, and those Africans attracted to these activities had to direct themselves to similar types of education. Thus, there was concentration on academic rather than vocational training. The Western educational system "emphasised individual achievements as against corporate responsibility, the virtue of the clerical and technical career as against the agricultural. The pen, at least as far as status was concerned, was mightier than the matchet" (Crowder 1968:387). Ranking and employability in the town was directly related to adoption of European ways, with Western education the avenue to success. Those learning in primary schools, however imperfectly, came to despise their own heritage.

The towns came to represent a paradigm for social change, and the greatest demand for Western education was there, rather than in the rural areas. Throughout the colonial period, occupational and educational opportunities were tied to clerical work. There was never a high demand for technicians and craftsmen; skilled workers and artisans accounted

for less than ten percent of the male labour force in 1948, including traditional craftsmen. Furthermore, academic training was not self-limiting, in terms of specialized job opportunities, whereas once a mechanic, always a mechanic. Academic training also let to the possibilities, however remote, of a profession such as law -- both prestigious and lucrative. In addition, the bureaucracy of public service expanded. By 1951, eighteen percent of the labor force were salaried workers, and two-fifths of them were employed by the government. In other words, there was a realistic basis for the desire by secondary school students to enter white-collar jobs. And the preferred posts at the top were attained only through academic secondary schooling.

> Given the occupational structure we have described, an academic education was pre-eminently a vocational education allowing entry into the most prestigeful and highly paid occupations. . . White collar aspirations stemmed from a realistic perception of occupation opportunities and from a recognition that the academic grammar school provided access to them. The African did not enter clerical employment because he had been to an academic secondary school; he went to an academic secondary school because it provided most effective entry into such employment.
>
> Another factor of considerable importance was the quest for 'parity' in education . . . Although Africans could aspire to a limited number of higher occupations, they could not, by definition, be members of the European caste. Similarly, their efforts to obtain parity of conditions with the latter entailed access to educational institutions of an identical character with those of the metropolitan power (Foster 1965:135f.).

Currently, the employment situation with secondary school graduates in Ghana is analagous to that of university B.A.s in the United States. There are far more of these employable types than there are jobs to accommodate them. In addition, secondary schooling is costly; being

dependent upon one's family after they have paid out school fees and expect some return for their money creates resentment. Academic secondary school, however, is still more prestigious than vocational training school, even though the latter provides a more useful program and the skills for regular employment.

What of the women in all of this? From an early period, establishment of girls' schools was attempted, but with little success. This was not the singular fault of either colonizers or missionaries. For example, in theperiod between 1820 and 1840, there was an expansion in government schools along the coast. At the same time, Cape Coast Girls' School was established, "an indication that the provision of clerical assistants was not, as is sometimes supposed, the sole aim of the Crown in creating these institutions" (Foster 1965:49). This goes back to what would be considered fitting employment for a young lady. Following Foster's thesis that schools were created mainly to meet an occupational need (and prerequisite training), women were not accorded educational rights in parity with their brothers. Furthermore, local populations were resistant to the idea, given traditional attitudes.

The Basel Mission used the system of boarding in students to take youngsters away from traditional society, which did not allow for the rapid incorporation of educational institutions and the creation of Christian communities. They operated mainly inland, which led to the development of a system based on agricultural and industrial training, as well as vernacular instruction. Boarding schools for girls were established, the emphasis put on courses in domestic economy (Foster 1965). The Christian ideal of the nuclear family, with a well-domesticated wife, combined nicely with traditional views on female roles.

Thus, those active in founding Western-like schools -- the Colonial Government, framers of the Fanti Confederation of 1871, and the missions -- were prepared to build facilities for women. One must keep in mind, however, that the quantity and quality could never be greater than in the home-country. After all, in the mid-nineteenth century, women in England were organizing for the rights of women to education and its concomitants. Furthermore, women were not on par in the economic sphere. In building a new socio-political system, women were not taken seriously into account.

That women are entering secondary school in larger numbers, therefore,is a fairly recent trend. As of 1963, female recruitment saw girls as one-fifth of the secondary school population -- still considerably behind that of boys. Secondary schools may be for boys, for girls, or co-educational (Foster 1963).

> The term 'co-educational,' however, may be regarded rather lightly, since places in such schools are overwhelmingly taken by boys. In fact, only 38.5 percent of the female sampled students [in a study of secondary schoolers] were drawn from the eleven 'co-educational' schools; the remainder came from three large girls' institutions. Such a situation indicates not only the considerable lag in female enrolments at this level of education but reflects in some degree an existing widespread antipathy to co-education in what, for the most part, are boarding institutions (Foster 1965:222).

It is true that the child of educated parents with urban backgrounds has greater access to secondary school than others. The first cohorts of girls to attend hailed from families with distinctly superior educational and occupational backgrounds. Traditional restraints are not uncommon in the less urbanized majority; one sphere so affected is that of female education.

This brief accounting of the raison d'etre for the educational system as constituted today in Ghana, and some of its consequences, leads to my particular interest: viz.,how "everywoman" has been affected in her own opportunities for education and the value she places on schooling. Did her parents hold her back? If so, was it a question of finances, or was it considered improper for her to attend? How does she feel about it, both for herself and her own children? Tables 9 and 10 are a jumping-off point.

In my sample of women, ranging from age nineteen to sixty-four, levels of education run the gamut of nil through secondary-plus. It is interesting to note the educational background of the parents, especially mothers, at the start of the inquiry to set the scene. The mothers of five of the women had been through school -- two through Middle Form 4, two through Secondary Form 5 and one through primary. On the other hand, twenty-four fathers had been to school -- twelve to Middle Form 4, five to Secondary Form 5, one to Koranic, one to university, and five some unspecified amount.

Is there still a tradition of following in one's parents foot-steps? Stated differently, is there any association between the parents' educational background and that of their offspring? Only ten of the women had had no schooling whatsoever; three had had three years of primary. the mothers of all of them were uneducated, the fathers of four had had some schooling, or so they though since they were able to speak English. In every single case except two, the girls were pre-vented from going to school by their parents: "my parents were ignorant about school"; "at that time you didn't send girls"; "because we were

Table 9

Distribution of Educational Background by Age

Education	Age 18-25	26-35	36-45	46+	Total
Illiterate (a)	4	4(e)	5	2	15
Middle Form 4 (b)	3	3			6
Middle Form 4 and Training (c)	7	1		1	9
Middle Form 4 and Specialized Study(d)	7	1	1	—	9
TOTAL	22	8	6	3	39

(a) Includes no or little school, or no English-speaking abilities.

(b) Includes graduates or those just short of graduating.

(c) Includes apprenticeships in crafts, such as sewing.

(d) Includes secondary school, commercial school, professional training.

Table 10

Distribution of Educational Background by Ethnicity

Education	Ethnicity: Ga	Adangme	Akan(e)	Ewe	North, Foreigners, Misc.(f)	Total
Illiterate(a)	6	1	5	1	2	15
Middle Form 4(b)	4		2			6
Middle Form 4 and Training (c)	5	1	2	2		10
Middle Form 4 & Specialized Study (d)	3	1	3	1	—	8
TOTAL	18	3	12	4	2	39

(a) Includes no or little school, or no English-speaking abilities.

(b) Includes graduates or those just short of graduating.

(c) Includes apprenticeships in crafts, such as sewing.

(d) Includes secondary school, commercial school, professional training.

(e) Includes Akwapim, Ashanti,Kwabu, Fanti, Nzima.

(f) Includes Buganga and Dagomba.

many and my parents couldn't afford to send us all, so they sent the men to school and not the women [why?]. . . at that time schooling not popular" (the words of thirty-six year old Ruby).

These women span the ages of twenty-three to sixty-four. If parents prohibited their daughters from attending school, were they consistent in their sentiments with their other children? In numbers, no. Some sent their sons and not their daughters; some sent all of them; in one case the daughter had more schooling than the son, in another it was reversed. Such things are sometimes a function of an era; thus, for example, in one case the woman was one of the elder children, and those following her had the chance that she did not because times had changed, or because they did not have heavy household responsibilities.

This raises an interesting issue: what were these girls expected to do rather than attend school? Auntie Rose replied that her mother would not allow her to go to school, because she needed her at home to take care of the other children. In other words, a girl's preparation for her role as an adult was both learned and perfected within the confines of the house. Until recent years, even primary school had a price tag. Until values were altered, this would add that much more of an obstacle.

There is also another interesting point to be made. When discussing the criteria involved in choosing an occupation, I said that this is often relative to the woman's sights and in turn to her urbanness. I found the same to be true when discussing education.[1] It is not always clear what the individual means by schooling. To an illiterate,

it may connote Middle Form Four; to a Middle Form graduate, it can mean Secondary Form Five or possibly even university. It always has an academic connotation, with the limits set by the individual's ken. Thus, Adisa doggedly insisted that she had never been to school. "Muslims don't want their daughters to go to school; only they should read Koran. It's not good [they say] to go to school because a woman mustn't work. If you marry a Muslim, he'll insist you stop work. You may only sell near your house. [She and all of the other Muslim women do go beyond the house limits to sell.]" She wanted, she said, to go to school. Now, if there was someone to care for her baby, she would go. In fact, not only had her brothers and sisters all been to Koranic School (like their father), but she had as well. However, she left it when she married at the age of fourteen. Given the Western-style connotation to education, she does not accord her schooling credit as such; I have.

At the other end of the spectrum are those who have been through Secondary Form Five: five women, four of them in their twenties, and one forty-two years of age. The mothers of two (one of them the forty-two year old) had been through secondary school also; one had finished Middle Form Four; one primary, and one was illiterate. The span of the fathers is similar: one is a lawyer, one has been through secondary school, two completed Middle Form Four, and one is uneducated (and married to the uneducated woman). With such small numbers, it is impossible to weave any theories. In each case, however, where there are siblings (all except one), the latter were accorded the same educational opportunities. In a highly speculative vein, I would say that

if the girl-child is not the junior member of the family and has been well-educated, it is highly probable that her male siblings have certainly been given the opportunity. I shall give supportive evidence for this a bit further on.

The balance of the women fall mainly in the Middle School category, some having graduated and going on to further training, others quitting before completion. Six went through most of Middle School. Why did they leave? Four (Dora, Martha, Joanna, Adawkaw) became pregnant, one got bored (Faustina) and Auntie Elizabeth could not pay her fees after her father's death.

Fourteen young women graduated from Middle School; five of them ended their formal training at that point, both out of lack of desire and lack of money. The others went on to learn a skill -- at commercial trade school, or as an apprentice. In fact, three of the Middle School drop-outs (Faustina, Joanna, Martha) left academic studies, to ultimately take up dress-making. In view of the functional relationship of the occupational structure and educational system, and the ranking that goes along with it, if women had parity, they would presumably pursue the same standard. I noted earlier that non-academic training in a specific skill is looked down upon by men; one of the reasons is that it is too restricting. All of the women who have had training in a trade, such as sewing, feel that they are at least enabled to earn a living; others, such as Faith, the nursery school teacher, have had training in one area and having difficulties finding a job, have left their training behind and found another job. It is clear that women do not have the same credibility as men, are not ranked according to the same standards

of measurement, are not considered for the same jobs; as the parts of the system of society are integrated there is no reason for the educational sector to be any different than the rest. It is the old story of the imposition of a new system (or superficial aspects thereof) on top of the old before the latter has resolved its own conflicts. Those norms, values, behaviors or whatever that hang on may not be highly visible; but there is a positive relationship between their tenacity in hanging on and their fundamental significance. So it was in the jobs that women follow (are encouraged to follow),so it is in scholastic achievement (cf. Peil 1968).

Those women who go for specialized training, however, are better prepared for urban employment. Indeed, commercial schooling is no asset in the rural area. And families are exceedingly resistant to laying out money for women's education, if there is no guarantee of a return. Besides all this, women are characterized as "bubble-heads," or "silly creatures" who don't belong in institutions of higher learning. They are also prisoners of a tradition -- the primacy of the domestic role.

Call it fatalism, call it an absence of conceptualized alternatives -- in either case, most of the women with little or no education shrug their shoulders. At that time, girls did not go to school, so . . . Or, there is not any money, therefore what can she do? With the limitations placed on my speculations by the small number of informants, I contend that money is important because the individual in question is a female. For example, four of my informants said that they would have gone on in school except for the fact that there was no one to pay;

Ellen had gone to commercial school rather than going on to secondary, Florence and Aggie simply stopped after Middle Form Four, and Bebbe became a sewing apprentice. In each case, there was a male sibling whose needs were accommodated for at the woman's expense: the first two did go to secondary school, the brother of the third went to commercial and the fourth went to secondary.

Despite this, there seems to be no ranking bitterness or feelings of denial. In most cases, the women do not make any connection between inconsistencies in their lot and that of their brothers. It is another example of the generalized understanding of what a man can do and a woman cannot, by virtue of their culturally prescribed roles. Jeanette, an illiterate, is thirty-nine. In her situation, there were six girls and three boys. Of all of them, only two of the girls were sent to school. She was young, the last-born, so she says that she does not know why her father allowed those two and not her or her brothers to attend. Her father's sister's daughter also went to primary school and even passed on her uniform to one of Jeanette's sisters; still, her father said no. She and my interpreter got to talking about it and the latter said that when the two of them sit down and think about it "they could feel to cry -- school is good." Yet it was clear that she had never given much thought to her educational possibilities, at least not once she had lost the chance as a child. Questioning her, as with most of the others, was difficult, for that very reason: it was as though it were a conceptual category devoid of meaning.

In order to assess the carry-over of the tradition of the male-right, I asked two hypothetical questions. The first was: if you had

a daughter in school and your father asked you to pay your brother's school fees, what would you do? Every single respondent replied that they would try to help their brother, the implicit assumption being that money would not be problematic -- i.e. that they would not have to school one at the expense of the other. All agreed, however, that if there was only money for one, they would take care of their respective daughters first. Georgina, a girl of nineteen who had been through Middle Form Four, at first said "I will send my brother because he is a boy," while keeping her own child in school. Her alternative, however, if money were tight would be to support her daughter's schooling through Secondary Form Five, and then send the boy through.

Family continues to be important, but perhaps with certain qualifications. The more revealing responses were to the second question: if you had two boys and two girls, which would you send to school? Fifteen of the women said that they would send the boys only; seven of them are literate, all except one under thirty, the seventh thirty years old. The illiterates are predominantly in their twenties, with one thirty-nine and one forty years of age. The ethnic distribution for the literate proponents of male education is three Ga, two Kwahu, one Adangme and one Fanti-Frobo; and for the illiterate proponents two Ga, one Kwahu, one Adangbe, one Ashanti and one Nzima(both Akan) and one Buzanga.

Their reasoning is predictable:

> Send the boys, because when grown up and you don't give them good education, they will be roaming about. They will be useless. And if you don't take good care of them, they will turn to thieves . . . As for girls, their work is not very hard as the boys. Even they can sell or learn some handiwork (nineteen year old Dora, Fanti/Krobo, literate).

> Girls can do anything at all. Even when not going to school. But when a boy is not going to school, it's not good . . . He won't get any work in future to do very well . . . But a girl she can sell, do anything. But nowadays in Ghana, everybody wants to go for education. Boys don't want to sell. [Do boys sell?] Yes, they can sell in bar and canteens, which is alright. [Do you have to go to school as a boy to sell?] No. But girls, even when hasn't gone to school can sell (twenty-one year old Faith, Ga, literate).

> [Send boys to secondary school and then to London.] "We shall go to London and learn something. In London, when you are going to learn something, you can learn it very well, but here, the girls and the women worry her [his] mind, that's why she wants her daughter [sic -- son] to go to London. Doesn't want to send daughter, because you spend your time on her sending her to school and then she gets pregnant (twenty-four year old Ekua, Ashanti,illiterate; translated).

The spectre of pregnancy looms large and is a realistic fear. In addition to this, an oft-heard rationale for inequity is that men have a family to support, whereas women just marry and are taken care of.

At the other end of the continuum are those who feel that all of their children, be they boys or girls, should be encouraged to attend school. This group of respondents includes only two illiterates, Auntie Rose -- a Ga woman of forty-three -- and Hope -- an Ewe of twenty-three; the balance of fifteen literate women includes eleven under the age of thirty -- three Ga, three Kwahu and one As three Ewe and one Shai (Adangme). The women between thirty and fifty-four years of age are Ga (four).

In all of these responses, if any qualification was made, it had to do with the child, boy or girl, having the brains and desire to continue. For, as more than one said, maybe the boys don't have the head for study; and how will she know which one is good, the girl or

the boy? In the words of Auntie Viv,

> both of them will have the same, provided they can study. If not, find something one can do. Formerly, we thought that the woman's place is in the kitchen -- that they need no more education. In fact, a woman can do more than a man: she can cook, study as hard, she can be motherly, with love for children. She cooks and feels at home -- not so with men.

This last sentiment is still not terribly widespread, given the relatively low level of sophistication prevalent among women. And it is not necessarily believed by all women who have had a higher education -- not if placed on a relative scale of need between men and women.

Finally, there are those caught in between: both men and women have a right to attend school, but there is a difference, or a conditional parity. Thus, Ruby, a thirty-six year old illiterate Kwahu, said that boys should attend university, girls commercial; Georgina, a literate Kwahu of nineteen, basically agreed. And, Fatima, an illiterate Muslim Ga woman of forty-five said that given the choice, the boys should be sent; but, "if the girl is anxious to learn and won't follow men and conceive on the way, then she can go."

The rationalization of keeping girls at home out of fear of pregnancy or because they play too much has come about in response to a situation where boys and girls alike have equal opportunities -- on the books. And traditionally, girls married at an earlier age, so that an unwanted pregnancy was less of an issue. It would not hinder progress, since a woman's place was in the home. And now, there is greater contact between young boys and girls, since education, at least up to secondary school, is co-educational. This judgment of girls is similar to an opinion offered by a prosperous baker (a woman in my original census

population), whose business is maintained by a number of young apprentices. She used to bring girls in from her hometown area, to live with her and learn the business. But, she said, girls are worrisome. One went home to stay with her mother after being in Accra training for six months; after her departure, two others who had been there for a year and a half followed. In their place she brought in three Northern boys. They are much better, because once girls reach a marriageable age, they become unpredictable. They leave but do not give you sifficient notice. They take their pay and then leave. Boys are less troublesome and work harder.

One way of confirming the reality of the responses would be to check on the school track record of children of the women. The majority of the children are still young. Now that mass education is provided through primary school at no cost, all of the children of that age are attending. All of those of Middle Form age currently are attending; and all of those older now were accorded the opportunity at least. For example, Auntie Rose (an illiterate) has tried to send all of her children through Middle Form Four; but her eldest boy, now twenty-five, left mid-way, at which point his uncle took him off to another school in Kumasi, and her first daughter failed before finishing. The older children (now in their twenties and more) of educated women at least started secondary school. But there are few of them. The real test -- both of what "schooling" connotes in terms of how much and then how far the children would go -- has yet to come.

In general, there is still resistance to education for women, but the limitations of that resistance change as time goes by. Currently, it is accepted that girls will attend primary school. It certainly makes

it easier, even in market trade, to be able to use numbers, read and write. Needless to say, the higher the level attained, the better (more prestigious) the job. In this case, the male/female standard of achievement is not double, since Western education is not so sex-linked. Many educated (at least through secondary school) and articulate women go into secretarial work, where they still constitute a minority among the male workers. To become an executive secretary carries prestige and entitles the individual to print up business cards. Secondary school, however, is not a prerequisite for such a job, particularly if secretarial skills are needed. Commercial school would be more appropriate, though less prestigious. It carries a better guarantee of employment, with less of an initial expense. And what if the young lady commences school and then quits, out of failure or pregnancy? Her family has wasted funds which could have been well-used.

Occupation

Independence is typically associated with economic mobility. The urban center, such as Accra, is fabled to provide this, as well as freedom from traditional (family, lineage) controls. With financial independence, gained through employment, a woman can change her relationships. She can exist as an individual with personal freedom. With independence, she can support herself and her child. She need not compete with co-wives and mother-in-law for support. She need not remarry or depend upon in-law's lineage for support (Baker and Bird 1959).

In Chapter I, I touched upon this in a brief history of how women were originally drawn into the (job) market. The heavily-sequestered

Hausa women, both in Northern and Southwestern Nigeria, present an example in the extreme. Trading for them is an avenue to economic mobility (Nadel 1942; A. Cohen 1969). Their case is particularly ironic, since they are confined to their respective compounds and must engage small children -- their own, or those of others -- to carry out the details of trade. Their amassing of wealth in the form of pots, is nothing more than that; it provides them with no mobility beyond the confines of their domiciles or their female culture.

"Ghana is a country which is in transition from a state where the vast majority of its people lived in villages to one where a significant fraction of its population live and work in towns. The occupational pattern is therefore undergoing change" (Caldwell 1967:57). So, for example, there is a far higher proportion of the older population working as farmers than among the younger generation. "The young, as in other countries, have adapted themselves more easily to the changes. Furthermore, it is generally the young who have the education needed to secure the town jobs" (Caldwell 1967:60).

Clearly, place of residence is intimately bound up with type of employment. In traditional areas, "by customary law [in either a patrilineal or matrilineal system] the children or a wife being dependents of a man, family life requires that a son should work with and for his father, and a wife with and for her husband . . . " (Ollenu 1962:39). Property acquired with such assistance is the individual property of the man; however, husband and wife worked out an arrangement, whereby the wife would take the surplus produce of their labor to sell. Either she paid her husband an agreed-upon amount and then sold the goods for

whatever she could get, or she would take the produce to sell, giving her spouse a percentage of the take.

In years past, throughout the former Gold Coast, women carried crops, water, firewood and household belongings. It is recorded in a Letter from the Secretary for Native Affairs to the Colonial Secretary of March 6, 1931, that the women of some tribes hired themselves out to carry produce to neighboring markets or to assist in road construction by carrying light loads of gravel. They were not employed in lifting heavy weights, mining, stevedoring or coaling of ships. These jobs were for men only. There custom provided no model, the Colonial Government created new legislation. Thus, for example, on the one hand, regulations and restrictions on women in heavy and dangerous trades were not in force since women were not similarly employed. Restrictions derived from custom. On the other hand, under § 54, Cap. 101 of the Gold Coast Laws, employment of women at night was prohibited. And finally, in an extract from the Secretary of State Miscellaneous Despatch of May 16, 1927, District Commissioners remarked upon the Governor's checks over chiefs against their abuses of women. One said, "It would be a resolute chief indeed who in this Colony possessed the temerity to attempt to abuse the privileges of the female proportion of his subjects!" Apparently, the District Commissioner's presence alone prevented abuse where labor was under the Political Administration. Otherwise, the Criminal Code could be brandished or abuses could be checked by way of the Native Tribunal (S.N.A. Case No. 11/1927).

The confluence of colonization, urbanization and in-migration was instrumental in a change in the pattern of occupation. Jobs (and

schooling) have been offered first to men (du Sautoy 1958; Foster 1965). Traditionally, however, there has always been equal pay for equal work, for men and women alike. Besides trading, women have always held both money and property; perhaps most important, they are solely responsible for home and children. With the beginning of mass education, women came running: ". . . there arose a demand for sewing, cooking, and housecraft classes, as well as instruction in child welfare" (du Sautoy 1958:107).

Women were, and are, encouraged to go into work (and studies) that affect the home. This leads one writer to note, in line with the current hypothesis of deprivation of direct power, that ". . . the women's work is less spectacular than the men's, in the sense that it does not produce actual buildings and roads, but perhaps it will succeed in producing a more lasting memorial in the proper training of the rising generation" (du Sautoy 1958:116).

In this section, I shall give a qualitative description and analysis of occupational choice.[2] This provides a basis for discussing the realities of how women in Adabraka fit into the socio-economic structure of the society, with their own views on occupations pursued and possibilities or real earnings. Tables 11 and 12 give summary information, which is elaborated upon in the body of the discussion.

The women in the small sample, in my view, are representative of a certain range of city-dwellers, in terms of general population characteristics and in queries answered. Their responses bring us that much closer to the opinions and sentiments of the Adabraka women, even if not Ghanaian women in general. None of these women has maintained ties with the soil, other than visits to hometown areas. They marvel

Table 11

Distribution of Occupation by Ethnicity

Occupation	Ethnicity					
	Ga	Adangme	Akan(e)	Ewe	North Foreigners, Misc.(f)	Total
Commerce(a)	6	1	6	1	1	15
Domestic(b)	4	1	3	2	1	11
Clerical	2		2	1		5
Professional(c)	2		1			3
Non-employed(d)	3	1	1	—	—	5
TOTAL	17	3	13	4	2	39

(a) Includes traders of foodstuff, petty goods, prepared foods, fuel.

(b) Includes cook, sweeper, hairdressing, baking, seamstress, apprentices.

(c) Includes film editing, teaching, contractor.

(d) Includes housewife, unemployed; students are included in the crafts as all are apprentices.

(e) Includes Akwapim, Ashanti,Kwahu, Fanti, Nzima.

(f) Includes Buzanga, Dagomba.

Table 12

Distribution of Educational Background by Occupation

	Occupation					
Education	Commerce(e)	Domestic Crafts(f)	Clerical	Professional	Non-Employed	Total
Illiterate(a)	12	2			1	15
Middle Form 4(b)	3	2			2	6
Middle Form 4 and Training(c)		8		1	1	10
Middle Form 4 & Specialized Study (d)			5	2	1	8
TOTAL	15	11	5	3	5	39

(a) Includes no or little school, or no English-speaking abilities.
(b) Includes graduates or those just short of graduating.
(c) Includes apprenticeships in crafts, such as sewing.
(d) Includes secondary school, commercial school, professional training.
(e) Includes traders of food stuffs, petty goods, prepared foods, fuel.
(f) Includes cook, sweeper, hairdresser, baker, seamstress (and apprentice).
(g) Includes film editor, teacher, contractor.
(h) Includes housewife, unemployed; students are included in domestic crafts as apprentices.

at their older (and elderly) female kin who continue to farm the land daily, some walking as far as five miles to reach their work. Many are ambivalent about staying in the town where they grew up, or making the move to the city. Even those who come along with a spouse or other family members, agree that at least here, in Accra, they can more easily find work.

Trading, the largest single occupational category in Ghana, is still the best alternative for an untrained or illiterate woman. ("Women at work" 1963). In the country at large, the percentage of women in commerce is ". . . 25, 38 and 53 percent of females from the same Region, another Region and another West African country respectively. Thus, over half the employment secured by immigrant females from other countries is in commerce, and the overwhelming majority takes the form of petty trading" (Caldwell 1967:62). In Accra alone, 75 percent of the traders are women. Prostitution or domestic work (other options) do not carry the same degree of respect.

With some elementary education, a woman might obtain work as a salaried shopkeeper. With local training, she might further her job possibilities in the areas of nursing, teaching, doing clerical work. These positions, however, become vacant only as the white-collar men move up along the scale.

For women and men alike continue to pursue the occupations that have traditionally been within their respective purviews. The tools of literacy have always gone first to members of the male populace, thus gaining them first access to jobs requiring literacy. Similarly, "although men are involved in the distribution system, in stores, shops,

supermarkets and street stalls, trading in foods and textiles is entirely handled by women in this [the main Accra] market" (Sai 1971:33). An indication of how deeply engrained is the coupling of "woman" and "trade" or "selling" emerges in the semantic distinction the women themselves make between "work" and "trade" (or selling). "Work" seems to be the Ghanaian English word for "salaried job," not necessarily for men alone. The women are differentiating between two types of work by using the word "work" of only one. Many women, when asked if they work, or ever have, replied in the negative. Asked if they would like to, their response was again no. But, do you not sell in the market? Yes, of course. "I can feel [sic] to trade, but I can't feel to work." Work often carries with it the connotation of a world these women still do not feel privy to -- the world of offices, with white-collar positions that have come to be associated with men.

On the other hand, the reverse picture is represented in the positive evaluation of "work." This ties in with the blossoming of a cash ethos. Not a single one of my informants gave even a hint of dissatisfaction or disenchantment with being actively employed. There is the rationale of keeping busy -- housewife Regina says, "When you are working, you don't feel lazy sleeping like that"; and trader Auntie Rose, that of lucrative gain -- "If you have money full up this room, if you don't work and add it, the money is gone . . ." and then you cannot buy cloth, scarves, etc.; or, says seamstress Joanna, ". . . because of my child . . . Not all of the time can my husband give . . . You can't rely upon a man; you must do some small thing." And finally, Lizzie states concisely, "If I don't work, how can I eat?"

Choice of employment is often a function of one type of job being easier than another; this is particularly true with respect to traditional selling jobs. For example, selling oranges is preferred because you need not "put them to fire," which is more tiring. Lydia aptly characterizes her preference for "work."

> I like working than the selling. In selling, somebody will credit some, so they will, say, come today. Today, if you went, he will tell you another story, he will go away. Some of the aliens, they have taken my money away. So I like working. If you work you know that at the end of the month, you will get ten pounds, you will get ten pounds. But if you sell, and you credit, you have made your budget already. If you go, somebody will tell you another story. Then your money will be short. So I like working than selling.

Lydia continued her remarks along this vein, admitting that by selling or sewing on her own, she would make more money. But that it was not worth the troubles involved in collecting. And besides, she finished, selling is more difficult. "If you go to work, you go and sit behind your machine and you can work. But when you're selling, you have to go and come."

This ties in with the distinction that the women make between the work that they should/can do, and that which is appropriate for the menfolk. Typically, it comes down to the continued self-definition of women in their culturally-defined domestic role. Thus, another reason for the preference of selling is that it is easier to take care of small children. Market women with pre-schoolers simply bring them along with them, unless there is someone at home with whom to leave the small ones. Furthermore, it makes cooking far more convenient. By keeping a coal-pot with her goods, she can buy her ingredients on

the spot, cook them there, and keep them for meal-time later, send them on to her spouse, or whatever else she might choose to do.

There is also the question of ease of accomplishment. With respect to the modern sector, men's jobs are seen as far more difficult -- for example in the fields of car mechanics, truck driving, construction, etc. -- rather than merely unattainable. There is still a very small percentage of women drivers of private cars; this goes along with the whole question of female training and education. Is your work for men as well as women? "For a man," said Georgina, apprenticing to a hairdresser. "I don't think. For a woman alone, because that work is not hard . . . Man can do engineering or doctoring or teaching, but hairdressing is woman's work." However, in terms of traditional operating, popular lore refers to Ghanaian women as the hard workers. They maintain their households, carry great loads on the farm and to and from the market, prepare meals, raise the children, and cater to their husbands' personal needs. Much of their time is spent in time-consuming, tiring and tedious work. This continues to be thought inappropriate for a man.

All of the women engaged in trading of one sort or another confirmed this notion, many for the same reasons. Selling oranges is a woman's job. Benedicta: "I can't say why, but I haven't seen a man selling oranges before." More to the point, Adisa: "Only a woman can feel to sell oranges, not men. Man is ashamed, everyone will laugh; orange selling not for men." Similarly, selling firewood is alright for women and old men, but not young men. Ekua: "Because you can take the wood, you can dress the wood -- the young cannot feel to do it, because it is too simple."

Then there are kinds of trading which are hard, dirty work, such as making kenkey. "A man cannot do it. A man cannot put his hands into hot water to remove the kenkey. All that petty petty work, a man cannot do it." Thus, preparing foods is reasoned to be a woman's work, because it wastes time and men cannot waste their time. On the other hand, selling fried plantain is for women only, because "first time, you put the firewood and the pan and the oil. And grind the tomatoes and pepper and onions, and cut the plantain, that's why. Because of the pepper and the fire. Men don't like fire. They are afraid of fire." And, adds Auntie Rose's eighteen year old daughter, "people will say, 'Look at the man selling kelewele [fried plantain]!" Selling oil carries with it similar unpleasantries -- Emma, an oil trader: " . . . at any time, men in Ghana cannot feel to sell oil, because at any time you wake up, you put on the fire before you sell it, that's why men cannot feel to do it . . . Because you will make dirty and is difficult for men. [But it is alright for women?] Because you know how to treat your daughter . . . because at any time, because of the bottle . . . Because you know how to treat your daugher, that's why you know how to fill a bottle."

Clearly, in most cases the model for male versus female work is the contrast between the household, with its inherent task structure, and the outside world. This is so for housekeeping itself. Says Hope, ". . . men cannot do it. They can't sweep the house, bathe children. They're lazy. And cooking too is a woman's work. Men can't do that kind of work . . . [So men don't learn it?] No, since they don't do it." Extrapolating from respective household tasks to similar tasks outside,

such as child-care, Faith, who works at the YWCA nursery school, said that only women work there. "Because, when they come in the morning, must undress them, cook breakfast, and in afternoon, give them lunch, clean them -- it is the care of women. A man can't do it; it is a hard work."

My own parenthetical reaction to the responses of the women about their capabilities versus those of the men when it comes to domestic work and selling is that fire takes on a kind of symbolism. I sense a bit of contemptuousness -- that women are more capable and men claim their positions of superiority through their ascriptive qualities, not because of powers of achievement. But, consciously at least, the distribution of rights is not questioned -- it is what has always been.

Occupations such as cooking draw a mixed response. One informant, who is a cook at a grammar school, at first said that cooking is for women. Then, when pressed, agreed that there is no reason for men not to do it, just because she has not seen them doing so; and leading into the conclusion that men obviously must, since so many men are stewards. (I would say it the other way around: in, for example, European homes, most stewards, house personnel, etc., are men; once again, a salaried position, and the family is usually brought along.) Most women, when first asked whether a man can cook, would reply in the negative, since the immediate image brought to mind is that of the family home kitchen. And indeed, many bachelor-men will pay a female relative in the city to cook for them on an arranged basis.

Not all trade, however, is reasoned to be for women alone. Only hawking, either on the street or in a market stall is specifically

classified as the female domain. Butchers are still in the main Northern men; but their base of operation is under a roof and a specialty taught only to men -- that of ritual slaughtering. At Salaga Market, the fish hawkers are also inside; but that in no ways distinguishes them from the other women traders. Similar to the meat merchants, Nigerian men are noted for their trading specialty. They are no longer operating in Ghana; the few who do, are doing so underground, as a result of the Ghanaian Business Act. They also, however, did not trade on the street in common goods. Those still around include, for instance, traders in native art.

The other exception is commercial trade in a shop or kiosk. All of the women who had a kiosk to work out of -- either selling provisions or pursuing her occupation there as in an office -- were there by the grace of their husbands. This is not necessarily the case all over the city, but it is common.

Within the clearly established categories of possible female employment, the choice of one occupation rather than another is still operative. Earlier, it was noted that often occupational choice follows the pattern of parental example. This would be particularly true with traditional forms of work, such as farming and selling. In terms of the modern job sector, however, parents or those instrumental in guiding the growing person do not necessarily possess the sophistication or knowledge of what is in the offing. Or again, there may be resistance, as already noted, on the part of the older advising generation, or the younger ones themselves who pick up on their elders' sentiments as to what is appropriate employment. But in any case, rare

is the young woman who goes off on her own, either in her decision to work, her choice of work and actual implementation of both. Independent agency not only seems to be absent; it is not even an issue.

Up until this point, the implication has been that all women feel compelled to work, for one reason or another. There are those, however, who are not out in the open job market. In dealing with the choices that the women make, as to their economic selves, there are three broad categories of inclusion. The first: the question of one's choice being a function of another's. The second: relating to ease of access and performance. And the third: the factor of finances. In most cases, the fundamental factor is that of another person's involvement or interference in the individual's decision-making; however, this is especially the case in the earlier phase of training for future opportunities. Thus, once that has already been established, the other factors of desirability and financial input/output may predominate.

Children have traditionally followed in their parent's occupational steps: men -- farming, fishing, hunting -- and women -- child care, food preparation, house cleaning, water carrying, marketing food and local commodities. With modernization, traditional economic activities are on the ebb. As such, children must be trained in other endeavors. And the children grow up to be adults, pursuing (new) adult occupations.

The vast majority of the women interviewed all had their occupational beginnings under the aegis of mother or father. Many left the particular type of work for lack of lucrative gain. Many of the latter, however, remained in this type of work. For example, Jeanette currently sells oranges; she got her start in her parental home, where she was exposed

to her mother's fish trade. She went into her "sister's" kenkey business -- her mother's sister's daughter -- and learned the business from her. Her preference, however, was in simple trading, and kenkey involves a great deal of preparation and cooking beforehand. So, from there, she went into the sale of oranges.

Working at something at the suggestion of another may be the indirect pattern of following parent, aunt, sister, etc. It was appropriate for them; training was acquired by simply being a child growing up around others who practised a particular occupation. This is true for many of the women currently engaged as traders. Others, in the main illiterate women, have taken up trading having come from traditional families where mother and father farmed. No longer near farming land, trading was a close second. After all, custom has evolved such that when the husband is a farmer, his wife (besides helping till the soil) disposes of the surplus. This has also been true for fishermen and their wives, and craftsmen and theirs. Where the mother has a craft, such as baking, her child becomes an integral part of the machinery -- perhaps in the preparation of the dough, as well as the sale of the finished product. Among the women interviewed, two provide a nice example of this. They are separated in age by thirty-five years. Auntie Elizabeth is fifty-four; her mother was a baker: "At that time, I was very small but I sell bread." Having already been inculcated with the business, she later apprenticed herself to a baker and learned the craft. Dora, similarly, is nineteen years old. Her mother bakes bread, as well as making porridge and doughnuts. Nora and her younger sister have equal responsibility in baking, cleaning up, and selling. She maintains that

she does not want to work for her mother, but must because her mother does not have the time and wants her to. She in effect learned at her mother's knee, watching and receiving informal instruction when ten years old.

There are also the suggestions of others -- not necessarily asked for and often of necessity followed. They are taken to heart because they play upon the theme of tradition -- women have always done such and so, therefore . . . ; or because they are proffered by a respected elder; or because reciprocation is due; or even because it provides a concrete proposal in the absence of anything better. Ekua (whose mother had been selling tobacco in Ashanti-land)came up through the ranks of trade. She is currently selling firewood, however, because her father asked her to help him. All of the women either learning sewing or employed as seamstresses followed the suggestion of a male relative -- father or elder brother. Bebbe said her father heard about a particular woman giving lessons and passed on the information to her. Auntie Atta said that when she first came to Accra and was living with her older brother, she needed work and he pushed her in that direction. That person, in both cases, knew more than she and his word must of need be taken seriously.

Reciprocating a favor by following another's advice is usual between mother and unmarried-daughter-with-child. In most cases, the baby is easily absorbed into the household and the major responsibility for socialization is the grandmother's. In return, however, the mother of the child is beholden -- perhaps to work in her mother's business, or to carry out the burden of household chores.

Why did Aggie choose to leave her aunt's trading business, to become a cook? "It was not my intention, but the headmaster is a friend of my father's. So when I got there, I was applying for a telephonist. But at that time there was no telephone there. And he said the kitchen has shortage of one women. So I must go there and try. Even I told him that I can't do the work properly . . . But I was sitting in the store [kiosk] playing records and doing nothing, so he told me to write an application, and that's all."

