MARRIAGE AND ALTERNATIVE STRATEGIES:

CAREER PATTERNS OF HAUSA WOMEN IN KATSINA CITY

Renee Ilene Pittin

Submitted for the degree of Ph.D. in Anthropology

School of Oriental and African Studies

University of London

December 1979

ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the social life of Hausa women in the Nigerian city of Katsina, and focuses on their perceptions and manipulation of available statuses and roles. Seen objectively, Hausa men dominate the wider political and economic life of the community: the men view women as subordinates whose lives they control. The ideology of women's seclusion supports this male view, but its most important 6ocial consequence is to define an arena from which all males are virtually excluded. This women's arena is domestic in two respects: the women's domain is the residential compounds, and the women's economic contributions are largely based on commodity production within these units. However, the domestic sphere is not a residual area of social life. Women's profits and other sources of income are the basis of extensive ceremonial exchanges which may involve hundreds of women in any single event. Informal and flexible women's networks operate in many contexts, most strikingly in protecting women threatened in times of unrest.

Women's and men's perceptions of women and their social life differ substantially, particularly in the women's emphases on the variety of positive choices open to them, and their active role in making decisions which affect their lives. Yet when women are with men, they preserve their exclusive social arena from male interference by deliberately behaving in ways which confirm male expectations of their passivity. A central theme of the thesis is the structure of the often contradictory male and female models of women, and the reasons for and consequences of their coexistence in Hausa society.

The study considers the wider social context within which women act, and outlines the historical processes resulting in a diminution of women's authority in the political sphere. Opportunities provided by seclusion, and women's distinct perceptions of their social life, allow them considerable economic self-sufficiency and autonomy, and satisfy social and psychological expectations. The women's arena is complex, and the alternative career strategies available to women are highly structured.

Case studies and quantitative data are used to analyse these strategies, and their advantages and disadvantages. Although Hausa women begin adult life as secluded married women, divorce is easily obtained, after which women may choose to remarry elsewhere, or to remain non-married. Or they may become prostitutes and achieve more complete independence and great personal freedom of movement. Women move easily between these statuses, and this mobility which is both spatial and social is extensive, yet much of it is virtually invisible to men, independent of male control, and ignored by the male model of women. The choices which women make are based on their own perceptions and priorities.

The thesis is intended as a contribution to West African ethnography, to the study of women in Muslim society, and, in a wider framework, to the debate concerning the existence and the nature of women's models of society.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

p.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION 13

Methodology 15
Dominant and Counterpart Models: the Hausa Case . . . 20
Summary of the Chapters 32

CHAPTER TWO: KATSINA: THE RESEARCH SETTING 37

Katsina in Historical Perspective 38
Ecology of Katsina City and Environs 46
Politico-administrative Units 48
Population 51
Ethnic Composition 52
Industry, and the Male Occupational Structure 55
An Introduction to Yarinci and Marina 60
Origin of Ward Members 61
Occupational Structure 63
Population 65
Incidence of Polygyny 73
Residential Patterns: the Compound 78
Physical Layout of the Compound 82
Compound Composition 83

CHAPTER THREE: WOMEN-CENTRED HOUSEHOLDS AND THE NON-MARRIED WOMEN 91

The Meaning of Non-marriage 94
The Lexical Component of Sex-specific Ideology . . . 97
The Spatial Component of Non-marriage 100
Residential Ties of Non-married Women 102
Duration of Non-marriage 105
The Matrifocal Household 108
Non-coresidential Marriage: Auren Silkiti 114
Old Age: Achieved and Ascribed Status 117
Residential Ties of Other Women 120

p.

Marriage as a Means of Obtaining Security 122
Economic Activities of Women 122
The Women's World in Microcosm 128
Conclusion 130

CHAPTER FOUR: CHOICE IN MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE: THE QUESTION OF FEMALE AUTONOMY 133

Age at First Marriage 134
Hausa Marriage: the Question of Choice 136
First Marriage: Choice or Coercion 140
Preferential Kin Marriage 149
The Character of Courtship 155
Marriage of Lies: the High Cost of Marriage in Katsina . 158
Parental Rights over Children 163
Fostering in Katsina 166
Childlessness and the Stability of Marriage 176
Frequency of Divorce 178
Divorce Procedures:
Unilateral Repudiation 193
Judicial Divorce 193
Conclusion 207

CHAPTER FIVE: ENTERING INTO KARUWANCI 210

Karuwa: the Meaning of the Term 211
Categorisation of Prostitution in Katsina City 213
Geographical Area of Research 215
Becoming a Karuwa: Precipitating Pressures 218
a) Marital Problems and Marriage Choice 219
b) Poverty 224
c) Childlessness 225
d) Benefits of Karuwanci 230
Entrance into Karuwanci 231
The Karuwa: a Statistical Profile 233
Provenance of Karuwai 233
Age at Entry into Karuwanci 242

p.

Marital Status 244

Marriages before Beginning Karuwanci 245

Conclusion 247

CHAPTER SIX: ORGANISATIONS, ALLIANCES, AND NETWORKS . . . 250

Changing Power Relationships in Katsina: the Traditional Hierarchy and the Karuwa 252

Women and Politics in Katsina 257

Exploitation: an Occupational Hazard for the Marginal Woman 259

Voluntary Organisations: Male Domination; Female Participation 262

Social Organisation of Karuwanci 264

The Practice of Karuwanci: Procurement 269

Women's Networks: Adaptation to Ostensible Male Dominance 277

Bonds among Karuwai 279

Association between Karuwai and Married Women 281

The Karuwa as Scapegoat 283

Attitudes and Ideology in Karuwanci 289

The Search for Security: Resort to Ritual 296

Conclusion 305

CHAPTER SEVEN: KARUWANCI: EXERCISING THE OPTION 308

Heterosexual Relationships in Karuwanci: 'Platonic Ties . 316

Heterosexual Relationships: Sexual Liaisons 318

Socio-economic Status within Karuwanci 326

Occupational Opportunity within Karuwanci 330

Independent Women 333

Marriage among Karuwai 341

Remarriage from Karuwanci 348

Conclusion 356

CHAPTER EIGHT: THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF MARRIED WOMEN . 358

Seclusion: the Realities of Socio-spatial Control . . . 359

p.

Strict Seclusion: an Introduction to Marriage 367
Economic Roles of Women: the Statistical Background . . 370
Economic Opportunity in Marriage 374
Conspicuous Leisure: an Indication of High Status . . . 376
Women's Trade - Yarinci and Marina 384
Utilisation of Economic Resources 396
Ceremonial Participation and Gift-exchange: the Foci of Bonds between Women 399
Ceremonial Attendance as Status Indicator 403
Gift-exchange and Social Integration 405
Relationships between Co-wives 414
The Relationship between Husband and Wife 421
Relationships with Affines 424
Deference, Authority, and Power 427
Authority and Power: the Economic Dimension 429
Conclusion 432

CHAPTER NINE: CONCLUSION 437
Education: New Opportunities for Women 437
Clarity to Ambiguity: the Manipulation of Models . . . 447
Men's World, Women's World 451
Theoretical Implications 452

APPENDIX I: Women's Political Power in the Savannah: The Historical Dimension 458

BIBLIOGRAPHY 468

LIST OF TABLES

		p.
2-1	Men's occupations, Katsina City, 1971	58
2-2	Origin of men and women - Yarinci and Marina	62
2-3	Men's occupations, Yarinci and Marina	64
2-4	Sex-age distribution - Yarinci	67
2-5	Sex-age distribution - Marina	68
2-6	Number of wives per husband - Yarinci and Marina	74
2-7	Relationship of men's age to number of wives	77
2-8	Number of persons per compound - Yarinci and Marina	84
2-9	Position in compound of adult men - Yarinci and Marina	88
3-1	Categories of women - Yarinci and Marina	93
3-2	Residential ties of non-married women	103
3-3	Relationship of age to incidence of remarriage among non-married women	105
3-4	Relationship of residence composition to incidence of remarriage among non-married women	107
3-5	Position in compound of older women - Yarinci and Marina	119
3-6	Residential ties of other women in Yarinci and Marina	121
3-7	Occupations of non-married women and older women in relation to age - Yarinci	124
3-8	Occupations of non-married women and older women in relation to age - Marina	125
3-9	Occupations of women in *silkiti* marriage - Yarinci and Marina	127
4-1	Duration of first marriage - Yarinci	145
4-2	Duration of first marriage - Marina	146
4-3	Relation between marriage duration and marriage choice	148
4-4	Relationship of foster children to foster parents	169
4-5	Children in compound of prospective foster mother	172
4-6	Relationship between fertility and marriage stability	177
4-7	Marriage duration in Yarinci	181

		p.
4-8	Marriage duration in Marina	182
4-9	Relationship of age to number of marriages contracted by women - Yarinci	185
4-10	Relationship of age to number of marriages contracted by women - Marina	186
4-11	Relationship of age to number of marriages among Yarinci men	189
4-12	Relationship of age to number of marriages among Marina men	190
4-13	Relationship of age to number of marriages - Yarinci and Marina	191
4-14	Divorce proceedings, Katsina Area Courts	197
5-1	Births in relation to age among women presently practising karuwanci	226
5-2	Place of origin of karuwai and length of time in karuwanci	237
5-3	Place of origin of karuwai	240
5-4	Age at entry into karuwanci	243
5-5	Marriages contracted prior to beginning karuwanci	246
7-1	Additional occupations among karuwai	331
7-2	Relationship of age to number of marriages contracted among karuwai	342
7-3	Relationship of age to number of marriages contracted by Yarinci women, Marina women, and karuwai	344
7-4	Marriage duration among karuwai	346
7-5	Marriages since beginning karuwanci	351
8-1	Participation in women's occupations - Yarinci	378
8-2	Participation in women's occupations - Marina	383
8-3	Occupations of married women living with their husbands, in relation to age - Yarinci	385
8-4	Occupations of married women living with their husbands, in relation to age - Marina	386

ILLUSTRATIONS

Map of Katsina City 12

To

ALHAJI BALAN GOGGO MOHAMMED
YANDAKAN KATSINA

who taught me
the meaning of hospitality

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

So many people in Nigeria and England have gone out of their way to help, both during the research period and during the writing-up, that it is difficult to single out individuals. I therefore wish to register forthwith my thanks to my friends and colleagues (the terms are not mutually exclusive) both at Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria, and at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, for their advice, suggestions, and myriad forms of assistance during the course of this research.