The second major factor in choice of work has to do with ease of access and performance. In a sense, this may continue on from the foregoing: for example, getting a job through someone else's contacts. In this case, I had more in mind the analogue to an individual finding a place to live, rather than following a lead provided by someone to whom she stood in a subordinate relationship. How did Lizzie find her job? She had commercial school training; someone told her about a contracting firm, so she went there and there was a vacancy.

Earlier, I discussed the differentiation of men's and women's work. One of the points brought up was the ease with which it could be carried out. The same distinction holds true within certain branches of women's work -- but particularly, even if not exclusively, within the field of market trade. Thus, Jeanette was brought up among kenkey-makers and became one herself; she left that to trade in provisions, because it was far less work. Selling itself might be looked down upon, if there is a better (i.e. more lucrative, easier) option. Market women still command a great deal of respect, for those who have made it big have done so against great odds, such as having to establish

credit and being illiterate. But as Lydia said earlier, it means coming and going. Those women with stalls in the market get there at opening time, about 7:30. Those who hawk on the streets adjust their work schedule to their stock-in-trade. A woman who sells porridge and doughnuts will be out on the streets by 6 a.m., since most of her trade is in breakfast customers on their way to work. Most bread sellers are out at night, along with rice, kenkey, fufu, etc., sellers. Depending upon the hours of trade, if the food must be prepared, that much more time beforehand must aside. For example, if a kenkey seller like Fatima does the bulk of her business during the early part of the day, she is up and cooking at 3 a.m. Clearly there are variations, depending upon personality and outside obligations, such as domestic. The point is that market women have typically put in long, hard hours. Since all of the women are accustomed to long work days, if not in the street then on the farm or in the home, etc., the length of time is not always a factor. Though Helena,who is employed as a film editor (a professional, Westernized position),complained that she found her hours too long. She, as a more modern person, is less willing to put up with a full day at work, then running home to prepare supper for her husband. To a trader, sitting at the market all day long does not connote hardness. To have a stall, in any case, is more prestigious than hawking on the street. But with the given of having to sit at the market, the amount of energy output (hard work versus long work) in preparing or selling the product does not carry a connotation of difficulty.

Women socialized into a particular occupation will stay with it out of familiarity and the ease of experience. However, should that

same occupation become non-lucrative, it is of no great moment to change to something else. Faith has been working as a nursery school teacher; she had no formal training, only an orientation period of a week through watching and doing. She did, however, have training as a caterer (mainly baking). She had to give it up, because she could not find that type of work. By the same token, Lydia was terminated from her factory sewing job, because the company lost its license. At that point, she tried the obvious alternative of working for herself.

Again, this in general is done with the support of another -- someone who stands in a position of seniority or respect to the irresolute one. When I approached a newly-graduate secondary school student with the offer of being my interpreter, she was exuberant, but felt that it was not her place to commit herself to me. First, I had to meet with her family. Her mother was deceased and her father lived elsewhere in Ghana; thus, she was in the nominal care of her paternal aunt. But it was her uncle -- her mother's brother, an Adangme like herself -- who came to see me, to determine my sincerity, integrity, etc., and extract promises of helping Mary in mapping out her future. Only after gaining his consent could I employ Mary.

The third criterion of choice to be considered is the financial. This has two sides: one is the need for capital to undertake a business pursuit, the other is undertaking a given pursuit because it promises to be profitable.

The initial expense may be for training in the profession, for example, learning how to sew. Even when a girl is apprenticed to a seamstress and as she progresses, helps the woman in her business, she

still must pay a fee. The same is true for such crafts as hairdressing, baking, catering. In earlier times, such arts or crafts were passed on through the family network. Today, in exchange for instruction, a girl might do household work, depending upon her age. There is always some reciprocity in kind. Training in a trade is more favorable regarded than continuation in secondary schooling (for reasons which have already been discussed). At least the young woman emerges with a skill. And the expense is lower. But there is an expense in any case, and the question always arises as to who shall pay. More often than not, the father or another senior male relative living nearby takes over the responsibility for fees. In the case of sewing, there is the added expense of a machine, which must also be paid for. All of my informants who are or had been apprenticed in a craft were not the initiators of discussion leading to commencement. Either they followed parental example (as with the two bakers -- the younger, Dora, really doing selling more than baking) or they followed advice leading them to the trade and the actual instructress. Fathers took responsibility for unmarried girls; unless they were absent or insolvent, in which case whosoever was the girl's operative guardian -- such as boyfriend or elder brother -- would do so. This means that without a financier, professions requiring such outlays can not be considered. (I have no first-hand information on the situation for male children; it is clear, however, that they are given encouragement in academic studies, that this involves a great deal of expense and therefore, that <u>someone</u> with both the authority to give consent and the money to finance the venture must be called upon for support.)

The same thing is the case vis-a-vis initial capital necessary to start, for example in market trading. Sai (1971) found in her study of textile and food sellers that 40 percent of her smaple started out with less than N¢10, the lowest amounts in the food groups. Certain fields of trade, such as cloth selling, require greater initial investment. Among 13 of my informants who had at some point engaged in trade, only three started with their own money; in each case, it was money saved from a previous endeavor under someone else's tutelage. Two started out by crediting their purchases; for Fatima, it was to establish a kenkey business, and since her mother was a kenkey seller, she was able to borrow the utensils until she had enough money to buy her own. Two were given money by their mothers -- Adawkaw's was a gift, Adisa reciprocated with a dash of cloth one year later; Ekua by her grandmother, which she returned; and Benedicta by her sister -- "If your sister gives you money . . . ?" of course you need not pay it back. Finally, there are those who went to their husbands for help. In three cases, it was essentially his business with the wife working it; in one case, it was for her own business: Joanna's husband bought her a kiosk, but there was little business. "Even if you get a penny, they collect it. Even this morning, the Town Councilman came to ask about money [for property tax]." She told him to go to her father about the papers! As a seamstress, she simply uses the kiosk as a place of business. And finally, the Ekua who had taken a loan from her grandmother for a previous trading venture and paid her back, subsequently married; she accepted capital from her husband, but for some reason which she did not articulate, she did not deem it necessary to repay him.

The profit-motive of working leads into the gut-level reasons that women have for their work activity, and the whole issue of their earning potential -- that is, the ability to garner an income which will provide entry into the new system of stratification, or a system of stratification which will allow them the ability to make a good living.

First, let us briefly re-cap the foregoing discussion in the person of Georgina. At the age of nineteen, her history of employment exemplifies all three factors affecting choice of work. When I first met her, she had been working for four months as an apprentice to a hairdresser. She works everyday except Monday, and half-day on Sunday. She trains there for one year -- "If he [sic] is doing it, he will call you and you will watch to see what he is doing. If she is going to set or straighten, tells us to do it." For this Georgina must pay N₵ 120 for the year -- one half at the beginning of the course, one half upon completion. Because her mother could not pay, she went to her "friend" (boyfriend) for the money. She is working there because it is good and will give her money.

Previously, she worked at Sunkwa Chemical Stores for three months as a salesgirl. She landed that position because Sunkwa was an acquaintance of hers and needed a salesgirl. She left the job to do hairdressing. And her first job, just after finishing school, was in her mother's employ. Her mother has a small shop where she sells provisions; Selena helped her sell, unsalaried. Thus, she passed through the tradition of following parental example to following her own inclinations once money was available to do so.

Going into an occupation out of desire for material gain is common for most of the informants. There is a vast difference, however, in the degree of sophistication and self-assertiveness they possess in seeking lucrative employment. Much of this has to do with the absence of initiative (or independence) that not just women, but men[3] as well, are socialized into. There is always someone older or wiser, who can offer advice or connections, or both. One aspect of this differentiation in sophistication is related to level of aspiration. Do you merely ask around your local contacts, or do you (as in times past) seek out kin or a traditional leader who has connections at his fingertips, or do you go to someone with greater access to the modern sector? Regina, at twenty-eight, has been a housewife for four years. She had worked for Lever Brothers from 1957 to 1961, while still single. But she did not stop working because of marriage; rather, she lost her job "because of redundancy." After ten years and three pregnancies, she says that she is still looking for a job: her husband is helping her. Many, many secondary school graduates come out of school to no job and have no idea where to start.

As a European, I was approached by young women and parents of young women alike; as Dora's father said, all he wants is that his daughter (who at the age of nineteen has a year old child) follow his advice and finish school. He wanted her to at least complete Middle Form Four. When she conceived he claims he was not vexed; when she failed the examination, he understood. And, he continued, he did not want her to cause trouble, but he would be happy for her to stay with me. He asked me to teach her and show her to be respectful and so forth; and then,

when my "course" was finished, I could take her with me to the United States for schooling. "If only you could advise her well and show her the right way. I would be so happy." Similarly, when I was leaving for good, my interpreter approached one of my contacts, a well-known chief, well-versed in the "American way"; out of deference to me, he found her a position through his network of contacts.

All the way to the other swing of the pendulum is the self-made operator. Auntie Viv provides a fine example. She actually began to trade at the age of sixteen, while she was home on vacation from secondary school in Sierra Leone. Her father had been a cocoa buying agent, her mother a buyer and seller at auctions, as well as a hat-trimmer on the side. Auntie Viv met a man on the street selling hats. She bought a dozen from him, added a few shillings and sold them quickly. The same man suggested she write to London to get them at cost. She ordered four dozen, C.O.D. It was Christmastime, and so they rapidly sold out. Then, she began to buy from UAC (United Africa Company). She was still at school, so when the goods arrived, she asked her sister to pick them up and put them on sale. When Viv arrived home, she would dash her sister a few shillings in return for the latter's efforts. Coming from an educated family, she went on to training in nursing and teaching as well.

In 1966, she went into wholesale and retail contracting in sand and stone. Each of these changes was made because of money. Simultaneous with her contracting business, she is also involved in wholesale importing. That, however, she says brings in little money because of the surcharge and just gives her headaches: she must wander about the

city collecting, a complaint similar to that of many traders. With contracting, customers simply pay into her account, so she need only check up at the bank periodically. She is continually thinking about how to improve her business; for example, she wants to put up a building near the quarry at Achimota to use as an office and also put up business guests. Then, she will be able to go into agriculture, and bring in poultry. This will give her the opportunity to drop the importing business. At one point, she almost gave up all of her businesses. Because people would come to her and say that they saw such and such a new machine had come on the market; she would give them the money, and nothing would be realized. It dawned upon her that she was giving out money for nought. Soon after, a cousin reminded her that when she was a teacher, she used to draw a great deal and that she should pick it up again and design cloth. Following the cousin's suggestion, she did so, registering the designs and realizing income from it. She therefore continues to do this in her spare time.

Auntie Viv obviously presents an example of financial wizardry and shrewd management. She has initiative and drive; she consults with both husband and mother. However, she also notes that although most women seek a second opinion before commencing a new enterprise, she will hear others out only to be polite; once she has made up her mind, she forges ahead.

Income

Occupational endeavor leads naturally into possibilities of financial increment; Table 13 gives summary information on the incomes (or their approximations) of the women interviewed. A number of items

Table 13

Distribution of Occupation by Income

Income	Occupation					
	Commerce(b)	Domestic(c)	Clerical	Professional(d)	Non-Employed	Total
N₵ 0 or less (a)	3	6			1	10
N₵ 2 to 20	9	2		1	2	14
N₵ 21 to 40	3	2	3		2	10
N₵ 41 to 75		1	2	1		4
76 plus				1		
TOTAL	15	11	5	3	5	39

(a) Or less relates to women paying out for occupational training.
(b) Includes traders of foodstuffs, petty goods, prepared foods, garb, fuel.
(c) Includes cook, sweeper, hairdresser, baker, seamstresses (and apprentices).
(d) Includes film editor, teacher, contractor.
(e) Includes housewife, unemployed; students are included in domestic-crafts, as apprentices.

of interest are lost in the lumping of categories. For one thing, all apprentices are listed not as non-employed, but rather, within the occupational category for which they are training (mainly seamstresses). Secondly, the table does not show extremes; for example, the one professional earning N¢ 76 plus is Auntie Viv, who in fact figures her income at about N¢ 1,200. Thirdly, the table does not distinguish between "no income" and dashing, or indirect income. What this means is that, in many cases, when the individual works for someone (especially close family), rather than receiving a set amount of money, she either receives dashes or cash when needed -- both in addition to provision of basic subsistence needs. And finally, the non-employed class here is predominantly housewives, all of whom receive household money from their husbands; not all, however, report it as income, or receive a set amount on a regular basis.

It is clear, however, that salaries or profits are low. Even the highly-educated film editor Helena only earns N¢ 72 per month. In the country at large, the average income is about N¢ 250 per annum or N¢ 20 per month. This is no no way proportional to the cost of living, especially in the city. So, for example, with the plethora of traders, only a small percentage of the women have made their mark, legends notwithstanding. The fable of the market mammy who carries her bundle in her bodice applies to few. Sai (1971) found that in her sample of fifty-seven textile and food traders, seventeen owned their own house (three owning more than one) and this was after an average of thirty years of trading; twenty rented their homes or rooms at N¢ 3 to N¢ 60 per month; and the remaining twenty lived in family houses. In the

last section in this chapter,I discuss place of residence as it relates to independence of action -- that is, how tied to tradition is a woman? Can she actually break loose and live on her own? Here I shall briefly remark on choice of residence as it relates to economic independence.

Hilda, already in her sixties, is the only member of the sample who has been able to purchase her own house. Fatima is also a home-owner, having inherited the residence from her husband (under Islamic law) when he died. Ellen and Vivian, both in their mid-twenties, live in their own rented rooms. Both are immigrants to Accra. Both, however, also have more than one elder sibling living in the area. But all of the other sample women live either in the family house -- sixteen women, of whom thirteen are Ga, one is Adangme, one is Kwahu, and one Fanti; in their husband's father's house -- two; in their husband's house -- two; in rented room(s) with family -- six; and finally in rented room(s) with respective spouses -- eight. What this means is that only those living on their own are responsible for the gamut of household expenses, including rent, electricity and water. There is no payment of rent whatsoever in a family house; and either husband or family, as the case may be, takes care of the monthly remittance in a rented dwelling. All of the women contribute in one way or another to household expenses; but it is not considered a cultural obligation to do so.

My data provides insights on an even more basic level, with regard to the woman's ability to be self-supporting. It also deals with a wider range of occupations and the possibilities of income. There are two aspects that I shall discuss. The first is why the women choose to work;

the second is a consideration of a few measures of economic self-sufficiency. Keeping in mind the skimpy profits or salaries earned, one might ask, why do women work at all? "Because it is good, you'll get money." "I like to work. If I don't work, how can I get money to buy clothes, food and everything. If I can't work, I have no money. Maybe my husband can give me, but it will be less." "You must, you see, just to help the house." As with Sai's traders, there was almost unanimous agreement "that a woman had to work, even if she had someone to look after her. This is a well-established tradition: all women had to work, on the farms, at craft-work (dress-making) or trading" (1971:13).

There is a traditional model for husband and wife working together for the common good of the household. If nothing else, spouses were always economic partners. Women worked where needed, and the income, or product of her labor, went to support the house. In the city, where money comes to her directly, she can more easily use the cash for herself or her children. In the village, the husband was expected to provide for the home, but often he gave her only "chop money" and nothing more. In such cases, she would quietly assume the responsibility; in town, however, she might be more moved to make a stir and leave the marriage.

For in town, the woman really is far more dependent for support upon family or male attachment. Husbands must, and generally do, provide minimally for subsistence needs. This <u>is</u> a sacred institution. My first interpreter Ramatu was a twenty-six year old Hausa woman with three children -- two by her former marriage, who live with her mother.

She was badly shamed by her husband. In a fit of pique, he moved most of the house furnishings out to his second sife's room elsewhere. To add insult to injury, he refused to pay Ramatu's rent. Ramatu went to a girlfriend, a woman of another northern tribe and also a Muslim to complain. Allah! exclaimed Skenatu. If he were her husband, she would go crazy -- she would take poison. What! that Ramatu should pay the rent, that he should shame her by moving out his radiogram and chairs in front of everyone. Ramatu's comment: "Is the other one beautiful and good past me that he should treat me like this?" Her only alternative was to move in with her mother, which she was opposed to: "In my country, if you live with your mother, you can't do anything. No going out, no cinima, no nothing." And yet, on the other hand, she felt that she had been badly ridiculed before her friends and neighbors, all of whom agreed that, if nothing else, her husband owed her basic support. She would have claerly been within her rights to leave him.

In terms of actual expenditures, it is mainly the extras -- personal luxuries such as scarves for herself, and sweets for the children -- that provide added incentive to work. Most women believe that they cannot ask their husbands for oddments such as these. What expenses are they responsible for? Phrased more handily, what do they spend their money on? The women who live alone, as noted above, are responsible for daily expenses. Both, however, have boygriends, and just as a husband's marital tie is operative as the money flows, so is that of courtship. Indeed, all of my informants with boyfriends (as well as all the other women I knew who were in the same situation) are given direct support, either in the form of a monthly allowance and occasional

gifts, or, if the woman is of a higher income bracket, expensive gifts and indirect payment, such as household furnishings. Those who are employed and living with family will share food bills and make contributions which will go for the rent and such. It is also not unusual, if one person does all of the cooking, to dash her something monthly. And there are periodic dashes to kin, who continue to live in the hometown -- especially to mother and siblings (cf. R. Cohen 1971).

In general, for those who have earning power, no matter how great or how small, their own money is re-invested (for example, a cloth-seller will use some of her profits to buy more cloth), spent on non-necessities (petty food, clothing extras for oneself and children, other personal expenditures) and dashes or household contributions. Faustina sums it up nicely: she must buy some cloth for herself and her child, sandals, decorations for her room (carpet, curtains) or bedsheets. If she asked her husband, he would give, but she does not like to. It is not good to buy everything from your husband's money. "I don't know his mind; maybe he'd smile in my face, but wouldn't like it."

It is not appropriate, given the foregoing, to characterize these women as self-supporting. However, before going on, let us consider two conditions, one real, one hypothetical. The first is the possessions that each of these women regard as their own. All of the married women own their own kitchen utensils -- these are like her stock in trade -- as do those living on their own. The others generally share with their kin house-mates. Benedicta, who lives with her elder sister: "How can I take pots from you if the person I am living with has?"

Married women living in the same house as their husband tend to own hard furnishings, and none of the decorative items. Faith, at the age of twenty-one, is living with her family until her husband can afford to set the two of them up elsewhere. She does not even own any cooking utensils. But, she says, "when you are a wife of somebody, even if you have not married or engaged, he must buy it, because she [sic] is with you." In which case, they are his possessions, which he shares with her. Once they have children, most married women living in a family house, will have either a private or semi-private room. In this case, furnishings will be nominally hers. I do not know if the husband would be in his rights to confiscate bed and bureau in cases of divorce, viz. the case of my interpreter. Ruby simply broke into peals of laughter when asked what she owns; her weak response: cooking utensils and clothing.

Any woman with an occupation will own the tools of her trade, be that a sewing machine or vats for preparing food. And generally these were not purchased with her own funds. Along these lines, Muslim women still bring an array of large porcelain bowls into their marriage; these provide leverage against destitution. They are theirs, to do with as they please -- a marriage gift from mother. They are resistant to cashing them in, keeping them atop the wardrobe. (The very high value placed on the dowry is a very widespread idea. See A. Cohen 1969; Goody and Tambiah 1973)

All of the women living away from their hometown maintain ties through visiting,such as at times of annual festivals or family funerals, and also through periodic be-gifting. The legend of promise of the

city continues. To the hometown folk, cost of living is not the same kind of issue. They know that their city kin have access to paying jobs. For them, money is often hard to come by. Urban women and men alike feed into their expectations by sending home money. For this, a woman must work. It may not be much, but it is more than the others have. In any case, it provides incentive to earn a few extra cedis. It also carries on the reciprocal cycle.

The second measure of economic independence poses a hypothetical question, in terms of the occupation of the respective woman: if someone stole your X (sewing machine, cloth, oranges, etc.), who would you ask for money to buy more? Out of thirty-nine women, not one said that she would raise the money on her own. One woman, unable to conceptualize such a thing, said that "God will provide her when she will pass, before she will get her things, because as she is working, she doesn't eat all of her money, she saves some." (Interpreters translation) The others said that they would borrow from a parent or sister -- eleven; from their husband -- sixteen; or from a boyfriend -- three. Only one of those who would ask her husband feels that she must pay him back; and two of those borrowing from kin responded similarly, one woman saying she would reciprocate with a dash. This ties in nicely with the actualities of capital needed to start trading or learn a trade. Since parents (or kin in a position of guardian) are responsible for their offsprings' education, direct recompense is neither expected nor forthcoming for payment of, e.g. sewing fees. On the other hand, monetary outlay for a business is a larger chunk at one time, and since it is with profit-making in mind, recompense is expected. In the present

example, however, it would be an unfair situation, which the individual is not necessarily expected to prepare for -- money is short enough without anticipating future disasters. And that is when the link of kinship, and all of its obligations, is brought into play.

Consulting Table 13, we see that a number of women have a minus income (i.e. must pay out for their occupational training) or have no apparent source of income (as student of housewife). From the foregoing discussion, however, it is clear that this does not set them back much behind their employed sisters. Their basic expenses are absorbed by whoever they reside with, be it sister, mother or husband. Boyfriends come to the fore, when accessories are needed (or wanted or expected, as part and parcel of the relationship's reciprocal nature). All of the women with boyfriends add anywhere from N₵ 10 to 20 per month to their income. Such an allowance is bestowed as a matter of course, in recognition of two things: one, that women have certain needs, which they themselves cannot meet with the amoung of money that they earn; and two, that by contributing to a woman's maintenance on a regular basis, the boyfriend has a right to expect certain favors from her as his woman. This, however, does not tie her down to one man. It also does not cast her in the mold of a particularly independent person (see Chapter VI).

The Draw of the City

The content of this chapter has been directed towards the three basic avenues to mobility in a modernizing society -- education, occupation and income. The discussion of each has shown that women are not

accorded equal opportunities in the socio-economic structure. The acceptance and maintenance of traditional assumptions provides the basis for understanding and action among these women. There is a conceptual basis of similarity amongst the protagonists, with variations along the theme of femaleness. To anchor some of the proceeding, I introduce one example of situational response.

Why did these women come to Accra? Did they flee the control of family and lineage, of mother and marriage, to follow a new life-style? I have not said or implied that this sample of respondents represents "everywoman" of Accra or Adabraka, just as Adabraka is not a microcosm of Accra, of which it is a part.

Out of thirty-nine women, twenty-two were born in the Accra environs, and fifteen came from as far north as Yendi and as close as Nsawam in the south. How many of these women live independently of family or husband? Only two, both of them young women in their twenties (cf. Caldwell 1968:60). One came originally to live with a sister and work; she took over the rented room when the latter married and moved away. The other, came originally to live with her sister and go to secondary school. Once established in her employment, she moved off to her own abode. Just as she had originally carried out household chores for her elder sister, in exchange for payment of her school fees, so she welcomed her younger sister, who marketed and cooked and cleaned for her, prior to going off to school. The second of these two women insists that she would far prefer living in a family house, for example if her father were still alive and had a house in Accra. Then it would not be necessary for her to waste her money on rent.

This raises the questions not only of why they came to Accra, but where all of these women reside. Their reasons for coming are all justifiable by the traditional mores: to marry, to attend school or job, to stay with family. More often than not, Accra is chosen both because the individual already has kin there upon whom she can rely. Everyone in the sample came to Accra knowing someone, and in pursuit of a job. Four came with husbands; four moved with mother or father; six came for school or work; and one came to see her mother's sister.

And with whom do they currently reside? Predominantly with a guardian of sorts: seven in rented accommodations with their respective husbands; three are with sisters (e.g. Auntie Atta's husband died so she moved in with her sister subsequently); Dora is in her father's house, Ruby in her husband's father's house, Bebbe with her mother; and finally, Vivian and Ellen, both unmarried, live alone.

What of those indigenous to Accra? (This does not mean that Accra is their hometown -- true only of the Ga -- but rather, that they were born and bred in the area. It might be added here that in many cases, this sets off the loosening of hometown ties, although contact is by no means lost. Traditional festivals, funerals and the like are cause for visiting.) Of such indigenous women, nine live in the traditional family house, and six of these have husbands who live elsewhere. One of them, Hope, is divorced and Auntie Rose is widowed; but both have always lived there. And then there are variations, like Georgina living with her immediate family, or Helena living in her elder brother's house -- in effect, the seed of the new family house; Ruby living with her husband in his family house; etc.

What do all of these numbers mean? Either this group of women is conservative, or non-traditional avenues to mobility have not yet been exploited by the masses. I would contend that the latter explanation is the more valid one. Most of the women I dealt with were middle-aged and younger -- thus of the generation(s) that would be in the process of breaking away. But, in Western terms (those same terms in which West African researchers have on the whole dealt) they are not. Or, in any event, not in the sense of anything approaching a mass movement. It is more like the tokenism evident in the professions.

Just as many returned to family when widowed, others created the nuclei of new family centers -- accommodating, for example, married offspring and their families. What does this say for female independence? Without exception, the women said that if they divorced, they would gravitate to family, generally mothers -- continuing to support themselves. This is an important point: the trappings or appearance of financial success (such as patiently sitting long hours in the sun selling merchandise) are not an indicator of autonomy <u>if</u> we assume that power over one's alternatives and decisions concerning them is also an ingredient. Especially when one also considers that the household head -- the person who not only has the power of decision but the authority to enforce that as well -- is usually the senior member.[4]

Needless to say, Hilda, as a house-owner and co-resident, occupies such a position. She is also, however, a woman in her late sixties. Despite that, she defers to her mother who lives with her. And were she younger, with a husband, as she said was the case, his opinions would carry the weight. In fact, it was Auntie Rose, a woman in her forties

who said that if the man is troubling you, you may leave him and go to your mother. Thus one might almost say that the circumstances of one's life in the city do not stand apart from the traditional life-style. They are also acceptable only under propitious conditions; the family is a refuge from adversity.

Thus, the opportunity to come to the big city is one not activated on one's own. As with her occupational activity and educational advance, a woman's options and powers of decision-making are often dependent upon other, generally senior, persons. Very few of the women could oppose their parents if they were denied the right to come to the big city. Few of these women as parents would consider anything less than marriage, schooling or a proper job reason enough for their own daughters to migrate to an urban center. And just as they would adhere to their parents wishes, so they expect their own children to do the same.

Another way of looking at independence is the taking of initiative. Women and men alike, with and without education, complain of not being able to find a job if they have training, and not knowing what occupation to pursue when they don't. They do not know where to look, or what criteria to use, or basically, what they themselves want for themselves. There has always been someone else to guide their thoughts and actions. Initiative is stifled, never being allowed a chance to develop. When one grows up following an established pattern of life, within an unquestioned system of values and beliefs, alternatives are not conceptualized. Life-styles do not necessarily change when the context for role development changes; such things take time.

Women, however, have always worked. Perhaps the real show of

independence would be to choose not to work -- particularly since they are still being goaded into traditionally-acceptable occupations. There certainly is not much monetary rewards in their working, and it serves to further support traditional patterns -- of helping out in the conjugal household expenses, in reciprocating parental affections and support, in accepting the second-best. In my sample, no unemployed woman wanted to remain in that status. And only one woman, Faustina, who is a seamstress, said that if she had her choice, she would quit her work and keep house; this would only be possible if her husband had money -- an empty possibility.

Women allow others to hold them back, in their unquestioning acceptance of the status quo and perpetuation of the same. By the same token, the diversifying and modernizing social system has kept the women back, denying them instrumental power over their own lives, as well as in society at large. Theoretically, avenues to mobility in Accra derive from achieved rather than ascribed statuses. Access to the "better things in life," not to mention the options of simple, everyday choices, should be available to all. Ostensibly, to exploit these possibilities, the first step is to make a break with one's past and move out of the family house to the city, if not already a resident. Actually, very few women move to the city on their own.

Throughout this study, I have tried to look at the many facets of female development and self-assertion, in terms of what society allows and what she herself takes. I suggest that we not assume that everyone, male and female alike, has equal access to alternate identities and relationships, structural changes notwithstanding. This was the theme

of this chapter. In the next chapter, I discuss the primacy of traditional roles, within the context of the urban sector.

CHAPTER V

PRIMARY IDENTITY RELATIONSHIPS

Generally, there is much of the traditional in any type of move, although it varies in degree among them. Its predominance is closely tied to the primacy of the activity and the degree to which it can be modified or manipulated. In this chapter, I examine the issue of primary (i.e. those which take precedence, still defined along traditional lines) social identities. I analyse the extent to which cultural attitudes and consequent behaviors continue to be fundamental to the woman's role, and the extent to which the woman's role is a reflection of traditional life-style.

Tradition depicts a woman as wife, mother, child and sibling -- the sexual roles she was socialized into as a youngster. Each entails obligations and expectations. They endure, because the family, lineage and tribal ties endure. Contact is not broken. In many, if not most, ways, my informants' daily lives follow the model of their mothers'. Responsibilities to the household are paramount. This is important, as it relates to the nation of alternatives -- the power and authority to exercise one's choice.

It is important to keep the physical, as well as social, context in mind; therefore, the material in this chapter is divided up as follows: a brief discussion of the interplay of physical and social environments, followed by a look at the "everywoman's" daily schedule

and those contacts and activities which carry primacy. This is followed by three sections, which fall under the rubric of traditional identity relationships -- that of wife, mother, and daughter and sister.

The Interplay of the Physical and the Social Structures

I have suggested that the development of social identities (which are associated with a new constellation of relationships) is tied to socio-physical contexts. This has two sides: the accessibility of new spheres of activity, and the exploitation of them. Thus, to lead into this chapter, I shall briefly explicate a theoretical orientation au courant in geography, because it relates to the posited interplay of the physical and social structure. This is the notion that perceptions of space influence behavior. To live in, and use, the environment, the individual requires a way of ordering it. Similarities and dissimilarities of places are learned by means of both locational (physical, spatial) and non-locational criteria. Such a learning or classification is a "mental map" or "spatial schema." (Cox and Zannaras 1973; Lee 1973; Gould 1973; Stea 1969; Milgram et al 1972) In the urban locality, there is continuous input from both physical and social stimuli, due to repeated transactions. Everyone carries around in his or her head a piece of the whole; again, everyone's mapping depends upon a unique perception, as well as the "imagability" (Lynch 1960) of the city -- i.e. how well or easily the city can be conceived as a whole entity by its people.

Schema build up, as many impressions are incorporated as they agree with the schema as it already exists. There is probably great

similarity across individuals who belong to identifiable groups and who share the same verbal and/or sensory experience of the environment. This would be the case particularly with groups that are based upon life cycle, social class and ethnicity. (Cox and Zannaras 1973) In Adabraka, there may be as many perceptions of the scene as there are backgrounds represented. This is to say that people have brought their schemata with them from the traditional setting or lore; activating it out of context may create confusion. The younger generation, who have grown up in the urban neighborhood, may have a different set of orientations than do their parents, this depending upon the extent of their traditional ties and learning.

Given the situation of first and second-generation residents of Adabraka (and/or Accra) whose ties to the hometown (and/or hometown tradition) are still fairly strong, some of the contradictions of life-style and circumstance become more comprehensible since " . . . all our present behavior is governed by these assemblies of selected and organized past experiences." (Lee 1973:89)

At the same time, there are broad principles which cross-cut <u>all</u> of the hometown groups, as detailed in Chapter III. Hometown notions of daily life and interactions are associated with socio-physical institutions. They form a major part of the newcomer's cultural baggage. When these institutions (or attitudes) are replicated in the urban milieu, the consequent behaviors will be similar. Thus, there are identities and relationships which both derive from and perpetuate the traditional.

The Daily Routine

In the city, a woman is no less busy than in the rural area. If anything, her time is far more precious and it is as carefully reckoned as pocket money. Less time is spent walking, since public conveyances are available. But places of business are more scattered. In Accra, there is no business center proper, and not all of the markets carry the same goods. Furthermore, there are more activities to be involved in. For example, those who are newly arrived or who wish to maintain ties with others like them (same tribe, same hometown, etc.) may want to budget time for voluntary association meetings. Women with Western skills, such as typing, may have a distance to travel to their place of employment. This by no means frees them from their traditional chores, such as cooking, cleaning, and marketing.

The day beings early. At 5:30 a.m., the voice of the morning GBC (Ghana Broadcasting Corporation) blasts forth from the ommipresent box radio. It is soon answered by the sound of brooms sweeping public and private compound spaces. The Kumasi lorries, which leave from a neighborhood gas station, begin their run. Five-thirty is the average waking hour for the women-folk. Some rise earlier and a few later. Most, however get up about two hours before they have to be at work. The newspaper boy is out hawking by 6:30 a.m. If there is a chop bar, there are bound to be patrons as the doors open. Since many of the breakfasters are mobile, and cars make the man, hooting fills the air. Schoolchildren start out for school at 7:00 a.m. Since the government offices open at 7:30 a.m., short-cut traffic to the ministries comes through at about 7:00. Most office hours start at 7:30 or 8:00 a.m., and market

stalls open at seven. Advanced classes begin at 8:30. There is much to be done before departing for office or market. Housewives have a more flexible schedule (as do street hawkers), yet even they are up by 6:00 a.m., carrying out the same household tasks as the others.

Early morning tasks include sweeping out rooms, making beds, straightening out rooms, drawing (and heating) water for bathing, bathing self and children, preparing tea and condiments for husband and children, washing clothes (a daily chore when there is an infant in the family) -- all before 7:30! Certain tasks, such as washing and ironing clothes, may be put off till later in the morning if one's schedule is flexible. For example, traders who do not sell in a stall in the market, can pick their hours and their location. If one's compound is on a major thoroughfare or well-travelled road, a table can easily be set up right out front. In which case, a child or neighbor can be left to keep an eye on the business while the seller takes care of household duties; or, meal preparation can be done on the spot. Flexible hours also accomodate breaks in the day, for example to go marketing, cook, nap and then go back to work. Many hawkers time their selling to specific hours during the day -- e.g. in the early morning, porridge, doughnut and rice sellers are situated for the breakfast traffic. Conversely in the early evening, bread sellers come out and sit behind a kerosene lamp, catering to the tea-and-bread repast before bed-time. Those who sell prepared foods early in the day must spend the previous afternoon and/or evening assembling ingredients.

Most do not take breakfast en famille. After sending off other family members, the non-office-working women, some of the market women, and others, go to the market to buy perishables for cooking. Or, they

may go midday or late afternoon; it depends upon place of business and whether they go themselves or send someone. Most agree that they prefer to do their own marketing -- either because they are afraid that another will get bad produce or pay a bad price. In general, the individual who does the cooking does the shopping; there are exceptions, for example when there is a hired housemaid or a dependent sibling (not young). In the case of the former, she probably has a hand in the cooking, and also has been trained by the mistress of the house. And in the case of the latter, it is a reciprocation of services, expected as a matter of course. The frequency of marketing is a function of the frequency of cooking, as well as the absence of refrigerators in most households. Those who cook daily market daily. Even those who do own refrigerators tend to market frequently -- partially out of habit and also because the refrigerator is used mainly to keep a stock of cold liquids.

When women go to the market, they have their purchases in mind. Should they run into friends, they go through the rituals of greeting and exchanging gossip. But most are pressed for time. The gossiping and socializing characteristic of non-urban (and periodic) markets, is minimal in Accra. The market-place is a business arena; the women selling are businesswomen and friendship is not a primary feature of transactions. Just as women maintain that they do not patronize one woman regularly, so they insist that friendships do not necessarily eventuate in a trading relationship.[1] Socializing is prevalent mainly among the traders themselves, but it is secondary to actual business transactions. Women do not hang around the market; their domestic duties, at least, are enough to keep them occupied during the daylight

hours. If anyone hangs around the market, it is the man at large.[2] In general, women maintain that they do not socialize during off-business time, or cultivate friendships, because they simply do not have the time to spare. Marketing is serious business.

Frequency of meal preparation seems to be associated with the presence of an adult male. If a woman does not have a husband, she will cook every two or three days; if she is polygynously married, she will cook on the days that he comes to stay with her (or that she stays with him). Ellen, unmarried though affianced and living on her own, felt this to be an obstacle to her freedom -- "If you get married, you are not going to be free, because of so many things. Like as now, cooking is not compulsory. I can buy something and eat. But as soon as you get married you should cook for your husband and children everyday. If you are not going to eat, your husband will eat." Enough stew or soup can be prepared to provide meals for off-days; even without refrigeration, if periodically heated, it staves off rot. And then there are all manner of soups, stews, starches and snacks sold on the street.

Those who work at an office-type job (including students) are away from the house the entire day. They have a lunch break of one-and-a-half to two hours, which may be spent at a "chop bar" (native restaurant) or at the place of work after buying street food. If there are household responsibilities (mainly in the case of married women, living with a spouse) they must carry these out upon returning in the evening. In many families, the main meal is taken at noon; in this case, a second heavy meal is not necessarily eaten in the evening, and food is either prepared for the midday meal on the morrow, or not prepared at all.

When an adult woman is a sibling or child in a household, she often takes over the responsibility for meal preparation only on her off-days -- Saturday afternoons and Sundays for office-workers.

Market women stay at their stall the entire day. While there, they can do their own marketing and cooking, as well as catch a nap in the afternoon when business is slow. Street sellers have the option of breaking midday or whenever business is non-existent, leaving their spot to market, cook, nap, or whatever. Housewives who do no trading on the side have more time at their disposal. This means that they are able to take care of meals and catch up on sleep at home; there is also more time to do personal and/or family ironing, rather than sending it out.

The work-day is long, from early morning house duties till return from work at dusk or thereabouts. And then there is a new set of chores: putting together a meal, cleaning up, bathing children, putting them to bed. Such a schedule leaves little time for extra-curricular activities, unless they carry a strong commitment, such as services or organizations at the church. By 9:30 p.m., most residents are inside, behind locked shutters. A woman does not go out, "not regularly the way the man goes out, but sometimes. . . No time. As for the man, if he comes home from business and there are meals, and they take their bath, they have nothing to do again. Then they go to the town. But as a woman, she has to bathe her children." Such a schedule also places major importance on the domestic sector.

The length of the day and responsibilities to be attended are due in part to the amount of time it takes to carry out the most basic of tasks. To bathe, and everyone does twice daily, water must first be

drawn. Most compounds have a water pipe; residents of those that do not must walk to the public tap, not always conveniently located. If it is chilly, the water is heated on the little coal pot and the bath, more like a cross between sponge-bath and a shower, can proceed. This, however, depends upon whether anyone else is using the shower room. Children bathe out of the bucket next to the gutter out front, but adults must wait their turn. Marketing takes time: the walk to the market and at times to more than one if a specialty like fresh fish is on the menu, haggling for every item, and then walking home. If the Adabraka woman patronizes Salaga or Makola Market, both in the center of town, she usually takes the "tro-tro," and that means a wait and an uncomfortable ride. I have put my emphasis on cooking, and it provides a good example of the time and tedium involved in a common duty.

Light soup, a broth with meat and vegetables, is regular fare. From start to finish, when it is time to pound fufu, it takes about two hours. First, pepper and eggplant is parboiled. The fresh red pepper, once soft, is ground to a pulp -- either in a ridged bowl with a pestel or on a grinding stone. Meat (or chicken or fish) is cleaned, shallots chopped and the two put to fire. Tomatoes and pepper are added, the tomatoes whole. The eggplant is cleaned and ground up. If smoked fish is to be added, it is done now. Tomatoes are removed. (Some women, in removing whole vegetables from the boiling soup, dip their fingers in cold water and pick the vegetables out, without using a spoon.) Tomatoes are peeled, ground, and put back in. Then, the starch must be prepared; fufu takes about ten minutes to pound, banku (a starch, made from fermented corn) must be continuously stirred and as it gets thicker and

stickier, poles hook into the pot to hold it down with one's feet. Some women take minimal short-cuts, such as buying banku or kenkey on the street to eat with the soup; others, particularly those with a helper, will go so far as to make their own ground-nut paste as the base for stew.

Sunday afternoon is the one time during the week that there is less pressure. But then there are children around to supervise and house chores to take care of that week-day schedules don't permit. All of my informants are church-goers, some more regularly than others. This takes up some portion of the day; some Fundamentalists and Catholics also have daily services to attend. And even religion does not pre-empt conjugal responsibilities: one of my informants complained bitterly one Sunday morning that she could not go to church, because her husband insisted on palm nut soup for lunch; she had to stay at home to cook.

This superficial account gives some idea of how the day is parcelled out, in terms of things to be done, and some of the priorities. Let us now look at the woman's traditional roles in the context of the urban compound.

The Wife

The immediate environment, be it traditional family house, family house with tenants, or mixed compound, has a direct influence on shaping the woman's (individual's) attitudes and relationships. In the sample population of women, room apportionment in compounds is as follows:

Table 14

Room Apportionment Among Sampled Women
and Their Room-Mates

People in Room		Number of Rooms 1	1 1/2	2	3	4	5	6		
Women	Older	12	2	1	2	2	-	1	20	61
	Younger	15	5	9	5	4	-	3	41	
Men		4	-	9	2	2	-	-	17	
Children		19	4	16	12	6	-	4	61	
TOTAL		50	11	35	21	14	-	8	139	

In terms of averages: there are 3.4 people in single-room arrangements 3.3 in 1 1/2 rooms, 2.4 in 2 rooms, 2.3 in 3 rooms, 1.7 in 4 rooms, and 1.6 in 6-room arrangements. (See Figures 1-5.) There were no informants living in 5-room arrangements, because there were no 5-room arrangements. As overcrowding goes, the conditions in general are not hideous. The greater the number of rooms a household can afford, the smaller the number of people sharing each room.

One must be circumspect in drawing conclusions from such a small sample. It is, however, interesting to note the ratio of adult women to adult men -- 78 percent to 22 percent. And this is particularly outstanding in the one-room set-ups, which contain the highest percentage of children, of women, and the lowest percentage of men. In this situation, it is clearly not that the women have not yet married, given the number of children. We might keep this in mind for later discussion of the male-female system of relationships insofar as it is reflected in living arrangements.

Caldwell notes that

> many more Ghanaians now live in large town houses containing a considerable number of rooms. In one sense, this has represented a surprisingly successful attempt to carry a village way of life to the town. Living in a town like Accra, with a population over a third of a million, has in many cases not meant leaving the communal life of the village for residence in small lonely quarters in the town. This is especially true of richer families with interests in cocoa or other lucrative fields rather than of poorer immigrants from further afield. (1967:67)

The large town houses have indeed perpetuated the appearance of communal life. I would disagree, from my sample at least, that entire families occupy such houses. The reasons for migration to Accra, and particular houses in Adabraka, have already been discussed in the preceding chapter. What has been noted is that few women make the total break with familiarity and the refuge of kin. Caldwell's point certainly holds true, insofar as individual rooms or sections of houses are occupied by families. But more often than not, other sections are not. The different nature of Caldwell's discipline, perspective and methodology from mine accounts for the differences in our results. A demographer is interested in population trends; I am interested in the grass-roots reality that comes from closer scrutiny. While his work shows few extremes, which become lost in the statistical survey, mine suffers a certain amount of bias, since the sample is less random, is far smaller and examined at close range. There are gains and losses on both sides; to my mind, anthropology has the advantage.

To reiterate an earlier-made point: urbanness is, to a large degree, a function of one's exposure to diverse types of people and situations, and learning how to cope with each. For the average newcomer,

the compound situation could be a start. It is here that she must first orient herself to the city. Often she has family to help ease the transition, and she may choose to stay within that unit to avoid newness and strangeness. Or she may have little choice: domestic duties may be prohibitive to much outside activity, other than financial pursuit.

The urban nuclear family-type to all appearances is replacing the extended family. Entire families do not necessarily migrate to the city as a unit; thus, a young lady may come with her husband. The cost of living in Accra is dear, rooms are hard to find, and the couple (or whatever the unit) must often settle for far less, in terms of space and amenities, than they are accustomed to in the hometown. After a few years of marriage, and a heightened sense of his own mobility, the man may decide he "doesn't want to marry me anymore." His wife remains in the rented chamber and hall, with the one or two children she has brought forth. Her younger sister, having finished a commercial course in the hometown area, cannot find work there; so, knowing that she can rely upon her older sister for room if not board, she comes to the city to seek employment. She begins to work, and she contributes her share to the on-going household. A year or two passes and the mother of the two women decides to join her daughters. Her husband has passed away and she can engage in cloth selling as easily in Accra as in Obo. If she is fortunate, there is another room available in the same compound, in which case one of the young women will move her belongings, the mother staying with the other. The household continues to operate as before. The separate room is for sleeping and storing belongings. The three women cook and eat together, sharing responsibilities as of old.

There are many variations on this theme. The lesson to be learned from all of them is that the essence of the extended family continues. In the above-mentioned case, the cyclical pattern is particularly evident. The same is true for most first-generation migrants, or, as long as there continue to be kin in the rural area. For no matter how distant geographically, lineally, temporally, the tie and the obligations remain.

Despite this, the conjugal pair as the domestic unit is the ideal.

> The important feature of the urban household is not so much its size as its composition. The rural household is usually composed of persons who are held together by bonds of consanguinity. The relationship between the members is based on descent. In the urban situation there is a greater emphasis on the husband-wife relationship. (Tetteh 1967: 214)

Given the choice, albeit hypothetical, of living neolocally with husband and children, or patri-matrilocally, only one of my informants opted for the latter.

> I prefer to live in the family house. If I'm living here, I'll get somebody to buy me something, or fetch me water. [There is less work to do here.] For instance, I'm washing, the baby is crying. If somebody is here, I will take the baby and give it to him. Then I can continue to wash. But there, nobody is there. You will stop washing and take care of her. After that, you will come and continue your washing.

Lydia does live in her mother's brother's house with her four children; when she is neither pregnant nor nursing an infant, she goes to her husband's place. She alternates visits with his other wife, cooking and cleaning for him when she does. She shares a room with her mother and her own children. Her acceptance of this state of affairs is unusual.

Lydia grew up in this house. The only time she has been away from it was when she went to school in Takoradi and lived with an aunt. She has been socialized into the family house style of life. But, so were

many of my other informants. Sixteen women, living with their own or their husband's kin (either in a family house or rented quarters) were quick to denounce the situation in favor of separate housing. Seven of them are currently married and five of these do not live in their husband's houses. "I want to live with my husband. My family don'e like me stay here; because I am married, I want to go." (Martha) When she has a "white gown" (church) wedding, then, Martha says, she will go to live with her husband. Like others, she does not wish to remain in the family house because she is a married woman. "If with husband and child, it's good, it's better. To help train the child to become a good girl or a good boy. So many children living here, and different characters." (Faustina) There is no reason to believe, for either of these two women, that their circumstances will change. They will not initiate any movement, and at least this way it is less of a financial drain on the husband. It is to the man's advantage, since he is even freer to move about (although having a wife in tow does not hamper him in any case), and it is ultimately to the woman's advantage as well -- she has her family.

Midway between the pro's and the con's are those three who are unsure. "I can't choose, really, because when I'm with mum I feel at home and when I'm with my husband I feel at home." These are the words of Auntie Viv, the woman who has made such a success of her various business undertakings. Her work is based in Accra, her husband's is based in Ho. At age forty-two, she is again living with her mother and sisters and their children, seeing her spouse only on week-ends. The other two ambivalent ones -- Akwele and Faith -- also live with kin, but they are of the younger generation. And Akwele insists that, although

it is her preference to live with her husband and he acquiesces, they have not been properly married by custom, so she refuses.

Needless to say, all of those living with their husbands -- twelve in number -- favor their arrangement. Their view is supported by Vivian and Ellen who live on their own, as well as Fatima, who after being widowed did not move back with her family. As Regina, who lives off with husband and children says,

> Because when you are there like that, I will do something I like. But in our house, plenty people stay there. My aunt's sisters, my aunt's daughters, plenty. And my cousins all in the house. Like that. Everytime I want to do something, I have to tell them; some will go there . . . I don't like.

There is the issue of having to report back to someone else, or ask permission, even if it is just a formality -- Joanna: "I love my mother, but can't live with her"; there is also the issue of difficulties arising out of conflicts of interests, rampant in family houses; and then there is the question of custom -- Benedicta: "We Akan people can't do that. Can't marry and stay with our mother."

As far as daily private household chores are concerned, there is very little difference between the two housing arrangements. This is because in both cases, the whole house is composed of discrete housing units, generally defined by each room. This in turn follows some principle of relationship among the co-residing individuals. For example, in a family house, one room might house mother, daughter(s), grandchild(ren). Another room might house mother's sister, mother's sister's daughter and the latter's children. And so on Individual rooms in either case are cleaned by the individuals living in them. Marketing, cooking and eating follows these same lines.

It is the women who are locked into these tasks, and these tasks hold primacy over any other activity. The parcelling out of specific household work is closely tied in to the relationship of seniority, as well as reciprocation for a service rendered. For example, the senior woman (or the woman whose room/house it is, alone or with a spouse) has ultimate responsibility for the housekeeping. As children come of age, often as young as eight, they are given small chores, such as the sweeping. As they grow, they graduate to different tasks, the younger ones taking over in their stead. Similarly, when a younger family member lives in or partakes of the pot on a regular basis, he/she reciprocates by helping out in the house. There is no sexual division of labor in general housekeeping chores, such as sweeping, washing clothes, washing the floor; cooking, however, is done by women only.

In the traditional extended family, there was always a young female member to help out; she would be useful especially in preparation of meals. In the city, family periodically show up, but in general, if a maid-servant is not hired, the burden falls upon the adult woman occupant. Florence is a full-time housewife. She explained that this means she does everything in the house -- alone. They cannot hire anyone, so she does her own cooking, washing, ironing. If they had a housemaid, they would have to pay her; but they cannot afford to pay someone, so Florence does it herself.

None of the stated reasons favoring nuclear family living includes the quality of the husband/wife relationship. Widespread, however, is the Western-ideal of monogamy and marriage by registry -- both of which are functionally related to the nuclear living arrangement.

Marriage by registry assures the woman of Western-style respectability, for it means that she may call herself "Mrs." Otherwise, women continue to use their fathers' name. Analogously, men who feel that outer appearance is advantageous, for example, to career advancement, will marry in line with British law. Men and women alike express both positive and negative feelings about such unions. Fear of the monogamously-wed wife has been remarked upon by researchers in the past. Thise goes back to the time when the British first conducted an enquiry in 1905 about the Marriage Ordinance of 1884. In fact, those fears expressed by the male populace at that time are still prevalent.

It seems that in 1905, there were only 176 couples married by Ordinance, in a colony of 17,000 Christian adults. There were primarily three objections: (1) expense -- the family of the bride expects the customary prestations, but the Ordinance brought requests for a larger amount, since it carried greater importance; moreover, the groom had to support other expenses, such as entertaining the bridal party; (2) the woman's behavior -- "the wife is apt to become 'wild,' that she 'behaves proudly against her husband,' and 'is not so submissive as a woman married by native law.' It is not surprising that the wife becomes more self-assertive, as her position improves." (SNA Case No. 480/1905; ADM 11/1457); (3) difficulty in obtaining a divorce -- the chief complaint; and (4) the law of succession -- native law opines that the family of the deceased man or woman should be allowed at least 1/3 of the private property. The Ordinance on the other hand, rules that should the man or woman die intestate, and if there are children, the whole of the private property goes to the wife and children.

There are rules and regulations, written down in law books, of which the marriage partners may or may not be aware. Monogamy, the monogamous ideal, marriage by registry all in no way constrain the man. The society in essence continues to be polygynous. "Monogamy tends to have functionally associated with it customs such as concubinage, mistress relations, and specific types of prostitution." (Omari 1960:202) Whether or not a man marries by Ordinance is not relevant to his conduct in extra-marital affairs and/or further native marriages. He may marry only one woman by Ordinance; however, he may marry any number of women by native law, custom permitting. His father maintained wives and/or girlfriends, and so does he, the same. This cross-cuts all levels of urban society. Everyone knows that the wife stays at home, providing children and stability, whereas the girlfriend accompanies him to his social engagements, providing companionship.

Indeed, the ideals of monogamy and the nuclear family have, in conjunction with the onslaught of Europeans and singles come to the city, been responsible for the ethos of "jollying"; this has in turn given the double standard a modern twist and exacerbated the married woman's isolation. Has there been a change in the attitudes and practices of today's urban women? Let us consider two issues: attitudes towards polygyny and its functional equivalent of befriending; and attitudes towards different forms of marriage.

When asking an individual her opinion about something, it is worthwhile taking into account her own background. For often, the tenor of her response is influenced by her own experience. Similarly, her experiences may be influenced by her exposure to the experiences of others.

Among the sample of informants interviewed, the vast majority (31) have monogamously-wed parents. Twenty-seven of the women are married; and one-third of them have married polygynously, either currently or some time in the past. Of the nine, only one (Akosua) comes from a polygynous background. Only two (so married in the past) do not like having co-wives, and Akosua is one: she, because of money problems, which in fact she suffered. "It worries her," she says, "because maybe she'll suffer with the man at first; they're poor but slowly make something, have a child and look after him, and then he goes and takes another wife who shares in the money and none of the suffering," (translated from Twi). Furthermore, Akosua's in-laws did not like the fact that she was of a different ethnic group, so they brought in a second wife. She came and left; a second came and left; a third came and left. They all left, because Akosua, the senior wife, was not willing to converse with them. She worked hard for her husband, and all of them lived in the same house; this is unusual. Auntie Rose, who also had a co-wife and lived in the same house with her, explains it away as a function of her husband being from Sierra Leone.

The other antagnoist toward polygyny, who had been so married, is Ekua; her fear is of being thrown out. Both women are Akan. Of the balance, who are acquiescent, only two are Muslim (Adisa and Fatima); and while Adisa is a Buzanga and born Muslim, Fatima is a Ga, who converted when marrying. The others are Ga and Akan.

Of the balance of the married women who are not married polygynously, five come from plural marriages, And four of them are explicit in their dislike for the practice, while the fifth says she does not care. Aggie's

major complaint relates to the expense of adding children through additional marriages, when you cannot even properly care for those already in the family. When I asked if her father is a rich man, she replied in the negative. "It is the mothers who take care of them, not my father . . . It's expensive." The others feel similarly, or worry about disharmony.

Those from monogamous marriages unanimously oppose polygyny, some in stronger words than others. Only one favors it, out of regard for the husband -- it is good for him -- and two are accepting conditionally (money and harmony). Hope split her vote, and her response is symbolic of the bind of most of those voicing disfavor: "Ghanaian men, that's the way they are. Whether you like it or not, they can marry. If you say you won't like him to marry another . . ." (translated from Ewe). He has no other wives and if he married another, she would not like it, but says that she can do nothing about it. "It's good to marry more than one; Ghanaian men, that's how they are. Whether or not it troubles the wife. But it will not trouble me."

Others, like Hope, who do not care and are children of both plural and monogamous unions, qualify their responses similarly; some add that as long as the man takes care of her, what does she care? This compliance in word is out-distanced by the explicit disavowal which Faith exemplifies. Her father has four wives, her husband has married only her: "Some rivals [sic] good, some too are not. Even my husband doesn't want, because says spend too much money. It can be good -- she can converse with you and even you can work like sisters . . ." but others are too quarrelsome.

Therefore, of the married women, there appears to be mainly clear

antipathy or ambivalence toward polygynous marriage. Most have probably never thought of their feelings about this before, let alone be asked of their sentiments. This, in fact, was my distinct impression on more than one occasion. Any one woman, like Hope, might begin her response on a positive note, and end up expressing the exact opposite. Expressed fears and dislikes, and the few likes, are tied to concrete realities. Even for those two who had been married polygynously and disclaimed the experience; for Ekua's husband in fact went off to England, took another (European) wife, and divorced his wife back home. And Akosua's tale has already been told. It certainly is not to one's advantage to get worked up over an issue that she not only has no control over, but that she may then in fact suffer doubly from. And it goes back to Sartre's negatité -- one does not consider that which is not conceptualized.

Of the twelve unmarried women, only two come from plural marriages; and neither of them favor the practice. Amawkaw, highly educated and already a "been-to" at the age of twenty-one, finds it upsetting that her father has so many wives (five Ghanaian, one European -- he is living in England), although it does not upset her mother. "When you don't stay with your father, you really feel it." Her belief is that if he had not married more than one woman, she would have lived with him. All of the other single women, with the exception of Dora, are aligned with Amawkaw. Dora says it is good "so we will all stay together and be happy."

In general, for married and unmarried alike, the major reasons given by the opponents of polygyny are financial, fear of disharmony and jealousy. Its proponents, or those who are simply accepting, cite possibilities of harmony, more help in the house and out of respect to the man.

Ruby, in voicing her displeasure, said that having a co-wife would worry her, but that her husband "jollies" anyway.

This brings up the issue of girlfriends, who, in many cases, have supplanted the secondary wives. Ten married women say that, if they knew and/or those who do know of their husbands' extra-marital activity, it annoys or worries them. On the other hand, thirteen maintain that they do not care. Of the single women, five are antagonistic, six do not care.

It is interesting that twenty-two of the respondents gave an equivalent reaction to their husbands' (or future husbands) taking a second wife and having a girlfriend. And in many of the explanations, their reasoning was the same. For example, Lydia who does have a co-wife, does not mind because she never has to come into contact with her; by the same token, she does not care if her husband has a girlfriend, as long as she need not deal with her. One of my more articulate informants, Ellen, who is affianced but living on her own, put it this way:

> If the other woman will give you the due respect; if he'll go and take another woman and hide it, then it's alright. It won't be anything. But anybody who will bring it to here, and say 'This is my girlfriend' -- some do that . . . And if you think of how you've been serving the man and somebody too is paying outside -- yes, it's very painful. Here they do it. Today is the holidays [opening of Parliament]; go and see the hotels. Men are drinking with the young girls while their wives stay at home.

This brings up the second major reason or condition given as explanation. Many women worry financially about their husbands' taking another wife and then stinting on them (the first) or their children; similarly, they say that as long as their spouse provides them with what they want, what do they care? A point implied earlier and to be developed

as I go along is the tremendous dependence of women on men. Jealousy of other women vis-a-vis one's own man is rarely on the level of affect; rather, it is the fear of being cheated out of material things. Hope maintains that she does not care if her husband runs around -- as long as he gives her what she "likes" (i.e. needs). Her first husband ran around and did not properly provide for her financially, so at the age of twenty, after two years of marriage, she left him.

Finally, there is the question of male privilege; men will always run around, so, given the foregoing conditions and as long as he is her husband, there is nothing to be done -- "he must have his fun." Only four of the women know for sure that their husbands are "womanizers"; they seem almost indifferent, since they cannot do anything about it. Indeed, when Ruby was queried about her feelings towards having co-wives, she said that it would worry her, but that he is "jollying" anyway, and she cannot do anything about it.

On the reverse side of the coin, however, is the question of female carousing or taking a friend. Every single woman responded in the negative: because it is the male right only ("men have authority" "God made it so" "women cannot marry two") or because it is improper for married women ("people think bad things," i.e. the eyes of society, or for the sake of one's husband, his jealousy or the need to look after him). In either case, it comes back to women operating with men as their reference group, either directly (e.g. spouse) or indirectly (female gossip, giving her a bad reputation). It is of course possible that some of these women do carry on affairs on the side; but, in general, it is still quite deviant. The few times such trysts came to light while I was in Ghana, it

created a stir. And in any case, the women are expressing the norm, no different now than in times past.

Turning from attitudes towards extra-marital and secondary marital coupling, I shall go on to perceptions of differences among forms of marriage. Archival material presents the majority male view. It was written by men of middle-class background, not infrequently evangelical in outlook. (Evans-Pritchard 1965) Anthropologists who followed in time often followed in orientation, putting the stamp of science on the data extracted from the earlier accounts and combined with their own observations. It is hard to say what the response of the wives and daughters of those early respondents would have been; it is not out of order to speculate, given more current responses.

Some forty-five years after the British inquiry, Crabtree (1950) found that among educated Ghanaians in the south, men in government, missions or commercial firms married according to native custom; they might also have a church or civil ceremony.

> In a sample of 113 educated men and 37 educated women, 23 men and two women had been married by native custom only; 11 men and three women had the marriage blessed in church; 69 men and 29 women had been married in church, 10 men and three women by a magistrate. Church marriage is to a large extent an assertion of social status. (Mair 1969:149)

The 1960 Post Enumeration Survey has more current figures: customary marriage continues to be the basic and normal method of marrying. Those who choose to marry by Ordinance or church do so after carrying out the traditional rites. Thus, 86 percent of persons ever married had done so under customary law only. Next in popularity was Muslim marriage, contracted by 5 percent of the sample population; it is more prevalent in

Ashanti and Brong-Ahafo than elsewhere. Third is the combination of customary marriage, church and Ordinance marriage -- 2.3 percent and 1.2 percent of sample males and females, respectively. "This type of marriage is associated with urban areas and a high socio-economic status. Accordingly, the proportions are highest in the large urban centres." (Tetteh 1967:207) Marriage by native law, followed by a church union carries no greater legal weight than customary marriage alone and is particularly common in areas where the Presbyterian Church is strong. Marriage by customary and Ordinance law is contracted mainly in large towns, involving 1 percent of all marriages. And finally, Common Law Marriage, although not legally valid, is an important form -- with 4 percent of the sample males and 5.6 of the sample females so attached.

> The proportions for the Accra City Council area were at 2.1 per cent males and 4.4 per cent females, that is, below the national average. One may conclude that these unions are not necessarily the result of urbanization. The explanation is to be sought in the indigenous social arrangements of the various ethnic groups . . . the high rate of conjugal separation may be a factor in some of these unions. When a woman has contracted more than one marriage a subsequent husband does not feel obliged to perform the necessary customary rites to validate the marriage. The women do not insist on these payments for fear of losing the husbands on whom they depend for sexual satisfaction and economic support . . . As a woman gets on in years her bargaining position is weaker and she finds it harder to get a man. (Tetteh 1967:209 -- emphasis added by current writer)

With greater exposure to and experience of Westernization (even if only its superficial aspects) today's urban women might be expected to have a stronger opinion on the subject than their rural sisters. I found in my own queries that there is little sophistication on the subject. Many do not distinguish between marriage by registry, church or native law. Among my sample informants, only one woman was married by

Ordinance; she had also gone through the traditional Ga ceremony and the Anglican church rites as well. Only a few expressed interest in a Church wedding; but its status is clear in its nick-name "white gown ceremony." The fact that they do not marry in church indicates less their faithful attendance than their fiance's social or economic situation.[3] All of them had at least gone through the traditional engagement.

One could say that the power to decide between alternatives necessitates some prior notion or concept of alternatives. Despite the fact that more and more people are adding church or registry forms to the traditional rites, the numbers are still small, and the women I spoke with had very vague understanding of the distinction among the three. As Florence said, "I haven't studied this so . . . will think about it." This was particularly true as to how it would affect their freedom of movement. Fatima simply responded by saying she just "does by Muslim, not native or registry." To many it is "all the same": it signifies that you are a married woman, and that is all that is customarily necessary.

Marriage is the one contract that in no way legally involves anyone other than the immediate couple, plus a witness. Since ties to traditional family structures are still viable, the native marriage would be a matter of course. Why, then, go through another ceremony? For the status, for one thing. For protection, for another. "If marry church marriage, you cannot be free, because you are wedded. And if you marry by customary, you are free because you are not wedded. And if you are wedded, your husband cannot feel to marry another woman." (Bebbe, twenty-three and unmarried) "If you marry customary [and church] it's not very

hard, like registered. Because you will be afraid of the law." (Auntie Elizabeth, fifty-four and customarily married) Or, by registry, you may be more free:

> Some of the men fool the women. Will marry you and won't look after you a-tall. Can take him to court and they will ask him why . . . If you marry in the Church, the man will do something to you, and you can't say anything. You just sit quietly and you can't leave him too. (Dora, nineteen and unmarried)

The other side of the coin, albeit the minority opinion, sees customary marriage operating in the favor of the women. Joanna married by native law, although her husband was perfectly willing to go through Registry. She said no, because she says she did not know his mind:

> I don't know how you are, if you'll beat me . . . If a man is good, it doesn't matter; if a man is bad, you will suffer. By customary, you don't record it. If he dies, his family will come and collect all and drive you away. By registry, all goes to you. But difference is that with registry, you are less free. With customary, if man is bad, you are free to leave him. With registry, get involved with court and fees and so on.

Needless to say, inter-religious marriage is frequently in the coupling of Christians -- "it is all one God." This runs the gamut from Apostolic to Roman Catholic. Children are not raised according to the teachings of one sect rather than the other with the stringency of Western observers. Concerns of a traditional nature supercede the religious variations. Consequently, they do not observe the aphorism, "the family that prays together, stays together." A child might easily opt to follow a grandparent's religious affiliation rather than the parents'. Moreover, a church wedding is not requisite to marriage. It is dreamed about, insofar as it is associated with modernity and show; but more often than not, it remains a dream.

The religious question is sticky if a Muslim and a Christian are involved. Since Muslims get to know each other, or know of each other, they have a built-in mechanism for meeting future mates -- both religious and linguistic. Islam is different enough from Christianity to discourage active courtships across such boundaries. Given such a union, a choice would clearly have to be made, and invariably such a choice favors the Muslim, given the flexibility of Christian sectarian allegiance. (In Southern Ghana, the major followers of Islam are Hausa, or at least Hausa-speakers. And Hausa, as a culture and language, is accorded the highest respect, by even the most chauvinist of other Ghanaian ethnic groups.)

Not only is a woman not free to remain single, but she is faced traditionally with additional restraints. Just as the family sustains control over her freedom of movement, initiative, choice, etc., so does the ethnic group as well. Less directly, perhaps, but ethnocentrism persists. Ethnic solidarity (an indicator of urbanness) carries the bond of family and lineage one step further. Thus, as varied as the types of individuals one meets in the city may be, a woman is still discouraged from marrying outside her ethnic group. Even if other sentiments are mouthed, the practice certainly seem to follow tradition.[4] As one young modern woman said, "mostly our family wants us to marry customary." Preference in marriage partners is one of the best expressions of persisting loyalties. One might say that more than any other formally-established relationship, that of marriage is a telling sign in the easing of traditional custom and clannishness, or of increasing urbanness. This is so, because marriage has always minimally implied a

contract between the bethrothed couple and the two sets of parents. And, using the pidgin definition of "parents," anyone standing in a relationship of kinship (behaviorally defined) to the pair is involved. For this reason, inter-ethnic marriage has been frowned upon in general. How can you rely upon or trust those with whom you share no common history and tradition? The pragmatism of this sentiment is evident when a newly-wedded couple set up house in the hometown. When one of them is odd-man-out (in the spouse's town), it makes for a doubly-difficult adjustment to a new life-style, both for the in-coming stranger and the ensconced in-laws.

Time and again, observers have stated that with escape to the city, ethnic restraints are weakening. For one thing, it is neutral turf, which makes it that much easier for two strangers to come together; secondly, the whole extended family and greater lineal organization is not necessarily present. There is a push to learn English and nationalism is promoted in lieu of tribalism. Thus, ethnic stereotyping to the contrary, it is not surprising that informants have positive feelings about inter-ethnic marriage. One must, however, make the leap of faith from the idealized, mouthed platitudes, to the realized fait accompli. We will never know if a woman professing openness to marriage with anyone "if only he can look after me" but who has married her own countryman, would in fact be willing or able the create the circumstances for a different fate.

Actually, in interviews with thirty-nine women, drawn from the sample population, twenty-seven said that they would marry anyone; three made it conditional; and eight rejected the possibility altogether.

Three of the negatives reside in Ga family houses, and Helena lives in her brother's house. The ethnic break-down of the nays is four Ga, three Kwahu, and one Ashanti. Besides the problems with custody of children and seeing them, should a divorce occur, the women speak of a basic dislike of outsiders -- either xenophobic or based on experience. Joanna, a Kwahu, had married an Ashanti man, had a child by him, and he ran off to America. He reneged his responsibilities to her and the child, and she blamed it on his ethnicity -- "You see, they're no good." Finally, there is the simple desire to be among one's own -- at least if you have to live in a compound of strangers, you should share your room with a countryman.

For the sake of the record, it is interesting to check out the statistics for those in favor of intermarriage. Of twenty-one who are married and expressed a positive feeling, only eight in fact practise what they believe. Several of the women who maintain that should they fall in love with a man from a different group they would marry him, add that they would do so, despite family dissent. That there would be dissent is fairly certain. That they would willingly buck it is not. One way of circumlocuting the situation is for the partner of the less militant group to marry according to custom of the other. Needless to say, such is not always possible. Because the family, despite its physical absence in the city, is still closely tied and a necessary ally; the birth of offspring creates a mutually-reinforcing association, through the institution of fostering.

What is ultimately important is that the marriage is contracted, for marriage is still the normal adult state throughout Ghana. Women are

wise to their husbands' ways, but as long as the reciprocal nature of their relationship is upheld, they will not make trouble. Even if they disapprove of the mens' ways, it is not their place to take action. Voicing displeasure can be counter-productive.

Why marry? For one thing, it is an accepted custom, something that has always been and is not questioned. Beyond this, it is here suggested that the woman's status as an adult, even in the city, depends upon her tie to a male, with evidence of offspring. She may be a successful businesswoman, she may wield power in her voluntary association, and for these she is accorded all due respect. If, however, she is unattached, it is to her debit. She need not be co-resident with the man, or be actively supported by him (although rent and "chop money" -- money for food -- are sacrosanct). The mere fact of the man "making her a respectable woman" fulfills the minimum requirement.

A woman who is not accorded proper respect is a woman whom any man feels free to approach with unbecoming comments.

> As a woman, you must have somebody . . . If you say you are not going to marry, you are going around and having boyfriends and the rest. This man, he may not want to pay for the pregnancy, or anything like that. But if you are well-married, you will know that by all means, this man is your husband and the man too that this is his wife. He has to do everything for you. (Aba, twenty-six, unmarried with a child)

"Because if stay and don't have a husband, it's bad . . . When stay and don't have a husband, everybody can feel to talk with you . . . When he sees you don't have a husband, he can come to your place anytime." (Jeanette, thirty-nine and married)

The principal reasons given for marrying include that of custom

and respect -- it is not good not to have a husband -- child-bearing and support. The latter is often thrown in as an after-thought, but its extreme importance comes in when women speak in terms of reciprocal marital responsibilities and what they want in a husband. Many combine all three in their responses. As an yet unmarried girl put it this way: "A woman wants to bring forth, and you want to get a man who works so he can look after you . . . And you marry for respect. If you don't marry in Ghana here, people won't respect you . . ." (Georgina, nineteen, unmarried) It is also interesting that, male carousing notwithstanding, women do not want to remain single if widowed or divorced.

Why marry once?

> A woman married because (1) if she's sick, the man will send her to hospital because her parents are no more now. And again, if the man also is sick, she also will help him and send him to the hospital. (2) A man cannot go to a market and chop, so he must marry a woman to cook for him. (3) A man needs a woman to wash for him and the money that he would give to a washman goes for chop for them. (4) If a woman has no money, the man will give her money. And if they have children, the man will look after them and send them to school. (Twice married illiterate Akosua)

And why marry twice?

> Marriage here is not like European marrige. After marrying you, he will marry again and not mind you. So you too go and find another man . . . To marry is difficult: if she had work, she wouldn't marry. Having to wash clothes, clean the room. Even she doesn't have time to eat. She says that she has no money and no work. If she had money, she would have a store of her own and wouldn't have to marry. (Ibid.)

Similarly, Auntie Atta, widowed in her twenties, wants to marry again, because the man will look after her.

This brings us to the content of marital relationships, which is

sufficient explanation for the motives to marry in the first place. The character of this adult relationship, as stated by the women questioned, is generally financially-based. Both men and women are practical-minded. Six of the respondents -- all illiterate and two of them only in their twenties -- were married off by their families without knowing the individual involved. Others might just as well have been so matched: a man saw a woman selling in the market; he approached her elder sister and told her he wanted to marry her junior. Introductions were made and his family sent out the customary engagement payment to her family. Traditionally, affective content, if it existed, was incidental to the marriage. In current times, looking into marital relationships, things have not changed much.

What do women expect from their husbands? Material provisions, mainly. Household and chop money, money for basic needs of the children and their schooling, and "anything I want, he will give me." Lydia pinpoints her husband's obligations to her as his wife:

> He is responsible for everything you need: your eating, going out, coming, your clothing, everything. He is responsible for it. Monthly money, pocket money, money for the children. Pocket money for you. If you see something, maybe a scarf, you can't be going to him 'I want to buy a scarf, I want to buy sandals.' But if he is giving you pocket money, you will use some for it.

Clearly, the man's financial (and social) position and his wife's degree of sophistication have a lot to do with expectations.

> Only to assist you, he can do it. If he has the means. But if not, he might say, wait small. But some people are evil. Like looking after the children, clothing, helping with household expenses. They expect you to feed him three times a day and he just gives small and goes away. (Auntie Elizabeth, married)

Only four of my informants (Helena, Viv, Amawkaw, Bebbe) did not couch their desires in explicit economic terms: that he would look after her and be with her, as she would with him; that they would make demands on each other, smile, go out once a week; and "he provides for me, advises me, is a companion to me." All four are in their twenties, three of them informed about Western norms and values, and only one married.

On the other hand, the woman sees her wifely responsibilities in an equally-traditional and non-affective light: "to cook, wash, do everything for him." That is, her obligations are all domestic -- to be sure that there is order in his home life in terms of his own belongings, and the on-going nature of the household cycle. This includes bearing and raising his children.

> In the morning fetch water for his bath, prepare tea for him, clean his shoes; he will go to work and you will prepare food and he will come and eat; go again. In the evening he will come again, you will fetch water for his bath, prepare food for him again. (Lydia, married)

One woman can do as well as the next. For example, Faustina has a sister who gets along with no one in the family house. Auntie Akuye "squeezes her face" all of the time. It turns out that she is an unbalanced person. One afternoon, she kept wandering back and forth and in and out, crying. First it was because one of her nephews spilled her water for cooking, then something else on the same order of magnitude. When I asked about it, everyone just shrugged -- she cries all of the time. And yet, she is married, has four children and carries out all normal housewifely duties. Presumably this is that much more possible since she and her husband do not live together and she need carry out only the most basic

functions for him -- bearing his children and cooking for him. (In the family house, child-rearing is aided by sisters and cousins.) Companionship he can get elsewhere.

On a few occasions, I tried to inquire about husband/wife sex life. It was a sensitive question, as I discovered months into my work; it reflected upon another question I had been asking: how do you know (where did you meet) your husband? This was frequently met with either an embarrassed silence or giggling and no response. With a few of my informants, however, there was enough freedom and trust for an exchange. Several times, my interpreter was the vehicle for discussion. When I introduced the subject, it was generally out of the blue; for such information was never volunteered as a response to marital duties. Ekua said that her husband must sleep with her and she must sleep with him, because they are married. But it is only the man who initiates sex. At this point, my interpreter Ramatu said the same is true for her; the other responsive women agreed. "She says that she cannot feel to do anything until the man was touching her; but she cannot feel to tell the man, come and using [sic] me. Talking, talking then it starts." (Interpreter's translation) Ramatu, my interpreter, says that she would use a gimmick, so "the man will crazy, like go and bathe and then come and stand in front of him naked, or in bodice, and put on oil and powder, and then the man was crazy!" She felt that, as a woman, it is not her place to approach the man (even her husband) directly.

In general, the notion of companionship in the context of marriage was foreign to my informants. Respect for the other is an apt characterization of the relationship; and respect is tied to reciprocity. But it

is assymmetrical, given traditional attitudes of the male right. She is far more confined to the hearth and acknowledges his seniority (as he is a man) through deference to his will. She has her own life, but it is acted out according to the desires of others -- first her family, then her husband. She has no control over her spouse's comings and going (as he is a man). In many homes, use of the title "mr." is symbolic of the type of sentiment between them. As individuals, they are both detached from their roles; it does not take a special personality to perform as wife or husband; the players are interchangeable, but there must be players.

Few go out with their spouses, let alone on a regular basis. They might enjoy it, if they had the time; but for them, a good relationship is materially defined.

> Maybe you want something and he will refuse; maybe he is going out he will leave you in the house. Some of them do that. That is not good. But if you are having a husband, if you ask him anything, he will give it. If he haven't got, he will tell you, 'oh, wait, next time I will give you.' That is good. (Lydia, polygynously married)

This ties in closely with the discussion of "new" male/female relationships, in the next chapter. The similarities are startling and leave room for re-consideration of the practice of monogamy in the city for reasons of finance.

The Mother

A major element in the definition of "adult woman" and "adult man" is evidence of children. Procreation is best undertaken within the bounds of marriage, and it is also a good reason for marrying:

"You must marry to bring forth; and if you don't marry, people won't respect you. If you aren't married by twenty-four, they think it is because of bad behavior." So speaks twenty-two-year old Ellen, certainly one of the most Westernized of all of the women in this sample. And as observant of tradition as the next. Just as the state of marriage confers respect, so does bearing children; and bearing children when one is already married carries that much more respect. The concern with having children (1) "legitimately" and (2) maintaining access to them, even in cases of divorce, is one strike against inter-ethnic marriage. The fate of children in cases of divorce, when mother and father are of different ethnic groups is problematic. Three of my informants articulated the difficulties: Ellen, an Ashanti woman, literate in Twi, Ga and English, who lives alone, but looks forward to marriage with her boyfriend, says that she will not marry a non-Ashanti: "I don't want my children going to the other side. Maybe they will be living with their father, who is not Ashanti and who speaks a different language. And they will repeat that language. When they come to my mother, my mother can't speak with them." Auntie Rose, an illiterate Ga, who speaks only Ga, lives with her children in the family house, with all female family. She says, having married a Ga, that if she did not marry within her own ethnic group, "one day, if she leaves the child in the house, she goes to some place, maybe by the time she will come, the man will take the child away. And she will not see him." Lydia, also a Ga, literate in English and Fanti, lives with her children in the family house. She says

> I like to marry Ga. I don't like to marry Fanti or any other. As for me. I don't like that, because if you have children with a stranger, and you divorce with him, some of them take the children away. If the Ga man takes the children away, you will meet him. Maybe you are staying here, the man is staying at Jamestown. If you want to see your children, you can join a bus or taxi then you go there. If the one is a stranger and he is staying at for instance Nigeria, if you haven't got money to pay your transport, you can't go. That is why.