I am grateful to my supervisor, Professor Abner Cohen, both for initially directing my studies towards Hausa language and culture, and for his very long-term continuity of advice and encouragement. And to Dr. David Parkin, my thanks for his yeoman efforts in taking on a formidable task on short notice, and in then fulfilling that responsibility with unfailing diligence and good will; I gained immeasurably from our discussions. My debt to Professor James Hirabayashi, formerly of the Department of Sociology, Ahmadu Bello University, is great indeed. For two years he acted as advisor and taskmaster, and pursued his self-appointed mission with such vigour that chapter after thesis chapter was completed, infinitely improved in the process by virtue of his perceptive comments. And I must express my gratitude particularly to Dr. Polly Hill. Her intellectual and moral support, her precise, clear, and constructive criticism, and her enthusiastic and continuing interest

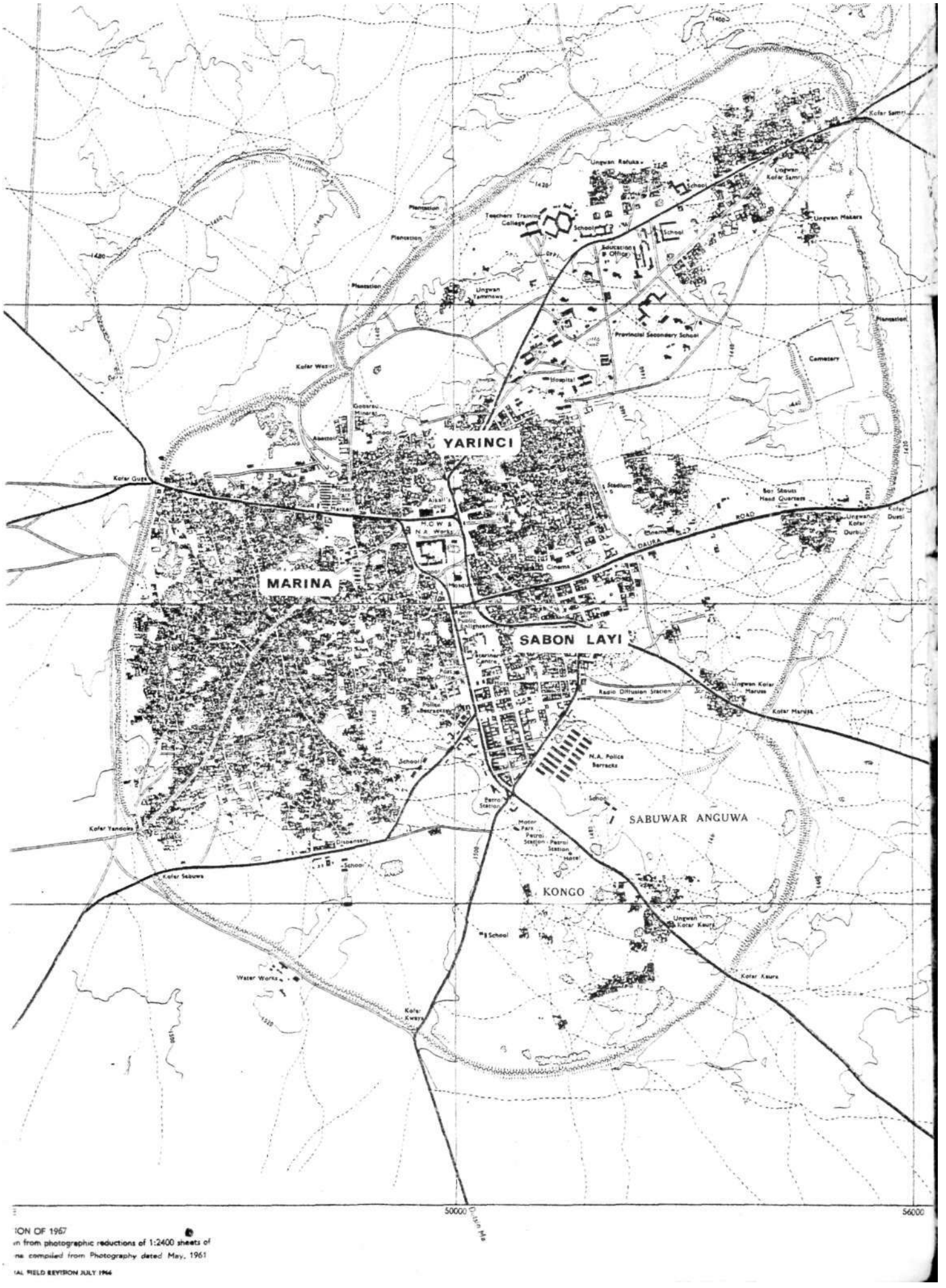
in the research itself, have been invaluable to me.

I was extremely fortunate in Katsina in having the help of two excellent research assistants. Hajiya Hassu Inko was, indeed, rather less assistant than guide: her tact, understanding and sensitivity made the early field research effortless and highly rewarding. Words do not suffice to convey my gratitude to Malama Rabi Danbaba, former research assistant and present Headmistress, Dutsin-Ma Girls Primary Boarding School. Rabi's enthusiastic and unfailing assistance in the field is matched only by the quality of her friendship.

My special thanks to Alhaji Musa Ma'aji and his wife, Hajiya Rabi, for their patience in answering all manner of questions both in Katsina and London. While most Katsina residents were exceedingly kind in sharing their knowledge, few were so assailed by questions across borders and seas.

The research upon which this study is based was partially funded by a grant from the University of London Central Research Fund. I must also express my appreciation to Ahmadu Bello University, which awarded me with a period of study leave in order to complete the writing of the thesis, and very generously provided a grant for thesis expenses.

My final and greatest debt is, without doubt, to the women of Katsina, who welcomed me and so unstintingly shared their lives with me, and who made my stay in Katsina so very fruitful. An gode, an gode, an gode kwarai!



ION OF 1967
n from photographic reductions of 1:2400 sheets of
ns compiled from Photography dated May, 1961

IAL FIELD REVISION JULY 1966

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Glimpses of the Hausa women's world afforded by a sojourn in the Nigerien village of Magaria, and by the writings of anthropologists[1] working in Nigeria and Niger, whetted my interest in pursuing detailed research regarding the women's lives, and the women's world. The opportunity presented itself in April, 1971, with Nigerian government approval of my status as research worker, and my arrival in Nigeria. The fieldwork was carried out over a twenty-eight month period, from April, 1971, to August, 1973.

From the earliest stages of preparation for field research, my intention had been to place the study in an urban setting. It seemed reasonable to expect that the urban milieu would permit greater opportunity for varied career options; this expectation was proved to be correct. The urban setting would also be likely to provide a more highly stratified cross-section of population than would be found in rural areas. Since divergent status systems seemed a possible indicator of separate men's and women's domains, the greater depth of a city sample would be likely to provide a more clear-cut demonstration of the shared or divergent aspects of social status.

---

1. Most particularly at that time, Guy and Jacqueline Nicolas in Niger; and Polly Hill, Abner Cohen, and M.G. and Mary Smith in Nigeria.

The selection of Katsina City as the research setting was based on a variety of factors, both personal and academic. Katsina was originally suggested as the optimum centre for enquiries by Katsina residents temporarily based in London, particularly at the Hausa Section of the BBC. Their enthusiasm was infectious, and was matched only by their subsequent diligence and kindness in providing me with introductions to their friends and relatives, thereby making my arrival in Katsina as smooth and as trouble-free as possible. They described Katsina, quite correctly, as a beautiful city proud of its past, maintaining and nourishing traditional Hausa culture, and perhaps less affected by western influences than cities farther to the south.

Strong academic considerations also favoured Katsina. The work of Polly Hill in nearby Batagarawa would provide interesting contrasts to an altogether urban-based study, while a different socio-historical perspective was available through reference to the research of Guy and Jacqueline Nicolas in Maradi, fifty miles north. It was to Maradi that the former Katsina rulers and their followers retired before the forces of the Jihad.

The two wards studied within the city represent a historical and class division within the society; the choice of the two areas was based on both historical sources and present perceptions. The distinctions between the two wards, and the characteristics of each, are considered in some detail in the following chapter.

Methodology

Participant observation was an integral and perhaps the most important technique utilised in the field. As I speak Hausa fluently, and spent virtually all my time with Hausa women, the opportunities for learning were unbounded by barriers of space, time or language. As a researcher working alone, I was dependent upon the women for friendship, sometimes for solace, and for simple human companionship; these were all bestowed whole-heartedly. For almost two-and-a-half years, I had the pleasure of sharing the women's lives. The ceremonies of one's friends became the focus of one's own world; the minutiae of the women's world, and the grand occasions, were equally shared.

Obtaining data concerning the marital careers and life-histories of individuals clearly demanded the use of techniques other than participant observation. Much of the data was collected within two purposive sampling units - the wards of Yarinci and Marina - and from the geographically dispersed population of Hausa courtesans (karuwai) in the city. The two wards provide a cross-section of married, non-married and older urban women. The karuwai, hardly represented in Yarinci and Marina, became the focus of the third phase of research.

Research techniques included an initial survey, for which Malama Rabi and I originally attempted to visit every house in each of the two wards and every karuwa working in the city. Insofar as possible, the life histories were obtained through first-person information. The verbal administration of a formal questionnaire

was discarded very early in the research: the very act of soliciting such personal information demands rather more consideration and finesse than is easily accommodated by the questionnaire format. The same kinds of information were elicited within the framework of a more unstructured interview. This proved a successful technique not only for obtaining much of the originally sought information, but also in providing the liberty necessary to follow interesting and relevant leads evoked by the open-ended conversational approach. A second survey was carried out in each of the research areas in order to obtain additional diachronic data. This was particularly relevant regarding the question of remarriage among non-married women and karuwai, and the frequency of divorce among married women. Marital histories and extended interviews with older women also added some diachronic depth to the women's world, which was further expanded by reference to archival and historical sources.

The first-person survey approach was very strongly supplemented by reference to key informants, usually long-time residents in the wards, and karuwai with lengthy careers in Katsina. Through the assistance of these informants, contradictions in life histories were often resolved, lacunae in the corpus of data were filled, and infinitely more detailed and comprehensive information was garnered than is usually obtainable through the survey method.

It proved to be impossible to obtain the life-histories of all women in the two wards and all the karuwai, due to a number of factors, including constraints of time and money, and non-response

or non-cooperation. One unexpected difficulty was the establishment of the actual boundaries of the wards, which ebbed and flowed depending upon the tax-list utilised, or the ward head consulted. Although, ultimately, not all women were interviewed in order to obtain their life-histories, at least minimal demographic data was collected from virtually all the houses in both wards, and from most of the karuwai. From this data, it appears that the compounds and women included in the more detailed survey are reasonably representative of the wards as a whole.

The data included in each of the tables in the text are based upon the total response obtained with regard to the enquiry in question. While this method results in the utilisation of a varying percentage of the survey population, it seemed preferable to the reduction of the data base to only information from individuals whose responses could be used for all tables; this would increase the possibility of bias. Thus, the widest possible base is used for each presentation. The effective response, rarely less than half the total research population and ranging to one hundred percent, is generally indicated in the text.

Even with the most willing and well-disposed respondents, certain difficulties were encountered, including the withholding of demographic data, and problems of dating. The withholding of demographic data revolves around the whole group of customs in Hausa society relating to the "shame" (kunya) associated with the birth of one's first-born child, and often devolving also upon the second-born. As a woman does not speak the name of her first-born, and indeed often refuses

to admit its existence, or states that it belongs to someone else, and lists her children beginning with the second or third child, this plays havoc with the collection of demographic information. Name restrictions add somewhat to the difficulties of obtaining data, for a woman will not utter the name of her first-born, her husband, or her husband's father or mother. This restriction extends to former parents-in-law, and to all persons bearing the same name as these categories of kin and affines. There are, however, certain descriptive terms and nicknames attached to most Hausa names, an adaptation which averts the utter confusion which would otherwise result from this limitation of communication. These strictures are much less stringently applied to men. For other reasons, discussed in Chapter Four, women may conceal some of their marriages; this problem was often overcome through the assistance of key information.