There is a basis in fact to the women's fears. In general, the child remains with the mother if still young. The older ones go with the parent of the same sex. In a matrilineal system, the children ultimately belong to the mother's clan. (Kaye 1962) Amongst Akans, the divorced woman either leaves weaned children with their father, or is provided with money to feed, clothe and maintain them -- the normal paternal obligations. (Manoukian 1950) Ewe children are exclusively the divorced mother's concern, until they reach the age of two or three. When old enough, they should go to their father, although a daughter may opt to remain with her mother. (Manoukian 1950) The Ga award full possession to the man if he has paid the bride price to his ex-wife's family, if not, they may claim the child. It is unclear what occurs when the bride price is refunded. (Field 1937)

Motherhood is accepted as a fact of life; preferably it will occur after the wedding and not before. From the foregoing, it is clear that, if not the definitive characteristic of the woman's role, childbearing is certainly an important part. (cf. Paulme 1963) It is also looked forward to with eagerness. This is borne out in the fecundity of women, as well as number of children desired.

Caldwell notes (1966) that the 1960 fertility rates were lower in

the larger towns. Most women throughout the country had five to nine children. For those with less than five children -- 33 percent of the whole live in urban areas, 23 percent live in the Southern rural areas, and 15 percent live in the rural areas in the North of the country.

In my sample, thirty women are mothers; this includes five not yet married. Eleven women have given birth to one child; all are within the eighteen-twenty-six age bracket, except one forty year old. She simply never conceived again. This same group of women, when queried about how many children they wish to bring forth (or, to have brought forth) responded as follows: one hopes for two, two for three and the rest for four.

Five have borne two children. Four of them are in their twenties, one is sixty-four. Three desire four, and two of them six. Hilda, sixty-four years old, and past child-bearing, is one of the latter -- "it is all up to God." Only Adawkaw has three children; at the age of twenty-seven, she says that as to how many she wants, "I can't answer, because God provides."

Six women have four children; only one of them -- Adisa -- is under thirty, one -- Auntie Rose -- is in her forties. None is menopausal; all, however, are satisfied with that number of children. Another four women, in their thirties, have given birth to five children. One hopes for five only, one for six, one for seven and the fourth -- "all if God gives."

Two have borne six; one is forty-two, the other fifty-four and both are satisfied with their number of offspring. And Emma, who bore ten had wanted only six -- "but God didn't allow it."

Finally, there are those as yet childless; all are young -- seven in their twenties, and the eighth nineteen -- and all look forward to becoming mothers. One hopes for two, two for three and five for four.

Out of these thirty-eight respondents, only two (Dora and Viv, both single) want less than three children. Offspring carry great value; for, in general, the greater number born, the more contributions to parents in the latters' old age. This is not proportionate to increased size, but rather, there is a markedly lower number of children contributing where there are only one to four of them.

> It is interesting to note that, even in Ghanaian society, where females enjoy a great deal of independence [sic] and often regard themselves as breadwinners in much the same way as males do [sic], 72 percent of all respondents, who received assistance from children, received most from sons. Only 17 percent received most from daughters, and in 11 percent of cases the two sources were of roughly equal importance. In the extreme cases, 37 percent received assistance entirely or almost entirely from sons and 5 percent entirely or almost entirely from daughters. Those receiving assistance almost entirely from daughters almost approximate to the number of families where one could expect daughters to be the sole survivors, and those receiving most from daughters to families where the great majority of survivors would be daughters. (Caldwell 1966:18)

In the urban areas, perhaps because of greater possibilities of gainful employment, 23 percent are aided by daughters, as opposed to 15 percent in rural areas. (Caldwell 1966)

At the same time, once four have been born and the mother still has several good child-bearing years left, further pregnancies come to be looked upon both positively and with some ambivalence. The stress is on ambivalence. To ask a woman how many children she wants can be elicited, though with difficulty. To ask whether she would prefer not to have children or why she submits (if she even sees it in this light is

improbably), has no meaning in her universe. She has little control over her own body, from a social, psychological or physiological perspective. *It is her role to reproduce. Joanna, twenty-three years of* age and pregnant with her third child, had only recently discovered her condition. It was something of an inconvenience: she, her husband, their two children and a cousin (an unannounced arrival from the hometown) occupied one room. Joanna said that to conceive is hard, for she cannot eat and "grows lean." This is due to the baby "taking all of my blood"; in fact, she refers to her pregnancy as her "sickness."

Prior to impregnation, and to prevent it, there is the age-old alternative of "not going to the man." Only Gloria, an Ewe,[5] had more than a vague notion of traditional medicines for contraception. And her account is slightly confused, in part because contraception is traditionally scorned. "Sell leaves from the trees . . . If use, can prevent. I don't know what it is. If you have no children and want, take. If you don't want, do the same thing." Many will advise that after a baby's birth, the woman should wait one year, "so the vagina will dry up"; for a stronger remedy, wait two years. Whether one waits or not, nursing is still held to ward off menstration and thus the possibility of conception.

In very recent years, Planned Parenthood and the larger organization *Family Planning have established offices in Accra and begun propa*gandizing. Any woman who reads English, as well as some of her nonliterate sisters, knows the phrase Family Planning and recognizes the triangular symbol. Thus, in my queries about the possibilities of contraception, and in pursuing levels of awareness or practice along these

lines, a number of women mentioned Family Planning. Only one of them, however, had ever visited the clinic. For most who know of it, the phrase has no referent in reality. For example, Regina is twenty-eight, has three children and wants only one more. What does she use to prevent more? "We have family Planning. [So you use it?] No, I can't use it, but will go. They came here and talked about it."

In his discussion of population control among the urban elite, Caldwell notes two themes.

> One is the increasing pressures resulting from high fertility in a situation where nearly all children survive to demand extended education, high standards of dress, opportunities for entering high status occupations, and so on. The other is resistance to innovations and particularly such radical innovations as the use of modern contraceptives. (1968:168)

More than two-thirds in his elite sample favor establishment of clinics, and two-thirds expect to use them. "These statistics have to be placed against the equally attested facts, that love of children and pride in large families are deeply entrenched characteristics of African society." (Caldwell 1968:169)

Unfortunately, there is no grass roots campaigning, and traditional attitudes hang on. Newspaper advertisements promote Family Planning (see below); periodically, columnists do a piece on the pros or cons of contraception. Some have actually listed the different methods and devices, and respective costs. Many of those women who oppose contraception have received their quasi-education on the subject through the news media or the posters put out by the Family Planning Association. Neither plays to their sentiments, hence the women go no further. The campaign of the Association, in particular, is highly intellectual; at the Trade

Nancy Ofori and Family Planning/The Problem:

"I just don't want any more children!"

The Issue:

Mrs. Ofori has had five children and she feels this is quite enough.

She would now like to enrich her life a little. Perhaps by taking more interest in her church groups or helping in community work.

Her problem is that she is still young enough to conceive so how can she enjoy her marriage to the full with her constant fear of an unwanted pregnancy?

The Answer:

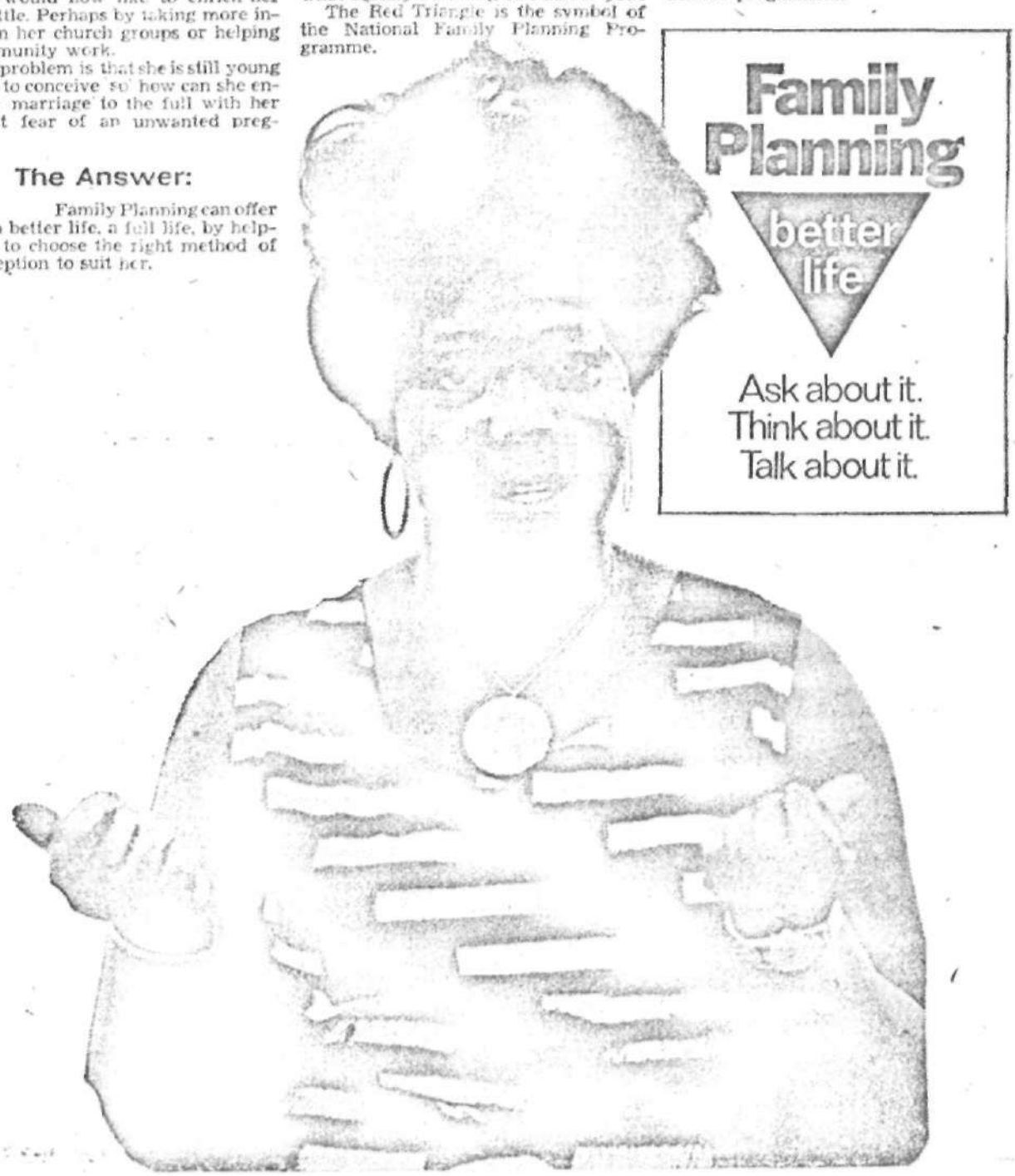
Family Planning can offer Nancy a better life, a full life, by helping her to choose the right method of contraception to suit her.

There are different Contraceptives to suit different people.

If you, like Mrs. Ofosi, feel that you have completed your family, why not seek out the Red Triangle and find out what Family Planning can do for you?

The Red Triangle is the symbol of the National Family Planning Programme.

It is outside all Family Planning Clinics, Government Hospitals and Health Centres which offer Family Planning Services and Information on Family Planning and how to avoid unwanted pregnancies.



(from The Daily Graphic, July 5, 1971)

Fair in February, 1971, they had a booth. People came from all over to see the exhibits and it was a perfect opportunity for the Association to win over prospective users. But the pamphlets and posters, for example, spoke of the need for "protein" in children's diets, and how with a big family and little money, such needs are not met. This meant nothing to the majority of the booth's visitors.

I was sitting and conversing with Hope, a thirty-year old woman with five children, the youngest an infant. We turned to the topic of men and sexuality. Suddenly, she asked if I could tell her how to prevent more children. I suggested either oral contraceptives or an IUD, explaning how each works. In the final analysis, she said she would just wait till after a year or so, i.e. after she had stopped nursing. On another occasion, I stopped by a neighbor's compound to say hello. Juliana, in her late twenties, was grinding up vegetables for soup. I asked how many children she had -- three; do you want more? "Three is enough, is good. Maybe you can help?" I agreed to take her to the Planned Parenthood clinic. "But I don't like those rubber things that you put in your privates." And "they" say that Pills are very dear -- that each costs two shillings. I corrected her misinformation and the following week took her to the clinic. She was given a supply of birth control pills, took them for one month; then she later told me that she "passed menses" for the first time since conceiving one year, nine months earlier, and did not take them again. Part of the difficulty is the absence of a time sense in specifics; "take time" or "be patient" are expressions of an outlook. There is no tradition of taking medication on one's own at specified times of the day. Herbalists give on-the-spot

cures; modern doctors give injections. There is still resistance to anti-malarials as prophylaxis. In the case of oral contraceptives, missing a few days could spell disaster. Women like Juliana have a lot on their mind and do not want to be bothered with this as well.

Dissemination of birth control information would help cut down the number of deaths due to abortion. Nana Mamponghene, in leafing through the Daily Graphic, pointed out the obituary section and said -- everytime you see the death of a young girl listed, you know that she died of an abortion. To a certain extent this is an exaggeration. There is an extensive mythology associated with the subject, with some basis in fact. Patience, a young neighborhood friend of fourteen, insisted that

> . . . if you have a baby in your stomach and you go to the hospital to get rid of it, they will give you an injection and kill you . . . We read it in the Graphic . . . Otherwise, you can buy medicine for an abortion from a dispensary. If the man likes you, he'll give it to you. But you must take your boyfriend along. If he refuses,take another fellow. If you get pregnant and he doesn't care, he will not want to see your face. If he likes you, he will either marry you or give you money to 'spoil'it . . . Surely if you want to die, just go to Korle Bu [the hospital] and tell them you want to spoil your baby.

I asked Joanna, one of my informants who lives next door to Patience, in the same compound, what she knows about abortions. She was not happy about volunteering information. She knows where to go, but when I asked where, she at first refused to understand my reasons for asking. Then, she said that when she had gone for an abortion, it was before marrying, and that the man is probably no longer there. It had left quite an impression, judging from her uneasiness and description. "They do it with an instrument that looks like a scissors. They

stick it in and cut the fetus off from the cord. And it pains horribly for about a week, and you bleed a lot."

During the Summer of 1971, the Ministry of Education and Sports issued a communique; in it was stated that female students in secondary schools and training colleges who became pregnant from September, 1971, on would be dismissed. This opened up a Pandora's Box of letters and articles and informal conversation on the subject of contraception. The major issue was the loosening of the morality of the female populace through the non-selective dispensing of contraceptive literature and devices. (When all else failed, religious practice was mentioned, since religion in Ghana is taken seriously.)

> Should unmarried girls be allowed to get help from family planning clinics? This was the topic of a conversation I overheard at the Trade Fair Site the other day.
>
> . . . I very soon concluded that they were against the issuing of contraceptives to unmarried young women because of the low moral standards it would breed, the irresponsibility, too much freedom, and the dangers in some forms of contraception.
>
> To my surprise, no mention was made of the most important aspect of the whole family planning affair: birth control. As far as I know, the immediate aim of the campaign is to give people a choice in the number of children they can afford and want, but in the final analysis, it's to control the population of each country and in the long run, that of the world so as to enable everybody to have his fair share of the worldly kenkey.
>
> Now I would say that the bulk of our population comes from unmarried mothers -- working girls and school girls who have to drop out of school. Therefore, if birth control devices are made available only to married women, only part of the problem is solved because we'll still have unmarried mothers and a rising population.
>
> . . . Of course some old fogeys will come out and say that it'll lower the morality of the young girls. Don't they know the old proverb which translates 'the yam which will burn when

> roasted will still burn even when boiled?' ("Yaa Yaa's World," The Mirror, February 13, 1971, p. 6)

In my own sample, five unmarried young women each have had one child:[6] the youngest (Martha) was fifteen when she gave birth, Dora and Felicia were eighteen, Benedicta was nineteen and Aba, the eldest, twenty-three. Only two of them did not finish Middle Form Four, dropping out after the pregnancy began to show; the others had already finished. In earlier times, in rural areas, they would have been married by this ages, or that custom would promote pre-marital pregnancy.

> Among the Krobos, a patrilineal people, the first child born by a girl belongs to the girl's family. The rights in genetricem which a husband has over his wife are therefore transferred only after the girl has had one child. This being the case, the girls are not so anxious to contract valid marriages before the birth of their first child. (Tetteh 1967:208)

None of the unmarried pregnant girls could marry at the tine -- because they felt they were too young, because it was a mistake and they did not want to marry the boy or, because the friend would not marry her. But, in all five instances, there was a boyfriend involved; and in two, the boyfriend is still in the picture, and marriage is being negotiated.

Since pre-marital sex is not categorically discouraged, it is not unusual for girls to get involved. The problem is the dissemination of information. Most leave it up to their boyfriend, who provides.

> If only you don't want children, you will take the medicine or something else. And now in Ghana, they say they are asking Family Planning. So if you go, I think they will give you anything. [For now?] I used [i.e. am accustomed to] to take medicine, Alephin 21. I get it myself.

Georgina has heard of Alephin through others, who got it from boyfriends. Alephin, and like it Apoenstill, both have the efficacy of aspirin.

Unmarried and married women alike are terribly unsophisticated in modes of contraception. Only one of my sample informants said that she uses oral contraceptives. Even when the birth of additional children poses a threat to economic security, there is little attempt to actively take precaution. "When I give up with four, I'll go and see a doctor"; "If the time comes, I'll find my way out"; "Maybe use medicines, so my stomach will spoil." Much is left to chance or fate.

So, when Daily Graphic writer John C. Hagan wrote an invective against providing teen-age girls with contraceptive devices, Gladys Kotey, also a columnist, was quick to point out

> the mere use of contraceptives does not turn a woman or girl into a prostitute. I know a number of women in this profession who never heard of contraceptives through a research I carried out sometime ago.
>
> . . . A good knowledge of birth control methods can abolish illegal abortions that cause a lot of deaths among teen-age girls.
>
> . . . Educate the young ones in family planning and half the battle is won. (Gladys Kotey "Contraceptives and Teen-agers," The Daily Graphic, September 13, 1971)

Some men, furthermore, do not encourage their wives to seek out contraceptive information: they fear an explosion of extra-marital affairs on the part of their wives. One such man is a former Minister of Health -- the one individual responsible for legitimating dessimination of such information. In a conversation with me on this subject, his concern had nothing to do with the time-consuming and exhausting nature of child-care, or the difficulties of child-bearing. Rather, he railed about the morality of the thing: how it is a woman's duty to bear many children, and to stay home and mind them; if a woman has access to

birth control, she might stint on her job, and worse yet, run off with other men. As a fearful, yet powerful man, he was able to put his reactionary sentiments into operation, thus slowing down the progress of the Family Planning Association.[7] What a perfect example of instrumental power in the hands of a male-dominated power structure! It also speaks to the perpetuation of traditional roles, which in turn restrict women taking a more active part in the developing society. Girls look to their boyfriends for information, women look to their husbands. An unmarried girl still has her freedom and her bargaining card -- she can take off if she so desires. In fact, my young friend Patience says that girls are about fourteen when they first learn about sex, while boys are a bit older. Because boys like to have several girlfriends, a girl learns not to depend upon any one boy "because he will abuse you." A married woman does not have that option; at this point, she does not even have the option of making her life a little easier.

Thus, suggesting selective dissemination, Hagan, in a rejoinder to Ms. Kotey, stresses that

> . . . the whole idea of birth control and its planned campaign is an indivisible part of that inviolable reality called MORALITY on which the life of every nation depends. Destroy it and you destroy the very life-blood of society. That is why some would urge caution, discernment and discrimination in this rush for the propagation of birth control devices. (John C. Hagan "Contraceptives and Teenagers" Daily Graphic, September 28, 1971, p. 7)

What he and his colleagues are suggesting is that an adult woman is a married woman, and only adults should have the opportunity to advance their rights at self-assertiveness. Many men, however, if addressing the question of the married (i.e., adult) woman's right to controlling her own destiny would agree with what the former Minister of Health said.

For, married women are still beholden to their husbands -- all of my informants said as much -- for advice, permission, and so on.

For whatever reason, having children is as normal as being married, and accepted in the same spirit. Therefore, having conceived, most women will see the pregnancy through; for once the child is born, he or she is easily absorbed into the family and loved as much as others born before. One indication of the importance of children is the incorporation of the mother's (and often the father's) identity into that of the first-born: the mother of Abenaa becomes known as Abenaa Maame (mother of Abenaa). Children are highly valued (see Chapter III) and treated as small human beings. They are not isolated from adult company, neither are they pivotal to household interaction and activity. They are allowed their fun, but there are also continuities in their conditioning for future roles. (cf. Ruth Benedict 1938) As they mature, they are given increasingly complicated tasks to perform for the family weal. This and proper disciplining usually falls to the mother or the supervising female.

In my own sample, this is certainly so. Among the married women with children, twelve stated that they have the responsibility for discipline; three said that their husband is the disciplinarian; and Adisa said that it is split along sexual lines -- she deals with the girls, her husband with the boys. On the other hand, women spend the majority of time with the children; in nine cases with the mother, in five cases with the maternal grandmother, and in one with the maternal aunt. Those looked after by a female other than the mother are of course partly socialized as well by that same person.

The balance of the married women with children state that the job is equally split between husband and wife (two cases), is entirely in the hands of the maternal mother (three) and in the hands of the maternal aunt (one). Similarly, time spent with the children follows the same lines, except that in the first instance of husband/wife participation, one child spends the day with his mother, the other with his grandmother. Auntie Atta, who gave her child over to her own mother back home, also has the elder child with her. When her husband died, she could not afford a maid, but also felt she would be better off sending one of the children "home" for better caretaking.

Not one of the unmarried group of mothers has sole responsibility for the up-bringing of her child. Three are being raised by the maternal grandmother, one by mother and grandmother and one by the mother's sister. And in four instances, it is the grandmother who spends the better part of the day with the child, while in the fifth it is the mothering aunt (mother's sister).

In general, children do pay heed to both parents, as well as other familiar adults who chastise or correct them. Fathers tend to bask in the glory of their offspring and handle them more gently. Joanna says that Victor, her baby, cries more when his father is around, because he knows that the man does not allow Joanna to beat him. While we talked, Victor whimpered and wiggled about. "As for child, must be patient . . . Africans beat children badly." I expressed surprise at this; she in turn said that the reason she was not beating him at that moment was because she had already done so a few hours earlier.

The last group to be mentioned is the minority group -- those

without children. These women are either unmarried or newly-wed. Their responses are interesting: half say that they alone will raise their children, while half say they will divide the labor with the child's father. But some add post-scripts, i.e. that they will hire a maid to care for the child during the day, or close maternal kin for the same. These responses are interesting, because they epitomize the modern mode -- the male/female division of labor, the working mother who cannot take the children with her (presumably an indication of non-traditional work) and the hired help to substitute for either over-burdened mother or hometown kin. I question the validity of such expectations at this point in time, because they remind me of the young married woman's hope that she would have a "white gown" wedding. These are not fantasies pulled out of the air; the newspapers are full of articles portraying the image of "the" modern woman and her life-style. (In Chapter VI, I have used several extracts to document similar points.) Furthermore, these women are exposed to such new ways, both in their contact (even if only visual), with Europeans, who hire Ghanaian women for child-care, and in their contact with other Ghanaians, married to "big men" who can afford to hire help (and do so to prove it).

Just as there is little display of affect between husband and wife, so does there seem to be little between mother and child. The caressing and nuzzling is often in the hands of older women, relatives or familiars. On two different occasions, I was in the presence of a menopausal woman, who was playing with a very small child. And in her playfulness and trying to keep the baby subdued, she pulled out a pendulous breast and stuck it in the little one's mouth. In a sense, this is an extension of

the nursing mother's role, just as any mothering female adopts the behaviors of, and is responded to as, the biological mother. And the child is pivotal to maintenance of cross-generational ties, as well as extended family ties in general.

The Member of an Extended Family

> Even when the extended family does not influence the life of the urbanite to any great extent, the urbanite still has strong loyalties to his extended family and keeps contact with its members. The existence of a family in the home town is one factor which keeps the widely scattered members together. (Tetteh 1967:215)

The last facet in the woman's role, as traditionally defined, which I propose to present is her membership in the extended family -- as daughter or sibling. The married, urban, woman-with-child is still the child of her family network. Her ties are not severed when she leaves home. The persistence of fostering, as ideal or reality, is a major vehicle for maintaining the reciprocal nature of the extended ties, particularly with one's mother.

There is an irony to the cycle: as shown earlier, not only is there little choice involved in having children (just as there is little choice in occupation) but the task of socialization falls mainly to the mother. Assume for a moment that in her move to the city she has chosen to lead a life independent of family influence or interference. But she is saddled with a child or two, and if she is to work full-time, she cannot spend the time necessary to raising them. Given her earning capacity, she cannot afford to hire a house-maid. And for those married, many husbands are resistant to their wives relinquishing the role of mother and bringing in a stranger. Interestingly enough, the same is true for those

women I spoke with who have children, young or grown. Hence, if an alternate care-taker must be found, we return full-circle to the propitiation of family ties.

The institution of fostering carries over from extended family relationships and the interdependence of members. As has been said, when children are raised together in a family house, they come to regard each other as siblings, and the mother of one by extension becomes the mother of the other, and vice versa. This is supported by the common help given in socialization. This type of upbringing re-inforces the individual's ability to envision roles as interchangeable; the level of affect and personal involvement is low. (cf. R. Cohen 1972) As such, following through the metaphor of extension, it is not inconceivable from either the adult's or the child's perspective to send/be sent to relatives. To what extent is this still pracised, and has it been logically extended beyond the range of family?

While talking with the Gbese Manshe (the local sub-paramount chief of the area), a certain woman came in to ask something of him. The night before, she had come for advice; her father was unfortunate enough to be put in prison for committing a crime, and she wanted to see him -- he had been transferred to the prison in Accra. The woman is a Ga fetish priestess, and she had come to the Gbese Manshe both for help in getting in to see her father and also for sleeping accomodation while she was in the area. Nii found her a place to stay with another fetish priestess. The morning I was at the palace, she returned to thank him for all that he had done. Although he did not know her at all, she offered to send him her child to raise, in reciprocation for the man's hospitality.

There is always the possibility that she would do so in order to get her child well-connected. But this is not the impression given by the Gbese Manshe, who then went on to tell me his own experience. "I had an aunt. She loved me more than my own mother. When she died, I had the will to recompensate her needs." For that, her daughter serves the Gbese Manshe and he does for her as he would for the dead aunt, regarding her as an extension of her mother.

The majority of my informants were raised by their mothers -- twenty-six of them. Lizzie explicitly adds that her two aunts were also present on the scene and she refers to her mother and mother's sisters as "my mothers." It would be the same or similar for many raised in other family houses; primary contacts and socialization are mainly in the hands of the mother, if she is present. But other senior female relatives living on the premises take part, and the youngsters pay heed to them. Children raised with cousins in this way often refer to them as brother and sister. During prepubescent or teen-age years, some of the women went off to live with family while attending school. To their mind, however, they were raised by mother.

One-quarter of the respondents were fostered by kin. Six grew up in the care of a grandmother -- father's mother if patrilineal, mother's mother if matrilineal. One other was raised by an aunt, and two by elder siblings. All were "lent out" for reasons of finance, upon request of the fostering mother (barren women often take on someone else's child), because the child would be better-instructed with less pampering, or simply because it seemed appropriate under the circumstances.

With this in mind, I went on to ask how these women regard the

prospect of fostering; at times, responses of the same individuals varied according to the context of the conversation. Some, whose growing years were spent in someone else's house and whose experiences were good, were ambivalent about continuing the practice. Lydia lived with an aunt in Takoradi from the age of nine till nineteen. "At the time she was going, she said she wanted to go with me . . . She lived with her husband." Lydia's preference for herself would have been to live in her mother's house "because I am a stranger there [Takoradi], I don't know anybody there. If [when] I went to school, I have friends. When we close, no friends."

Yet, she feels the pull of kinship obligations, even though she prefers not to do the same with her own children.

> If my aunt is there and she says she wants to look after one of my children, I would give her. But now my aunt has grown up; she can't look after them properly. Maybe if you go there, you will see the children dirty and so forth, and you are dress up. It's not nice. But once you are all right and you can look after them, you can look after your children.

Bebbe, unmarried and living with her mother, grew up in the care of her grandmother. She worries that if she sent her child to someone "the one will not look after my child well." For her, it was alright -- "but she [the grandmother] know me." In other words, if it were family, "she will look after her well. But if not, sometimes he don't look after her well."

Responses to the question: would you send your child . . . were mainly positive. Only one-third gave an unqualified no. The others: an unqualified yes -- five; to family, mainly mother -- twelve; and to

a good friend -- one. Those favoring fostering gave as their reasons that the child would not listen to the mother as well as to another, that the child would learn respect, that she would become the daughter of a barren female, or that there was not enough money at home for proper up-bringing.

While I was admiring Benedicta's toddler, the woman replied -- "How she worries my mind. I will send her to my mother soon." She is not alone in the knowledge that it is her right to do so. Unless one's mother is incontinent, the chances are good that she will care for the child. Indeed, this is another reason that unmarried girls are not more careful in their sexual encounters; the child will be born into a home. Six of my informants currently have a child living elsewhere: Ruby, Ekua and Auntie Atta with mother; Auntie Rose with her brother; and Hope and Adisa with mother-in-law.

Some of those expression opposition at first understood fostering to mean sending a child off to strangers. For example, Hope (not the same person as above) responded negatively, then added, "If the person is a good man or a good woman, she [i.e. I] will like. She doesn't like because some people would not take good care of him. If <u>did</u> send, would send to her father's sister." (translated from the Ewe) Her comment is interesting, since she is still living with her mother and father, despite being married, and her mother is Hope's child's chief socializer.

This leads into the major reasons for opposition: maltreatment (which is why family is more trustworthy) and that she, the mother, would not be on the spot to oversee; and the distinction between fostering and leaving the child to someone else's care. A few pages back, I discussed

disciplining of children and use of day-time help. I mention this again, as it was raised in connection with questions relating to fostering. I asked what a woman would do if she were offered a good job, but had to make provisions for her child -- make use of family or hire a housemaid. Again, the responses are interesting: six chose family, another twelve specified mother, one sister, ten housemaid and one day school. Thus, two-thirds would rely upon family.

I spoke of Hope confusing the meaning of the term fostering; she does distinguish between fostering and day-time care. In the same breath, she said she would hire a housemaid if she got a good job, and give her child to her mother if she were interested in fostering. The latter she (and others) regard as more encompassing.

There is also a question of real and ideal. This comes up particularly with respect to hiring a housemaid. For example, the Kwahu Hope said she would prefer hiring someone. In fact, she does have a housegirl for dirty work while, at the same time, one of her children is living with her husband's mother. It is not peculiar for any of these individuals to think in terms of having a housemaid, since traditionally there is such a household role. But, such a role would traditionally be filled by a younger family member.

To follow through on the dichotomy of real and ideal, I divided the responses up, according to the location of family base -- Accra or elsewhere. Most of the family/mother responses belong to the former, while those of housemaid belong to the latter. It is possible that this is indicative of a trend in the direction of easing off of family dependence. But, again, having a housemaid is an urban ideal. Furthermore,

many of those relying on mother or family are not indigenous to Accra; the family came as part of the urban migration. Further evidence weights the scale in favor of perpetuity of family ties and interdependency.

Thus, bearing children reflects not just upon the woman in question. She is responsible to her family as well; in general, her actions continue to affect them, even if they are hundreds of miles off. And the act of child-bearing, like marriage, is instrumental in reaffirming one's responsibility to others, in carrying out traditional obligations, in sustaining the balance of indebtedness, in tangibly showing respect for custom and for those who represent it -- both the hometown folk as well as one's husband.

When a woman produces offspring, she changes her mother's status and helps to perpetuate the family line. In return, her mother chooses to take a hand in the child's upbringing, or is receptive to her daughter's request to take the child off her hands. A very strong female bond ties together mother and daughter. The returns are great for both. Just as the young girl in her mother's house helped with daily chores, so her mother helps her out in those areas in which one's mother "knows best." A good example is mother's assistance during the daughter's postpartum period. Even after the birth of several children, women will still go to mother; the exceptions are when the two women are resident in the same house or town, or when the distance between them is very great. In the first instance, the mother may just come over on a day-to-day basis; in the second, the seasoned child-bearer may decide that the trip is too long; or more probably, that she has other small children in

the house whom she must care for and cannot take all of them with her. For her stay with her mother is usually extended.

Every single one of the respondents with children was ministered to after giving birth. Only four report someone other than mother (sister or mother-in-law), and this is because she had already died. Thus, after delivering either in the hospital or with the aid of a midwife, twenty stayed with their mother. Some gave birth in the hometown, others went there after the baby's birth. In either case, they spend an average of four months in their mothers' home, leaving husband behind. If it is not too far, he will visit periodically. For those whose mother comes to them, the visitation period is shorter; but unless impossible, she comes. For, as Ellen remarked about child-care when she works: "I would send my child to my mother; a housemaid may be someone who has not brought forth, she doesn't know anything about a child. But my mother knows everything." These are the words of a twenty-two year old. She is as conservative in maintaining the tie and showing her respect for her elder, in this case her mother. This young lady has not yet married or brought forth. She says that when it is her time to deliver, she will do so in Accra. Her mother will arrive that same week, looking after her for about two weeks. And then she will take Ellen back with her to Ashanti, where she will stay the remainder of her maternity leave. All of her sisters have left the hometown, and each time each gives birth, her mother follows the same pattern. Adawkaw, also in her twenties, lives with her mother in the family house. She is married and has already born children. Thus, after leaving the hospital, she comes back home. She adds, however, that if she did not live there, she would come there and stay for four months.

Mothers and daughters engage in reciprocal gifting, exchanging of favors and so on. The assymetry of the exchanges balances out periodically; for example, having been the recipient of a dash, the mother will then take on care of a grandchild. This is even more pronounced when the young mother is unmarried and living with her mother. One of my nineteen year old informants has been in this situation; to an outsider, her life seems to run according to parental manipulation. Dora gets up between 4:30 and 5:00 a.m.; she must sweep the compound, prepare porridge to sell for her mother while everyone else sleeps. Then she cleans the kitchen and carries the paraphernalia for selling porridge and togbeh (doughnuts) out in front of the compound. Between 6:00 and 7:00 a.m. she comes out front to sell; this involves cooking dough in hot fat while dishing out porridge to breakfast customers on their way to work. Dora's mother is a baker and on days when she bakes, Dora helps her by firing up the oven and putting in the bread; on those days, she comes out to sell at 7:00 a.m.

She sits in the morning sun till almost nine o'clock; then she must clean up her selling area, take all of the utensils inside and wash them, bathe, and then prepare for her part-time employment as a housegirl. But one morning, for example, by nine o'clock, she was still sitting and selling -- "please, the porridge is not finished, people aren't buying." She could not come inside because her mother would harass her. It furthermore made her late for her outside work. As time went on, it became increasingly apparent that she had no leverage against her mother, whose occupational and household chores for Dora took precedence.

Late afternoon, she helps with the bread, going with her sister to

have the flour ground, bringing it back and mixing the ingredients; then, helping her mother loave and bake it. At some point, she must also buy corn dough, sieve it and get it ready for the morning porridge. Then, when the bread is baked, she takes it to the bus stop to sell. There she stays until 11:30, comes home, puts away remaining bread, takes in the laundry and goes to sleep.

Dora is at her mother's disposal; however, her mother has also taken Dora's fourteen-month old child as her own. She disciplines him, watches over him and has taken over complete responsibility for his up-bringing. This is the older woman's trump card; she has absolved her daughter of most motherly duties and as long as Dora remains at home, she will be beholden. It is especially pronounced, because Dora is frightfully submissive and because her father has done all in his power to keep the mistake a secret. For his protection and help, Dora must return the favor in kind.

All of my informants agree that the money they earn is theirs to do with as they please. Yet, disposal of income outside of the conjugal family can be a source of tension. Mair (1969) notes that among the matrilineal Akan, both husband and wife have financial obligations to their matrilineal kin; these are as compelling as those they have to each other, and often moreso. This can lead to conflicts, with the wife nursing resentments against her husband, and/or the husband objecting to his wife's sending out part of her earnings.

The Secretary of the Committee on Women's Status received a letter from a Secondary School tutor, which discusses this problem, but with an interesting twist.

> Many men complain that failure of marriage is mainly caused by the wife's mother. I support it.
> . . . . . .
> I married a woman from Anum since July, 1953. I performed all marriage customary rites. We have five children. We never quarrelled, but in April, 1964, her mother refused to allow her to continue the marriage because I was not giving money (the mother was asking from me) to my mother-in-law. As a result, my wife has left her five children with me, and now has become a prostitute.
>
> My wife . . . has declared in writing that I had not performed any customary rites to make her my wife. She added that she was not interested in either the marriage or the children.
> . . . . . .
> I have no interest to pursue the marriage, but all I know very well is that my wife has been influenced by the parents to leave the marriage, contrary to her will . . .
> That her parents do not wish her to continue the marriage because I was not paying the unnecessary monies demanded from me. Whether I shall take any legal steps or not, I wish your committee investigate thoroughly into this, as an example to all married women and see to put an end to such practices . . . (Letter to Janet Tay, Secretary, Committee on Women's Status, at Ministry of Social Welfare, Accra, from G. Agyekum, 6 August 1967)

The influence which parents and family wield is not to be underestimated. It may be out of group self-interest; or, in may cases, it may be protective of the family member's rights. For example, in the case of the letter writer, it is possible that the woman involved decided she wanted to be rid of her husband and had her mother and father stand up for her, perhaps even inventing a story. As Dora said, "If he does you something and you don't like it and you tell your mother and they see it ins't good, you can't marry him again." On the other hand, the family may not agree that the woman's reasons are justified. Hope (the Ewe) left her husband, because he was not properly supporting her financially. She went to her mother who "sacked her to go back." But

the man continued to do badly by her, so she came back and was accepted. Most will abide by mother's and father's decision.

I have already shown that the husband who shows disrespect for his wife's parents is opening himself up for a lot of trouble. (See Chapter III.) Following this train of thought, I asked who the respective woman would go to live with in a case of divorce. The mother-daughter tie is particularly evident in this situation: nineteen replied that they would go home to mother; seven to (or stay in) the family house; one to father (who lives in Accra apart from mother who is north); one on her own; and one (Regina) to mother and father: "if they thought the matter was not good, they would bring me back to my husband."

A certain amount of coaxing was necessary in several cases to elicit a response. This is similar to the blank-look response I received from unattached women when I asked what kind of a man they wished to marry. I had to provide multiple-answer lists -- examples of why a woman might leave her husband, should it come about on her side, and examples of what a girl might find appealing in a man; these things are dealt with as they occur. Vivian, one of my more articulate informants, is still single at the age of twenty-six. She lives on her own, not having married yet, because she is looking for a love relationship. At the same time, she has few illusions about the content of a marital union.

> They can say anything that comes into their mind. They figure that because they give their wives money, that they can push them around; don't realize that a woman also takes part in the house and should be given a chance to say what is on her mind. Most men are so.

She insists that splitting up is not a possibility. "I wouldn't do that;

we must talk it over." She said this with the consciousness (stated without my putting words into her mouth) that Ghanaian men do not treat women well. The majority of women have not married for love, and need only become concerned if and when the man reneges on his responsibilities. Until that time, there is no reason to think about contingency plans. It is the same as in her attitude towards her roles and relationships. They are followed through as is appropriate; if a decision must be made, there is someone to give advice. Furthermore, unstable marriage in traditional areas continues as in former times. There was, and is, a model to follow, if need be.

Then there is the issue of the woman's rights in leaving her husband, since the burden of the proof is on her and her justifiable reasons for such actions are few. Akosua was involved in an interesting dilemma, which led to divorce. During the Nkrumah regime, she and her husband lived at Flag Staff House (Government headquarters) where her husband had a provision store. During the coup, ". . . soldiers came and she ran away to her hometown and stayed there. Her husband's family said that because she ran away and left her husband alone, he should not marry her again [remain married]." (Translated from the Twi)

Crabtree (1950) notes that the general rule for divorce among educated urban dwellers in Southern Ghana is far more inclusive for men than for women. A man may sue for divorce for adultery, barrenness, witchcraft, juju, neglect of household duties, disrespect of him or his parents, or desertion. And a woman may sue for neglect, cruelty or impotence. The latter has bearing on her sexual activity, for she must restrict such relations to her spouse; in a parallel situation, he need

not leave her, since he can marry another or father a child out-of-wedlock. The technicalities include a remittance: if the husband has proof of good reasons, her family must refund the bridge price and money spent on her to date. If his reasons are judged trivial, he foregoes the money. And if the woman has proof of good reasons, the money he has spent on her need not be refunded.

It is interesting that none of my informants know of any such financial complications. All who "married" had at least gone through the traditional engagement and could describe the ritual of exchanges. Most, however, did not know the exact goods or amounts of goods which changed hands. None of them is familiar with their rights to divorce either. But again, in both cases as in so many others, it is not their need to know. There are others to evaluate situations and provide guidance.

> Divorce is easily obtained, even from more formal marriages, with the single exception of marriage under the ordinance which can be dissolved only judicially. Other divorces require little more than agreement, or even desertion . . . One factor which makes an unstable marriage pattern possible is the economically independent outlook of Ghanaian women. Over half of all Ghanaian adult females are employed, and most can find a living or return to their families if the need arises. (Caldwell 1967:70)

Who, indeed, do the women feel they can rely upon for financial support? Their responses to this are not necessarily a function of where they say they would live. Twelve maintain that they would be self-supporting, while another fourteen would fall back into the role of a family dependent: the mother again is the main agency of help, for ten agree with Aba's sentiment "my mother is there to support me"; and one each would go to elder sister, aunt, grandmother, father and both parents.

Even when mother is the support, it is conditional upon the reasonableness of the estrangement. The last two responses have the husband as provider -- one, the divorced spouse, the other a new husband.

It is curious that only one woman -- Faith -- considered remarriage as the natural way out of the situation, and even she did so with hesitation: "Anyway, I don't know that I would leave him; anyway, maybe I would have another husband." It is curious, because material support figures so greatly in the reasons given for marrying in the first place and as the husband's fundamental marital obligations. In addition, some who are widowed either speak of remarriage as a way out of the financial hole, or speak of how life has become more difficult since the husband's death because money is short. The jump from impoverished widowhood to solvent union is not great, particularly in these days when consumerism and materialism are rife. If it were a burning issue, it seems that it would be more consciously referred to. Which leads me back to an initial thesis that marriage is a social and cultural necessity, rather than a financial one. And once married, and divorced or widowed, there is not the same push to be attached again. This will be further developed in the next chapter.

In the context of the hometown, one's family is one's friends. These are the people who can be depended upon if need be.

> The fact that incomes are on the average higher in the towns does not mean that economic pressures are felt less there. Just the opposite is the case. For most Ghanaians, the town is still something of an 'unnatural' existence. Its delights can be enjoyed more easily if one is aware that welcome and security is waiting in the village as soon as things being to go wrong in the town. Failure to help relatives in the village or to visit them occasionally could well destroy that welcome, and this is

> a state of affairs that comparatively few urban Ghanaians would be prepared to court. Life in town without a job can be very difficult, especially if one's family lives hundreds of miles away. (Caldwell 1967a:143)

Given the choice between reliance upon family or friend, twenty-two of my urban informants opted for family. This carries through the theme of return to kin for money or solace. When money is dashed, it is expected that at some time in the future, it will be reciprocated, in cash or kind. Lending money, however, is a different story. It is part of the local lore that lending money to family is the same as giving it away; and since it would be desirable for cash to be repaid in cash, people often express hesitance in lending to kin. (We saw a similar thing in the situation of replacing stolen belongings; few feel that they must repay family or spouse or whosoever helped.) That notwithstanding, twenty-one women still prefer lending money to family than to friend, assuming that they have any to lend. One, who said that she would give to kin first, added that it is not important if they repay; another, who said that she would give to a friend, then remarked that the latter will repay.

Travel is almost always undertaken for the sake of family. All of my informants with kin outside of Accra go to visit them. When they are in the hometown, visiting is done with regularity. If a child has married and moved elsewhere, it is an excuse to travel, though not often. The only woman who avoids the trip to see her mother is Vivian, an Ewe. She travels to her mother's house infrequently, because her mother fears that kin and towns-people, envious of Vivian's good fortune, will use juju against her. Two women also travel with their boyfriends, if not

going to family -- the men can afford to take them. And two travel on church excursions. I asked Regina, who is indigenous to Accra, if she ever travels: "I haven't got anybody there, but when I have got anybody there, I will travel." Her response exemplifies the general sentiment.

It is not unusual for elder siblings to take on responsibilities toward juniors in the absence of those of the older generation who normally would do the job. This might include raising the child of a sister or brother, for reasons given earlier in the account on fostering; it might include taking on the responsibility of educating a younger brother or sister. This means sapping meager salaries to put the junior through school. There is little escape from obligations of family and kin, just as there is little escape from traditional female roles, based upon her sexual social identity. She may come to the city, out from under the direct supervision of mother and father and extended kin; but she as soon comes under the direct supervision of her husband. She goes off to earn some money, but does so as she and her fore-bears before her have always done so, and within the realm of the acceptable. Thus far, it is apparent that her persona is based upon and guided by tradition; and, certainly as an adult, it is dependent upon her relationship to men.

Throughout this chapter, I have tried to show how important traditional identities and identity relationships are in the urban woman's daily schedule of responsibilities. In her domestic tasks, she is ensconced in the world of women. There is a strict sex-role division of labor along the lines of home and outside. Men have no prescribed

household duties; they depend upon women, their wives and mothers, to maintain the hearth fires for them. They use the home and its personnel for their pleasures; just as the woman's adult identity depends upon keeping house for a man, so does a man's identity depend upon a woman keeping his house, raising his children, and so on. These tasks are the same as in the hometown, except that here there is less chance of help; and she must juggle her duties, with the greater pressure of time and less flexible hours.

All of her responsibilities do not allow for much extra-curricular movement. Despite diversification in the urban social structure, traditional attitudes and behaviors constrain women in their exercise of new roles and freedoms. Financial insolvency is a further constraint. Any roles contracted for, above and beyond circumscribed activities, must have high worth. In urban Ghana, given the high cost of living, the paltry salaries or profits earned, the very strong material ethos and the continuation of traditional support of men for wives and girlfriends, one must again question the appropriateness of independence in this context.

Especially in the city, where a woman is far more dependent upon men than she would be in the hometown do I question this. In the hometown, she has fewer expenses, and excesses could be met by kin and neighbors. Furthermore, she lives there among friends and family, people with whom she has a history of exchanges, and upon whom she can depend. In the city, she is isolated from those upon whom she <u>still</u> maintains reliance. Socially, her freedom of movement is more restricted. If we accept the proposal that the woman's domestic identity is paramount, it makes sense to further agree that a large percentage of her time is spent

in carrying out domestic chores; this includes care for family of procreation and family of orientation. This has been shown to be true. It cuts down her possibilities of outside contacts. Most informants say that the exigencies of child-care are not restrictive; thus, it is commonplace to see a woman at the cinema, infant on her back. Nor do they find obligations to extended kin oppressive. But marriage does cripple the woman's mobility, child or no child. There are only certain places which she may frequent with propriety, and those are specifically the haunts of women. The five posited cultural attitudes, underlying normative mores and the role structure, are implicit.

The next question is: to what extent does the prominence of traditional roles promote or inhibit new ones to develop? We now turn to this topic and deal with it in the following chapter.

CHAPTER VI

NEW IDENTITY RELATIONSHIPS

I ended the last chapter on a question, and I begin this chapter by re-phrasing that question: to what extent are new roles and behaviors developing as a result of the urban milieu, thus overcoming or replacing tradition? More particularly, how do new identities arise and how do these new identities affect the social life of women?

So far it appears that the development of new content in women's roles has been inhibited. Older social identities have been perpetuated at the expense of new ones. The fundamental nature, basis and context of relationships are associated with a system of traditional attitudes. A woman's capacity for decision-making, for leading her own life, varies according to specific spheres of activity. What we have seen so far has shown that her options in choosing spheres are severely limited. And her social identities are far less specific than one might have expected, given the urban context. She may work, but where she works is controlled; she may learn, but where and how much is controlled. Within acceptable sectors, she may carry on her dealings as she wishes, though, as a prisoner of custom, she tends to follow models.

The diversification of spheres of activity in the city does not necessarily make them more accessible to women than if there were none; social identities appropriate to the proliferation of spheres have no opportunity to bloom; and, identity relationships finally are not changing

and re-developing. Superficially, behaviors may appear to be different. But on closer examination, most simply result in old-style roles. The woman's relationships with others have in common the characteristic of distance, a carry-over from the past. Such is the case whether it is women interacting with other women or with men.

It is my thesis that women's roles are both restricted and restrictive. Interactions with others, male and/or female, are bounded by certain social and physical properties, within certain social and physical spaces. As a consequence, contacts are cut down and mobility clipped. The traditionally feminine areas of wifehood, motherhood and the like are components in the role repertoire of the women under study; all of these components and more are woven into a network of relationships. It has been said that in the city, and Adabraka by extension, a woman has greater possibilities to "fulfill" herself, with other than traditional roles. Having already laid the groundwork in the last chapter, we can now show the allusion for what it really is -- an illusion.

In this chapter, I wish to look beyond those roles and relationships which are traditional in context and content, and examine instead the actual possibilities of roles unique to the urban scene, and vice versa -- to consider new contexts which might foster the development of new roles and relationships. The basis for, contents of, and ultimate direction in male-famele interactions are different from times past only in appearance and indicators employed. The essence of such relationships is sexual. The pre-marital contexts are the night-time playgrounds of Accra, and after marriage, the hearth and home. Interactions with women are similarly limited. The highly-structured work week, from which Sunday

afternoon brings partial respite, is partially responsible. There is not much free time to spend in seeking out friends or engaging in frivolous activities. There are also just so many places two women can go alone; and then, there is also the problem of be-friending and the traditional distrust of other women.

This chapter is divided up into three broad sections: relationships with women, relationships with men and alternate life-styles. Section One subsumes three areas of concern: the relationships of stranger/neighbor, of friend and of rival. This leads naturally into Section Two, which is concerned with relationships that women have with men as girlfriend and as wife. And finally, in Section Three, the discussion re-confirms the primacy of the folk-image of the woman's role and its sexual definition.

Relationships With Women -- As Neighbor

I shall consider first the possibilities of non-familial relationships that one woman can carry on with another, starting with that of stranger cum neighbor. "The bonds of kinships, of neighborliness, and the sentiments arising out of living together for generations under a common folk tradition are likely to be absent or, at best, relatively weak in an aggregate the members of which have such diverse origins and backgrounds." (Wirth 1938:11) Adabraka has been painted as a part of the urban environment, and at the same time, as an urban village, where commonness of folk tradition and patterning of relationships follow the kin metaphor and the Western way. But a tradition must develop before behavioral patterns, and thus roles and models, entrench themselves.

The type of neighboring reflects the going rule of what a good neighbor is expected to be or do. Neighboring activities may be highly formalized and regular,or sporadic, informal and casual.

> If as in some simple villages, neighbors are also clan and blood relations, then the concept of neighbor cannot arise. It arises precisely because the neighbor is the proximate stranger, defending interests that are partly his alone and partly those he shares with other neighbors . . . In most tribal and peasant villages this presents no real problem, for though the neighbor may be considered a stranger in the sense of not being a blood or afinal relative, he is, nonetheless, a familiar figure whose antecedents are as well known as his current habits. In cities, however, the neighbor may actually be a total stranger, one whose ancestors and habits are unknown and whose true personality must be pieced together from fragments revealed only in the course of time. (Keller 1968:22)

Let us return to the urban compound as a starting point, for it is here, in the public spaces, that the newcomer-female is socialized into urban life. With the possible exception of work, more time is spent in this sector of activity than anywhere else. The compound is the catalyst for possible new forms of interactions, which are adaptations of the old to the new setting. For, although it is circumscribed by the privacy of the individual rooms, the domestic sector, it also presents contrasts with traditional compound life. Many are replete with different types of people; they provide an introduction to the heterogeneity of the urban populace at large. For here, the woman is forced into learning how to deal with strangers. She is eased into and prepared for the transition to city life via the role of urban neighbor.

There are latent functions of neighboring, which provide clues to the newcomer on how to behave and what to acquire. (Keller 1968; Perry 1939) These are: (1) reciprocal social control to help sustain common

standards and shared communication; (2) gossip chains, to spread information; and (3) creation and maintenance of social standards of correct belief and conduct.

Neighboring is socially structured like any other social activity and is adapted to the type of community setting. "In the small, rural village with long-established traditions, a common way of life, an intertwining of work, family and social relations, and a common destiny, neighboring is a by-product of life itself." (Keller 1968:48) Some city areas have retained this type of neighboring, particularly in village-like settings. Urban centers accomodate both this and the anomic variety,

> from the transient, anonymous rooming-house residents, who pick up stray relations when and where they find them, to the stable, solid citizens who stick close to home in all things. Some have referred to these as urban villagers . . . they then transfer their habits and outlook to the urban habitat and cut them here and there to fit the urban cloth. (Keller 1968:50)

This is an apt characterization of varying conditions in Adabraka. In those compounds where kin reside together, behavior is more solidary than when those living alongside one another meet in the yard as total strangers.

Neighboring is affected by a number of factors. One is physical design. The manner in which inhabitants use the physical space reflects and is reflected by the manner in which they relate to each other. For example, there are extremes among compounds in basic amenities and aesthetic appearance; similarly, there are ranges in appearance and equipment within compounds. In one, there may be an entire family living in two rooms off of the compound yard, while in the next room lives one

man by himself. The former family of five have most of their inner space taken up with the basics of daily life -- beds, clothing, cooking utensils, etc. The latter gentleman has plenty of room for his necessities, and the highly visible addition of a television and radiogram. The compound may bring together a grand variety of ethnic types; there are broad basics to behavior, as has been detailed. There are also differences. They come up on a daily basis and must be respected. Thus, in the public compound yard individuals adhere to reciprocating greetings; yet, acknowledgement of privacy must also be shown. Even though the Muslim prostrates himself in the middle of the yard four times during the day, his privacy is respected; the corners of the rug he kneels on mark his boundaries. Hospitality may be extended (akwaaba, you are welcome), but the fact that the door is left open is not automatically an invitation to enter.

Hometown traditions of neighboring may be similar, but it is apparent that there are variations in neighborliness in the city, from compound to compound. One may be as close as she desires, if she finds simpatico neighbors. But she need not be so. Basic courtesies are maintained, such as greeting after returning from work or travel. Kin, however, have not been replaced by neighbors. The city may not have many advantages, given its strangeness and high cost of living. But to all appearances, it does afford release from direct family and lineage supervision. Kin have traditionally been at close range; one would expect that in the city, when they are far, ties would be eased. And yet, there is little to take the place of family reliability. Even if she could choose, the compound she moves into in most instances is a function of another person's choice.

Another factor which affects neighboring is social change, as reflected in changing values and institutions, and an increase in mobility. Thus, compound life is no longer congruent with the extended family and dependencies are different; nothing can be taken for granted. It is important to keep in mind that a neighbor is neither a friend nor a relative, as far as the role goes. The first is a chosen role, the second prescribed. The differ also because "physical distance does not destroy these relationships whereas a neighbor, by definition, ceases to exist as a neighbor once spatial distance intervenes." (Keller 1968:24) If two neighbors become good friends, the friendship relation usurps the neighbor relation.

> Thus, the role of neighbor fits into a network of social roles and its explicitness depends upon the nature of the social organization, including the density of settlements, the distance between dwelling units, the economic well-being of the inhabitants, the degree of cooperation demanded or permitted among residents, and the general trust placed by individuals in non-relative. (Keller 1968:26)

Another factor is that of individual characteristics, such as sex, age, family life-cycle and personality. The number of people-per-house is on the average higher here than in rural areas. In-migration of out-lying people goes on in a continual stream and living spaces are limited. (Caldwell 1967) Closeness of proximity of living units is a function of the physical design. The individual deals with it as he sees fit. It may necessitate nothing more than developing the arts of cooperation for a working relationship in areas where required, such as compound maintenance. Children very often disregard territorial boundaries (Sommer 1968) and trespass where others would not tread. Children may serve to bring neighbors together (Whyte 1957); but on the other hand, they may

also cause arguments among themselves; they may even interfere with adults directly, for example by barging into someone else's room uninvited.

These generalities lead into the specifics of compound life in Adabraka. The behaviors of the women meld traditional givens, such as show of respect and reciprocal favors, with the impersonality of urban living. Ethnic solidarity is one way of dealing with ethnic diversity; it need not be xenophobic only, as seen in the analogous preferences for people of the same language group. In fact, there is an interplay between the two. Queries about a person's ethnicity were often answered, for example, "she is a Twi," i.e. Twi-speaker. Many continue to interact with those who share the same mother tongue, that being a measure of comfort. Members of one's ethnic group are those one is most familiar with, outside of kin. But inter-ethnic (and inter-linguistic) encounters are interactions are becoming common to those heretofore accustomed to homogeneous situations. The mixed compound is an agent of orientation. Economic differentiation among co-residents exists, but it is not always extreme and may still be cross-cut by ethnicity and kinship.

A few indices have been chosen to investigate how the sampled Adabraka women have adjusted, or are adjusting, to their socio-physical context, in terms of neighborliness. First let us look at a measure of compound associations; this includes the depth of interrelations among compound-mates (knowing each others' names, use of titles of respect and seniority), the type and extend of social intercourse and with whom, the locale of interaction (whether it is confined to the compound, and if so where).

The second measure goes beyond the optional associations, such as exchanged pleasantries or a friendly game of Ludu on a Sunday afternoon. Since people share the use of facilities, they must also share the responsibilitity for the care of such facilities. This is obligatory maintenance and involves basic working relationships. People must respect each other's rights to use compound facilities. The yard serves many functions, and it is these, as activated by co-resident strangers, which are specific to the new urban environment; they help clarify the new role or social identity which must be learned. In form, they are similar to those facilities which one grew up with elsewhere. But, at least in the hometown context, people involved together had other than a mere situational connection.

> Not only the role of what a neighbor is and should do varies from group to group, but also its relative priority. Evidence suggests that if people are totally taken up with relatives, they will not cultivate ties with friends or neighbors . . . Traditional, stable, settled communities probably rely more on relatives, but as these tend also to be neighbors, their respective influence cannot be ascertained. (Keller 1968:34f.)

There are a few formulas for addressing people; these tend to vary according to the statuses (in terms of seniority, sex, ethnicity, marital status) of the interacting parties. All of the non-Muslim women in my sample have their own given Christian names. All of them also have a Ghanaian day-name, and the latter is more commonly used for first name calling. This would be the case between peers; "sister" is a common alternative. If the woman is considered an adult (for example, if she lives on her own) but is childless, she is usually called "auntie" by those junior to her. When she has a child, she may still be called

"auntie" or "mother of X" (e.g. Maama Kofi).[1] Mothers call their daughters by their day-name, daughters address their mothers as well as other women whom they place in the category of mother as maame (mother). The Muslim women are known by their Hausa name, often first and family (or husband's)name (e.g. Adisa Harona).

The distance between men and women is mirrored in naming. Just as traditional leaders are addressed by their title (nana for an Akan chief, Nii for a Ga chief), so ordinary men are often called "Mr." On the other hand, they may both address women by a Ghanaian name, or on occasion, "auntie." Women, however, are rarely called "Mrs." Such a title accrues only to those married according to the Marriage Ordinance. Young boys may be called by their day-name, though it is far more common for them to be known by a Christian first name.

There are distinctions between use of names, depending upon whether it is a family member, a compound member, or someone involved in the outside business arena. This carries through from the foregoing distinctions between friend, relative, neighbor. In the current case, the use of a particular name depends upon whether the compound is a family house, or stranger, and whether there are socio-cultural clusters in either case.

Perry (1939) stated that the vast number of urban dwellers are not acquainted with the people living next door. I found this to be true across kinship and/or ethnic clusters, or when there was great admixture within one compound. For example, in one compound, there was a neat socio-physical split between Kwahus (an Akan group) and Ewes. Illiterate Ewes tend to be clannish and suspicious of outsiders generally, in addition to being the target of pejorative, ethnocentric labelling. The

Kwahus, among all of the ethnic groups I dealt with, were outstanding in terms of their high regard for one another -- sticking together seemingly out of a positive bias rather than any xenophobia. In one particular compound, the Kwahus are on one side, the Ewes on the other. Their compound interaction is fairly limited. "Oh, I know them, but I don't know their hometown. But we come together and if anyone needs anything . . ." They recognize each other, the younger ones know everyone's name, but the adults do not. In this situation, there is no particular interest; but there is also no need. Both groupings are self-contained and have perpetuated a home-town scene.

In compounds inhabited by one family with a few stranger-tenants, the latter are usually known by name (family name). In compounds that begin as a family establishment and are then expanded into family and tenant housing, it is not unusual for neighbors to recognize each other, perhaps even know their mutual ethnic backgrounds, but little else. This is similar to mixed housing, where odd-(wo)man-out is an ephemeral resident. For one thing, besides lack of interest, there is also the factor of staggered schedules. Often as not compound-mates come into contact with each other only if there is a definite reason for it.

Social intercourse in the compound is limited therefore by the womens' work schedules. All of them, outside work notwithstanding, have their domestic duties. This does not leave a great deal of time for socializing, especially with people not regarded as anything more than people who happen to be living next door. As one young woman said, "If I am cooking and you are in the kitchen, I will just chat with you. As soon as I am finished, I will come to my room." All of the women

distinguish between neighbor and relative/friend. In most cases, compound relationships are restricted to the compound. Interaction among "strangers" runs the gamut of "If I see my countryman, I will greet" through informal conversation and Sunday afternoon games of Ludu, to an occasional outing to the cinema. The majority tend toward casual interaction in the public spaces of the common yard.

Such interaction for women is generally limited to women from the compound, or male kinsmen. It is often promoted by similarities in tasks, for example, cooking meals and marketing. Since most women cook out-of-doors, and eating schedules generally coincide, conversation is stimulated. In Ghana, even in Accra, refrigeration is still a luxury for the private household. As such, most women market on a daily basis. In some compounds, as women learn to develop neighborly relations with one or two others, they may market together. Or, on occasion, one woman may buy a few items for another. Such cases, however, involve a greater than usual sense of trust. Women enjoy a good bargain and are rarely willing to trust their shopping to another for that reason. In a society where children are usually brought up learning adult tasks, few are actually sent off to the market because "they are children and they will be cheated."

The lay-out of the compound may also promote or inhibit interaction. Ruby, who owns a kiosk at the front of her compound, knows all of the people in the double house -- mainly because they buy their petty goods and provisions from her. However, she does not see the women "at the upstairs." Upstairs is not really an upstairs at all; it is the main building, which has six steps leading up to it, so that it is not on ground level.

Age is also a factor in interaction. " . . . in the house . . . I work alone. They are older than me. They are married, have got husband. How can a small girl like me make friends with them?" So said a young lady in her early twenties, who has a two-year old child and lives with her sister. "But we come together," she continued. Age may be qualified by marital status. An unmarried woman is still free of compulsory daily household tasks, which puts her into a different social category than her married neighbor.

It goes without saying that male-female interaction is looked at askance; I found only one case of a compound woman spending time with any of the men in the house. This was most probably a function of her relationship with her husband. He is a nurse and has less of a traditional orientation than others. Thus, the two of them entertain friends together and both go out drinking or dancing with compound mates as well as outside friends. On the reverse side, one woman (illiterate) has become more than just neighborly with her neighbor. The two women share cloths and kerchiefs, they sit and converse. Formerly, they cooked together, but her husband separated them -- she does not know why. Returning to the male-female circumstance, almost every single Christian woman (i.e. non-Muslim, not necessarily religious) addresses non-kin men by the title "Mr."

Most of the women claim to know everyone in the compound; this, however, is generally for purposes of greeting. As long as it is known if a woman is older, the term "auntie" passes for a name. Or, if it is known whose child is whose, then the teknonymous term "mother of . . ." is used.

There are variations in neighborliness from person to person and compound to compound. Social interaction tends to be confined to the compound yard, for short periods of time before bed or on Sunday when no one works, and in passing during the day. Rarely do neighbors frequent each other's rooms, unless they are kin or towns(wo)men. The major exception is when there is a television on the premises. In this case, it is permissible to waive informal rules of privacy. But this falls into the category of borrowing a desired item, and because it is a status symbol for an individual or family to own one, it benefits the reputation to allow neighbors in to watch.

Care of children provides a final example. Since children are often the force in group/neighborhood cohesion, neighborly concern for others' children could follow suit. Just as a neighbor is "not really a friend, only we are living together" and free time is not spent playing together; so, a neighbor is not family and not to be depended upon as such. This is the attitude of the more traditional women, who will not leave their small children in the care of compound people, "no, if one of them is my parent . . ." If the baby wakes up and there is no one to nurse her . . . On the other hand, those women whose children are older and have working relationships with neighbors -- e.g. marketing together, talking together -- also help out in care of children.

Children are not the concern of the husband, yet if a woman's baby makes a mess in someone else's yard, a female resident (even if only a peripheral acquaintance) will immediately come to her aid. Children are fed on demand from birth, and a hungry child can always find something to eat, if not from his own mother, then from someone else's. Children

seem to feel no restrictions -- territorial, social or psychological. But adults do. This is frequently a function of age, generation of city residence, and continuity of socio-cultural ties. Traditional behaviors -- of greeting, of respect for age and sex, of clannishness -- carry over, coloring newly-formed relationships.

The more sociable sorts of contacts just delineated are indicative of the depth of involvement neighbor-women have. Sexual distinctions stand out; interaction among women is kept to a minimum in mixed compounds; and such that there it is pretty much confined to the commonly-inhabited territory. Women are more receptive to others of their own ethnic group and more willing to be helpful, in the mode (and name) of hometown solidarity.

Beyond these, however, are the more basic interactions which are necessary to the daily functioning of the house and its component parts. This entails the division of labor. It is a new role, insofar as it makes all inhabitants (be they strangers or kin) participants in a system of care-taking. It is also a role which is <u>not</u> activated by the male members of the house. Men learn to deal with strangers in the new social system proper, beyond the compound walls. Women learn through their domestic roles. It is a variation on a common theme.

A woman cooking and selling kenkey, or a woman frying fish to sell, may, by virtue of residential rights, claim a spot in the compound yard where she can sit and earn her livelihood. She must keep that spot in order. Similarly, each woman in the compound has her own cooking spot -- typically in her corner of the compound, in front of her own door. She must be sure that it is cleaned every day.

Whether a house is newly-built or a vintage product, there is a modicum of external cleanliness. However, fine architectural design notwithstanding, there is a problem of maintenance. And it is the women who are responsible for the cleanliness of both communal and personal compound space. The humidity and heat eat away at the paint and hallways convey an impression of sliminess. Ayi Kwei Armah paints a fecal picture of the interiors of buildings in Accra:

> . . . his hand recoiled in an instinctive gesture of withdrawal. The touch of the banister on the balls of his finger-tips had something uncomfortably organic about it . . . The banister had originally been a wooden one, and to this time it was still possible to see, in the deepest of the cracks between the swellings of other matter, a dubious piece of deeply aged brown wood . . . They were no longer sharp, the cracks, but all rounded out and smoothed, consumed by some soft, gentle process of decay . . . Of course it was the nature of the wood to rot with age . . . In the natural course of things it would always take the newness of the different kinds of polish and the vaunted cleansing power of the chemicals in them, and it would convert all to victorious filth . . . Apart from the wood itself there were, of course, people themselves, just so many hands and fingers bringing help to the wood in its course toward putrefaction. Left-hand fingers in their careless journey from a hasty anus sliding all the way up the banister as their owners made the return trip from the lavatory downstairs to the offices above. Right-hand fingers still dripping with the after-piss and the stale sweat from fat crotches. . . The wood would always win. (Armah 1969:14f.)

Floors, public and private, are always carefully swept, but walls, doors and baseboards are grimy and spotted. Every adult female resident in a compound is responsible for sweeping her area of the compound, or allocating the chore to another, generally younger and always female.

Depending upon the age of the woman (women) living in a room or set of rooms, and the female children living there as well, one of them will sweep out the room(s) early in the morning, and their respective part of the compound. Once a child is seven or eight, she will be given

this responsibility. If the occupants are a husband and wife, the latter surely does it. If a mother and daughter, when the latter is even as old as twenty, she defers to her parent's age and takes responsibility for the cleaning. If an extra family member is living with them on sufferance, or indeed, if they have been lent someone's girl child, she will take over the job.[2] If the room is upstairs in a two-storied building, she has no yard-cleaning duties. But there is the substitution of one kind of public space for another: most storied buildings have some kind of balcony arrangement, or a connecting hallway which must be clearned regularly. When her room is off of a hallway, her area of the hallway is individually swept.

These individually-maintained public spots, outside or on balconies, are swept as many times in a day as meals are prepared. When she cooks, a woman uses the ground for her refuse pile, afterwards sweeping up the parings. And the coal-pot leaves a trail of ashes and dead charcoal which is disposed of after cooking.

The middle of the yard might, or might not, be swept regularly, depending upon the whims of the women living there. If there is a common kitchen, it is cleaned by whoever uses it. It is not cleaned in rotation -- each woman cooks individually and each takes care of her own area. Conflicts resulting from one person refusing to clean a spot she has not used do not seem to crop up -- there is always a child about who can be given the task. And the women do not think out equal distributions of tasks. One may sweep, "in any spot . . . If I like I can sweep all the house . . . and clean the toilets and the bath. And if there is something bad, and that thing is going to spoil us, I can take it . . . Like a milk tin or a rag or anything."

People living upstairs might never come into contact with those downstairs, since their community spaces are split -- even in the line of compound duty, and it is here that minimal contacts are enforced. For toilet and shower facilities are shared in every single compound. The least number of each is one, and this is usually in a family house only. Usually, there is one set per house in the compound. Hence, in Figure 5, there are three sets. The use of toilets and showers is also assigned where there are multiples. This may be according to house, ethnicity or indeed, as in one compound the division is along the lines of sex.

Cleaning follows sexual lines, as do most tasks which can in any way be associated with domesticity. For instance, in one compound where one of the rooms is inhabited by a man and his child but no woman, and where the job of sanitation goes according to room, the man is skipped entirely. The decision-making involved in who cleans what and when varies, but there are a few generalities. In most cases, there is a system of rotation: it may be by room, in a weekly order -- " . . . it just came about when one day the lady from the first room did it and the next the next room and so on." Or, the women might sit down and discuss it and decide whose turn is when. Regina, whose mother-in-law is the house-owner, says that it is her husband's decision, "and they have shared it, my husband, with those in the house." Actually, the women in the house get together, in the morning, afternoon or evening, on a daily basis [sic] and discuss "about the house." The children wash the latrine and shower on a daily basis and then the women back them up monthly. Regina's husband gets into the act when something goes wrong -- e.g. when he goes

to the toilet and it is not clean, he calls only the women together to straighten things out.

The women in another case might decide for themselves, but on a monthly or more basis. Or, some women like Ekua insist that there is no system whatsoever: "If you look and see the toilet is dirty, you can wash. If you see the bath is dirty, you can wash." In cases when the men share one set and the women another, it still falls upon the women to clean both. If there is only one woman in the compound, and the other occupants men, it is her ascribed task.

Sometimes, a mixed compound's system follows the lines of a family house, where seniority and ownership come into play. The eldest women in the compound may dictate who cleans when. In a family house, the eldest woman (in the situation in Adabraka) is invariably the head of the house -- either she is the head of the matrilineage, the house-owner, or the eldest sister of the house-owner. If no one takes the initiative to do the cleaning, she will allot the jobs. More often than not, the women of the house carry out this work themselves, rather than passing it on to the children, who do the simpler sweeping. If it is a question, however, of a young adult woman versus her mother or aunt, etc., the former will concede to the latter's seniority and do it.

Auntie Viv, who is in her early forties and married, continues to live with her mother and sisters, because she is a contractor in Accra and her husband was transferred to Ho (in the Volta Region). Her brothers also live in the compound, but on the other side of a separating wall (they complain of noise). Each woman has her own room, as well as sharing the front room with the others. The old lady has two rooms. The

sisters cook in a temporary shelter, whereas the mother has a proper kitchen, bath, and pantry all at the rear of the house. So the mother has no duties in the front of the house. The sisters have their own bath and toilet in front. Housework is done by house girls -- one for the two brothers, two for the main house. And every women has her set tasks: Auntie Viv must see that the table is laid and breakfast ready; someone else must see to the garbage being cleared. As to the maids, one is a relative, one is fictive kin. The father of the latter had been looking after one of Auntie Viv's children, a student at Achimota. His wife brought forth and became mentally ill, so when the child was eight months old, the man brought the child to Auntie Viv. She has been with her ever since; she is sent to school and taken care of, in return for household work.

The foregoing discussion makes it clear that the compound provides a starting point for negotiating new roles. However, the context and the content of the roles continue to be a variation on the theme of traditional female responsibilities. Following my thesis that these roles continue to predominate even in the city, women have learned something of the city's ways right outside their doors. There is no confusion in their minds between neighbor and friend. The latter carries the connotation of greater closeness. Both currently exhibit the attribute of distance. One might expect that alongside superficial compound associations she would have intimate relationships (with others than family) with those she has met elsewhere. There still do not seem to be many ways of varying one's relationships.

Relationships With Women -- As Friend

Inherent in all relationships is an exchange of values. Basically these are much the same as in previous times, only the indicators have changed. In a cash economy, plantains and yams can be supplanted by frivolous items. Friendship is measured in tangibles just like any business transaction. The expression "I like you" and "I want to be your friend" are openers, followed by the ritual of be-gifting. A relationship of trust, a reciprocal relationship, indicates a time lag, during which one person is in the other's debt. The disequilibrium continues, until alter repays ego. And then the cycle starts anew. This "dashing" or be-gifting works like a contract. Breaking faith would break the contract, and be-gifting would end.

As noted earlier, in small-town life, the distinction between friend, relative and neighbor is superfluous, since often as not the three are coincident. Women are somewhat afraid of each other. In the city, they have not even necessarily grown up among friends and family, with the support of older women. They have had to learn the new role of neighbor, living as they do among strangers, in rented rooms. The power of gossip is great, and reputations are highly valued and easily destroyed. The question is whether ties of friendship, as a trust-relationship, are beginning to replace those of kinship. To get to this, one must first determine what the qualities of a friend are (to these women) and the extent of the relationship -- in terms of what the women do together and the frequency of their meetings. This then leads into the essence of a reliance, if it exists.

I asked my informants if they have any female friends; twenty-

seven replied in the affirmative. The first distinction to come up was between what a friend is and what a friend does. The first was difficult to determine and at times was defined negatively -- so and so is a friend because she wouldn't do such and such. In general, it is safe to say that two friends are usually peers. I pointed out earlier on that when individuals converse who are not fo the same age (status), they use titles which reflect this (e.g. auntie for an older woman). Faith, in speaking of three friends from church says that they all use first names -- "anyway [i.e. because] we are friends." Similarly, others like Joanna refer to their friends as their "equals," because when two women are friends, "you are the same size."

Why are they friends with certain others? Faith: "Because they are good for me"; Hope: "because I know them to entertain ourselves"; Hope the Ewe: "because she doesn't abuse her, doesn't talk rough, is good for her" (translated). I was interested to see how, if at all, ethnicity figures into friendships. To do so, I asked who the individuals' friends are (what ethnicity). Then at another juncture I enquired whether she had a tribal preference in friends. The answers coincide remarkably well for the twenty-four (of those with friends) who responded on both accounts, One half of them claim to prefer their own: "I like it, I'm proud of it"; "the people I know best"; "because of language"; "we are all the same," and these same carry out their preferences in practice. Another quarter (actually seven) claimed to have no ethnic preferences -- "all since there is no language problem,"[3] "we are all one," "depends upon the person" -- and in fact have mixed friendships.

Two of the remainder are worth mentioning in passing -- Georgina,

a Kwahu, because she mouths a common stereotype of her people, "they work harder," and yet is closer with another; and Lydia, because she says she enjoys all, then speaks of her one friend, a Ga like herself, and then follows that by the comment that she is closest with her sister. The content of her friendship is exemplified by what they do together: "If I meet them, we can converse, cracking jokes then, then pass away, bye bye." Her ambivalence carries through the entirety of her behavior.

It is hard to say whether any of this bespeaks a trend toward cross-ethnic interaction; two who are inclined in this way (Adisa and Hope) do not speak English and both belong to difficult linguistic groups (Buzanga and Ewe). On the other hand, two-thirds of those who prefer members of their own ethnic group do speak English and thus would have a basis for interaction with others. Then again, it is hard to say how significant knowledge of English is, since most are poly-lingual in African languages.

Having mentioned what one woman does with friends, I shall go on to discuss the rest. With them as well, their answers are revealing, because they give some indication of what women expect out of female friends, if they have friends, that is. Twenty-five percent speak of material obligations -- "if I need something, ask for it"; "we buy things for each other." It follows that shopping together for cloth or other articles of clothing is a common activity. But often, the friends meet accidentally and end their interaction when the activity which brought them together ends. That is, they do not go off together to the house, and there are no other such places suitable for women to patronize. But "visiting together" has a variety of connotations.

More than half of the women with friends explicitly speak of going to visit each other, at the home of one or the other. This might mean stopping by for a few minutes of greeting; it might mean a meal and a game of Ludu; it might mean sitting and conversing -- Benedicta: "they give me pieces of advice in future careers" -- or it might mean "speaking my mind." This is partially dependent upon how often they see each other: the need or dependence each has for the other. For example, Amina is from Yendi. She has friends only in Yendi, some long distance from Accra, so she does not see them. And Auntie Viv has a friend who went to the United States in 1965 and she has not seen her since. What does this say about the rapport they have and maintain and need? Others see friends on holidays only (the friends they refer to as "the" friends). Those who work together or live together have some contact daily. In general, however, most see each other on an average of once every ten days to two weeks.