Difficulties in correctly dating events, ascertaining ages, and determining durations of marriages were much more serious. The western concept of dating is irrelevant to Hausa women, whose interests and preoccupations do not require this kind of chronology. Political events were of very limited value in establishing significant dates for women. The Emir has been in office since 1944; the appointment of a new District Head, Wakili (the urban equivalent of the Village Head), or ward head has no impact on the women's lives or consciousness. The only major political event which could invariably be used for dating was the coup of 1966: the accompanying social and political upheavals embroiled Katsina in the turmoil that swept

throughout the North.

A list of significant dates was painstakingly constructed, using also serious and widespread epidemics, solar eclipses, and, most important, all the famines which have affected Katsina since the turn of the century, each of which is named, although names vary according to locality. The list was useful in establishing initial life-cycle dating, which was refined by incorporating number and durations of marriages, number and ages of children, and, most important, corroborative or comparative third-party information.

I have already briefly noted my debt to key informants. In dealing with all the fieldwork difficulties listed here, they were invaluable. In Marina in particular, where so many of the women grew up in or near the ward, inconsistencies or errors in first-person demographic information were easily rectified by reference to these ward residents who had known the respondents from their birth. Using the basic chronological data provided by respondents, and the knowledge of key informants, comparative age tables were constructed, and much greater accuracy was established in dating of the careers of many of the ward women. In Yarinci, the problem was more difficult in that most women come from outside the city. In this case, efforts were directed more towards cross-checking data through the good offices of kinswomen, affines, and fellow townswomen and villagers living in the city. And again, certain long-term Yarinci residents, both men and women, assisted in corroborating data concerning women's histories since their arrival in the ward.[1]

---

1. Data collection among the karuwai is discussed particularly in Chapter Five.

A very great deal of time and effort were expended in pinning down this basic life-cycle information,[1] first with the respondent, and later, if necessary, with key informants. Occasionally, return visits were made to the original respondents for clarification of particular information. The degree of accuracy of the data, therefore, is quite high.

In the course of research, it was particularly in the realm of participant observation, in the detailed discussions with key informants, and in the sharing of one's friends' daily lives, that the complexities of the women's world, the options available to them, and the existence and operation of a separate women's model, became most clearly apparent. It is these which form the basis of the present work.

Dominant and Counterpart Models: the Hausa Case

The Ardeners (E. Ardener, 1972; E. and S. Ardener, 1975) have proposed that women in a male-dominant society could be viewed as a "muted" group, and their model of society as a counterpart model, at least as it refers to the women's utilisation of their own models rather than those of men. However, according to Shirley Ardener,

---

1. J.A. Barnes lists the kinds of information necessary for a study of divorce frequency, which include the woman's date of birth, and, for each marriage: the date of commencement; whether extant or terminated by death or divorce; date of termination if not extant; and name or identification of spouse. He then states, "It will be seen that the information required is not great, and it can easily be collected as part of a systematic inquiry..." (p. 95; emphasis mine). In Hausa society, at least, the collection of such data cannot by any stretch of the imagination be called easy.

> "/The/ dominant model may impede the free expression of alternative models ... which subdominant groups may possess, and perhaps may even inhibit the very generation of such models."
>
> (p. xii)

I should like to suggest that the "muting" of the counterpart model may be less a function of impediments or inhibitions presented by the dominant model, and more the result of active strategy on the part of the counterpart group to preserve their actual autonomy in the face of male dominance. I shall demonstrate that there is rather more political awareness and intent inherent in the differential utilisation of dual models than has been recognised heretofore, and that, for very different and indeed sometimes contradictory reasons, both dominant and counterpart groups may symbolically support the ideology of male dominance, and utilise the dominant model of society.

Through the use of symbolic behaviour, and particularly through resort to verbalisation of the male ideology, women "mystify" the extent of their actual extensive options and independence, and thereby protect them from exposure and possible curtailment. I suggest that such a strategy is most likely to be effective in societies in which there is marked social segregation, and that this segregation, seemingly symbolic of overt dominance and social control, in practice may afford the counterpart group with greater autonomy and freedom than would be possible in a more closely integrated structure.

The relationship between ideology, behaviour, and power is complex, and will be considered in a variety of contexts. Symbolism is used to mask rather than clarify certain relationships and interaction, and the use of dominant symbols acts as a means of reassurance to

other members of society, and renders less likely close examination of actual social roles and relationships.

The actual discrepancy between women's ostensible acceptance of the male ideology, and female behaviour and roles, is largely explicable in terms of women's expression of the counterpart ideology, and their identification with and commitment to the muted model of society. Women's values overlap, but are not identical with, those of men.

The fact that this chasm may exist between actual and ideal, that indeed two distinct ideologies can coexist and be utilised within a context of such apparent dominance, and that women can manipulate the ideologies with such success and impunity, is a function of the most striking feature of Katsina Hausa culture, which is the utter segregation of the men's and women's worlds. This segregation has far-reaching consequences.

Partially consequent upon women's disengagement from the wider political arena, and reinforced by the present practice of seclusion, the women's world, in ritual, political, social and economic aspects, is carefully demarcated and bound off from the world of men. This is manifested in the division of labour, the creation and maintenance of separate social networks, the distinction between men's and women's ceremonies and rituals, the separate economic activities and resources of women and men, and the clear-cut spatial arrangements whereby women and men are rarely together even within the home, much less outside it. It is this total segregation which makes possible the effectiveness of the double ideology and double identity which women use, and it is

the fulcrum upon which Hausa heterosexual relationships are pivoted.

In order to understand the present relationships between Hausa men and women, it is necessary to view the society also from a diachronic perspective. In the past, Hausa women had great overt political power. They had control not only over women, but also over the entire polity, or large areas of it. This control, greatest probably around the sixteenth century, has been eroded over the course of time. The only present manifestation of this former power is a series of women's titles which confer virtually no political authority. In the sphere of state political power, women have lost the control they formerly exerted, and their offices have been taken by men. It may be that the nearly total segregation of the women's world from the men's world is at least in part a reaction to the women's loss of their political claims and prerogatives.[1]

The loss of political power was inextricably linked with the growing ascendancy of Islam over the traditional spirit-possession cult (bori), of which women were the main custodians and the majority of adepts, and by means of which women were responsible for the fertility and prosperity of the land and the state. Women lost both religious and political authority in relation to the dominant religio-political organisation, and were therefore either constrained to accept the second-class status offered them, or to reorganise themselves,

---

1. There is virtually no information available regarding the daily lives of the female commoners (talakawa) during past centuries. The existence of female rulers does not give much indication of the position of other women in the society, as contemporary data shows. However, the actual loss of overt political power among noblewomen may well have had negative effects upon the socio-political status of other women also.

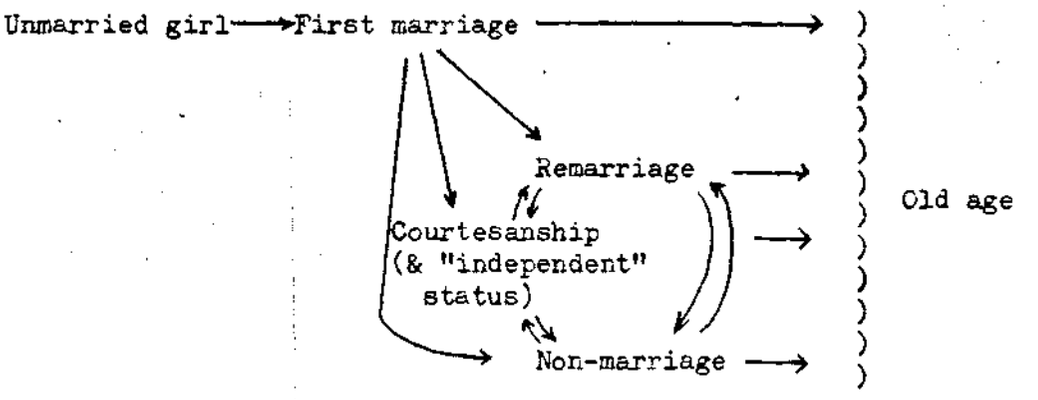
their lives, and their values in order to occupy a more satisfying position within Hausa society.

The separation of the women's and men's worlds may be seen, then, at least in part as a measure of the women's disengagement from the politico-religious arena in which they have been bested, in order to restructure their lives along other lines, with other goals and values partly parallel to and partly conflicting with those of the men. Thus, I suggest that with their defeat in the overt political arena and the religious sphere, the women withdrew from the unambiguity of a socio-political system with a non-gender-based ideology, and opted for a more ambiguous role. This women's counterpart position is reinforced by the women's utilisation of the traditional spirit possession cult, officially forbidden in the City, but widespread and a source of security and of strength for many women, whether or not they are active participants.

Hausa men do not "oppress" women, nor do Hausa women control their destinies without reference to men. Men control the macrounit of the state and affect to control women, although in fact women exhibit a measure of autonomy in the running of their lives which contradicts the ostensible male dominance, and is expressed in the careers they select, the terminology they use, and even in the songs they sing.

Men's and women's perceptions differ with reference to the careers available to women, and to the women's autonomy in choosing and changing career options. Women have a wider and much more positive view of the options open to them than is evoked by the

male ideology. These options may be conceived of schematically:



All Hausa women marry. That women may remain in one marriage throughout their lives is reflected in the top line of the diagram. However, many women oscillate between one or more of the alternative career strategies open to them, eventually and inevitably leaving all three behind as they become old women. This study concentrates upon the three major career strategies, or options, open to women. These are marriage and remarriage; courtesanship (karuwanci), and non-marriage[1] (jawarci).

We shall consider the various benefits and constraints inherent in the adoption of a particular career strategy, and we shall show, particularly through the use of case studies and qualitative data, the means by which women maximise their individual status and position through manipulation of the system of career options. We shall

---

1. Throughout this study, "non-married" refers to persons formerly but no longer married, and is distinguishable thereby from "unmarried", referring only to persons who have not yet married.

examine the divergence between the men's and women's models of the women's world through reference to the differing attitudes, values, and perceptions associated with the various career strategies.

The freedom and ease with which women actually move between careers is consistent with their own model of society, although greatly at variance with the male model of women's subordination. It is clearly to women's advantage to assume publicly the male view, while acting very much in accordance with their own predilections and priorities. It must be noted, however, that men are not altogether unaware of this dual ideology. In relation to a Greek study, S.C. Rogers points out:

> "...although...males are not actually dominant, both sex groups act publicly as if they were because each may maintain its own power in this way."
>
> (1975, p. 746)

In certain ways, the quote is appropriate to the Hausa case, even though in many respects Hausa men and their world are dominant. I have noted that women have considerable autonomy, and this autonomy is best retained by avoiding direct confrontation, and by ostensibly supporting the dominant ideology, thus disarming criticism and effectively denying grounds for accusation or reprisal.

In the Hausa case, the muting of the women's ideology is a function of the women's own recognition of their position vis à vis men, and their understanding of the need to verbalise dominant ideology and behaviour. Their "muteness", i.e. reticence to verbalise the women's ideology, or their intentional articulation of the dominant ideology, is "heard" by those whom women might have reason

to believe would support the male model of society, or by persons whose actual ideological position is not immediately evident.