They meet first at work, they meet at church, in the neighborhood or through significant others (like family, friend or husband). They do not see each other often -- they do not have the time. And there is little extra-curricular activity that brings them together, without the company of men. If they belong to the same church, they attend alone, sit together, and return home alone. Membership in associations, for those few who belong, are church-based (e.g. Methodist Guild) or ethnic-based (Zumunchi). They also tend to keep their contacts within the bounds of the institution. If they hail from the same hometown, they may travel to kin or festivals together. They can plait each other's hair. They can even take an early evening walk to the Circle (where

there are many people on the street and many women selling snacks) and on Sunday afternoon go to the cinema.

In general, their meetings are consigned to the home or to snatches-on the go. Those places where their husbands and boyfriends, fathers and brothers go and engage in heady discussion -- bars, in particular -- are off-limits to unaccompanied women. Unless they do not mind being marked as loose -- "Accra boys are bad and will try to follow you and boss you" (Joanna) -- and in those situations, women are only incidentally present for the sake of the women they came with.

Perhaps a major indication of intimacy among women is the fear of each other that they themselves verbalize. One has one friend from church, but that holy place is the only context for their meeting; others are dealt with in passing.

> Going to friends' house, I don't like it. Some of the friends are not good. If you go there, they will gossip or something else. I don't like going to friends. If I'm lazy then I'm in the house, reading my Bible or any story-book . . . If you meet at the Ambassador [Hotel] you can joke and do everything from there, it's okay. Because you alone aren't going there (Lydia).

This is the ambivalent friend cited above. Another who <u>does</u> have a close friend, has chosen her for what she does <u>not</u> do.

> As for other girls, when you tell your secret things to them, they will reveal your secrets; but as for this girl, she doesn't do that. And whenever they want to go out, to buy the cloth, they share it together; they do everything together (Hope, translated from Ewe).

The issue of secrets is pivotal. Amina with friends in Yendi has her mother and father there as well. And because of her <u>parents'</u> distance from her side, if something happens, she has no one to tell. Joanna says that a friend is one whom you can tell your secrets to,

"that's different from a friend who is your sister [someone simply your age]" and she goes on to say that to her mother, she can tell those self-same secrets -- "as for my mother, I can say she is my friend." Indeed, only three tell secrets to friends. Others either keep to themselves or tell family.

> I don't tell my secrets to friends. I used to [usually] converse with my friend [boyfriend] or my mother. Though I can tell something to my friend [boyfriend] but not so deep. In Ghana, friend they are not this thing. If you think you'll give all your mind to her, or to him [boyfriend] what they will do you might not like it (Georgina).

But with her real sisters, she is free. With most people, family (and especially mother) is still more reliable; secrets are safe with them.

There is no tradition of men and women socializing together; a woman stays in the company of other women; if she is with a man, there is an assumption of sexual play. In traditional areas, women-friends are mainly kin. There is a distinction made between family (the "in" group) and strangers (the "out" group). The latter may be incorporated through fictive kinship, thus they become part of the "in" group. Some urban women make an attempt to befriend outsiders, as already described. Often, however, they are not ethnic strangers. Many hold back on the realtionship, asking for material exchanges or light banter; and finally, there are those who reject friendship entirely.

Why? And what have they in its stead? There are eight women in the sample who responded in the negative to the query of whether they have any close friends. Lizzie says she is "free with everyone" and close with no one. Much of her time is spent with family. (This is no less true with many of those others who say that they do have out-

side friends.) Another four explicitly equate friend with family; thus, they renege on outside friendships, but do not hold back on those friend-relationships with kin. Two of them live in family houses; they say they have no friends, but follow that by saying that their close relationships (that include telling secrets) are with sisters. Indeed, one-half of the group without friends live with immediate family -- in a family house or rented room(s). This influences their extra-familial associations. Faustina says her special friend is her sister (with whom she lives), and a fourth respondent says,

> I don't have any friends. I don't know why . . . It's the nature of my business. Each time I come home, I can't go out and I don't think somebody can come to visit, because by the time I will finish it will be getting to seven o'clock. And I have to come to my room. Unless on the week-end . . . (Ellen)

and then she prefers to go to her sisters, her "closest friends."

Several of those who do socialize, even to a limited extent, express fear of bad-mouthing. Three give that as a reason for keeping to their own. (In practice, they very well may be just as sociable as any of the others who maintain they have friends.) Indeed, one could say that Amina from Yendi in functional terms has no friends, for she never sees them. It is only with her mother and father that she finds possibilities for intimacy, and since they live far away, she is quite alone. As one who belongs to an ethnic association, she has her countrywomen; they must satisfy her need for sociability.

Relationships With Women -- As Rival

In any case, the expressed antagonism to the suggestion of making friends, leads into the third female-female relationship to be considered --

that of rivals. This is a carry-over from the rural milieu, where female kin are one's friends and all other women potential rivals for one's husband or boyfriend. Even today, one meaning of the word "co-wife" is "rival." The defining role of the adult woman traditionally is as wife and mother to her husband's children. Such a situation could not help but pit women against one another. Things have not changed much in the move to the city. Rivalry for men continues, and so does distrust of women. Women keep each other in line through the sanction of gossip. And since a woman never knows when and by whom she will be victimized by bad talk, she often chooses to avoid putting herself into the position. This includes accepting the possibility of friendship from non-kin.

Akosua has no good friends. Maybe, she says, if they are sitting down conversing, she will say something and the friend also will say something. And when the friend leaves, she will say something to others that Akosua did not say to bring trouble to her. That is why, she says, she has no friends. The theme of conversational inadequacy comes up periodically; women fear that their words will be distorted because they do not speak well -- just another kind of taunt.

> She doesn't know how to converse and maybe if she has a friend and she's conversing with her, what she doesn't say, she will go and say that she said so. So because of that she has no friends (Fatima, translated from Ga).

But, even without saying anything, women must beware, particularly if family are not there. Says Auntie Elizabeth,

> Even I don't like to go out. People are bad. They're not good in this country. They talk about you. And I don't have parents. So if anything happens . . .

To her mind, "people" gossip too much, even if she were just going out.

For that reason, she would not want to give anyone the satisfaction of talking about her and ruining her name.

I went to the funeral of a man from the Krobo town of Odumase. "Mr. Disu's wife is a Fanti, from a renowned family; she runs her dressmaking business in her deceased father's house in Adabraka. Her sister has her baking business there as well. The funeral was held in the dead man's hometown, and the wake-keeping and visitation were at his father's house. After paying my respects to the family, I went off to the cemetary to await the burial. He had been a "big man" -- a member of the foreign service -- and the chapel was crowded. I sat on a stone in the cemetary with Mrs. Disu's niece. While we waited, the voice of one woman, in orange adinkra (stamped mourning cloth) kept rising in pitch. She was a Krobo, a member of the aggrieved family. She was going on and on about how her relative, Mr. Disu had made his wife a rich woman, who would live out her days in wealth. Look, she exclaimed, she hasn't even shed a tear; that shows you how bereaved she is! If he had not married her, she would be nothing, nobody. (This was far from true, given her family's resources and name.) That she kept the body so long -- why? Because now she knows exactly what his assets were and how much he was worth and what she can expect. And when he died! how she held and kissed him, as if she were eating his flesh![4]

Akwele and Adawkaw are friends. They met four years earlier through their mothers -- Adawkaw's mother sells cloth to Akwele's mother. Whenever the former came by, she would ask Akwele about the Methodist Youth Guild, in hopes of interesting her daughter. Which is how their friendship came about. Adawkaw often comes to her friend to

converse and confide her secrets. Here, Akwele declares, women are afraid of gossip, and for that reason, she does not befriend many. What kind of gossip? Some people come and talk to you about somebody. Then, as soon as they leave, they go and tell the person in question that you said such and such. And at times, what you did not say, they go and say that you did. And who does the gossiping? Women, not men. "As for men, they don't gossip. And whatever you tell them, they won't tell anybody." So why not have male friends instead of women? "Because some people will say that he is your boyfriend."

Thus, for the general sake of one's reputation,proprieties are carefully observed. The maliciousness which women bring to bear against one another is directly related to their view of one another as potential threats. Since multiple marriages are on the ebb, they fear the threat of mistresses and girlfriends; this is particularly so when the woman herself is not a wife but a girlfriend. She must protect her position. She has no leverage against the man's philandering, other than to leave him for another. Instead, she goes after the woman who has caught his favor. I knew from Accra one young woman, whose nighttime activities were often professional. She was barred from entering the Ambassador Hotel one Saturday; this is a popular dance spot and a "nice place." She was with another woman, and the doorman kept insisting, Sorry, you cannot come in without a man to accompany you. Evelyn sputtered a bit, but to no avail. It seems that three weeks earlier, she had come to the Ambassador and seen a rival, sitting there with her (Evelyn's boyfriend). So she beat up the other woman (not the man) and was thrown out.

Relationships With Men -- As

"Friend" and As Wife

The spectre of polygyny has been overshadowed by be-friending. And most married women who are concerned about the behavioral (in addition to the financial) side of their husbands' affairs, are concerned about the other woman's confrontations. Many girlfriends feel that they have special rights and often choose to abuse the wife fo their lover -- "bluff" her, as the saying goes. The wife maintains the domestic sphere, while the girlfriend is the social companion and she often loses no time in reminding the stay-at-home wife of this. To avoid this sort of unpleasantness, polygamously-married men tend to house their wives separately. And sororal polygyny had as its rationale promotion of the maximum of harmony. Sisters grow up together and learn to work together. If a man is to marry more than one woman, it is to his advantage that the co-wives get along, if and when they come in contact. In functional polygyny, no such attempts are made, and wives are the object of harassment.

Women are still adjuncts to men, and their status accrues from that of their husbands and boyfriends. In speaking of male-female relationships, one informant expressed distaste while at the same time shrugging. Not only is there nothing that she can do, but she does not discuss the particulars of relationships much with other women. "It is not good to talk about such things. When you are married, not good to talk, because you don't know what this other person will do with that man."

But you do know that there is a good chance that if something

transpires, it will not be to your interest. Women know that husbands and boyfriends alike always have their eyes open should an eligible young lady happen by. Most have at least one girlfriend on the side; ther is peer group pressure to do so. The only complaints ever volunteered to me came from women who have spent time in the West ("been-tos"); when they return to Ghana, they too feel that their hands are tied. One such person asked if I was not becoming bored with the conversations I had with women -- that all they talk about is sex and men. And for good reason: across the board, their lives are bound up with men, defined by men and controlled by men. Identity relationships with men (outside of the family) are also sexual. And any woman who reads the newspaper is reassured of this, as in the article "The Sensuous Woman: you too can be a goddess."

> Show me a woman who is sexy, desirable and exciting and I will show you a woman who has worked hard in becoming so.
>
> How many times have you been in a man's company only to have "his" interest diverted to the stunning woman who has just made her entrance?
>
> Moreover, it is "she" that he thinks of while you are making love?
>
> . . . But before you can hope to start driving him crazy with desire, you have to awaken your own sexuality and so become aware of your own prowess.
>
> . . . If, when you slide between the sheets you are covered in sticky creams or lotions, with your hair uncombed or not plaited, and wearing a faded cloth or an old night dress, note that this might excite only a gorilla.
>
> . . . A favourite with men is the see-through, short nightie in light pestal [sic] shades . . .
>
> . . . Wigs, whether Afro or conventional can be very attractive in or out of bed.

> . . . It is likely that while he is making love to you, he imagines you are the good looking girl next door, the current Drum [monthly magazine] cover girl, his girl friend or whoever else excites him sexually.
>
> Sometimes his sexual day dreams may appear in more bizarre forms, Man in his superego believes that any woman finds his charm irresistable. . .
>
> Unfortunately, not many wives happen to be psychologists. . .
>
> But with little coaxing, some tempting and a few bottles of beer, try and make him reveal his secret sexual longings.
>
> . . . be honest in your flattery. . . Comment on his fine physique, his handsome face, his big eyes, his sexy voice. . .
>
> Some foods are supposed to have certain qualities that act as sexual stimulants. . .
>
> Also, you may know or have heard the local man who sells aphrodisiacs: why not give some of the wares a try.
>
> The marriage vows are not enough to stop your man from straying. What you have to do is act out the parts of many different women. You can change the style of your clothes and make-up. And even your sexual personality can be altered occasionally.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> Wives should also be lovers too! (Stella Addo, in The Daily Graphic, November 23, 1970, p. 5)

This columnist is married to a British fellow she met while in London. Most of her writing reflects female bitchiness and superficial Western ploys. She often returns to the theme of how to catch a man and hold him; how to keep him interested, but most of all, how to make him feel like a man and want you, the woman, for flattering his ego.

In Ghana, a man and a woman have more at stake in an interaction than two women or two men. They do not operate in a vacuum of sentiment -- there is always electricity. Their identity relationships fall into two main categories -- friendship and marriage.[5] The consumerism

which is characteristic of relationships in general dominates male-female negotiations in particular. This produces a kind of bargaining, a reciprocity of demands. The quality of this reciprocity is inherently conditional; it is contingent upon benefits conferred by others and the imputed value of the benefit received. Ergo, "the obligations imposed by the norm of reciprocity may vary with the status of the participants within a society." (Goulfner 1960:171) The greater the sought-after status which accrues to the relationship, the greater its worth to the contracting party. And the less advantageous to one in the face of long-term norms, the more the other must pay to make it worthwhile. In Ghana, the woman who resists marrying in favor of be-friending must take note of the advantages and disadvantages, immediate versus long-run of each type of relationship -- and then she strikes the bargain.

No matter where they meet, to a man a woman is primarily a sexual being. Any other status notwithstanding, that is how he relates to her. Knowing that, she exacts an exchange: the behavioral components of sexuality and sociability, in return for material recompense. It turns upon the fulcrum of status. This is true for both marriage and friendship. I have dealt with the former in the previous chapter, as the traditional relationship which it continues to be. Here I shall concentrate on the relationship of friendship.

The girlfriend may be a potential wife to the man, or she may be a social companion to the married man. Perhaps one difference between the two types is that the married man's companion often receives greater exposure in social situations and also has the potential of greater mobility. The adult woman's status and mobility is tied to men

in two ways: the mere fact of attachment, important in terms of the mores of the society at large (e.g. as in marriage); and the specific attributes of the consort, in keeping with those valued by the individual's reference group. Both men and women are cognizant of how association with the other is reflexive; this is particularly so in pre- and inter-marital involvements for women (and extra-marital for men). For it is then that the two gain exposure as a couple.

What do they expect of each other? In Accra, a woman has no more power of possession over her boyfriend than over any other man; neither, however, does he hold such powers over her. At least not until he formally betroths her. "As he has not married me," says one, "he has no authority over me." He brings her gifts and he gives her a monthly allowance. Just as she knows that she has every right to expect begifting and support, so he knows that he can expect sexual favors. Pre-marital and inter-marital sexuality for the woman is the mirror image of extra-marital sexuality for the man. And polygyny, as a mental construct, carries with it the implicit assumption that male-female relationships are not platonic.

I was sitting at the local AGIP petrol station with Benedicta. She sells oranges there. Benedicta is twenty, unmarried and has an eighteen month old child. The petrol station serves as the starting point for the Kumasi taxis; consequently, on any given day, there are a number of drivers and their friends hanging around. While I was speaking with Benedicta, we were joined by some of the men. In response to a question I posed her, one fellow interceded -- "she goes with her boyfriend."

Benedicta: Don't mind him.
Me: Well, do you have a boyfriend?
Benedicta: No.
Man: She doesn't like to fuck, so she doesn't have a boyfriend.
Me: Is that the only reason to have a boyfriend?
Man: Yes. She has one baby who doesn't have a father, so she doesn't want a boyfriend.

Benedicta's (imputed) attitude is the minority side of the coin.

Greater value, or heightened reputation do not necessarily accrue to the chaste woman in modern-day Accra (or Adabraka). Particularly since sexual permissiveness brings positive results in the form of material goods.

Women come to enjoy the good things in city living, and they cannot afford to buy them on their small incomes. Courting behavior in the Western world employs a great deal of protestation; in Ghana, it employs prestation. Westerners are appalled by the practice of direct payment for the pleasure of the other's company; yet, many Western women think nothing of dispensing sexual favors to reciprocate for an evening out. Trutenau (1968) remarks on these cultural conflicts, using as an example the parting gift or settlement a village woman expects from her long-term European lover. To her, it connotes respectability and reassures her that she is not "cheap." While the European feels that

> an alliance without social recognition, for which payment is expected, is degrading for the woman involved, in fact reduces her to the status of a woman who can be had for money. (21)

In a love relationship, this same man might say, no man would be so crass as to give his beloved a monthly allowance. His sentiments are measured in timely verbal outpourings, the concern he voices and the

assurance that he cares. All of these things are intangibles. In Ghana, they are made tangible: you get what you pay for, and you pay for what you get.

And what do you get? On the one hand, there are the expected tangibles. Male-female interaction and the role game are extremely honest; many men insist that there is no hypocrisy involved in their behavior. 'And no self-respecting Ghanaian woman would remain in a friendship without material recompense. The actual form and extent of payment may be a function of class and expectations, just as the socializing is. As an example of one extreme, I have a divorced friend who lives in a suburb of Accra. She entertains a great deal, and Ghanaians drink a lot (as I noted earlier, it is a major vehicle for sociability). As a sign of hospitality, she must provide liquor. She expects interested males to keep her supplied. Even beyond this, there was a certain man who "proclaimed" his love for her, which he demonstrated by furnishing her house. She was not interested in him, but allowed (even encouraged) his purchases before terminating the association.

Everyone of my informants with a boyfriend receives a nominal sum of money. Only two report not receiving it with regularity; one of them, Vivian (who tries to maintain her self-sufficiency), only asks for money when broke. On the average, each is given monthly "chop" money, without being obligated to cook for the friend. Most also receive periodic gifts, such as cloth, and extra dashes of cash. This is an important supplement to paltry earnings, and goes toward the purchase of extras, which in turn add to her appeal. For almost all,

this is a standard measurement of good treatment.

> Yes, he [boyfriend] is good to me, because he give me anything I want . . . As I'm not working and I'm grown up too, my parents can't give me money too, because they know that I have a friend. So, he was responsible to do all these things (Georgina).

The prestations do not insure her fidelity,[6] which again must be bargained for. Nothing is sacred -- only that the reciprocal duties be fulfilled on both ends. If she feels that he is reneging, i.e. stinting on his material "due," and if she is upwardly mobile, she may search for a more lucrative friendship -- and suffer no recriminations. Instead, she may feel that his treatment leaves something to be desired.

> Some don't treat them well. Some boys, if they are sitting with you, all those things in talking, they don't care about it. If you ask him, he will refuse. That is why the girls used [usually] to take two friends or three friends, because if you are asking him and he wouldn't give it to you, so you will try this boy, I want to go, if only he will give me (Georgina, unmarried).

More than one young man from the neighborhood complained to me about the expense involved in having a girlfriend, and the fickleness of the women. Sammy insists that he has no girlfriend because he does not have any money and girls are interested in what they can get. And Alice's estranged boyfriend decried the amorality and infidelity of her behavior. To his mind, Ghanaian women are impossible to deal with until they are married. If they approach you for something, like money, and you cannot or will not give it to them, they will not wait. They will go to bed with someone else who will. So it is difficult to hold onto a woman without many favors.

Amawkaw responded to this expressed sentiment, defending her sisters. Her boyfriend, to whom she is affianced, does well by her.

He takes her out to movies and clubs, tries to give her some money at the end of the month, helps her out of financial difficulty. Most men, however, do not, "because they have to go about with many girls." Thus, women are simply following the male example, while their marital status allows it.

Ronald Cohen (in a personal communication) noted that "fickleness" of women is the man's view. "It is one reason for purdah for modesty, and many cultures have the idea that women are weak and can be had easily by anyone." Germaine Tillion (1966:199-209) elaborates upon this point in a chapter on the symbolism of the veil in Muslim countries. She notes that at the beginning of the twentieth century, all over North Africa and Western Asia, there was a rule requiring women who had to leave the harem for any reason (e.g. some obligation) must cover her face. But -- this was true only in the cities, not in the countryside, where women circulated unveiled. Her point is that in the city, the men feel that they have more to fear in allowing their women freedom, and thus cloister them more than before. In line with both Cohen and Tillion, it is my view that the weakness or fickleness feared, at least in urban Ghana, is a function of the contract-reciprocity quality of sexual relations.

There are also the intangibles: as his girlfriend, you get more attention than as his wife, and, you do not have to wash his clothes. The attentions vary somewhat in degree, depending upon whether the man is married, the demands placed upon him and how measureable the returns. for both parties. Nine of my informants each has a boyfriend. Their activities with them are far more social than those of married couples.

Bebbe exclaims, "If I want to enjoy, then I went to my boyfriend; maybe we go to the town, roaming about, come back, that's all." For the married women, the spectre of a husband protects her image; the visibility of the boyfriend gives analogous support to the unmarried woman. Married women operate in more circumscribed spheres; for one thing, because they have more responsibilities and less time, but also because other spheres are not open to them. Unmarried women are also restricted as to where they can go, but less so -- because they can attend on the arm of a man.

Thus, most of their outings with men are things that women will not, or prefer not, to do alone or in the company of females only. This generally applies to night-time activities. Simply "roaming about" is an example. The major social activity throughout the city is going to clubs to drink and/or dance. Married couples are in the minority, although married men are not. For example, only three out of twenty-two married women in my sample go to such places with spouses other than on special occasions such as Christmas. When the men go, they take girl-friends. The clientele takes in all classes, though regular patrons are aspiring sophisticates, who have incomes which can absorb the cost. Because the woman's attendance depends upon her male friend, if this is a central interest, she must shop around for someone who can afford it. Only four of the women with boyfriends attend regularly; one of the others, Aba, says that she used to enjoy going. Now, however, she has not the time. This is another important limiting factor -- for any recreational activity. She would go, but such times are limited to week-end nights when she is with her friend; and he is not interested, so she no longer goes. Lizzie, who does go dancing, expresses the

sentiments of many:

> Anyway, I don't like going out in the night with my girlfriends. In Accra here, in Ghana here, when you used to go out in the evening with some girls, they suspect that you are this thing -- a Lido girl.[7] They used to stand behind you and make rough comment.

Lizzie and Vivian both make mention of having male friends who they spend time with when their boyfriends are not available. Lizzie's friend acted as her escort if she wanted to go dancing. But it ended when she refused to be his "friend." And Vivian goes out with a man from work, mainly in the company of a group. Non-sexual social relationships are rare and often qualified -- e.g. if one's "friend" is busy, going out with his boyfriend, who would be circumspect in his behavior; or, going out with a man to fire up a neglectful boyfriend.

Public clubs have been recently supplemented by quasi-private clubs. Such places are also the stomping grounds for men and their girlfriends, and often facilitate extra-marital trysts. Some men are single, most are not. They drink and dance, often meeting up with friends or acquaintances. To some, going to clubs like Keteke is valuable, because they gain visibility. The clientele is predominantly elite. All women know that they are adjuncts to men; some will exploit that as much as possible to their advantage. If their status is derivative of the excort's status, and that is due in part to his financial position, they may set their sights on men who have these characteristics.

Only a few of the women in my sample have been to such places. The well-established Accra Club is the prototype for the new spots. It is limited to members only, composed of professional men and two female lawyers. The Club is primarily for drinking and socializing;

members are welcome to bring any women, with the noted exception of their wives. The explicitness of the regulation is underlined by the institution of "wives' night," held annually. Many of the wives are educated; however, the double standard applies to them just as it would to illiterates. Many wives refuse to attend on the one night they are invited, because some non-wives come and the married women fear (justifiably) unpleasantries from "bluffing" girlfriends. But peer group pressure and (the perpetuation of) polygyny maintain the system. One member, a prominent doctor, believes that women should not have equality with men; and in reply to my question about whether married women have affairs, he said "good God, no!" As Little points out, "men and society generally still tend to regard a man's relationships with other women as acceptable polygyny." (1959:75) And no system of polygyny accords women the same rights as men.

This is where the girlfriend can push the advantage. Recreation is the basis of girlfriend-boyfriend interaction. There are other recreational outlets, such as going to the cinema. Women may go without men, but this is usually only for the late Sunday afternoon show. Night-time attendance tends to depend upon having a male companion. There is also the occasional concert or football game; only if there are no domestic duties is the game a possibility. Most young women who work also take their turn at cooking on off-days, such as Sunday afternoons. Parties have become a thing of the past, for members of society-at-large; this is a result of economic distress. "Not like during the Old Regime" (i.e. when Nkrumah was in power); party-giving is pretty much confined to the elite.

In general, time is carefully parcelled out. Leisure-time is limited. And sexual play is a basic feature of friendships which must be accorded its fair share. This can be problematic, for the same reason that paying visits to the girl who lives at home is discouraged -- the disapproving mother. Sexual rendezvous are arranged by the man; he may have his own room, or may have a friend who does. For those with money, there are hotels. And there is the lore of the man who displaces his wife to take his pleasure: if you were married and asleep on your bed, says Patience, your husband would come in with another women, wake you up, tell you to go away, and then he would take the girl to bed. When they had finished, he would come out, tell you to lie down again, and the two of them would leave. No matter how exaggerated, this is indicative of what women conceive as their lot and what they are up against. In any case, sex is accommodated, as seen from the number of young school-girls who get pregnant. It is also a major reason for the disapproval of mothers.

All of my informants with a friend, except Georgina, express hesitancy if not outright opposition toward receiving visits from a boyfriend at the parental home. All met their friends either on their own -- such as at work, school or in the neighborhood -- or through mutual acquaintances (which is how most girls now meet friends, says one). None entered the relationship through family intervention.

> The comparative freedom with which young persons now enter sexual unions means that parents are no longer able to exercise much control in the selection of mates . . . The role of the parents and the extended families in the choice of mates is limited to advising the young persons to avoid certain categories of mates. When two young persons intend to marry they inform their respective parents and/or heads of their extended families (Tetteh 1967:205).

The word "mate" is the key. Friendships are not necessarily set-up with permanency in mind. Thus, whether she lives at home (with mother) or elsewhere, family may have no inkling of her involvement. This could be taken as a step in the process of extricating oneself from the guiding force of elders or anyone who traditionally wields power over the individual's actions; and a step toward thinking of alternatives and putting them into operation. I say could, not is, for two reasons: for one thing, marriage still looms large at some future time and families must still be consulted. And for another, until the relationship is to be formalized, it is kept secret from kin because of the continuing influence they (and especially the mother) can bring to bear.

Only two of the young women do not exhibit this sense of freedom. They rarely go off to play, confining their leisurely activities to the compound, where the "friend" may come by, and to occasional walks. They too express disapproval of visits that will give away the secret. But they have little leeway in their movements. Presumably, this has to do with the fact that they are young, live with mothers and each has a child who is being raised by the respective grandmother. As a result of the past, supervision is greater. Indeed, when Dora was staying with her aunt in Saltpond, only that woman knew of the boyfriend's existence. Dora was already six months pregnant before her mother was told by her aunt. "In Ghana, don't like the mother to know, because whe will tell you to wait small." The man was prepared to marry her, but it was thought that she was too young; better that her mother should raise the child.

Ellen expects to marry as soon as her fiance is transferred from Takoradi to Accra. Her mother does not even know yet of their intentions.

> I don't know why we don't do it, but don't . . . I just want her to meet the man when he's ready to come forward. I don't want to show him to my mother and in the long run maybe he's not going to marry me. I don't know quite what will be her reaction.

The fear of being "disappointed" by the man is common, and justifiably so. It is also the reationale which Georgina uses in dealing with her mother, but to the opposite end. She is the exception to the rule.

> I think if your mother knows, it is good . . . Because Ghanaian boys are not good and they used to disappoint girls. They disappoint girls always. So if your mother know this is the boy you are walking with and if something comes [becomes pregnant] and he wants to refuse, the mother will come. Some boys seem to refuse. . .

Of course, the mother will come to her aid, whether she knows ahead of time or not.

Amawkaw mused about the "typical" girl's training: the emphasis on family ties at the expense of those with outsiders, coupled with strict up-bringing. "You don't have a friend here till eighteen, nineteen, twenty -- when you're old enough. Because adults prevent you from it." So, you learn to keep your liaisons quiet. As they are women, mothers are aware of the sexual connotation of friendship, and the fact that the merest encounter can lead to such. "What I have seen is . . . some of the people don't allow men to come to their house when they are having girls. Or when they see the girl talking to boys, you see it is very bad intention." Lizzie herself sees the folly in such an outlook. "If I am having any children, I wouldn't

like to do that. I would like her to bring her boyfriends to me just to show me. If something comes, what-should I let her hide?"

Lizzie's boyfriend picks her up at work; they go out for a drink or sit in the car and converse. He then drops her near the compound. He never comes to her house -- not because he is married but just because he is her boyfriend.

> That is the thing. Our parents, when they see you moving with a certain boy, they used to quarrel with you or say something which is not good. So, whenever you take a friend, you used to hide it. Even when you are. . . say about sixteen or seventeen going, they don't want you to take any boyfriend. Till someone come your age to marry you. That is their mind. If they see you they will talk, talk, talk, talk, which you'll be sorry. You are not grown up, you are not grown up. They think you will conceive, and maybe you have not finished your schooling. That is the whole problem.

In fact, as far as much of the girls' (and their mothers') behavior is concerned, there are not many differences between friendships with married and unmarried men. Unless he declares himself, his eligibility matters not. Besides which, in a (functionally) polygynous society, the technicality of such an issue is meaningless. There may be advantages either way, for there are negative aspects to friendships not unlike those of marriage. In Accra, it seems that the more a man and a woman know each other, the less they see of each other. When a man first meets someone he likes, he will try to see her daily, to be sure that she has no time for anyone else. Once he has staked his claim and has some assurance of her loyalty, he will ease off in his attentions. The visits and outings will drop to once or twice a week. "When first married, they handle you nicely." Once a child is born,

not much after two years of being wed, his interests flag and his eye begins to wander. The pattern is set before marriage.

> What to do about a boyfriend who you never see, who abuses you, keeps you waiting days on end. That's the way Ghanaian men are. The men here are dreadful. They hold all of the cards and too bad for you. If they come, they come. If they don't, they don't (Vivian).

It is the same story of disappointment. As noted earlier, the woman has no more control over her boyfriend than he has over her. After all, when married, she cannot control her husband's movements, and for that relationship she has a contract. Unless he is misbehaving, and she wants to make a point, she tends to avoid creating jealousy on his part. Married women give this as a reason for not indulging in adulterous affairs, or even in interactions which could possibly be construed as such. It just makes for trouble in the long-run.

Florence, one of my married informants speaks directly to this point.

> Men are different. Men are so jealous, he will prefer to go with you. Maybe you have some society, like Zumunchi, all women. But if some young men, husband will be jealous.

If the husband has been mistreating his wife, he may have cause to be alarmed. For he knows that she is sometimes weak, and if another man comes along, the outcome will not be to his benefit.

> . . . if he's treating you bad, you're in financial difficulties and he don't give you something . . . maybe want to leave the man and get somebody to hold onto before you leave the man. Depends upon the man . . . Some women like to. Women too are sometimes jealous, hear something, whereas may be no sex involved.

If a man is a womanizer, no amount of wiles will counteract his behavior. For example, Vivian was having friends over for lunch --

four women and one man. She had not invited her boyfriend and was afraid that he might arrive during the meal, get jealous and make trouble. To prevent such an occurrence, she prepared a complete meal for him and took it to his house that morning.

In addition to this, there is the undercurrent of feminine acquiescence and docility. The "bluffing" girlfriend holds her tongue when in the company of men.[8] The old institution of separation of the sexes carries on in principle; it is simply less explicit for the woman-as-girlfriend. I found, both among my sample population of literates and illiterates, and among my contacts in the greater Accra community, that women in mixed company do not talk. The paucity of conversational exchange between the sexes holds true for both married and unmarried in social situations. A few years ago, an aritcle was written in one of the Accra daily papers by an American entitled "Ghanaian Girls are Dull." It was concerned with the working woman -- white collar workers, most of whom were secondary school graduates. Janet Tay, Secretary of the Committee on the Status of Women, discussed this at one of the Committee's meetings, because she (and the others) felt that a letter of complaint should be sent to the author. The fact is that women are subservient to men and do not scintillate in their presence; and conversation amongst themselves is fairly limited. Women are terrific consumers, particularly of tangible items which carry status, such as Dutch Wax cloth; the means and ends of their consumerism are men. By the same token, men are even greater consumers -- of single women; their flirtations and affairs are not limited by their marital status. And they continue to speak for their women.

When in the course of an interview a male happened along (for example, in the compound yard) more often than not he would intervene, while the woman sat mute. If it were the husband who entered upon the scene, he would take the floor and answer for her. At parties, women are primarily dancing partners for their escorts; otherwise, their participation is restrained. They keep to their traditional role: of keeping still while the men converse, or keeping their comments within the bounds of the circle of women present. It is also common to see women, and at times men as well, sitting around in a party situation perusing magazines. On their part, conversant men do little to bring the women into the discussion.

Women suffer neglect and abuse most particularly at the hands of eligible bachelors over the age of thirty. Male attachments are valued, and after the woman has reached her middle twenties, single men with appeal are few. And those who are around know that they are in demand. It is not that there are so many single (unmarried or divorced) women; rather, most prefer going out with men older than themselves.

> Oh, the perversity of today's young women! They are turning their noses up at their male contemporaries who try to attract them by wearing the trendiest fashions, shoulder-length hair, perfume lotions and sprays. The fact is that the mad dash by the young Romeos towards being 'with it' is helping drive their girlfriends into the arms of older and more mature men (Fiona MacGregor "Girls prefer mature men", The Ghanaian Times, 14 September, 1971:4).

Part of this is a direct result of the material wants and needs of the women -- it is a good bet that older men are better established and more solvent thin their juniors. Furthermore, they are less conceited, pleased to have a regular diversion from married life and more apt to

stick with one girlfriend. Therefore, married men carry a certain appeal to the unattached woman. However, the fact that there may be more of them does nothing to lessen the competition that women engage in against one another to make a good match (or catch). Rivalry for male attentions and attachment, be he single or married, fans the fires of distrust and jealousy, and it sets up endless barriers between potential female friends.

Two of my informants (Georgina and Lizzie) are seeing married men. It is interesting that both of them would resent their own (future) husbands having girlfriends. It is bad, says Lizzie, and for herself, going out with a married man is "dangerous." But, she adds, nothing can stop them from taking girlfriends. The other explains how her philosophy of life dictates the way in which she conducts her current relationship.

> . . . maybe some men, when they close, they won't come home a-tall as they have girlfriends, Say maybe till 10:30 or 11. If you want to tell him something, you won't get time to do it. That's why every night, my boyfriend has to leave at eight o'clock. If he wants to come back, that's alright. I know that he has gone to see his wife. You should force him to go and see the wife, else he won't go. As he has got a new friend, he won't go. . . (Georgina)

If boyfriends both give material support and become neglectful once the shine has worn off, how does a relationship with them differ in substance from one of marriage? To those who expect to marry the friend, it is an interim phase. But to Lizzie, who does not expect to marry her friend, there is a difference. To her, marriage means living together; by extension, it is a socially-recognized union, both to the society as a whole, and to the family. It accords her her adult

status, while at the same time she is fulfilling traditional obligations to her kin. Furthermore, as both informants attest, it means the fulfillment of bearing children. The preference is for legitimized offspring (as explained in Chapter V), and it is a common fear, especially of mothers, that young women will conceive in friendship. Beyond this, Lizzie says that as a husband, he must "do everything" for her. "Whenever I'm in need of something, he has to give me and provide me everything."

The differences lie in the main in the woman's change of status: her attainment of womanhood, with the consequent change in her lifestyle and the responsibilities do not change radically. For him, the major difference is that he fathers legitimate children and is beholden to support them. I therefore take issue with the argument that holds that polygyny in urban areas is easing up due to expense. According to surveys, migrants in the town maintain that family support is far more worrisome there than in the village.

> The answer was clearer still in the case of polygyny. Only one in sixteen said that more than one wife could most easily be supported in the town, while over four-fifths voted for the village. There are, then, economic pressures of which the urban poor are also becoming aware, and which militate against both polygyny and large families in the Ghanaian town (Caldwell 1967:143).

This was a major reason that my own informants gave for fear of their husbands taking secondary wives. The fact is, however, that having girlfriends and mistresses carries very similar financial obligations -- the major difference turns on the birth, acknowledgement and therefore financial support of children. In her position as a wife, the woman

makes material demands upon her husband. These he will generally try to satisfy, lest she leave him to return to her family. In a friendship, however, the stakes are higher. She never knows how long or to what extent she can depend upon his affections and support. She is deferring her own acquisition of adulthood (assuming she has not yet been married), without guarantee of return. A man who does not satisfy the material demands of his girlfriend, on the other hand, runs the risk of losing her "affections" to another who will. And he has no court of appeal in her family, as there is no contract between them.

This is how the city woman manipulates the situation to her advantage. The game is the same, the rules are made more palatable. Her trump card lies in her pre-marital and inter-marital exploitation of men, in a very calculating, grasping way. This is not to impugn her. She lives in a society that worships material gain. It is only natural that she operate in accordance with the system. At least to some degree she can turn it to her advantage: as long as she is unmarried, she has prime bargaining power. She can negotiate a price for the relationship being contracted. On the other hand, she knows that once married, her immobility is guaranteed.

> Some boys, if you respect them, they don't respect you. They do thing to you you don't like. And then they beat you or quarrel with you. For instance, if you stay with him, he doesn't want your sister or brother or friend to visit you or for you to go out because think if you go out or go to a friend, you'll speak about him or how he treats you in the house. Only want you to stay in the house and cook after you come from market; even doesn't let you visit. If try to talk or if he abuse you and you do the same, he'll beat you. They don't care and sometimes don't care about the child too (Dora).

The more she demands, the more she can adjust her appearance and her

circumstances, and the further she can rise -- with respect to the men she attracts, the places she is seen and so forth. Finally, the greater becomes her mobility, widening the arena of her activity and associations. The more upwardly mobile the woman, the more elite her target. There is a thin line between courting behavior and whoring behavior. Once a woman has a few boyfriends, the distinction may be spurious, except for the context of their meeting.[9] For example, to recapitulate: a woman wants a half-piece (six yards) of cloth. Her boyfriend does not have the money to buy this for her. The degree to which she sees relations as contractual means will dictate her next move -- to stay with her friend and defer gratification, or to strike up a bargain with another man.

The point of divergence comes when the woman decides that she must marry. Once married, her options are circumscribed by the propriety of being a married woman. However, marriage is not a binding relationship. It is easily dissolved by men and women alike. Women do not marry for love; they marry in general for respectability, and more tangibly for security, but rarely for companionship. The society at large is still polygynous in nature. There is as yet no model for the monogamous man, nor for the monogamously-married woman. She must accept her role. If the traditional attitudes of fatalism, seniority and polygyny appear to work to her disadvantage on the one hand, then fatalism, reciprocity and lability can be maneuvered to work to her advantage on the other. Fatalism, in a society where options are still closed, for the moment pre-empts discontent.[10] The prescribed acceptance of the forthcoming conjugal role may enhance the courting game, with all of its negotiations and intrigue.

By the latter I mean the ability to deal in abstractions, to conceptualize alternatives; this process of creation requires taking leave of traditional models.

There are two sides to this coin -- the ideal, as preached by the Western magazines and the Ghanaian imitations and embodied in the external behavior of members of the elite; and the real, as practised by the majority of the population, underlying the behavior of even those "new" urban types, and embodied in the perpetuation of the folk image of the woman. The newspapers may carry articles about "trendy trends in wigs" and the "N₵ 175 student glamour girl"; they may advertise Western gimmickry in maintaining relationships; but, they also promote the traditional aspects of the female role, those identities and duties into which young girls are socialized. For example, be-friending may be accepted for what it is, but it can never supplant marriage.

> If marriage is that horrible and if married women are always left out of the fun, why do girls still clamour to get married?
>
> One would have thought that girls would prefer to stay single, knowing that all enjoyment ceases the day you get married.
>
> Why for example did I get married again after my first two attempts had ended so disastrously?
>
> Could it be that women enjoy being left at home?
>
> Could the 'old' fashion idea of a woman not being or feeling complete unless there is a man around be true?

The columnist goes on to describe a friend who is divorced, has a good job, three children and a plethora of invitations to go partying. She wants no more children, and is happy and carefree, yet she wants to re-marry. The man is neither wealthy nor handsome, and she is not in

love with him. "The last question is rather interesting, if you consider that she is somebody who has assured me that she doesn't believe in love any more. She says she doesn't love him but she just wants to stay with him." ("Bitter or not they like it" Saturday Mirror, 7 November, 1970)

Stella Addo, the weekly columnist in The Daily Graphic, wrote a column entitled "Those lovable rogues," in which she probes the reasons that women are infatuated with, and often marry, "the charming rogue who loves you one moment and double crosses you the next." She asked a divorcee about this.

> My ex-husband was what you would call a playboy type. But the brief happiness and few gifts he gave me can never compensate me for all the hardships and frustrations I experienced during our marriage.
>
> If I choose to marry again I will certainly look for more lasting qualities in a man (15 September, 1971:5).

The behavior of these "rogues" is never acceptable in the person of a married woman. Ellis Amenu asks whether male society ever realizes what an injustice is done to the legally married woman.

> I do not know why a married woman's extra-marital activities are looked upon as promiscuous and condemned seriously by her society. If women have achieved equality in business and education [sic!] why should the stigma of having indulged in extra marital relationship brand only the women? Why can't women achieve equality in sex?
>
> Our forefathers were polygamists because they needed the human labour on their large farms. . .
>
> . . . Men leave their lawfully married wives at home for 'Chicken soup' (young school girls) who could be their daughters. . .
>
> And these men full of lust breed indiscipline among small girls so they are used as gimmicks and the result of the relationship can only be a gimmick itself, a temporary thing like a new toy. And the man unscathed, unmarked, goes back to his ever faithful wife.

> . . . ("Marriage still a sacred union" The Daily Graphic, 29 September, 1971)

And yet, after enumerating the wrongs suffered by married women, she concludes that they should not be granted sexual freedom. "What I am saying is that MEN SHOULD DISCIPLINE THEMSELVES." Marriage is a sacred union.

I present as one last example the differentiation made between wife and girlfriend, in terms of her responsibilities to the man.

> . . . for those who believe that the quality of the food is more important than the quantity there is still nothing to beat home cooking.
>
> This is why most men demand culinary skill as a number-one quality before choosing a wife. George Meredith might have been a Ghanaian when he said: 'Kissing don't last; cookery do!' The girlfriend must be pretty, but the wife must be able to cook. (Stella Addo "Kissing don't last, cookery do!" The Daily Graphic, 6 October, 1971:5).

It is clear which is the time-honored role.

Alternate Life-Styles: Primacy of the Folk Image -- REAL

The extent of the "real," the traditional, is exuded through all of her daily behavior. Women, and men as well, grow up in a role, from which there appears still to be little deviation. There are elders to guide them, even after coming of age. Mothers and husbands are poised at either end of the rope, while their daughters/wives are tugged from one side to the other in fulfilling responsibilities and carrying out obligations. The tension does not ease up often enough for the go-between to go off in her own direction.

It all begins with her training at her mother's (or another responsible female's knee). Every single girl -- not matter what her ethnicity,

her generation, or her place of residence -- gets identical training for her adult role: first in the domestic arts, and then in her sexual comportment. Both direct her to make a good marriage and to keep house for a man. With respect to the first, girls receive a gradual and informal education -- "if she [mother] is doing things, you help." Auntie Viv gives an example of the way the role is taught in graduated steps:

> Start when about nine with kitchen -- see how things are being prepared. At about eleven, breakfast and laying of table; thirteen, have her prepare midday meal. Thus between fourteen and fifteen, she's okay. Then teach little mending. Washing of clothes go with cooking. She learns to budget her time. Then, leave younger children with her. By eighteen, she's perfect to get married.

The ages may differ in different homes, and the order may be modified, but in general, such training is the same. For, no matter what her aspirations, she must learn to maintain a proper household. And in a sense, it is another of her obligations to her mother to learn well.

> . . . you will go to marriage with somebody and if you do wrong, he will think your mother didn't teach you. Or your mother doesn't know how to do that thing. So she should teach you everything. . . how to cook, how to keep yourself neat, and your room . . . (Ellen).

And then there is the point when the girl becomes a woman -- measured almost unanimously by the coming of sexuality. Twenty-one of my informants say that a girl reaches adulthood with menarche (one used the linguistic phrase in Twi, ye a ne, which means "woman menses" or "become woman when pass menses"), four when one gives birth, two when one marries (one of whom has a baby, but is not married), and five when old enough -- mid teens to twenty-one -- as when finished school, working, able to dress oneself and go out.

Whether the woman believes that menstruation marks her adulthood or not, most report that the event does not go unnoticed. On the ritual (traditional) side, there are still many who celebrate the occasion. For example, among Gas and Akans, ɔtaw is prepared one month later. This is made from yam, mashed with palm oil, with a hard-boiled egg on the side. It is eaten by the young woman alone. And all Krobo who maintain ties with the hometown participate in the dipo. It used to be held for a group of girls in their early teens; now, it even includes youngsters. It is more of a general learning experience, culminating in a day of secret activities and communal festivities. Dora went through dipo at the age of twelve, and she bared her wrist to show the tiny knife marks to prove it. "If you don't do dipo and you conceive, the child doesn't belong to either your mother or father; you've brought dirt into the house."

Conception is the key. Some of those who did not take part in or partake of such ritual celebration (two-thirds of my sample) and some who did, received advice from mother or mother surrogate. Unlike training for housekeeping, this is made explicit.

> . . . at first when you start your menstruation, she will tell you what you have done -- you have been to a woman, so don't play with boys or men. If you do go to them, you will conceive (Lydia).

In former days, girls in their mid-teens were thought too young to be taught such adult matters. In modern times, however, friendships commence at an earlier age. Once menstruation begins and until the young woman is safely married, her mother fears that she will become pregnant. This reiterates what my informants gone-a-wooing express. Boys must be avoided.

Hope thought back to her unmarried days, some eight years ago. When she was with boys, she made sure that her mother would not see. Some mothers give ample warning beforehand, others wait, but most say something -- "hey, they are strict on that thing." They know that they must because you "don't know, anytime anytime in Ghana nowadays, when they begin going to boys. . ." Many conceive despite parental forewarnings. "So many girls don't mind their mothers and fathers. They didn't obey their law." Florence is a married woman, with two daughters. She points out how it can even happen to an older person, who knows her proprieties but is unhappily married.

> You know how sometimes we are all weak. Like go to a wedding, meet many people, don't go with husband. Don't have a car, take a taxi. So someone offers you a lift; then he says to go take some beer. And the women too are weak, then he'll get the privilege of you, just go and tell you something. . .

Mother's advice may also include strictures against "roaming about." For she may fall in with bad types, which will not benefit her future chances to marry, and may damage her reputation.

Mothers show concern to protect both their daughters and themselves. For the behavior of their offspring reflects on them. When Faustina was twenty years old, her mother told her 1) when she gets a boyfriend, she must introduce him to her; 2) she must find a "better," i.e. Ga, boy who would care for her; 3) a man without a wife; 4) she must obey her husband and cook well and serve well; 5) must not roam about with other men.

Adulthood, as expressed in the milestones chosen, falls some time in one's mid- or late teens. And yet, mothers still have enough influence

to forbid their daughters to go about with men "until they have grown." What this means is that once the daughter no longer is her mother's responsibility, she is grown. Defined by my informants, responsibility[1] ends when the "child" leaves the parental home. Twenty-two say that it is the same for both sons and daughters -- when they finish school and/or are working, fourteen; when they marry, four; when they are in their twenties (grown), three; or leave home, one. And seven make a distinction between girls and boys: responsibility for one's daughter ends when she marries, for one's son when he is grown, finished school and/or is working. Hence, the power the older woman holds over her daughter -- until the latter passes from her authority to that of a husband.

Beyond basic training and conditioning for marriage, girls learn through osmosis that they, as women, have different abilities and capabilities than men, and consequently different roles. Twenty-two say that a woman cannot do the same things as a man; this takes in work and play (Felicia: "Some work men can do, but we women can't. Men like going out more than women.") This rationalized in terms of technical knowledge, brute strength or God-given rights. And there is, of course, the financial side:

> You can't do anything like a man, as you are a woman. . . If [while] as man give you N₵ 20 or more than that to marry, you don't give a man. If you have a husband, you don't give chop money to your husband. If you have a husband, you don't buy all these things [furnishings], your husband will buy (Hope, married).

All of these and many other examples fall within the rubric of the traditional male role, as explicated in the section on conjugal

responsibilities. For a man is free of household chores. Unmarried Lizzie points out that "a man can go out freely, he's not prepared to cook. But as for a woman or a girl, you have to cook. When you are cooking, the man will be out."

And, following this through, can a man do the same things as a woman? Negative and positive responses are of about the same proportions as in the reverse question. The majority center on traditional female duties, such as domestic chores,

> A woman can cook, sweep, do all the rest, but a man can't stand and cook, sweep the room and everything. . . I can wash, but my husband can't wash because he's not a washman to wash (Martha, unmarried).

Work/trade -- "Women can do the same as men, but men can't sell in the market" -- and, interestingly enough, powers of procreation -- Lizzie: "a woman can bring forth, but a man can't. A woman has her period, but a man doesn't." All of the areas wherein she receives <u>traditional</u> training seems to reinforce her role as distinct from that of members of the opposite sex. And more often than not, answers are given in terms of the husband-wife differentiation of role duties, not just those generically male versus female.

> Men can go outside alone; they can keep other girl-friends or wives -- women just can't. . . I can do the cooking, he can't. Being a woman gives special privilege -- I can demand money from the husband, it is his duty. He can force you to stay in, you cannot force him to do the same, because he is your care-taker (Florence, married).

. . . just as your mother was before him.

Finally, the social persona: the social identities and identity relationships in combination; this still remains bound to the constraints

of hearth and home. Very few are interested in the housewifely role to the exclusion of all else. However, all agree that "all else" (even outside work, the importance of which has already been demonstrated) takes second place to being wife and mother. There is just so much time in a day, and the basic role duties have primacy. So, for example, from what my informants have said, it may be the case that the political identity and activity of women has been over-estimated. Or perhaps with the change in governments and the resurgence of ethnic identity, national political fervor has ebbed. Or perhaps my informants, the Adabraka "everywoman," are the exception; for not one of them is either politically involved or interested. Less than half even exercise their right to vote.

The "all else" is contingent upon one's immediate seniors, or guardians, be it parent or husband or even elder sibling. Once married, and officially grown, it is the male who gains control on a daily basis. Relationships and actions are developed and carried through according to priorities or urgency. Once married, urgency is defined according to the needs of husband and his household.

The "new" generation of urban dwellers, as well as those who have been inspired by permeating Western styles, appear to be developing images appropriate to a new way. The individual's social persona is manifestly attuned to a non-traditional life-style. Such a woman may attempt to ease her ties with hometown and extended kin, to disacknowledge her background and become her own person. And yet, even for her, unconscious, out-of-awareness traditional roles lie dormant, and they must be carried out when the ghosts of the past appear and demand it. Her, contradictions come to bear; the resolution favors tradition.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

In the Introduction to this dissertation, I asserted that women in Accra are still tied to their traditional, ascriptive roles. My concern has been with the content of their participation in the urban system, rather than with the form of involvement, which would be nothing more than a reiteration of past accounts. The manner in which the data was collected, and the organization of it, follows suit. Therefore, in this Conclusion, I wish to bring these issues together.

First, I shall relate the posited system of attitudes to the demonstration of the predominance of traditional social identities and identity relationships for adult women, and for their attainment of adulthood. Second, there is the two-sided issue of the power of choice -- the extent to which urban structures are open to women, and the extent to which women can break away from old patterns, conceptualize alternatives and act on them. I suggest that the second issue is an outgrowth of the first. For promotion of new behaviors, with the ebbing of old restraints, acquisition of new social identities by dint of achievement, and control over activities (if only differential) have not been gained. As a final note, I shall re-affirm my faith in the phenomenological approach to fieldwork, and the kind of data elicited, by allowing one of my informants to speak for me.

Accra contains many different constituencies; there are local Ga

structures and institutions, which happen to be situated within the confines of the city. There are zongos (strangers' quarters), mainly Hausa, which maintain their traditional structures. There are mixed neighborhoods, such as Adabraka, which accomodate in-migrants from all over Ghana and other African countries. Despite all of their background differences, there is a bond of union amongst all of these interactants; it is based upon their mutual adherence to a system of traditional attitudes, as reflected in the continuation of basic roles. This is glazed over by a patina of superficial Westernization, with its role structure based upon differentiation and achievement. Modern institutional life in Ghana is modelled after the latter, an import; but it is the indigenous system which represents the Weltanschauung of the common person.

Women are caught in between, but their roles remain traditional, and therefore ascriptive. Authority lies in the hands of the men; as defined by polygyny, men are the caretakers, and as such respected as elders (seniors) would be. Indeed, the traditional elders are men; they have the power of advise and consent. Women have always occupied a confined role in the social organization and structure; instrumental power lies in the hands of authority figures, namely men.

I have shown how in modern-day Accra, across ethnic, class, neighborhood lines, women are restricted in their activities and identities, ratified by the time-honored principles of reciprocity, polygyny, seniority, lability and fatalism. Women's roles are still based upon their sexual identity. Thus, in accordance with polygyny, the woman is an adjunct to a man. Her identity is tied to his, as his wife, his

girlfriend, his daughter; each change in her status vis-a-vis the rites of passage through phases of the life cycle ultimately result from (or are geared to) attachment to a man. For example, puberty rites allow her to be viewed as a potential wife and mother in a general sense; engagement and marriage take her out from under the authority of her father (or uncle) and place her under that of a new man. Furthermore, because polygyny is associated with the male right, and since Ghana continues to be functionally polygynous, first access to the choice morsels of city-life, including employment and training, goes to the men.

A woman not only owes it to herself to marry -- and to become a respectable member of adult society; she owes it to her family as well. They brought her up and expect proper acknowledgement. Her marrying enables her mother to hold her head high. But her child-bearing enables her mother to hold her head even higher. And the same is true for her consort. He is her caretaker; she must listen to him, put up with his affairs while abstaining herself. But she is supported by him and they both benefit each other through setting up house and raising a family. The children are the link between the hometown and the city, between the grandparental and parental generations.

No matter how constraining her life may be, she must follow this path, for it has always been done so in the past, and because those older than her have taught her it is right. Adherence to the advice of seniors has a crippling effect on initiative. The principle of seniority means that if your mother sold yams and informally trained you to do the same, her age and wisdom override your thoughts toward pursuing another

line of work. But even if you have not been taught a particular trade, the elders must be consulted before you strike out on a venture. Since women tend to marry men older than themselves, they are doubly deferent to the respective spouse. And as children, boys and girls alike learn quickly to heed their elders' words.

Thus, the woman has much less access to the tools which would provide her for greater participation in diverse spheres; she also has models to follow, exemplified by kin, mouthed by seniors. And she is further boxed in to the domestic life. She shrugs off her husband's "friendships" both because she has no say over his affairs, and also because her investment in the relationship is not infused with Western-style affect. She knows from first-hand experience of growing up in the countryside, or from stories retold, that men and women have a strongly financial relationship, that there must be reciprocation, but that companionship does necessarily play a part. Women do not expect fidelity and company from their spouses. Men, on the other hand, easily go from woman to woman -- made possible by their privilege and their low sense of affect. Persons in roles are oftimes interchangeable, for there is a behavioral definition and a diffuseness of affect. Children are exposed to this in their growing years -- either as victims of divorce, or objects of exchange, as in fostering.

Before marriage, the city woman can flex her muscles a bit; she will attend to the man whose material offer is highest. She too, like her male counterpart, appears to have little difficulty rotating persons in roles This is particularly so outside of the bounds of the family. Even within the family circle, however, the person who enacts a given

role is credited accordingly and responded to. Mother's sisters may mean as much to the individual as the mother does. The labile personality, in this sense, does not suffer great disorientation or sense of abandonment when she/he has been replaced. For there is always someone to substitute. Family are dependable, and one can always unearth some favor due her.

The woman, however, does settle down into marriage; her gamesmanship and practice in bargaining come to a head in the marital bargain and are then laid to rest -- at least until she is divorced and out in the market again. But why does she accept this situation? Why the categorical acceptance of male authority, of the rights of others to run your life, of running your life just as your mother ran hers? Why refrain from attempting change, or, why not even have the thought of making a change? It is a fatalistic acceptance of the structure of one's life and the society. Acceptance of the husband's philandering is not just a function of the power and authority vested in him as a male, or of affectual non-involvement; there is also the principle of fatalism. Why interfere? Such is life. As I have remarked earlier, it is fatalism which ties together the other interconnecting parts of the system, which has perhaps resulted in the woman's lack of self-assertion, of not insisting that she be sent to school in place of her brother. Women are denied a place in the newly-developing urban system. By the same token, they lack the conceptualization of alternatives, i.e. they accept things as they have always been.

Women have not had the opportunity to develop new identities and engage in new relationships, or sectors of activity. This relates to the

control that she may hold over her activities, her power of choice and how it is fulfilled. And this is the second issue I wish to consider.

In Chapter I, I spoke of difficulties encountered when trying to elicit a response to a question. It may have been due to the individual's inability to articulate her feelings. It may also have been due to the absence of the conceptual category; this may stem from the tradition of following models and/or running one's life according to the dictates of others. Or it may be due to the lack of relevant information, even though the category may have a referent.

This point is exemplified by the difficulty that I had when I employed the terms "independence" and "freedom." A point-blank request for the individual's understanding of this term, and how it related to her life, generally necessitated a great deal of cajoling. And even then, answers were often somewhat meaningless. I followed this with a series of related questions, which could be taken to illustrate my interest, and the answers to which would illustrate the informant's. They included such items as from whom permission must be requested to do a variety of things, whether husband or family limited her activities, whether she can do the same things as a man, and so on. Responses to these were more easily obtained and have been used as documentation throughout the foregoing chapters. It was clear, in the asking, that more often than not, no connection was made between the abstract query and the more concrete one that followed. I then posed the hypothetical situation question: are you more independent if you marry a wealthy man who gives you all you want AND you also have ten children; OR if you are single and have a good job? The inconsistencies in responses, that is, in how the women understand the questions, are illuminating.

There are those who not only could define "independence" (as I understand it)[1] but also carry it through to some associated situations, and, in particular, to that of being married versus being single. They are less than half the sample (fifteen), but include all age and ethnic groups, as well as levels of literacy. For example, Adawkaw is illiterate and in her late twenties; she said that if she hires a room, does her own work, and looks after herself, she would be independent. But, she continues, she is not now, as she is married, and despite today (day of the interview) being Sunday, she cannot go to church because her husband wants her to cook for him. Her answer to the hypothetical question was to choose the life of a single woman: if you stay on your own, then you can go everywhere you like and you can be happy.

By the same token, Florence, a woman in her mid-thirties, literate and also married, says that "you will do everything you think is good for you . . . don't want anybody to force you to do anything against your wish." She believes that she enjoys this sense of freedom, and given the choice between a rich man and no man, she also chooses the latter.

> Wealthy people have hatred and jealousy between their wives . . . Maybe the man will give you everything, but don't have peace of mind. So prefer to be single. Also these wealthy people have so much money they can spend it on girls and hotels and tell you they have gone on trek. But because of the money, you don't say anything, even if he abuses you.

Money is an important quality; indeed, many use it as an index to achieving independence. And Florence's words ring true, for many would choose to marry someone with money, assuming they would have everything they wanted and could hire a maid to care for the children. The mere fact of children is also important. Alongside those choosing the rich

man for the economics of it, just as many others made the choice because of the children. Children will provide security in sickness and old age, not to mention respectability. "If you haven't any child, it's not good . . . If you have money and no child, it's not good . . . If you die, that's all. And if you have child, someone will say 'this is Hope's child.' " This same individual (who has five children) proclaims "if you have husband, you don't have independence . . . Because if you go out, he will ask you what you are going to do . . ." But, it is <u>good</u> to be married. "Everyday you have owner like your mother or your father."

This brings me back to the inappropriateness of certain categories and the high regard given others due to traditional attitudes. Marriage in Ghana, whether urban or rural, is the norm for adult women; it is also good in the long-run because it provides the context for bearing children, another sacred cow. Children care for their parents as well as bringing them status as parents. Thus, marriage is not so easily disqualified. Even some of those who admit to greater freedom when single append such qualifications as, neither being married <u>nor</u> being single carries independence, since you need always depend on others. Or, "in the long-run, single, but what about when old, even if you're in an old-age home, you're still dependent. [If] at least you have family [children] to look after you . . ."

There is also the issue of control. As Hope implies, it is <u>good</u> to be controlled by a senior -- first parents, then naturally enough spouse. Auntie Atta, hoping to remarry having been widowed in her twenties, says that it is good that someone will look after her; to her, that is independence. The same thought in different words from Georgina --

> I think if you are independence [sic], people don't respect you. Because you go here and there . . . [Independence] means you have nobody to control you. I don't think it's good. I think if you get somebody to control you, that is good. If you are doing bad thing, they will tell you this is not good or this is good.

This returns to the beginning of the question of free will and conceptualizing alternatives. As I said, some women were perfectly consistent in related thoughts and examples; others had no thoughts whatsoever -- "anyways, my husband can tell you" -- although they could respond articulately to examples. The majority gave answers that were consonant with their socio-cultural norms and values: making an association with a condition of goodness, then choosing that which would best satisfy this definition, thus, equating "good" with material gain or with an accepted norm -- e.g. disregarding possibilities that do not include marriage and children, and not conceiving of living without others to tell you what to do (Amawkaw would feel free "if I'm married. That is, if I got away from my grandmother . . ."), or designating such a hypothetical possibility as bad. It is similar to the responses I received when asking, what kind of a man would you like to marry? She knew she would marry, one man or another, and she did not really consider it to be within her control -- so she had no answer. And when my unmarried and married informants alike spoke dishearteningly of their (future) spouses womanizing; and the hand-tying obligations for them, the woman, once they were married -- not one expressed the will to be single. With respect to the example at hand: independence, for most, has a positive connotation, it is good. Marriage is a norm, thus marriage to a rich man is also good; therefore, the equivalence of independence with marriage is predictable, and in line.

Tradition holds its sway, in the structure of the society as well as the structure of the individual's patterns of thought. And concrete action overrules abstract thought; thus, you choose that which has the most tangible worth. A woman knows what the returns are when she fulfills traditional responsibilities and follows traditional models. To take the big step and depart from that for the unknown is itself unknown. And what is its value?

And what cohesiveness do women themselves exhibit? What is their consciousness? To my mind, they do not see themselves in a changeable role. "Baako closed his mouth . . . listening to the two woman talking . . .

> 'But are you sure Kwesi will agree?'
> 'I'll make him agree.'
> 'How?'
> 'I have my secret weapon.'
> 'Where?'
> Araba pointed in the direction of her genitals and said languidly, 'Here.'
>
> 'If he doesn't agree to the things I'm going to ask for, I'll add another month. Think of his big kojo going hungry for three long months.'
> 'Araba,' the mother laughed 'you're going to drive some woman's son crazy.'
> 'Let him starve a bit. After all, we have to find some way of making men share some of all this suffering. They can't always come in and pump it in and goodbye and leave us with all the work. (Armah 1971:132f.)

Women continue to view their role as sexual, and their weapon is ultimately sexual as well. They continue to vie with one another for the favors of men, their avenues to success. Educated woman may know better, but they get sucked back into the same system; and besides, they too have little if any power.

My third, and final, point concerns the methodology I used in this

study, and the kinds of data elicited. I alluded to this briefly in Chapter IV, with respect to the discrepancies between my work and that of Caldwell. There are pros and cons to small sample, phenomenological research. Perhaps the major drawbacks include the danger of generalizing from an unrepresentative group, and the high pitch of involvement with the informants, which has a very distorting effect on the anthropologist's observations. However, loss of objectivity was never a concern of mine, because I do not think that objectivity is an attribute of such field research. Other than asking the same questions in the same order, for example, and using the same systems of analysis for the responses, the researcher has little control over subjective involvement. Because that is basically what participant-observation is: it is relating to, and being related to, and not everybody relates to everyone else in the same way.

The positive side of such involvement is the quality of the data. For example, in Chapter VI, when comparing polygyny and befriending, I showed that detailed anthropological research can create serious reinterpretation of survey research. My results up-ended Caldwell's, without invalidating his; questionnaires are simply far more superficial and have no behavioral element.

Some responses are clearly more reliable than others, in terms of "the truth." I allowed my informants to define truth or reality as they chose; in other words, I have presented their perceptions of their reality worlds. I shall end with the case of Vivian, and her resolution of "new" urban life-ways and traditional obligations.

Vivian came to Accra from a small town in the Volta Region when

she was eleven years old. Her reasons for coming, typically, were two-fold: to attend school and to help her elder sister, with whom she would live. Despite the fact that she was moving from the protectiveness of her hometown to the city, her mother evinced little concern. For, as in most cases, if the young woman is migrating for a reasonable purpose, and will be staying with kin, parents do not put up obstacles or agonize over her safety. Vivian finished Form Five at Achimota, a prestigious secondary school, and went on to work at Barclays Bank as a cashier. Once she began working, she moved out on her own.

With her educational background, job and marital status, she qualified as a "new" urban woman. She is exposed to, and interacts in, a variety of situations; part of this is a function of her job. She comes into contact with people who could be vehicles to new experiences and opportunities. She seems free and Westernized. She entered a beauty contest at the bank and won. She met an Afro-American businessman, who is established in Accra. Her intelligence and capability struck him as attributes which should be furthered; and he began negotiations with her about going to the United States for more schooling.

She speaks of marriage, but not until she has reached the age of thirty, and only then if she finds a man whom she loves and who loves her. "I wouldn't like to marry a man from my side," i.e. a fellow Ewe, because she dislikes them.

In traditional society, where there is greater homogeneity in life-style, background and opportunities,there is also less to question. In the city, the opposite is possible, albeit not always attainable. Living as she does now, Vivian answers to no one but herself, or so it seems.

She lives on her own, still somewhat unusual; yet she insists that if her family had a house in Accra, she would move there with no hesitation. She is ruled by the practicalities of day-to-day expenses. Her boyfriend comes and goes as he pleases, expecting her to wait on his whims. She, however, enjoins the spirit of the moment if an outing comes up which piques her interest; she will go out with others, in part for the mere enjoyment, in part to spite her "friend."

Because her friend is so undependable, even though they have been seeing each other for several years, she fears marriage with him. And yet, as she makes clear, "a woman cannot just be going out with men all her life." And so the tie of friendship becomes binding. Furthermore, Vivian has a younger sister, who has joined her, much in the same way that Vivian joined her elder sister years before. The younger earns her keep by helping out in the house. Vivian could easily lose herself in her life-style; she begins to make plans. And then the skeletons begin to rattle.

As long as she stays put in the city, nagging family pressures are latent, can be put out of mind; but they do exist. The younger sister has come of secondary school age, and Vivian is responsible for her. Living in the hometown is financially less burdensome, and has all of the traditional comforts of home and family. But there is little ready cash, for example, to pay school fees; thus it is the city relative who must provide in such contingencies, even though the latter's expenses are also great. Vivian feels this obligation and will see it through, just as her elder sister did for her. Although she is not directly involved, she cannot just take off without leaving adequate provision. And it will cramp her financially.

Caught in the changing social scene, she must determine for herself the way of life which is most adaptable to conflicting tensions. Unfortunately, many tensions are not foreseen; they appear when the two systems simultaneously exert their pull. After my return to the United States, I received a letter from Vivian, from which the following is an extract.

> Let me tell you something. You know when I went home last year -- that was when I was on leave. My mum complained so bitterly about me not having a baby and that all the people whom I was born before had all had children and that what was I waiting for. When I returned, my boyfriend too talked about having a baby this year by all means. So I stopped taking my birth control tablets. You know, I've taken seed and I'm in the fourth month now . . . it's so horrible at the beginning. I usually feel so sick and lazy. I feel so lazy that sometimes I couldn't do any cooking when I return in the evenings.
>
> I only pray that it stays so that by October my mum will see what she wants, so that I can be free from her mutterings. We Africans are so crazy you know when our daughters delay a bit then we start to complain. I hope one day our ways will change, that we also have the carefree life so that if we [the daughters] don't bring forth early, our parents won't complain.
>
> Our parents don't see that it's very difficult for a young girl these days to find real true lover. Unless you want the hit and run type, you get a lot of them. And if you are not interested in that then you'll hold on for a long time. Then when you finally bring forth the children, you don't have sufficient time to look after them before death also calls on you. So at times it's better to start life early.
>
> . . . My boyfriend is planning to do the engagement after the Easter holidays. I hope he keeps to his words. You know I wouldn't like to have a baby without not being engaged at the least, if I won't have the wedding. I only pray hard that he keeps to his words that I'll be happy when I have my baby.

Vivian had her baby and was set to care for him for a year or until weaning; and then she will send him to her mother. Thus, her mother's

role will be ratified, Vivian's adulthood guaranteed and the father's position established. If Vivian "chooses" to follow through her earlier-made plans, she will leave the child with her mother, visiting on occasion, but putting off taking over full responsibility as the child's true mother.

The "new"urban woman is exposed to Western dress, life-styles, institutions, general easing of restraints -- but the traditional and accepted forms of behavior have not yet been discarded. Her opportunities for breaking out of her prescribed role of "sometimes seen, rarely heard" are still small. Her power of self-determination is limited. She still has no access to the level of education of her fellow-men -- less because of the laws on the books than because of simple, traditional attitudes.

Her earning power is not great. And society dictates that she marry, putting her into a situation even more constraining in the city than in the hometown, because the cost of living is high, her dependency, isolation, exposure to a world in which she can participate only minimally. It is a society which has rapidly taken to Western materialism -- a society where clothes make the person -- and it has forced a syncretism between the traditional authority structure and capitalism. It is in this context that women have been depicted as emancipated spirits; and it is this depiction that this thesis refers to as the myth of the emancipated West African urban (Ghanaian) woman.

I cannot in all honesty say that the move to the city provides greater freedom and mobility. It strips the migrant woman of family support, leaves her isolated in her husband's home since few stay on

their own. Leisure time is not increased, so that leisure-time activities are not indulged in with regularity. The woman in Accra, by overt, legitimate authority, is relatively powerless. Within the authority structure, however, she sometimes asserts herself, using the very modi vivendi that the society has embraced with open arms and closed minds.

APPENDIX I

METHODOLOGY

I had three major interests, which prompted the present piece of research. One was in West African urbanization, the second, a growing concern with feminism and the third, a desire to carry out my research with a minimum of obstacles due to my being a woman. The latter two neatly dove-tail: female researchers who have had problems in traditional societies usually are dependent upon male members of the population for their data. Furthermore, women have been neatly side-stepped in most ethnographic work. Information regarding the society's women is generally second-hand or of a strictly observational sort. It therefore seemed appropriate to pursue a study of the role(s) of adult urban women. Through the process of systematic elimination, I chose Ghana. (Nigeria was still in the midst of the Biafran War, French West Africa continues to be segregated, which would add to the problems inherent in overseas research, and Ghana both has a fairly good university and a good reputation for its receptiveness to researchers.) The choice of Accra was due to a coastal bias on my part, as well as the desire to include members of a variety of ethnic groups in my study.

Having received a classical training in social anthropology, my primary tool of enquiry was that of participant observation. My feeling at the time was, and continues to be, that this is the only way to gain an understanding of the nature of everyday behavior. It is with this

technique that anthropology is in its element. Given my focus on the content of women's relationships, I felt it imperative to be in a position to observe their behavior in different situations of social interaction. Participant observation is most felicitous to this end.

In traditional field studies, the anthropologist ensconces him/herself in the midst of a small society and by carefully observing and asking questions, emerges with information on behavioral patterns, organizational principles and so on. Similarly, I spent the first few weeks in Ghana at the University of Ghana, while looking for a place in town. I chose the neighborhood of Adabraka, because I was interested in working in an ethnically, socio-economically mixed area. Adabraka is well-known in these respects, as well as being a renters' area and less settled and less homogeneous than strictly home-owning areas.

It is important to acknowledge that the field-worker herself is a tool of research. The majority of anthropological studies have been done by men, with the data revealing male bias. Needless to say, eliciting information from women only provides drawbacks and bias; but, as Leith-Ross remarks, ". . . even with the highest degree of trained discernment, it is difficult for a male investigator to get an accurate impression of what goes on in a woman's mind when its revealed to him by another man. . ." (1965:22). Just as questionable is the reliability of data that a European male obtains from a female informant. As a woman informant said to Cohen's female interviewer, "All women are against all men!" (Personal communication)

By living in Adabraka, I became part of the scenery. I lost something of my stranger status. Not that I was any less an European -- I

was an eccentric European, who left her door open throughout the day, and welcomed anyone who wanted to stop by. At first, this was predominantly the children; but as the months went by, more and more of my neighbors occasionally stopped by. Some of my choice pieces of data came from teen-age girls who came by regularly.

My second major technique was formal interviewing. This was rarely done in my house, but more usually in the individual's room or compound. On a few occasions, when scheduling prevented all else, I conducted interviews at the place of business, i.e. market or street-side stand. See Appendix II for the list of questions asked. At first, I took down information by hand; this proved to disrupt the flow of conversation, was distracting both to me and the informant, and was not complete enough. As such, I switched over to using a tape recorder, which proved to be my most invaluable aid, besides my typewriter. The women exhibited no concern with the instrument. Following the interview, or at the earliest convenience, I would transcribe the tape. At times, I took down interpreted interviews in long-hand. Two visits were generally necessary to complete the schedule of questions.

To fill out the picture, I took advantage of most opportunities to attend festivals, funerals, weddings, etc. One of the most significant experiences I had was a three-day stay with the second wife of Nana Atakora Amaniampong II, Ashanti Mamponghene, in her compound at the traditional palace in Mampong Ashanti. It provided me with insight into the traditional model of the adult woman, as still practiced by the wife of the paramount chief. Such experiences, along with my Adabraka jottings and personal thoughts turned into an extensive journal -- which in fact

forms the basis of this thesis. Fourteen months of writing about the people around me, especially the aspects of social life which seemed peculiar, had a pattern, which created the unity of the finished piece. Not least important is the fact that I, as a single woman and as a white woman, carried a great deal of status. Consequently, I went out with a number of Ghanaian men; and, after their initial pretense of making a good impression, my status notwithstanding, I found myself pigeon-holed as a "woman" and treated accordingly. This provided me with a great deal of food for thought.

I made it a point of reading many of the popular "story-books," magazines and of course the daily newspapers. These also provided me with a clearer idea of the popular image of women, especially in the context of the city.

All of the less formal techniques were useful when it came time to construct my schedule of questions. This was true both in terms of specific questions to be asked, general areas, and specifics of wording. I received help from Professor Lawrence Boadi, of the Linguistics Department, at the University of Ghana, in problematic areas. There is no question about the ambituity -- both in question and response -- suffered in certain cases, a problem which I deal with later in terms of interpreters.

I proceeded as follows: first, collecting census material to be used for a general profile of the neighborhood of Adabraka; and secondly, drawing a sample for the specifics of the study. Formal interviewing involved only members of the sample, although, as noted earlier, a great deal of supplementary data was picked up from women who lived nearby, but who were not in the sample.

For my census, I followed the suggestions of Nelson Addo, a demographer from the University of Ghana, in constructing categories. Mr. K. de Graft-Johnson, the Coordinator of the 1970 Population Census, allowed me to see the Enumeration Visit Books. This gave me the house numbers (addresses), with the number of households and persons at each. I selected randomly five sub-areas of Adabraka -- copying down every seventh house number in each. The final sample, for intensive interviews, was drawn from this stratified by occupation and ethnicity.

One of the five sub-areas, Official Town, was already occupied by another researcher. I cut it out of my study, substituting a section of Adabraka which is in part more settled and more recently built -- Asylum Down. The latter is not proportionately represented, because there were a number of foreigners living there, and I cut them out of my census without substituting other houses in their place. In addition, Asylum Down has a smaller population than the other sub-areas. Given the difficulties of sampling in Accra, and as long as I was trying to maintain stringency in my methodology, it seemed wiser not to go back to the Enumeration Books for Asylum Down.

The census sample included Tuxedo Junction, Adabraka Market, Liberation Circle (my immediate area), Obuadaban Terrace and Asylum Down. Each of these areas is named after a local fixture. Thus, Asylum Down is just down the road from the mental asylum of the same name; Adabraka Market abuts the local market; Tuxedo Junction is the name of a bar located in that area. Each takes in approximately two square blocks.

After moving into Adabraka, I went to a friend who teaches at a girls' secondary school. She gave me the names of three girls who had

recently graduated and were looking for work. One of them is a Twi-speaker,the other two Ga. All three were eighteen, had finished their O Levels (5th Form) and wanted to work before continuing on in A Level (6th Form). Two of the girls took several copies of the Census Form which I had set up, and tested it in their own neighborhoods.

With the four of us working, the census took a week, the first time around. When I began to go through the responses, I realized that there was no explicit independent variable, binding all of the women together. On the basis of this, I returned to the eighty-eight compounds we had canvassed, to ask two further questions: length of residence, and whether the woman spoke English. My questions were directed at adult (eighteen years and over) women only. Only those who had been living in Accra at least since the age of twenty-two (if they had been born elsewhere) were eligible for the interview sample. It was suggested by a research fellow at the University that I simply cut out everyone except Middle Form Four leavers. This would provide me with less language problems and a common denominator. Had I done so, I would have cut out two-thirds of the original sample. That in itself is a telling factor of the neighborhood.

The first step in grouping the strata was to throw out any where the length of residence variable did not meet my qualification. Since I am interested in the perceptions of adult women, I felt that it would be consistent to solicit responses from women who have lived in Accra from their early adult years. To provide some leeway, I extended the age to twenty-two.