This was made explicit even in the course of interviewing. Women's perceptions regarding myself and my role varied according to situational context, length of acquaintance, and the degree of friendship established between us. It was through women's changing perceptions of my own status, and their concurrent change in emphases and priorities in presenting their decisions and actions, that this very vital aspect of women's behaviour became manifest. It became eminently clear that the kinds of models women use, and the ideologies implicit in the explanations they offer, may well differ, with the muted ideology presented or hidden depending on the individual's perceptions of her interlocutor. The values and priorities of the individual are therefore gender-based to some extent both within the culture and outside it. Cynthia Nelson has noted that:

> "The sex-linked aspect of social interaction places the actor and ethnographer in situations of communication in which the so-called 'raw data' of ethnography are the very products of this communication." (p. 560)

In the context of Hausa culture, common gender represents only a first step towards the acquisition of "raw data" in terms of understanding the counterpart model of society.

I have noted the profound sexual segregation which is a feature of almost every facet of Hausa life. In the course of this study, it will become evident that in many respects the women's world is self-contained and self-sufficient. It will be demonstrated that emphasis upon the "wider society" in analysing the position of Hausa

women, accords the men's world, or the "formal" political structure, greater significance for the society overall than it actually merits. The kind of approach we are suggesting is implicit in a recent article by S.C. Rogers:

> "...marked social and economic segregation is conducive to the development of separate ideological systems and of two contrasting valuations of the importance and attractiveness of each sex group and its activities. ...it may not be legitimate to consider one group as more excluded than the other, if neither has access to the other's domains."
>
> (1978, p. 145)

She measures power in terms of control over significant resources, including economic (land, labour, food and money), ritual, specialist skills, formal political rights and information, and notes that:

> "Where ideological differentiation is present, there will be disagreement between the sexes as to the relative value of particular resources. ...women, for example, will consider some male-controlled resources relatively unimportant, and value highly their own, while men hold the opposite valuation. ...another point of disagreement may be between public and private assessments of particular resources."
>
> (1978, p. 155)

This kind of analysis reflects the dual ideology in Hausa society, and the pitfalls inherent in concentrating on a single ideology. It is also a prelude to an attempt in the course of this study to act upon Ifeka's suggestion:

> "If it becomes apparent that men only run one among several systems of power, we will have to refine and expand our currently limited idea of power."
>
> (p. 565)

One of the main foci in studies of women has been the degree of influence women may exert over men, and the ways in which women

may influence the wider/male/formal political structure; women's informal roles are stressed.[1] However, it is sometimes the case that the possible presence of a separate women's model, or set of models, is implicit in the data. This is especially likely in exemplification of the continuous "sabotage" of men's plans and arrangements in areas in which men's and women's interests coincide. This is a feature, for example, of Ronald Cohen's fascinating study of male-female relationships among the Kanuri. He bases his analysis squarely on the male model of society, although internal evidence suggests the presence of an alternative women's model.

Some studies have concentrated on the existence of women's groups, women's organisations, or women's networks in the context of overt male dominance, associated with fairly strict social segregation. Relevant here, for example, is the work of Amina Farrag (1971) on the Algerian Azzabat, Vanessa Maher's study (1974) of Moroccan women, and Nancy Tapper's interesting exposition (1978) of the women's sub-society among the Shahsevan nomads of Iran. In none of these cases did the socio-economic opportunities open to women begin to approach those available to the women in Hausa society; the combination of factors which might lead to the growth of a separate and relatively self-sufficient women's world was absent. These factors are discussed in the course of the present work.

Even in Hausa society, the women's world is in some ways

---

1. See, for example, the work of L.E. Sweet, S.K. Mohsen, B.C. Aswad, and J.F. Riegelhaupt. These articles were all included in a special issue concerning women of the Anthropological Quarterly, 1967.

subordinate within the wider political framework, but these aspects of subordination are not as significant in certain respects as the self-sufficiency and the autonomy manifested within the women's world. Taking into account also the extent to which women's goals and expectations can be fulfilled within the women's sphere, the women's world becomes a very comprehensive and exclusive unit within the society. In many ways, indeed, men are specifically excluded from the events and activities which are shared by women.

The women's domain is largely comprehended within the spatial arena of the domestic compound, but this domestic arena is in fact the domain only of women, and of all women. For women, the residence is the meeting place, and the main focus of group interaction. And this interaction, while excluding men, includes all women, cross-cutting differing life-styles and careers.

I have assiduously avoided the use of the public/private dichotomy in the course of this study. The dichotomy, long utilised in discussing women's status and position, and popularised in the literature on women by Rosaldo (1974),[1] is an etic concept which does not fit the emic model of Hausa society. This will be demonstrated particularly in Chapters Eight and Nine. As used in the women's literature, the terms are largely descriptive and appear to have little analytical value.

---

1. Ernestine Friedl's study of Vásilika (1967) focuses on this dichotomy, as does the work of Pehrson (1966) and Cunnison (1966), among others. Cynthia Nelson (1974) argues against the public/private dyad particularly as presented by male ethnographers studying men in segregated Middle Eastern societies, but rather surprisingly, given the content of her data, she does not object to the terminology. See also C. Sutton et al (1975).

The focus of this study is upon the virtually self-contained world of women, and upon the means by which women maintain their autonomy in an ostensibly male-dominant society. A number of articles have appeared concerning the existence of women's models,[1] but the ethnography upon which the theoretical framework may be placed has been very limited.[2] The present work addresses itself to the study of women's models, considering particularly the ways in which they are generated and sustained, and the means by which the women's world coexists with that of men.

In the course of this study, we shall analyse the bases of the women's model of society. We shall consider the relationship between women's control of economic resources, their status, and their activation of a counterpart model. We shall examine the ways in which the counterpart model is manifested, both behaviourally and verbally, and the conditions under which this occurs. We shall demonstrate the ways in which the distinct counterpart and dominant models place women in a seemingly anomalous position in the society, and we shall attempt to ascertain the extent to which men are cognisant of the alternative women's model, and the ways in which they may, or do, act upon this knowledge. We shall consider these questions particularly within the framework of the alternative strategies, or career options, open to women.

---

1. See, e.g., S. Ardener (1975) and E. Ardener (1972, 1975), S.C. Rogers (1975 and 1978), and S.W. Tiffany (1978).

2. A notable exception is Marilyn Strathern's Women in Between.

It is hoped that the analysis included herein, and the detailed ethnography upon which it is based, will prove of value in furthering understanding of the existence, and the nature, of women's models of society.

Summary of the Chapters

The following chapter provides an introduction to the history, ecology, and demography of Katsina City. The historical account stresses particularly those trends, events and incidents which were the precursors of the present formal politico-religious system, with its differing significance for men and women. The historical material in Chapter Two should be read in conjunction with Appendix One, "Women's Political Power in the Savannah". This account is far more wide-ranging than the historical information provided in Chapter Two, covering not only Katsina, or Hausaland, but also other kingdoms and empires stretching from east to west. Information from a number of published sources as well as from informants' narratives are integrated to display a wider perspective concerning the formal power of women across the African savannah, its gradual diminution, and possible causes and consequences.

Demographic and occupational information focus particularly on the two wards, Yarinci and Marina, within which much of the field research was carried out. Occupational structure, relative wealth, and the salient distinctions between the two wards are shown, primarily as these relate to the men's world. Residence is

presented using the compound as the significant unit, rather than the household or domestic group, in order to ensure the inclusion of women as individuals rather than as appendages to fathers, husbands or other kin.

Chapter Three begins the discussion of career options available to Hausa women, with emphasis upon the category of "non-marriage". An important option in the women's model, it is virtually ignored in the dominant model, and thereby provides a valuable first indication of the kind of divergence which exists between the men's and women's worlds. The distinctions between models are analysed and the reasons for the differences sought. Attention is also focused on the all-women compounds and women-centred compounds whose residents play an important part in Katsina City life, and which are an everpresent symbol of the significance of all-female groupings in the society. The fact that residence in these compounds cuts across class lines and male categories signifies the kind of solidarity which may exist between women, and the relative unimportance to them of dominant ideological categorisation. The varied careers of the compound residents is a continual reminder to the rest of the female population of the alternative options open to them.

The question of choice in marriage and divorce is dealt with in detail in Chapter Four. Far from being helpless pawns in men's marriage arrangements, women are shown to be active agents. This is made manifest not only in the machinations of the bride, but also in the kinds of control which senior kinswomen wield. The political significance of marriage alliances is shown to be necessarily limited,

in that the autonomy of women precludes any guarantee of marriage stability. It is demonstrated that the bilateral nature of Hausa kinship reinforces this optional aspect of marriage, which is reflected also in the transfer of marriage prestations of nearly equal value between the kin groups of bride and groom.

In a discussion of divorce, we show how Hausa custom overrides Muslim law regarding women's right to divorce. While marriage is more easily terminated by men, women who wish to end a marriage will eventually and invariably succeed. The question of custody of children is considered here, and the importance of fostering is demonstrated. It is suggested that through fostering women create matrifocal nexi which are virtually independent of husband and marriage, and which provide woman and child with a continuity of interest and affection which may be more permanent than the matrimonial bonds within which the fostering is usually initiated.

Chapters Five, Six and Seven are concerned with another career open to Hausa women: the option of karuwanci, or courtesanship. Chapter Five describes entry into karuwanci, and the precipitating pressures which may influence a woman to exercise the option, or may provide her with an acceptable rationale to do so. The distinctions between men's and women's ideology are most clearly seen with regard to karuwanci, and examples are presented.

The essentially autonomous position of women is re-examined in Chapter Six, in the context of the process of procurement. However, the main focus of the chapter is upon the informal networks maintained by women which, like the all-women compounds noted above, cross-cut

women's career categories, and emphasise the solidarity which exists between women. Women's networks are widespread and flexible enough to permit easy movement and superb communication among women, and are invaluable in times of natural disaster, when karuwai become the prime scapegoats for the ills, tensions, and fears in the wider society. The karuwai are shown to be a category particularly vulnerable to exploitation, although this is minimised by utilisation of the women's networks. The spirit-possession cult, bori, is discussed here, especially in terms of the present benefits it provides to women, and the heritage of its past.

Chapter Seven returns to the main theme of this study, the existence of a dual ideology and its manipulation by women. This is followed by consideration of the options available to the older karuwa , and the significance of the change in categorisation as she becomes more or less successful in her chosen trade. The optional nature of karuwanci, and women's manipulation of the dominant ideology is underscored by analysis of the marital careers of karuwai and married women.

In Chapter Eight, we turn to the remaining career option open to women, and the one which is most commonly chosen: the option of marriage. Considerations of status among women are as important in marriage as in the other career strategies, and it is in this chapter that the most important ceremonial opportunities for increasing status are discussed. Relevant to this is the ostensible spatial control of women and the actual movement which is a feature of their life-style. The general debate concerning the relationship between women's economic

position, social status, and political power is entered into here.

In the final chapter some of the main conclusions reached in this work are summarised, and their implications considered, particularly in relation to the study of women. The chapter also includes a brief foray into the possible effects of education upon women's career options, and upon their ideology.

CHAPTER TWO

KATSINA: THE RESEARCH SETTING

This chapter is basically an introduction to the city and people of Katsina. Beginning with the politico-historical basis of the land of Katsina (Kasar Katsina), the units under discussion become progressively smaller, ending with the compound composition of specific urban wards.

Much of the content of this chapter is concerned with what might be styled the "male" social, political and economic structure. A knowledge of this wider social arena is necessary, however, for an understanding of the framework within which women operate, the pressures and exigencies of the man's world indirectly affecting the women, and the common cultural matrix having a more pervasive effect.

The first half of the chapter deals with historical, ecological, demographic and economic aspects of Katsina City. The second half of the chapter is concerned with the two Katsina wards, Yarinci and Marina, within which much of the research was conducted. The socio-economic bases of the wards, and the distinctions between them, are noted, and the factors responsible for these differences considered. The study then reaches the level of individual compounds, and the distinctive Katsina residential pattern is discussed. This general outline of city and wards provides the basis upon which to present the more detailed analysis, particularly regarding the women's sphere of activities and influence, which is the subject of subsequent chapters.

Katsina in Historical Perspective

The written history of Katsina is, alas, the history of her men - the men who worked, fought, taught, and ruled there. The purpose of this brief and selective introduction is to present the historical basis of some of the dominant socio-political characteristics of the city today, and to impress upon the reader the antiquity and the glory which are the heritage and the pride of Katsina.

The roles of women, their achievements, their contributions, are not the stuff of historical sources, with certain striking exceptions. The early political pre-eminence of women in the savannah kingdoms and empires, the progressive diminution of their power, and the present roles played by women in the political hierarchy, are discussed in a short supplement to this study (Appendix I).

Katsina was founded, according to the Bayajida legend (see Appendix I), by Kumayo, son of Bawo and grandson of Bayajida and the Queen of Daura. The longstanding prominence of trade and commerce in Katsina is emphasized and legitimized by the legend, with the appointment of the founder of Katsina, with the ruler of Daura, as Sarkin Kasuwa, Chief of the Market.

Historical sources suggest that Kumayo founded the state about the 12th century AD. He and his descendants, known as the Durbawa, established themselves at Bugaje, 10 miles west of the present Katsina City, and at Durbi Ta Kusheye, 18 miles southeast of the city, where the alleged tumuli of the kings are still visible. In the middle of the 13th century, the Durbawa were overcome and a new dynasty arose led by Korau, whose name is still commemorated in the epithet accorded to every subsequent ruler of Katsina, Magajin Korau (successor of Korau). The beginning of Habe rule about two centuries later is

marked by the accession of the first of the Muslim Habe kings, Muhammadu Korau[1].

The date of the initial appearance of Islam in Katsina is unknown, but sources point to influences coming from the west with the Wangarawa. The Kano Chronicle (recorded in Palmer, 1928, Vol. 3, pp. 92-132) places the coming of Muslims to Hausaland in the latter half of the 14th century, but Islamic influence was probably not significant until nearly a century later. The reign of Muhammadu Korau is distinguished by increased interest in Islam, with a visit to the city of al-Maghili of Tilemsan, a Muslim jurist and former advisor to the Askia of Songhai, and the subsequent construction of the Gobirau Minaret (Hasumiyar Gobirau), the remains of which are still a Katsina landmark.

Islam did not replace the traditional Habe bori (spirit-possession) cult, but rather coexisted with it, and indeed coexists with it even today, although with Islam now playing an unquestionably dominant socio-political role. But during Habe rule, as Abdullahi Smith points out:

> "Politically, the bokaye /bori priests/ came to share power with the malamai /Muslim teachers/, and the sarki /chief/ to occupy an uneasy position of leader of both groups."
>
> (1971, p. 197)

Bori played a vital role in providing ritual legitimacy to the state throughout Habe rule, and many of its adepts were women. The effects of bori and Islam on the socio-political status of

---

1. It should be noted that Y.B. Usman presents Korau and Muhammadu Korau as the same individual, and places his reign at 1445-1495 AD. He rejects Barth's and subsequent writers' contention of a new dynasty, the Habe, and suggests that the ruling group were rather the undifferentiated jikokin Korau, the "grandchildren" of Korau (1974, p. 164).

women, then and now, are considered both in Appendix I and elsewhere in this study.

Muhammadu Korau, or his dynasty, may have been the first to centralise political power in Kasar Katsina (Y.B. Usman, 1972, p. 175), with the seat of power in Katsina City, which he founded (e.g. H.F.C. Smith, 1971, p. 198) or, according to a Maradi tradition, fortified:

> "Mohammed Koro ... fit construire un solide mur d'enceite autour de la capitale des Dourbaouas et lui donna le nom de Birni-n'Katséna en souvenir de Katsé, celui de ses compagnons qui dirigea les travaux."
> (Landeroin, in Mission Tilho, 1911, Vol. 2, p. 458)

These were the first of the Katsina walls, with a diameter of 13 or 14 miles, attested by some sources, as above, to Muhammadu Korau, by Katsina king lists to Ali Murabus, the third of the Habe kings (d. 1568/9)[1], and by popular belief to the ubiquitous and indefatigable Queen Amina of Zazzau (see Appendix I).

The present city walls, with a lesser diameter than the original fortifications, protected by moat and thorn, were unparalleled in the North for their awesome beauty and strength, well preserved by the dry Katsina climate. It is only in this decade, in a disastrous period of perhaps five years, that great sections of the walls and the surrounding land have been sold off to developers, with the gratuitous and wholesale destruction of this superb time-honoured monument to Katsina's former power and grandeur.

---

1. Katsina king lists are included, among other sources, in Palmer (1927 and 1928) and in Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 181-3. The latter source includes additional information and incorporates corrections advanced by H.F.C. Smith (1961 a and b).

There is no evidence that Leo Africanus, who wrote in the early 16th century that Katsina people:

> "dwell in the most forlorne and base cottages: neither shall you finde any of their villages containing above three hundred families ..."
>
> (Vol. 3, p. 830)

ever actually visited Kasar Katsina, and his description may have been the product of second- or third-hand information. Or, as John Hunwick points out (1971, p. 214), the fortifications may have been built after Leo received his reports, and the apparent poverty could have been the result of the long period of continuous warfare which was a feature of existence in Katsina at the time.

Expansion of trade in Katsina in the 14th and 15th centuries was marked, the Kano Chronicle noting in the mid-15th century:

> "... merchants from Gwanja /Gonja/ began coming to Katsina; Beriberi came in large numbers, and a colony of Arabs arrived. Some of the Arabs settled in Kano and some in Katsina."
>
> (in Palmer, 1928, Vol. 3, p. 111)

Katsina became the terminus of the trans-Saharan caravan route, trade passing through Katsina to Tessawa and Agadez. In spite of frequent warfare, recorded in the chronicles of Katsina, Kano, and neighboring states, Katsina maintained considerable trade outside her borders, the influence of Mali and Songhai and the extensive contacts with other areas being reflected in the names of quarters within the city, recorded by Barth (Vol. 2, Appendix I, p. 556) and later by Palmer (1927, pp. 222-3).

By the beginning of the 18th century, Katsina reached the height of her prosperity and fame. Barth wrote:

> "... Katsina, during the 17th and 18th centuries of our era, seems to have been the chief city of this part of Negroland, as well in commercial and political importance as in other respects; for here that state of civilisation which had been called forth by contact with the Arabs seems to have reached its highest degree ..."
>
> (Vol. 2, pp. 79-80)

The wealth and tradition of learning of Songhai were diverted to Katsina, and scholars gathered as they had earlier in Timbuktu. The leather-working trade had been introduced to Katsina by the Songhai, and became so linked with Katsina that by 1851, Barth could state that:

> "... no place in the whole of Negroland is so famous for excellent leather and the art of tanning as Katséna."
>
> (Vol. 4, p. 99)

Katsina reached its territorial limits during the 18th century, including to the north Tessawa and Maradi. It was bounded on the northwest and west by Gobir and Zamfara, on the south by Zaria, on the southeast by Kano and Kazaure, and on the east and northeast by Daura and Damagaram. The mid-18th century saw an influx of Tuaregs into Katsina, the Agadez-Katsina trade route becoming more heavily travelled than the strife-torn Gobir-Kebbi route to the west.

The Jihad of Shehu Usman dan Fodio in the 19th century brought major political and economic changes to Katsina (see also Appendix I). The Habe rulers, driven from Katsina, fled first to Damagaram and later moved to Maradi. One of the effects of the Jihad, and the protracted struggle between the new Katsina rulers with their Emirate allies, and the Maradi Habe, was a considerable reduction in trade, the traditional routes having become unsafe for travellers, and commerce shifting eastwards. Clapperton, who visited Katsina

in 1824, in the reign of the first Katsina Emir, Umaru Dallaji, wrote:

> "The houses are mostly in ruins, the principal commerce of the country being carried on in Kano since the Felatah conquest; nevertheless there is still a considerable trade. There are two daily markets ... The southern market is chiefly attended by merchants of Ghadamis and Tuat; that to the north by Tuaricks ..."
>
> (Captain Clapperton's Narrative, in Denham and Clapperton, p. 121)

Barth passed through Katsina in 1851 and 1853, during the reign of Dallaji's eldest son, Mohamman Bello, and wrote of Katsina's decline:

> "From this time /of the Jihad/ ... all the principal foreign merchants migrated to Kanó ... while Katsina retained but secondary importance as the seat of a governor."
>
> (Vol. 2, p. 81)

Katsina's fortunes seem to have suffered even in the thirty years between Clapperton's and Barth's visits, for Barth noted of the market:

> "Altogether it was dull, showing the state of decay into which this once splendid and busy emporium ... has fallen."
>
> (Vol. 2, p. 81)

Of the population, Barth wrote:

> "At present, when the inhabited quarter /of the city/ is reduced to the north-western part, and when even this is mostly deserted, there are scarcely seven or eight thousand people living in it."
>
> (Vol. 2, p. 78)

Although troubled with factional strife, the descendants of Umaru Dallaji remained the ruling dynasty of Katsina for a century, continuing in office with the arrival of the British, led by Lugard, in 1903. Only three years later, however, the rule of the Dallazawa dynasty ended with the installation as Emir of Muhammadu Dikko, the first of the Sullubawa emirs and father of the present Emir, Usman Nagogo.

The transfer of power to a colonial administration, with different needs, requirements and priorities, and the subsequent independence of Nigeria, have of course resulted in profound socio-economic change. This is reflected, for example, in the economic infrastructure, which is briefly considered in this chapter in a discussion of industry and employment in Katsina. Other changes and recent historical events which are directly relevant to this study, such as those which have affected the status and roles of women, will be dealt with in greater detail elsewhere in the thesis.

Suffice it to say that Katsina, once commercially and educationally without peer in West Africa, has lost that pre-eminence. The city is no longer well-situated for large-scale trade, most international commerce moving through Lagos and other ports[1]. Although efforts are being made to build more secondary education institutions in Katsina, the one university in the state is 160 miles to the south.

---

1. The trans-African highway will go through Sokoto rather than Katsina, placing Katsina on the periphery of a new major trade route.

Katsina remains the capital of Katsina Emirate, but the emirate is no longer as significant a political unit as others which presently coexist with it. However, if the proposed division of Kaduna State[1] is effected with the restoration of civilian government, Katsina may see at least a partial return to the prosperity and achievements which have marked its long and distinguished history.

---

1. Part of the political programme of four of the five Nigerian political parties.

Ecology of Katsina City and Environs

The city of Katsina is located in the far north of Nigeria, thirty miles south of the Niger border. Katsina vegetation reflects the proximity of the Sahara, with a high proportion of thorny vegetation, short grasses and scrub woodland. Rainfall is low, the mean annual rainfall north of the city being generally less than 25 inches, and reaching only 15 inches in dry years; the city is located in almost the hottest, dryest part of Kaduna State[1]. The single rainy season begins in May or June, and ends about September or October. Temperatures at this time vary from a maximum of about 90-100° to a minimum of 65-75°[2] (Statistical Yearbook, pp. 3-4). During the long dry season, the relative humidity falls to less than 20%, the winds blow from the northeast, and the harmattan brings a haze of fine dust. From about November to February, the temperature drops to a minimum of around 50-60°, with a maximum of 85-95°. This is followed by a period of increasing heat, with maximum temperatures well over 100°, relieved finally by the arrival of the first rains.