To group the occupations, the 1960 Census classification was

either too narrow or not narrow enough. I took the list of occupations to five people -- a male neighbor (student), a woman who has subsequently been written-up in the New York Times as a successful businesswoman, a seamstress nearby, the female owner of a local dance spot and a young market woman friend. My major concerns were with the classification of school head mistress, seamstress, landlord and the whole commercial category. In Ghana, a head mistress is a teacher by profession, rather than an administrator. Thus, she joined the teaching ranks, as a professional. The same is true for the seamstress. Craftsmen were to include all previously categorized as technical, and the diamond sorter. A landlord is not identified as such, unless he owns a good deal of property. Thus, landlord/lady was classified by whatever else she does.[1] The differentiation between street hawker and shop salesgirl was not settled by the five of us, although the seamstress-advisor pointed out that education notwithstanding, both take specialized salesmanship training. The final stratification involved lumping more than I wanted and was based upon empty cells.

Out of a population of eighty-six houses, 467 women, the following were eligible to be interviewed and classified according to occupation:

Unemployed: (101) housewife (62); pensioner (2); student (9); non-specific (28) -- including 5 landladies.

Services: (12) ward assistant (1); nursemaid (3); housegirl (1); housekeeper (2); sweeper (20; waitress (1); cook (2).

Craftsmen: (18) machine operator (1); factory worker (2);

diamond sorter (1); furniture maker (1); hairdresser (2); employed seamstress (2); baker (6); book binder (3).

Seamstress: (34)

Professional: (20) teacher (10); head mistress (2); midwife (1); nurse (3); TV film editor (1); sand and stone contractor (1); radio studio manager (1); air hostress (1).

Clerical: (34) clerk (12); typist (7); shorthand/typist (3); telephonist (4); receptionist (2); telephonist/receptionist (2); bursar (1); cashier at bank (1); biller for telephone sercies (1); key puncher (1).

Commerce: (134) salesgirl (5); wholesaler (1); trader (8); storekeeper/kiosk owner (7); provisions (4); beauty goods (3); pot seller (1); firewood seller (1); cloth seller (13); petty trader (26); cigarettes (2): oil seller (3); porridge or fula seller (6); rice seller (10); kenkey seller (9); gari seller (1); doughnuts (1); vegetables (5); herbs (1); fruit (10); drink (3); fried food(3); clothing (6); eggs (1); groundnuts (2); meat, fish (2).

The ethnic stratification was equally difficult. It occured to me to simply take the three predominant groups in any one occupational stratum, rather than across the entire sample. This would give some indication of tribe-specific occupations (if such, in fact, is the case), as well as sufficient representatives of each to make relatively valid comparative statements.

The rationale for stratifying by occupation in the first place is tied to the association made between type of occupation and financial gain. Financial independence and increase in wealth is held by Westerners to be

a key to emancipation. Prior to the field trip to Ghana, I met many returned researchers and read many papers, all attesting to the traditional emancipation enjoyed by Ghanaian women. If one were to concede that the women do exhibit economic independence, this must be qualified, since there are several professions which have educational perquisites. Furthermore, women traditionally are enjoined to work, but only in certain areas and certainly not at the expense of their domestic duties.[2] A woman from an "old-fashioned" family believes she must marry, even if that means leaving school. And if she leaves school, certain doors must of need be closed to her.

And to what degree is emancipation shared by women of differing occupations? Does one's occupation preclude or enlarge association with different people? Do different occupations allow for or aid mobility? These were questions I was interested in, and which I felt that occupational stratification in my respondents would answer.

For my final sampling procedure, I went to the office of the 1970 Census and consulted with one of the statisticians. The first thing that he insisted upon was that I change un-employed to non-employed. He was also concerned that I had not used the Census occupational classification. After going over the material with me, he suggested that I merge services and craftsmen, else the strata would be too small and meaningless. As for internal (secondary) stratification by ethnic groups: he suggested I put the response sheets in ethnic order (given the proportions) of Ga-Adangbe, Akan, Ewe, and then the others. And then take every seventh person for the sample.

The project:

Accra -- The role of adult women

E.A. (Enumeration Area) -- Adabraka

Sample -- 50 adult women

Frame -- 353 adult women, either born in Accra and over 18 years old, or arrived in Accra by age 22 and over 18 years of age.

Real problems cropped up, before, during, and after determining the criteria for the sample and drawing it. These break down into those which involved conceptualization and theoretical concerns, and those which involved my contacts with informants. In terms of the completeness of the census, it would have been best to canvas all of Adabraka for the census. Given the time and money at hand, this was impossible, hence the first sampling procedure.

Setting up criteria for stratifying the sample was problematic. As noted earlier, it was very difficult to determine which factor was more important with respect to lumping occupations, or breaking them down. It became a problem of Western versus indigenous categories, and which would be more felicitous to the study. For example, a street hawker may be more adept at saleswomanship and earn more money than a saleswoman at GNTC. The latter position, however, is salaried and closely associated with Westernization, thus introducing a different status variable. The decision was finally made on the basis of an extension of traditional work -- if a woman were to go into a branch of work, appropriate for women and yet Western in form, selling in a store fits.

Similarly, stratifying for ethnicity brought up problems of

Table 15

Cross-Tabulation of Occupation by Ethnicity

Population -- 86 houses, 467 women

	Non-Employed	Services	Craftsmen	Seamstress	Proffes-sional	Clerical	Trade	Total
GA	42	4	4	9	11	13	41	124
Adangbe	4			2	3	1	11	21
TWI	29	5	6	11	1	10	34	96
Fanti	3		6	3	1	3	7	23
EWE	14	1	1	7	3	5	18	50
HAUSA	3					2	14	19
MISC.	6	2	1	1	1	—	9	20
Totals	101	12	18	34	20	34	134	353
%ages	29%	3%	5%	10%	6%	10%	38%	
Sample	14	2	3	5	3	5	19	

representativeness, and comparability. If I was interested in comparing the consciousness of, for example, two seamstresses, and of all of the group of seamstresses, only one is a Hausa, her similarity or difference may come down to personal idiosyncracy. It says nothing of her ethnicity. On the other hand, the one Hausa woman is a member of the community. She provides another piece of datum on the perceptions of urban women. Furthermore, if the hypothesis that role differentiation in Accra is sexist rather than ethnic at base is correct, a sample composed of a variety of women is favored.

A translation problem, which was inherent to the formal, intensive interviewing section, did not come up during the census. The census questions were clear enough as not to introduce confusion. The three secondary school interviewers all spoke Twi and Ga; I could do a census interview in Twi. The only group of people (of any ethnic group) who provided difficulties were the Ewe. Some Northerners -- Dagomba, Dagbani, Hausa -- did not understand much Twi. There was, however, always someone in the compound who did and who was more than willing to interpret.

Working with interpreters was trying. Interviews were conducted in English (two-thirds of the sample informants spoke English well enough to be interviewed without an interpreter) by me alone; in Twi, Ga, Hausa, and Ewe with an interpreter. Clearly, idiomatic expressions and native categorizations were not always carried through, because I decided against doing a back-translation of the interview schedule in the four African languages. As a consequence, interviews were at times frustrating, because either my interpreter had difficulty understanding the point I

wanted to make, or she asked the question incorrectly. (After a few months, I knew enough Twi to follow conversations, albeit superficially, sufficiently to pick up mistakes in connotation.) To do back-translations would have been costly, time-consuming, and, for the number of informants involved, not worth the returns.

To counter-balance the translation problem, I chose as my interpreter a woman who showed a special affinity for me and my project. She, however, became more and more undependable in showing up at arranged places. Towards the end of my field work, I took on another young woman for the duration. Dependability on the part of assistants and informants alike was problematic all the way through the year. At the beginning, when the three young girls helped on the census, it turned out that they missed many of the female residents in the compounds they visited. Fortunately, I caught this when I returned the second time with the additional questions.

In recognizing how busy the women are, I tried at first to make appointments for interviews. Invariably, I would be disappointed. To a certain degree, this reflects the pace of life and weight placed on timing and doing things by a certain time. But also, it reflects the fragmented nature of life in the big city. Domestic needs, business needs, friendships, rites (funerals, births, and such) took the women not only to all sections of Accra, but to hometown areas as well, depending upon the import of the occasion. Life is still spontaneous; most people do not have telephones, arrangements are made at the time and in person. As a consequence, if something came up and I had been so foolish as to pre-arrange a meeting, it would be my loss. By the same token, when

I did arrive, as arranged, and the woman was there, she usually greeted me with a mixture of surprise and pleasure.

Whenever possible, this was rectified by "catch as catch can." This often meant having on hand several partially-completed schedules, but it saved time and aggravation in the long-run. Particularly because, most working women were out of the house from early in the morning -- about 7:00 a.m. -- until late afternoon or early evening. When we were doing the initial census, it meant that the only time periods during the day when it was worthwhile to canvas compounds was between 6 and 7:00 a.m., and 5 to 8:00 p.m. The former was difficult, because everyone is in a rush to wash and dress and leave for work. The latter was difficult, because those returning from work were tired, involved in cooking and/or eating; and the sun sets very quickly, by 6:10. Many compounds do not have outside lights,so that writing down answers was often done in the dark.

We tried covering houses during the day, asking those present to fill in the details on those away. This was impossible, because neighbors do not even know each others' names, let alone any of their particulars. Or, they would give us Ghanaian names (day names) and upon return, when I asked for someone by her Ghanaian name, four women might reply. The reverse problem also occurred -- a woman giving me her Christian name, which nobody in the house knows her by; and when I returned for formal interviews, having drawn my sample, I could not locate the woman. Analogously, census data turned out to be full of half-truths -- ethnicity was not what it was reported to be, or occupation was different. So that after drawing a sample on the basis of the

information originally given to me, it turned out that all of my precautions in careful stratification procedures were for nought.

I waited until I left the field and returned to the United States to begin any analysis of the data collected over the fourteen-month period. I had not originally intended to do any computer work; however, the census population is large enough, and the demographic information contained in the short schedule of questions sufficient, to warrant a statistical analysis. And it is this data that provided the profile of the women of the neighborhood. It also made it possible to get some idea of the extent of exposure the women in general have had to urban centers. For example, I took the response given for birthplace, looked up the size of each as well as the distance of that town from a large urban center and from Accra. This was then punched onto cards, along with the other information I used the SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) program for the profile.

Although I have a great deal of information on the sample population, the number of cases is not great enough to carry through the statistical work. But more important, I feel that the detailed field work should be analyzed in the same spirit as it was collected. Thus, the bulk of the work has been done by hand, using my journal and interview protocols as sources.

APPENDIX II

SCHEDULE OF QUESTIONS

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name, age, place of interview.
2. Ethnicity, languages spoken, religion.
3. Always lived in Accra?
   If not, how long? why come?
   where lived previously?
4. Where do parents live? Ethnicity?
   Are they concerned about you living here?
5. Have you been to school? or trained specially for work?
   To what level?
   Why leave?
6. If not, why not?
   Do (did) you want to go?
7. Have your parents been to school?
   Did they want you to go?
8. How many brothers and sisters do you have?
   Have they been to school?
   Where do they live?
9. If married--has your husband been to school?
   Does he want you to go to school?
10. If not married--do you want an educated husband?
11. Are you married?
12. If yes:
    (a) why marry?
    (b) was your family or friends anxious for you to marry?
    (c) husband's name, age, ethnicity; use his name?
    (d) number of times you, husband have been married?
    (e) how old were you when you married?
    (f) where and when did you meet?
    (g) was the marriage your choice?
    (h) type of marriage ceremony? if none, what kind want?
    (i) brideprice? if split, must it be returned?
    (j) would you marry man from a different tribe?
    (k) want co-wives?
13. If no:
    (a) want to marry? why?
    (b) do you have boy friend?
    (c) boy friend's name, age, ethnicity; use his name?
    (d) number of times you, boy friend have been married?
    (e) how old were you when you met your boy friend?
    (f) where and when did you meet?
    (g) was he your choice?
    (h) want co-wives?
    (i) how old do you want to be?
    (j) type of marriage ceremony?

(k) marry a man from a different tribe?
(l) from different religion?
(m) are family, friends, anxious for you to marry?

14. Do you have children?
15. If yes:
    (a) same father?
    (b) school?
    (c) ages?
    (d) boys or girls?
    (e) how many do you want?
    (f) how can you prevent them?
    (g) where do you bring forth? how long do you stay there?
    (h) how old were you when first brought forth?
16. If no:
    (a) how many want?
    (b) can you prevent more?
    (c) how old want to be?

SPHERES OF ACTIVITY

Work

1. What do you do? where?
    (a) did you need capital to start?
    (b) who did you get it from?
    (c) did you pay back?
2. Have you worked before?
3. Can you work when you want?
4. Do you like it?
5. How many days/week?
6. Is this woman's work?
    (a) did you have training?
7. Do you want to work?
    (a) Does someone tell you what to do?
8. What is your income?
    (a) What do you use this money for?
9. Do your parents work?
    (a) your husband?
10. With whom do you work?
    (a) do you consider them your friend? names used? ethnicity?
    (b) who pays whom?
    (c) how often do you see each other? only at work?
11. Can you take holiday?
    (a) what do you do?
    (b) if your husband does, do you?

Fun

1. What do you do alone?
2. What do you do with friends?
    (a) if they didn't go, would you?

3. Do you:
   (a) visit
   (b) cinema
   (c) concert
   (d) chop bar
   (e) drinking bar
   (f) dance
   (g) beach
   (h) travel
   (i) arts and crafts
   (j) anything else, e.g. football, plaiting hair

   } how often?
   } with whom? names?
   } whose choice?
   } do you do other things together?
   } ethnicity?
   } how know each other?

Market

1. Which do you go to?
2. Go alone?
   (a) send someone?
3. How often?
4. If with someone:
   (a) are you friends?
   (b) only go to market together
   (c) ethnicity
4. Go whenever you want?
5. Buy what you want?
6. Meet friends there?
   (a) just greet:
   (b) see elsewhere?
   (c) know from where?

Home

1. Prefer living with husband and children or family?
2. Live with whom? who is head?
3. Pay rent, or service?
4. Share rooms?
   (a) how many and which?
5. Who does housework:
   (a) washing?
   (b) cooking?
   (c) for whom?
   (d) how often?
6. Who pays household expenses (electricity, water, chop, soap stuff, etc.)?
7. What must you do in the compound?
   (a) who tells you?
8. What do you own?
9. Who are the other people in the compound?
   (d) do you know their ethnicity?
   (b) do you know their names and vice versa? what titles do you use?
   (c) with whom do you spend time, doing what? how often?
   (d) do you see each other only in the compound?
   (e) do you have a friend living here?
10. How do you spend your time in compound when free?

4. Who makes decisions in your household?
   (a) who is in your household?
5. In taking a decision, are you influenced by what you think is right or by:
   (a) friend
   (b) husband
   (c) father
   (d) mother
   (e) uncle
6. Does age have any influence in who you listen to or ask advice in making decisions?
7. Does sex have any influence in who you listen to or ask advice in making decisions?
8. Child care:
   (a) who disciplines?
   (b) does the child listen to you and/or anyone else?
   (c) how long do you nurse?
   (d) when can you leave the child with whom?
   (e) when you work, who cares for him?
   (f) who decides on spending money on him?
   (g) who decides on his activities? if you had two boys and girls, who would you be sure went to school?
   (h) if you have a daughter in school and your father wants you to send (i.e. pay for) your brother, what would you do?
   (i) who spends the most time with your child(ren)?
   (j) until what age are you responsible for him/for her?
   (k) if your child wants toffee, can he ask you, husband, grandmother, or whom? if you say no, will he go to someone else?
9. When does your daughter become a woman?
   (a) do you teach her?
   (b) is there a ceremony?

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

1. (If a seller) Sell mainly to (give tribe)? To friends?
   (If other business) Deal mainly with (give tribe? To friends?
2. At market buy from (tribe)? From friends?
3. Depend more on friends (tribe) or family?
4. Enjoy (own tribe) more? Why?
5. Lend money to friends first or family?
6. If you could have a good work, but it would mean sending your child to a relative or getting a housemaid, which would you do?
   (a) do you like sending child to others to raise? why?
   (b) who raised you?
7. Would you rather work or stay at home in the house as a housewife?
8. If married, do you lend money to your husband?
9. Do you attend festivals?
   (a) own tribe only?
   (b) when did you go?
10. Do you want your daughter to work?
11. Would you rather be a big businesswoman or the household owner?
12. Is a woman's job in life to work, or be at home, or what?
13. Do family come here and expect to stay for long periods of time?

Associations

1. Which do you belong to?
2. How often do you go?
3. Why start going?
   (a) if with someone else, if that person stopped going, would you?
4. With whom do you sit most?
5. Do you have a friend here?
   (a) see people here only?
   (b) know their names and vice-versa?
   (c) ethnicity?
6. Do you have a special job?
7. Must you ask permission to go? from whom?

Church

1. Which do you belong to?
2. How often do you go?
3. Why start going?
   (a) if with someone else, if that person stopped going, would you?
4. With whom do you sit most?
5. Do you have a friend here?
   (a) see people here only?
   (b) know their names and vice-versa?
   (c) ethnicity?
6. Do you have a special job?
7. Must you ask permission to go? from whom?

Politics

1. Do you vote?
2. Are you politically active?

RELATIONSHIPS

1. Who tells you what to do?
2. Who do you tell what to do?
3. What do you do from morning till night (i.e. schedule)?
   (a) whom do you talk to?
4. If married: future if not
   (a) does your husband go out with women? do/would you care?
   (b) do you go out with men? not as "friends"?
   (c) when your husband goes out, does he take you with him and vice-versa? how often?
   (d) does he treat you well? do most Ghanaian husbands? what is an example of good/bad treatment?
   (e) what must he do for you as your husband?
   (f) what must you do for him as his wife?
   (g) if you left him, where would you go?
   (h) who would support you?
   (i) what could you keep (e.g. household possessions)?

5. What is independence or freedom?
   (a) what would make you feel independent?
   (b) are you?
6. Who must you ask permission
   (a) to leave the compound
   (b) find work
   (c) spend money
7. Does your husband or anyone else limit your activity?
8. To visit family or go to cinema, who must you tell?
9. As a woman, do you feel you can do the same things as a man?
10. Is there anything you cannot do if you have babies? because of family obligations?
11. Are you less independent if you marry by
   (a) customary
   (b) religious
   (c) registry
12. Are you more independent if you marry a wealthy man who gives you all you want and you also have ten children; or if you are single and have a good job?
13. Would you leave your husband if
   (a) he beat you
   (b) couldn't give you a child
   (c) went out with other women
   (d) insulted your father
   (e) wouldn't let you go out with friends
14. Which is worse
   (a) husband insulting father, or vice-versa?
   (b) you insulting your husband or your father?
   (c) you insulting your husband or your good friend?
15. How many good friends do you have?
   (a) what is a friend--or--what do you do with a friend?
   (b) how often, and where, do you see each other?
   (c) who, if anyone, do you tell secrets to?
16. Your parents live at (woman's hometown). You want to move to Accra. They say no. What do you do?
   (a) what if your daughter wanted to move from (. . . . .*)? What would you do?
17. Who are you responsible for?
   (a) who is responsible for you?
   (b) who is husband responsible for?

DECISION-MAKING

1. Does anyone have rights over your money?
   (a) do you have rights over anyone else's?
   (b) can you spend your money as you please?
   (c) what must you pay for?
2. Do you contribute to your mother and father and/or anyone else?
   (a) who contributes/gives dashes to you?
3. If you lost all your (. . . . **) who could you ask for money to buy more?

* Insert name of informant's hometown.
** Insert name of item, e.g. seamstress' machine, trader's goods.

NOTES: INTRODUCTION

1. Microcosm here is by no means used to mean that Adabraka is representative of a larger whole. It is part of the city, with characteristics that one associates with the city. To that degree, it is microcosm. However, it is by no means representative of anything other than itself. Adabraka is a field of social relations, within a larger field. It may be that it is nothing more than an arbitrary subdivision of Accra--both on the side of the original designers and the present researcher. It has, however, evolved a sense of identity. It seems worthwhile to check into its coherence (or decide that it is nothing more than a loose conglomeration of individuals, living there out of convenience) and also the extent to which the female residents respect its boundaries as delimiting to their networks of relationships and movements. The latter necessities, therefore, some sense of what constitutes a neighborhood boundary, or what makes a neighborhood.

2. Adabraka is not old enough to have housed women, for any length of time, who are past middle-age. Furthermore, we are assuming that Adabraka is continuous with the larger social system of Accra, so that residence in another section of the city might not explain one's neighborhood quotient--how one orients himself, attitude towards local urban environments--but it would account for a more general urban quotient. Finally, the commonality of length of residence in the same urban center has been further corrected for by the inclusion of only those women who have lived in Accra at least since their 22nd birthday, if not earlier. Clearly, there will be basic discrepancies between those botn in the city forty years ago and those born elsewhere forty years ago and who have lived in Accra or Adabraka for eighteen years. It is not, however, too much to expect that one's perceptions, attachments, self-image do not stop growing prior to the age of twenty-two.

NOTES: CHAPTER I

1. The distinctive character of the plural urban milieu in Africa, the problems which confront newcomers, and the changing perspective which the researcher must adopt, are not new to African Studies. But, they are to anthropology, which classically has pursued studies in well-defined areas among well-delineated and separate groups. Epstein (1964) complains that there is a tendency for urban anthropologists to disregard the existence of an urban social system and see it as a conglomeration of people from different regions and cultures. What is closer to the point is that such a system must evolve, and in its early stages, it must reorganize. ". . . antecedent custom may have little or no relevance for many of the situations and relationships in the new towns. This is especially true for migrants from African societies which have no urban tradition. Initially, they are obliged to find many of the norms for appropriate behaviour within the towns themselves; later their norms become part of the traditional culture, not necessarily as guiding behaviour within the confines of the traditional societies themselves, but as knowledge of urban ways. So, too, the norms of European society are often inappropriate or transported with difficulty, in part because they are not compatible with urban African pluralism." (Kuper, 1965a:130.) Thus, the incomprehensible imitation of certain features of the colonizing society, while other aspects are discarded, is part of the reorganization of the amalgamating peoples into a coherent system.

2. Even amongst the indigenous Ga, there is an agricultural heritage. The town people, again, are not true people, for no family is without agricultural or fishing interests in one of another of the villages. " 'The old man has gone to his village,' or 'the lad has gone to his uncle's village' . . ." (Field, 1937:2.) Thus, not only have they always cultivated, they have also had to travel to do so. Gutkind and Southall (1957) in underlining the rural mentality of Mulago residents, point out that people squeeze in plots of vegetables wherever they can. Adabraka is too built-up for that, although some compounds do have plants. As the reader will see, however, in its pristine stages, Adabraka was farmed by early Hausa settlers.

3. "Been-to" is the colloquial phrase of description for the person who has been abroad.

4. This presents the same problem as any pluralistic society. There is a Ghanaian nation, which acts as a united whole in the international political, economic and cultural scene--viz. the Ghana Dance Troupe, which performs on tour. To the outside world, Ghana is a nation. The model of segmentary systems presents an example: Ghana against any other nation on the broadest level; the Northern sector versus the

Southern, within the country; the eight separate regions (Upper, Northern, Brong-Ahafo, Ashanti, Western, Central, Eastern, Volta--and Accra Capital District); regional sub-divisions; ethnic areas; hometowns; fifty-seven language groups; ethnic groups--and of course, the urban/rural distinction, which cross-cuts all of the others.

5. Among a selected group of secondary school students, Omari found it significant that "the women have a more radical bent against the traditional family institution than the men," (1960:207) with respect to polygyny, the marriage contract, care of children. Such a sample is not particularly representative of the women at large--even those of Accra. I found, for example, numerous cases of informants who see nuclear family life as the ideal. But who, in practice, maintain the tradition of "lending" out some or all of their children to be reared by female kin. Or, monogamously- married women who accept their husbands' philandering as the male privilege.

6. In my own experience this was so. I mentioned in passing to a prominent Member of Parliament that prices were outrageous and that my neighbors were suffering. He insisted that, appearances aside, the women have much wealth. I pointed out that a seller of fried food is lucky if she profits fifty cents a day. "Why should she be doing that for so little money?" was his retort. Why indeed. Why need anyone be poor or discriminated against?

7. Since one is dealing with no one person, but with a role, nobody is responsible for decisions handed down. The role is dissociated from the individual activating it. In terms of traditional powers of decision-making, in Ghana, this has an interesting analogy: women may appear downtrodden, because they are exempt from taking their own decisions in a majority of circumstances. A woman interested in employment, for example, must consult her parents, husband or closest family member. The Ashanti political model, classic in design, allows no one, even the Asantehene, to make single-handed decisions. There is never one person, within the structure, to be held accountable. This is fundamental to the Weberian model and it accounts for the confusion manifest in Accra's system.

NOTES: CHAPTER II

1. Sea-fishing, notes Ward (1948:51, footnote 5) was not introduced until the late 1800's by the Fantis, thus increasing local trade. Lagoon fishing, however, is easier and no doubt more ancient.

2. It is not surprising that the expatriots built their own quarter, just as in the early days when they confined themselves to the castles' bounds. What is perhaps surprising is that today, there is no suburb with the sense of an overwhelming European presence. As the Africans prospered, they built alongside the Europeans.

3. NAG: SNA 1086. Letter to Hon. Col. Sec'y. from Brandford-Briffith, Governor, 11-9-1884. It is unclear who sent for the "Captain of the Hausas." Presumably, "Captain of the Hausas" was the head of the police force which was called in for assistance.

4. Mr. Annan,a long-time resident of Adabraka, is a retired educationist. He is still active in community affairs and has a real feel for social history. His words and thoughts are the basis of much of the following historical date. Interview on 9-29-71.

5. Mrs. Bossman at no time indicated precisely who was feuding with whom. She did remark that her uncle was taken as a hostage by the British, which she took as an indication of his importance in the community. Interview 8-19-71.

6. "The Otublohu quarter consists of the progency of a colony of Akwamu people from inland, who, on account of a quarrel with their own people, came and allied themselves with Accra and were given a place to live." (Field 1937:88.)

7. "Stool" is analogous to throne, save that it is consecrated after the chief's death and becomes a shrine for his spirit. The Ga incorporated the stool and umbrella from the Ashanti. The manshe (town father) was treated as a chief by outsiders. But he receives to this day his authority from the chief wulama (priest) and he is first a priest. (Field, 1937.) "Ga governments were originally absolute theocracies . . . the idea of secular chiefs and stools is quite foreign to the Gas." (3)

8. Mrs. Bossman, in an interview 8-19-71.

9. Mr. Annan, 9-29-71.

10. Since the Hausas were not building, the Colonial Secretary agreed that it would be worthwhile to adopt the Sekondi-type of compound house, 7-15-13. Unfortunately, none of the reports describes the house, other than to say that they do not want grass roofs and grass fences in Adabraka.

11. Mr. Annan, op. cit.

12. Mr. Annan, op. cit.

13. The Gbese and Sempe people were the first of the Ga to arrive. The Gbese settled in the Usshertown quarter and Salaga Market was established a block from the Gbese Manshe's palace. Ussher Fort lies on Gbese land, and during the annual corn festival (homowo), when the chief sprinkles kpek-pei (ground corn, pounded with palm oil) throughout the land of his fore-fathers, the Fort is included.

14. The Hausa women have two benevolent association. The members for both are culled from the Accra populace. The larger of the two is Zumunchi, defined as "we all love ourselves and we will all make one and we will help ourselves." About two years ago, in 1968, a group of women were at a suna (similar to an outdooring, seven days after the baby's birth) and one suggested that they get together and form a group. They began meeting at Cow Lane (within the Hausa zongo in Accra Central) and contributed six pence weekly for chairs and a canopy. Most of their meetings are for births, with much singing, led by four vocalists. There are four leaders, chosen by the group, and have a linguist, the only man in the group. They bring up any problems for discussion--e.g. if a member is sick, it is discussed what to do. The mother of the child for whom the suna is held provides food. The Zumunchi (called "meeting") beings with Islamic song-singing and praying, led by four malaams.

15. Kenkey is the typical Ga starch, which everyone in Accra, Ga or otherwise, eats daily. It is made from fermented maize, which is ground, cooked, formed into balls and wrapped in dry corn leaves and then boiled again. The resulting food has the consistency of heavy pastry dough and is eaten in kneaded chunks with fried fish and pepper, or with stew.

16. If family is present, the question of extra room simply does not arise. There is always room, even if there is not. Mr. Ofori, the husband of one of my informants, complained bitterly to me. He, his pregnant wife, and their two children, occupied one small room. His wife's cousin, somewhat removed, arrived, without warning, no money, and moved in without shame. She did provide household assistance.

17. The specifics of socio-physical feedback and socialization into new behaviors, especially that of neighbor, is considered in Chapter VI.

18. The members of the Society are among the prominently-known women, such as Dr. Susan de-Graft Johnson, Annie Jiagge, Supreme Court Justice, Regina Addae, owner and operator of a public relations agency. These are also the fortunate few, the ones who are usually interviewed for newspaper and magazine articles about the emancipated West African woman.

19. Fufu is a typically-Akan starch, which is eaten, in hometown areas at least, daily with the main mean. It is made by boiling plantain, or plantain and cassava, or cocoyam and cassave, or plain yam; when soft, they are put into the mortar and pounded, adding small amounts of water, until the texture is that of soft putty, or pastry dough. It is formed into loaves or balls and has the appearance of unbaked bread. Fufu is eaten by snipping off small pieces with two fingers and dipping it into soup.

20. Mr. Annan, op. cit.

NOTES: CHAPTER III

1. "All" is a very relative term. The unreliability of the count both reflects and results from the heterogeneity, fluidity and the sparseness of the networks (of the urban scene). Apparent, residential permanence poses for what is often social/psychological transcience.

2. It took longer to introduce myself and the purpose of my questions, then it did to ask the questions. Needless to say, I left out several key questions, perhaps the most important being marital status.

3. This is not to say that Accra is segregated; in point of fact, it is not. There are, however, two sides to be considered. On the one hand, most Europeans who come are either with the foreign service or a business enterprise, and their lodging is taken care of. Most live in the suburban areas. They are joined by Africans who are in similar straits, or who have a good income. On the other hand, moneyed Africans would not live in the inner-city, if it were not a family house situation, because of the material ethos--big, suburban house, flashy car, and so on.

4. Ethnic-specific attributes, suggestively if not outrightly pejorative, abound. Kwahus are called the Jews of Ghana, because they are good businessmen; Ewes are feared and avoided for their bad-magic and thievery; Ashantis (who superciliously assert an image of absolute cultural superiority) are often referred to as war mongers and cruel; Krobo, who established themselves against great odds and whose chiefs still wear a dagger, are considered cruel; Gas are looked down upon as dirty, worthless and lacking in culture. And so on.

5. Due to the Business Promotion Act, legislated to nationalize businesses and provide more occupational slots for Ghanaians (i.e. anyone whose mother is born in Ghana), better than one million persons--Africans (mainly Nigerians), Europeans, Lebanese, Indians, were expelled. (See Nelson Addo, 1970.)

6. Wooden boxes, commonly seen at the market, which the traders use for storing their merchandise. At home, women keep their worldly possessions therein.

7. This is also true for other northerners and may be Islamic in origin. In Ibadan, the Hausa women are heavily cloistered and must conduct their business in trade from behind compound walls; this they do with the help of children or house giels. Earnings are converted into porcelain pots, which are piled in the house. (Abner Cohen, 1969.)

8. I found this to be true more often than not: whereas I would find it a relief to have someone to talk to while engaged in a menial task, such as stuffing kenkey into corn leaves--many of my informants did not. This might be due to the subject matter of my visits; as I have indicated, some of my questions related to concepts or actions which are foreign to the women.

9. Most of the cousins in the house do not speak English; this is an example of an indigenous living situation right in the middle of the city.

10. For example, using the behavior of the Paramount Chief as the traditional model among the Ashantis, even today, Paramount Chief and wife(ves) are not permitted to dine together. Similarly, the Ga chiefs take their repasts alone. Much of this survives only ceremonially, as the vestige of the pure model.

11. Clearly, this argument can be carried too far. This is not saying that one's biological mother is no different from anyone else; but, if the individual in fact has no contact with her mother, the fact of biology is irrelevant, when another woman is doing the mothering.

NOTES: CHAPTER IV

1. This question is problematic, because I neglected to define my term "school."

2. In questioning the women about their choice of work, there was a lot of difficulty establishing the concept of "choice." This was particularly so in situations requiring an interpreter. Pushing the questioning became a matter of diminishing return. The informant was confused and I was aggravated.

3. Out of the blue, I received the following letter:

"Dear Miss,

> I beg to fall on your paternal sympathy to introduce myself that I was the boy who worked on your car when you brought it for repairs last time.
>
> But unfortunately I was not in the workshop before you collected the car from our boss. In fact I was worried I couldn't meet you, because I found most of the bolts and nutts [sic] under the car very slackened but I have now tightened them all firmly. I think you may need someone to make maintenance on your car every week to avoid any unnecessary breakdown.
>
> I therefore promise fervently, if you agree to this I will make no mess of it and you wouldn't regret having approved it.
>
> I hope therefore that you will give me the date on which we shall meet to discuss that. Hoping to hear from you favourably,
>
> I remain,
>
> "Philip Kwame"

4. In customary law, the term "elder" originally "was applied to senior members of the family who by reason of their age and experience constituted the council of the family and represented all the other members." (Ollennu, 1962:144.) The head of the family may win that position either by formal election or appointment; popular acknowledgement or acclaim; or in the absence of either, the eldest male member and failing him, the eldest female member becomes head automatically. "As a general rule, there is no necessity to make a formal appointment of a head of family. The law is that the oldest member of the family, male or female (male preferred to female sometimes) of the most senior generation is head; that in fact was the origin of 'head of family' and 'elder of a family.' " (Ollennu, 1962:150.)

NOTES: CHAPTER V

1. Not that friendship does not have its commercial aspect; Ghanaians value even the intangibles of relationships in concrete terms. What is meant here is that just because one has a girlfriend who sells tomatoes, she need not feel constrained, and indeed does not, to buy from her. Most women buy from strangers, i.e. non-friends, and get to know them through a trading relationship.

2. The only men who regularly shop at the market are either exceedingly Westernized or house stewards, primarily of Europeans. A Ghanaian woman would do her own marketing, even if she had a steward, on the assumption that, being a man, he would be cheated or over-charged.

3. Mary Nyarko, wife of Nana Atakora Amaniampong II (Mamponghene, Ashanti Traditional Region) met her husband at the Anglican Church. When they married, both of them were excommunicated as he already had one wife.

4. Little (1959) found that different lineage people and even different tribesmen dwell together; however, intertribal marriage is discouraged. Men marry much later than women--e.g. in Accra, more men marry between the ages of 30-40 than 20-30, hence the disparity in age between spouses.

5. Ewes are infamous for practising juju.

6. Adawkaw had an abortion in her late teens, and Viv a miscarriage. It is also quite probably that others among my sample had children before marrying. I only know for sure of one, who is now married with two additional children. There was generally no diplomatic way for me to investigate this further.

7. Without pointing the finger, I might add that some of the Americans with Family Planning and Planned Parenthood (under the aegis of the Ford Foundation) were more of a hinderance than a help. For example, they were encouraging methods (specifically Emko foam) which are highly controversial in the United States, because their effectiveness is questionable. The explanation for promotion: it is a step in the right direction. If they get used to e.g. foam, they can go on to other devices more easily.

NOTES: CHAPTER VI

1. This is a clear instance of a woman becoming a personality (or, on the other hand, losing her personality) through the birth of children.

2. This is by no means unusual, and it seems to be an unwritten agreement that the girl moving in will offer her services in exchange, at least for a room. When my second interpreter moved in with me, without anything having been said, I awakened the first morning at 5:30 a.m. to the sound of her sweeping out the house.

3. This woman speaks Buzanga, Yoruba, Hausa, Ga, Twi, Fanti, and Ewe--a good, though extreme, example of African polylingualism.

4. This insult-throwing is a traditional way of blowing-off steam, but the vitriole was specifically related to this situation: i.e. Krobo girls are known for their loose ways. My Ghanaian friend who was translating for me at the grave site insists that the bulk of prostitutes in Accra and Abidjan are Krobo. This is probably an exaggeration, but in any case, it is one of the reasons that Krobo men do not marry Krobo women--they fear their infidelity. Consequently, there is much resentment amongst the Krobo women, and family generally, when a man marries outside. After Mr. Kofi's death, the family was literally not speaking to his widow or their children. They insisted that not a drop of water was to be spilt on the corpse until they had done every single rite to be sure that he had not died of unnatural causes.

5. Little (1959)includes prostitution in his classification of major male-female relationships. I do not, because prostitution is more explicitly a business operation. It is not a viable alternative for the respectability conferred by male accompaniment. Since sexuality is overt and many urban men feel pressures against marrying more than one woman, prostitution is one outlet. Illiterate and/or untrained women have capitalized on this situation and made it into their occupation.

6. "Affections" would be a more appropriate word for Western modes, but the question of affect is one that must be dealt with, as was done with respect to lability.

7. The Lido is a dance club, where a lot of the less-expensive prostitutes hang out.

8. Unless she feels threatened or displaced by the presence of a rival; in which case it is the other woman who suffers the brunt of her ire.

9. Prostitutes do not operate out of houses. They hang around dance halls, such as the Lido, Ambassador, Star Hotel. As they rise on the ladder of occupational success, they change their mode of dress and places frequented. They may be paid on a nightly basis; most, however, opt for a long-term set-up, as concubine or mistress.

10. By the same token, her fatalistic acceptance makes her a conservative force, perpetuating the status quo.

11. The word "responsibility" created real headaches; what it finally came down to was provision of a place to stay, food to eat and petty needs.

NOTES: CONCLUSION

1. As I defined it in Chapter I--"control over one's own rights at making decisions and implementing them. Furthermore, independence implies option--to do or not to do a given thing."

NOTES: APPENDIX I

1. The women in general are more interested in an active economic role; houseowner formerly was associated with household head, a prestigious position. I take the shift of change by the women to indicate a lessening in the importance of both.

2. One of the non-sample women I interviewed about the position of Ghanaian women in general was Dr. Evelyn Amartifio, Secretary of the Ghana Assembly of Women.

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ACADEMIC AWARDS: Pennsylvania Senatorial Scholarship: 1962-63, 1964-66

National Unity Grant (Ford Foundation): Summer, 1968

University Fellowship, Northwestern University: 1968-69

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Research assistant to Professor Gwendolen Carter, for revisions on her book Major Foreign Powers: Summer, 1970

Research assistant to Professor John Paden, writing syllabus lectures for Vol. II of The African Experience (Northwestern University Press, 1970); doing the maps for the Handbook (Free Press, forthcoming), dealing with instability and integration of political systems in Sub-Saharan Africa: Summer, 1969

Teaching assistant to Professor Edward T. Hall and Professor Oswald Werner, one quarter respectively: 1968-69

Analysis of Professor William Shack's data on ethnicity and occupational preference, conducted in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia: Winter, 1968

Research assistant to Professor Ronald Cohen, formulating and carrying out a content analysis of TAT protocols administered among the Kanuri in Bornu: Summer, 1968

Research for a personal project on the effects of resettlement on family ties in the Greek neighborhood in Chicago: Spring, 1968

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Fourth grade teacher, for the Philadelphia Board of Education, in a ghetto school: 5-6/67

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