Either inadequate or badly distributed rain can result in crop failure, and drought is regarded as the principal natural hazard, farming being the basis of much of the economy. From colonial records, Grove estimates that "in any one part of Katsina [Province], the rains are distinctly unfavorable about one year in five" (p. 3), while local residents speak of insufficient rain for the seven years

---

1. Formerly known as North Central State, the name was changed at the time of the creation of new states in 1976.

2. From mean temperatures recorded at the Katsina weather station, 1969-70.

preceding and including 1973, a serious drought year. Soil loss is a major problem: plantations of trees have been established to protect the land against erosion and encroachment of the desert.

Although rainfall is limited, a continuous water table lies at a depth of from 50 to 240 feet below the surface, and sufficient water has generally been available to supply basic requirements for the people and stock upon it (Grove, p. 25). By 1952, according to the census of that year, the Magajin Gari District supported a population exceeding 300 persons per square mile[1]. Grove describes the heavily settled Kano-Katsina lands as "inherently the most productive ones in Northern Nigeria" (p. 10), while Heinrich Barth wrote of Katsina in 1851, that:

> "Altogether the province of Kátsena is one of the finest parts of Negroland, and being situated just at the water-parting between the basin of the Tsád /Chad/ and that of the Kwára ... it enjoys the advantage of being at once well-watered and well drained ... so that it is less insalubrious than other regions of this continent."
>
> (Vol. 2, pp. 83-4)

Major crops in the area include millet, guinea corn, cow peas and groundnuts, the last being the most commonly grown cash crop. While this is an urban study, and while cities, few of which were large by present-day standards, have long existed in Hausaland, it should be noted that Hausa society rests on a vast rural base. The censuses of 1952 and 1963 showed the urban[2] inhabitants to comprise only 9% and 6% respectively of the former Katsina Province population.

---

1. Soils are easily cultivable, and the land can support greater numbers of people. Hill recorded a population density of 1400 persons per square mile in Dorayi, in the Kano close settled zone (1977, p. 77).
2. In both these censuses, urban areas were "compact units of 5000 persons or more".

Politico-administrative Units

The military administration which came into power in 1966 has effected a number of changes in the administrative structure of the country in an attempt to create a more coherent and widely-based political matrix before the return of civilian rule, to correct various obvious misuses and imbalances in the inherited political framework, and to facilitate communication and co-operation between the central administration and the local areas. The most profound changes have been effected through the medium of the 1968 Local Government Reforms, with subsequent amendments to strengthen the new political structure vis à vis the traditional administration.

At the time this research was conducted, Katsina City was headquarters for the administrative area, emirate and province of the same name. Katsina Emirate, with Daura and Kazaure Emirates, was first governed by the colonial administration through Kano Province. In 1926, Katsina Emirate was regrouped with Zaria Division, in Zaria Province, and it was not until 1934 that Katsina and Daura Emirates were administratively remerged to form Katsina Province, a political entity which existed until March 31, 1976, when the rationalisation of political structures rendered it redundant. The Emirate, the political and territorial domain of the Emir, which has existed since the pre-colonial period, remains, although the Emir and his subordinates have been shorn of most of their political power, and their authority is now largely symbolic.

The new Local Government Areas have been superimposed upon the traditional political units. Three new Local Government Areas coexist with the Districts within the boundaries of Katsina Emirate. The Katsina Local Government Area, for example, covers the area occupied

by eleven of the traditional Districts[1]. Many of the obligations, responsibilities, and powers of the District Heads and Councils have been transferred to the Local Government Councils.

However, while these new administrative structures are politically significant, they are not relevant to this study. The political units of interest here are Katsina Province, Katsina Emirate, Magajin Gari District, and some of the subdivisions thereof. The Province and District, and occasionally the Emirate, are the salient units for census information. Other official information such as tax returns, is also presented within this format, as well as within smaller groupings. Urban subdivisions are clearly necessary for a microstudy of this kind, although census data is rarely so conveniently divided.

Katsina City is part of the Magajin Gari District, one of the twenty-one districts into which Katsina Emirate is divided. The District is administered by a District Head, the Magajin Gari, who is responsible to the Emir. The District Headship of Katsina City and environs is one of several which is retained within the ruling family; the present incumbent is Alhaji Kabir Usman, a son of the Emir, Alhaji Sir Usman Nagogo.

Magajin Gari District is subdivided into eight administrative units, four of which, with about 40% of the population, lie outside the city walls. The four administrative divisions which comprise the city are each controlled by a Wakili, the Katsina City administrative equivalent of the rural village head. Each is named according to the area he administers: Wakilin Gabas (Wakili of the East), Wakilin Yamma

---

1. These include Magajin Gari District, Batagarawa, Batsari, Kaita, Kaura, Dutsi, Mashi, Mani, Bindawa, Tsagero, and Jibiya.

(Wakili of the West), Wakilin Arewa (Wakili of the North) and Wakilin Kudu (Wakili of the South). Only the area of Wakilin Gabas includes any land outside the walls, the outside population amounting to 733 people in 1971[1].

The Wakilai are salaried staff of the Local Authority, and act within the traditional hierarchy. The lowest-ranking official in the local structure, and the one closest to the people, is the ward head (mai unguwa). Responsible for tax collection in conjunction with the wakili, the ward head may be approached in the settlement of local disputes, and may be party to the allocation and sale of land and property. However, one ward head (of the three interviewed for this research) admitted that he is not often consulted. Katsina City, i.e. the area under the authority of the four wakilai, is composed of thirty wards, two of which, Yarinci and Marina, formed the bounded areas where a large part of this study was carried out.

According to M.G. Smith, the ward is:

> "that close group of compounds immediately situated together, members of which meet frequently and continuously in the daily round of living. The ward ... is the widest durable grouping within which relationships with persons not connected to one by kinship or marriage can rival those relationships based on kinship and marriage in frequency, continuity, intensity, and range."
>
> (1955, p.6)

While this definition may be applicable for male ward residents, it is not relevant for most married women. The practice of seclusion lessens the occasions for interaction among women, who generally try to make maximum use of every sortie, visiting friends and kinswomen

---

1. As few published statistics use divisions smaller than these four urban sectors, figures for Katsina City will necessarily include this small area outside the city walls.

who may incidentally be neighbors; spatial proximity alone is not important. Interaction among women is not particularly ward-oriented, except among non-married women who have returned to their family home and who are thus living among both kin and old friends.

Population

Any consideration of population, and changes in population, is beset by problems of validity of the figures, and changing frames of reference with adjustment of political boundaries. Probably the most accurate census of Katsina City was one carried out almost fifty years ago, the Intensive Survey of 1931[1]. At that time, the population of the city was given as 22,347 (Vol. 2, p. 23), which represented an increase of about 28% over the 1921 Census total of 17,489, a figure which was not "anything more than approximately accurate" (Meek, Vol. 2, p. 169). For most purposes, Katsina City data from the 1931 Census were not treated separately from that obtained for the rest of the Magajin Gari District, the boundaries of which were altered in 1941, thus rendering impossible comparison with later census material.

According to the 1952 Census, the results of which are greatly disputed[2], Katsina City had grown to 31,919, an increase of about 43% over the 1931 figure. Reckoned in 1931 to be the fifth largest city in Northern Nigeria, by 1952 Katsina was classified as the fourth largest, after Kano, Maiduguri and Zaria. Since that time, however, and particularly with the introduction of states, Katsina's growth

---

1. Results were estimated by the Government Statistician as ±1% (1931 Census, p.6), and by the more disinterested Kuczynski as ±5% (p. 567).

2. The results are acceptable to some (e.g. Prothero, p. 181), while others consider them an underestimate (e.g. Olusanya, 1966; R. Cohen, 1971, pp. 24-5; P. Hill, 1977, p. 19) or an overestimate (e.g. Aluko, 1965).

has been proportionately less than that of Northern cities which became state capitals, and have profited from the vast flow of federal and state funds, the return of educated native sons, and the other socio-economic benefits associated with the creation of a new political infrastructure.

The 1963 Census, taken after the suspicion and non-acceptance of the 1962 Census which was never published, is very dubious and is probably best used, if at all, only for relative statistical data from that census alone. The population of Katsina City, according to the census, had risen to 58,163, an increase of 82%, and a highly suspect figure even taking into consideration the likely inaccuracies of the 1952 Census. The 1971 tax assessment figures, which give a population of 44,468 for Katsina City, and 76,060 for Magajin Gari District, are rather closer to the correct figures, although an underestimate; my own data for Yarinci and Marina show a higher population than is evident from the tax rolls of the two wards.

Ethnic Composition

Limited employment opportunities, and the effects of the upheavals preceding the recent civil war, have meant that only a small number of strangers from outside the northern ethnic groups live and work in the city. The majority of labour migrants, who form only a small part of the total population, are Hausa, Fulani, or Tuareg (Abba, p. 48).

Unlike most other Hausa cities, Katsina has no strangers' quarters outside the walls. With the influx of migrants in the 1950's, and the need for additional development, the Emir designated an area within the city where the new community might expand. This area, Sabon Layi

(New Line), forms a part of more than one ward, and is administered within the existing ward structure. It differs also from strangers' communities elsewhere in that the majority of buildings are constructed, owned and rented by Hausa landlords rather than by the immigrants themselves. The composition of Sabon Layi includes not only most of the non-Northern strangers, but also many Katsina indigenes, and the majority of women living on their own, most of whom are Hausa.

I have classified virtually all the persons included within this study as Hausa, but the term itself requires some clarification. The question of who is Hausa, or indeed what Hausa is (a language, a linguistic group, an ethnic group?) has exercised scholars and statisticians for decades, and was of absorbing concern to the colonial administrators. The 1952 Census, which includes figures for ethnic groups in Nigeria, gives no official instructions to its enumerators regarding what constitutes a Hausa or Fulani, but draws instead on the Nigeria Annual Reports:

> "The Hausa are simply a linguistic group consisting of those who speak the Hausa language as their mother tongue and do not claim Fulani descent. Fulani are intermingled with the Hausa and include all who claim descent ... from the true Fulani stock, which is preserved today amongst the nomadic herdsmen ("Cattle Fulani") and a minority of settled communities which have escaped intermarriage with the indigenous people. A majority of those listed as Fulani speak the Hausa, not the Fulani language, as its mother tongue."
>
> (1952 Census Covering Booklet, p. 10)

That census showed the Hausa to comprise more than half (54.8%) of the population of the Magajin Gari District, with the Fulani constituting more than a quarter (27.3%) of the total. However, as Hill correctly points out, since

> "... a high proportion of the Hausa-speaking population is of mixed Hausa-Fulani origin, the statistics relating to the numbers of Hausa and Fulani are of little practical value in those regions where both 'tribes' are numerous."
>
> (1972, p. 266)

The only salient ethnic distinction within this research, which is as much a socio-historical division, is that between the Habe, the original inhabitants of the city, and the later arrivals of Fulani origin who became politically dominant after the Jihad of Usman dan Fodio, begun in 1804. Usman, citing S. Abubakar (The Emirate of Fombina, Ph.D. Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, 1970, passim), points out that the term Habe (s. Kado) is a general term applied by Fulani to all non-Fulani, and does not specifically refer to the Hausa people (1974, p. 147fn). However, it has come to be identified primarily with the Hausa. In Katsina City, the indigenous Hausa do not "resent being called Habe" rather than Hausawa, as Smith found for Zaria (1955, p. 3), but rather so name themselves, thereby calling attention to the fact of their foundation of, and centuries-long residence in, Katsina City. Smith's general politico-ethnic distinction does still operate:

> "classification /is/ fluid according to the social context; Filanin gida[1] sometimes describe themselves as 'Hausawa' to the European, but in fact ... draw sharp distinctions not only between the dominant Fulani and subject Hausa, but between Fulani members of ruling families and other settled Fulani."
>
> (1955, p.3)

But the very fact that classification is dependent on context, that an individual sees himself as, in effect, a member at one and the same time of what sociologists have distinguished as distinct ethnic groups, must make one re-examine the categories one is employing.

In the course of attempting to ascertain the "ethnic background" of an individual, it was clear that the answer given was influenced by what the respondent felt the questioner was seeking, whether her own distant historical ethnic origin, or her present perception of her ethnic ties. The response to the latter was again influenced by the

---

1. "House Fulani" - settled Fulani, often the scribes and intelligentsia in the Habe states, and the ruling class in most of the post-Jihad emirates.

individual's discernment of the level of refinement expected of her (in distinguishing, for example, between Habe and Hausa).

Concentration on historical ethnic ties produced very different results from a focus on present perceptions, and made one aware of astonishing adaptability of Hausa culture, and of its contributions to and enrichment by many of the surrounding cultures.

The women who form the basis of this study are considered as Hausa through the criteria of common language and elements of common culture. Differing historical origins have little influence on present activities, and the categorisation of these women into a multitude of different ethnic groups, while possible, would give "ethnicity" a significance it should not properly claim. The only distinction which is of importance, and which will be noted where relevant, is that between the Habe autochtones of the city and the later Fulani inhabitants, a division which has ramifications in the economic and class structure of the society. The distinction remains meaningful particularly from the point of view of the ruling class itself, which uses its Fulani background as an indicator of their continued right to control and attempts to strengthen its security through appropriate marriage alliances.

Industry, and the Male Occupational Structure

Katsina City remains one of the more traditional and less industrialized cities in Northern Nigeria. Good roads have long linked Katsina with Kano, Zaria and Kaduna, the state capital, to the south, and with Niger and its border town of Maradi to the north. However, the railway does not extend to Katsina, nor has there been growth of factories or heavy industry, as has taken place farther to the south. For example,

Funtua, a town in the southern part of the Emirate, is on the railway route and is an important depot and processing centre for cotton, the major cash crop in Kaduna State, which provides much of the country's annual production. Lack of power resources, and lack of adequate water supplies, have hindered industrial development in Katsina, although this should be partially resolved with the new Ajiwa Dam. Grove wrote in 1952 that:

> "... there appears to be no good reason why industries should develop in Katsina rather than further south where power and food are and will probably remain cheaper."
>
> (p. 13)

A groundnut oil processing plant has been built, but government controlled groundnut prices are so low at present that most farmers have switched to other crops or sell their produce locally; many men sell their groundnut crop directly to their wives. An industrial estate has been zoned outside the city walls on the Kano-Katsina road, but the basis of Katsina's urban existence remains, as it has been for centuries, agriculture, commerce, and administration.

Among the Hausa, the multiplicity of economic activities is so great, and the tendency to have more than one source of income so pronounced, both among men and women, that there are invariably difficulties in collecting and reporting information about occupations. Probably the most accurate occupational information for Katsina was collected in the 1931 intensive census. Instructions to enumerators were specific:

> "... the principal means of livelihood of all persons who actually do work and carry on business ... should be entered, and ... any subsidiary occupation ..."
>
> (1931 Census, p. 40)

But the final census report then included only principal occupations. This was deceptive in the case of men's work, and clearly inaccurate, or at best misleading, concerning women (see Chapter 8). The 1952 and

1963 censuses give occupational categories on a Provincial rather than on a District or city basis, so both are valueless here.

Overleaf is an extract from the 1971 Tax Assessment Lists, which records some of the traditional occupations other than farming practised in the city, and gives some indication of the numbers of people involved in each. Although the numbers are an undercount, the table does give a general picture of the occupational structure, and of the relative importance of traditional occupations in the city, and in the major subdivisions of the city. A high proportion of urban men also farm, or at least own farms; the more wealthy hire labourers ('yan kwadago) to do the farm work, but the majority of men till their own farms and/or work on the farms of others. The city appears virtually empty during the mornings at the beginning of the rainy season, as farmers rush to their fields to carry out the first agricultural tasks of the year.

The "other workers" in the Tax Assessment Lists include civil servants, other salaried workers, and the modern craftsmen who are becoming more and more vital to the city. Southerners are the main practitioners of the expanding modern technological occupations, such as photography, auto and other mechanical repair, and welding. Salaried government workers comprise about a third of the "other workers" category; a 1970 survey showed 906 government employees out of a work force of 7,294. There have been tremendous increases in the bureaucracy, particularly with the Local Government Reforms, and the percentage of government employees is probably much greater at present.

Gross occupational distinctions between sections of Katsina City are strikingly shown in the tax list extract. Two subdivisions

Table 2-1

Men's Occupations, Katsina City, 1971
(extracted from Tax Assessment Lists)

Occupation (a)	Wak. Gabas (b)	Wak. Arewa (c)	Wak. Kudu	Wak. Yamma	Total
Long distance traders	201	277	350	263	1091
Tailors	54	216	354	230	854
Dyers	-	180	140	138	458
Koranic scholars	53	170	73	159	455
Builders	93	98	84	86	361
Middlemen	34	119	30	137	320
Butchers	21	22	21	183	247
Barbers	39	27	48	35	149
Weavers	5	4	92	34	135
Blacksmiths	14	6	40	60	120
Jewellers	-	-	20	64	84
Tanners	-	3	-	76	79
Leather workers	3	23	-	47	73
Drummers	24	-	-	8	32
Potters	-	-	-	3	3
Total	541	1145	1252	1523	4461
Other workers	1834	138	733	178	2883
TOTAL	2375	1283	1985	1701	7344

(a) This table includes all occupations shown in the Tax Lists; the occupational categories employed are direct translations from the Hausa.

(b) Includes Yarinci. The high proportion of non-specified occupations, i.e. non-craft or other than those above (more than 75%) reflects the non-traditional orientation of the area. Wakilin Gabas shares with Wakilin Kudu administration of the Sabon Layi area, which contains the majority of strangers in the city.

(c) Includes Marina. The area of Wakilin Arewa covers parts of both Haben Birni and Fada, including some wards near the Friday market.

of the city, the areas of Wakilin Gabas and Wakilin Kudu, provide 89% of the modern craftsmen, salaried workers and other "non-traditional" employees. These two areas include Sabon Layi, in which resides the non-Hausa migrant community, and also much of the Fada (Palace) area, where many of the civil servants live. The area of Wakilin Gabas is of special interest because of the inclusion within its borders of Yarinci. More than 75% of the working male population of the Wakilin Gabas area is engaged in other than the traditional listed occupations. Some are the migrants noted above, and many are salaried government workers. Occupations in Yarinci and Marina are discussed in detail in the "Introduction to Yarinci and Marina" in this chapter.

The traditional occupations are still practised by a majority (about three-fifths) of the working men in the city. The area of Wakilin Arewa, which includes Marina, shows almost 90% of the working male population engaged in traditional crafts, trades, and professions. Many of these occupations have been passed on for generations in particular families,aand indeed are characteristic of certain wards: Marina itself is named for its dyepits.

There is some status differentiation among men's traditional occupations, as indeed exists also in the wage-earning sector. Modern wage employment is greatly desired and well regarded, and is generally more highly valued than traditional crafts, but there are variations in the status attached to particular posts, reflected in and partly created by the salary structure. Annual wages in the Local Authority at the time of research, for example, ranged from less than £80 to over £1000. The educated and salaried workers (many of whom are members of the traditional ruling class) form an increasingly significant elite in the city.

The women's occupational structure shows few such clear-cut distinctions. Women's roles, the relationship between men's occupations and women's status, the tie between women's choice of occupation and husband's status, and the value of women's occupations relative to each other, and in relation to those of men, will be discussed elsewhere in this work.

An Introduction to Yarinci and Marina

The physical layout of Yarinci and Marina, and the people therein, reflect a basic rough division within the town. The eastern half of the city, which includes the Emir's palace and Local Authority offices, sparsely populated in Barth's time, is known as Fada, "palace", and is considered the newer, Fulani section of town, settled in large measure by relatives and dependents of the post-Jihad aristocracy, and in the last decades by newcomers to the city. Yarinci, in the Fada area, has been built and occupied only in this century, first by the family, descendants, servants and slaves of the late Emir Muhammadu Dikko, and lately by other Hausa coming into the city from the surrounding areas, and from other towns within the emirate. The ward gives an impression of wealth, many houses being two-storeyed, of cement block or with cement or plaster surfacing, metal roofed, and large and rambling within.

The spaciousness of much of the eastern half of the town, with wide streets and open areas, presents a different picture from that found to the west, in Haɓen Birni, the "City of the Haɓe". In this long occupied part of the city, houses are packed closely together, with alleys rather than roads running between them. It is here that

Marina[1] is situated.

Origin of Ward Members

As already noted, most Yarinci men are recent arrivals to the city; those who were born in the ward are mainly young men, second generation residents in the ward. Their wives show origins similar to those of the men (Table 2-2). Nineteen women shown in the Table are from Yarinci, but only two are married to ward residents. More than half the Yarinci women come from outside Katsina City, having either been brought to the city by their husbands, or having come for other reasons such as those noted above. Many Yarinci residents maintain ties of kinship, friendship, patronage and clientage to a markedly greater extent outside the ward than within it.

Marina displays a very different pattern, being far more locally oriented. Over 90% of the men were born and raised in the ward, as were half the Marina women included in Table 2-2. Sixty-four of the ward women shown are married to Marina men. Only slightly more than a tenth of the women in the sample come from outside Katsina City.

---

1. Marina means either dye pits or dyers, the distinction being dependent on tone.

Table 2-2

Origin of Men and Women - Yarinci and Marina (a)

YARINCI

Origin (b)	No. of Men	% of Men	No. of Women	% of Women
Yarinci	27	20.3%	19(c)	8.5%
Surrounding wards (e)	14	10.5%	21	9.4%
Elsewhere in city	6	4.5%	65	29.0%
Katsina Province excluding city	72	54.1%	107	47.8%
Elsewhere	14	10.5%	12	5.4%
Total	133	99.9%	224	100.1%

MARINA

Origin	No. of Men	% of Men	No. of Women	% of Women
Marina	215	91.1%	155(d)	50.0%
Surrounding wards (f)	3	1.3%	31	10.0%
Elsewhere in city	6	2.5%	88	28.4%
Katsina Province excluding city	8	3.4%	30	9.7%
Elsewhere	4	1.7%	6	1.9%
Total	236	100.0%	310	100.0%

(a) Includes all married and non-married men, and single men age 25 or older, in both wards. All women for whom information on origin was obtained are included. These figures represent about four-fifths (81.2%) of the Yarinci women, and about three-fourths (76.4%) of the Marina women.

(b) Where a person was raised in a place other than his/her birthplace, the former was used.

(c) Includes two Yarinci women married in the ward.

(d) Includes sixty-four Marina women married in the ward.

(e) Wards surrounding Yarinci include Kofar Keke, Kofar Bai, Cikin Gida, Kofar Soro, Galadanci, Iyatanci, and Rafukka.

(f) Wards surrounding Marina include Unguwar Yari, Sararen Kuka, 'Yan Kyaure, Lungun Nufawa, and Gambarawa.

Occupational Structure

Men's occupations[1] in the two wards are consistent with the different general orientations of Yarinci and Marina, and with the differing historical and class ties which are distinctive and salient features of the two areas.

Yarinci includes among its residents many members of the aristocracy[2], whose status has afforded them exceptional opportunity for entry into well-paying salaried employment, through greater educational opportunity and effective utilization of existing networks. Seventy men, or more than half of the 133 adult men in Yarinci, have salaried occupations ranging from custodial and janitorial jobs to senior government positions (Table 2-3). Many of the wage-earners are in close patron-client relationship with the more important civil servants, who have been responsible for obtaining salaried employment for their clients. Seventeen men are Koranic scholars (s. malam, pl. malamai), some with their own schools, and all depending on their religious training for their livelihood. Thirteen men engage in trade, which is much less important as an occupation in Yarinci than in Marina. The remaining thirty-three Yarinci men are engaged in a variety of other occupations: six are employed by wealthy householders as servants; there are few artisans.

---

1. Women's occupations will be discussed in considerable detail in subsequent chapters, and so are excluded here.

2. The Katsina aristocracy is composed primarily of persons whose status is ascribed by birth, and predicated upon genealogical ties with the Emir (sarki) and/or certain of the District Heads (hakimai). As there is considerable intermarriage within the ruling class, most persons in the aristocracy can trace multiple links with other members of the socio-political class.

Table 2-3

Men's Occupations, Yarinci and Marina (a)

Occupation (b)	YARINCI No. of Men	YARINCI % of Men	MARINA No. of Men	MARINA % of Men
Salaried worker (c)	70	52.6%	18	7.6%
Koranic scholar	17	12.8%	14	5.9%
Trader:				
Market trader	2		19	
Foodstuff seller	1		17	
Shop owner	4	9.8%	9	30.5%
Petty trader	4		8	
Other trader	2(d)		19(e)	
Dyer	-		31	13.1%
Builder/cement worker	8	6.0%	31	13.1%
Tailor/embroiderer	2	1.5%	22	9.3%
Other occupation	22(f)	16.5%	33(g)	14.0%
No employment (h)	-		5	2.1%
No information	1	0.7%	10	4.2%
Total	133	99.9%	236	99.8%

(a) Includes all married and non-married men, and all unmarried men 25 or older.

(b) This table shows the single most important year-round economic activity of each man.

(c) All salaried employees and pensioners are included here.

(d) Includes a tobacco seller and a shop assistant.

(e) Includes 2 shop assistants, 4 long distance traders, and traders in cloth (5), used clothes (3), calabashes (3), henna (1), and livestock (1).

(f) Includes 6 servants. Also 3 carpenters, 2 washermen, 2 gardeners, and one mechanic, driver, contractor, bicycle repairman, caretaker, palace worker, gambler, thief, and a man seeking employment.

(g) Includes 5 washermen, 5 praise-singers, 3 barbers, 3 gardeners, 3 bicycle repairmen, 2 drivers, 2 blacksmiths, 2 watchmen, and one lorry owner, contractor, carpenter, palace worker, caretaker, market labourer, beggar, and gambler.

(h) Most men engage in some work, switching to less arduous employment when forced by age or illness.

The many occupations in Marina (Table 2-3) correspond to the well-known complexity of the traditional Hausa economy[1], and show a very different pattern from that evident in Yarinci, admittedly anomalous in its heavy dependence upon salaried employment. Dyeing, with associated crafts of tailoring and embroidery, is the primary occupation of 53 (22.4%) of the Marina male population under consideration here. Seventy-two men, nearly a third (30.5%) of the Marina total, are engaged in some form of trade, while only 18 Marina men (7.6%) are salaried government workers, employed mainly in low-paying occupations. Artisans, including builders, blacksmiths, and barbers number 37 (15.7%). Fourteen Koranic scholars make up 5.9% of the total, with the remaining 42 men (17.8%) following a variety of other occupations. A few Marina residents, businessmen and traders, are quite wealthy[2]; extreme poverty is apparent in very few compounds. The high proportion of married men, and the incidence of polygyny, discussed below, are consistent with a population with adequate, if not abundant, economic resources.

Population

Yarinci is less populous than Marina: the wards have recorded populations of 875[3] and 1230 respectively. Within each ward, a more intensive survey was carried out among part of the population to

---

1. See, e.g. P. Hill, 1972, pp. 71-75; 1977, pp. 119-121; M.G. Smith, 1959, p. 248; and E. Yeld, pp. 117-8.

2. Only two were listed as wealthy men (tajirai) in the 1970 tax lists, however. Men in this category are subject to personal income tax.

3. The population of two compounds in Yarinci rented to Yoruba migrants is not included in the above figures.

obtain detailed demographic information, including ages of all compound members. There are several reasons that all compounds are not included, other than the pressures of limited time, resources, and assistance. In a number of compounds where the survey was attempted, the results were contradictory, conflicted with other received information, or were known to be incorrect on other grounds. Even the boundaries of the wards ebbed and flowed, depending upon the informant, or upon the tax list utilised. The partial demographic information included in the tables below is correct. It is the product of no single class or section of the respective areas, and to that extent can be considered characteristic of each of the wards.

Both wards show a high proportion of the population under fifteen. Persons under 15 form 50.7% of the Yarinci sample (Table 2-4), and 45.2% of the Marina sample (Table 2-5). These percentages are far higher than those available for some other Hausa areas. For example, the study of three Sokoto villages by Goddard, Fine, and Norman (1971, p.9) shows the under-fifteens comprising only 38.4% of the total population. The Marina figure is similar, however, to that obtained by E.B. Simmons in a Zaria village study (1976 , p.4), but the data is not quite comparable in that Simmons' figure of 46.4% includes fifteen-year-olds.

The high proportion of the population under fifteen is consistent with results generally obtained in developing nations, although the Katsina data is at the upper end of the spectrum. The Yarinci figure in particular is high, especially compared to other studies in Hausa areas. The proportions become more comprehensible when one notes that the Katsina hospital is adjacent to Yarinci, and is well patronised by the ward population. Also, the general level of

Table 2-4

Sex-age distribution - Yarinci[1]

Age	M	F	% of total sample	Male/female ratio
0-4	65	60	17.6	
5-9	59	70	18.2	1.08
10-14	63	43	14.9	
15-19	25	34	8.3	
20-24	7	29	5.1	0.45
25-29	6	21	3.8	
30-34	12	28	5.6	
35-39	9	26	4.9	0.54
40-44	17	16	4.6	
45-49	14	17	4.4	
50-54	14	15	4.1	0.95
55-59	13	11	3.4	
60-64	7	10	2.4	
65-69	1	4	0.7	0.38
70 or more	2	12	2.0	
Total	314	396	100.0%	0.79

1. Includes the population of 97 compounds, and comprises 81.1% of the ward population. Excluded above are 16 persons whose ages could not be determined. These include:
   - 2 non-married men
   - 3 male Koranic students
   - 7 married women
   - 4 non-married women.

Table 2-5

Sex-age distribution - Marina[1]

Age	M	F	% of total sample	Male/female ratio
0-4	63	84	20.4	
5-9	48	64	15.6	0.77
10-14	30	36	9.2	
15-19	14	37	7.1	
20-24	15	34	6.8	0.42
25-29	16	36	7.2	
30-34	23	19	5.8	
35-39	15	29	6.1	1.01
40-44	30	19	6.8	
45-49	17	11	3.9	
50-54	11	13	3.3	0.94
55-59	4	10	1.9	
60-64	7	16	3.2	
65-69	1	3	0.6	0.58
70 or more	7	7	1.9	
Total	301	418	99.8%	0.72

1. Includes the population of 131 compounds, and comprises 58.5% of the total population of the ward.

nutrition in the ward is probably as high as anywhere in the city. While infant mortality is still a great problem, the accessibility of the hospital in particular may have lowered the death rate among the very young.

In discussing the under-fifteens, I have taken pains to avoid describing them as children. Throughout this study, I have kept as close as possible to Hausa emic categorisation of children and adults[1]. The major rite de passage for adulthood is marriage: this applies particularly to women. In each ward, four of the girls under 15 years of age have already married, and are considered women in Hausa terms. They are included in all relevant calculations regarding Hausa married or non-married women. The categorisation of adult males is more problematic, inasmuch as man do not marry as early as Hausa women.

In general, the category of males classified as adult includes all married and non-married men, and all unmarried men age 25 or above. Younger unmarried men have a distinctive life-style, often characterised by unstable residence, great mobility, and few obligations. The Hausa term for these young men is samari (s. saurayi). As they have not assumed full adult responsibilities, they are in an intermediate position between boys and married men. Except where

---

1. In the process of seeking comparative demographic data, I was amazed to discover how carelessly the terms "adult" and "child" are bandied about. Without an associated statistical sex-age table, or explanatory comment, one was often at a loss to know what age, or what criteria, connotated adulthood. See, e.g., M. Konan (1975, p.2): the population is divided into four categories, including children and unmarried adults, with no gloss whatsoever concerning age or gender of the latter two categories.

otherwise indicated, they are excluded from tabulations concerning adult men and women in this study.

In both wards, females outnumber males. In the Yarinci sample, females constitute 55.8% of the population; the Marina data shows females comprising 58.1% of the total sample. Considering only the population over fifteen shown here, the imbalance is even greater, and is particularly striking in Yarinci: sample figures show women comprising almost two-thirds (63.7%) of the over-fifteen population. Comparable Marina figures show less change, women making up 59.4% of the over-fifteen population.

By using the definition of adult given above, it is possible to include the entire population of each ward in comparing the ratio of men to women. One would then expect an even higher number of women to men, given differential marriage age, and this is indeed the case. In Yarinci, the adult population is composed of 276 women (67.5%) and 133 men (32.5%). In Marina, the percentage of women to men rises to 63.2% to 36.8%: 406 women, and 236 men. The causes of demographic sex imbalance differ between the wards, although certain factors are common to both.

The most striking difference between numbers of males and females is in the second 15-year bracket (persons 15-29 years old) in both wards: the male-female ratio is 0.45 in Yarinci, and 0.42 in Marina. The major factor in Yarinci contributing to the sex imbalance is the effect of out-migration, due to greater opportunity outside Katsina for the more educated young men. In the 20-29 age bracket, eleven men were in civil service jobs outside Katsina, or were living elsewhere while pursuing post-secondary qualifications. Another four men had joined the army, while three pursued other careers in Kano

and Lagos. For this age category of men in particular, migration appears more likely than continued residence in Katsina. The combination of educational qualifications and highly effective kinship and clientship ties have resulted in easy access to good jobs with excellent prospects, usually in Kaduna, the state capital. The 15-19 age bracket in Yarinci is not as overbalanced towards women: most of the young men in this category are still at home or at school. Students of both sexes at boarding schools are included in the survey as residents of the ward, if they normally live there out of term. Judging from the behaviour of their seniors, many of the male students will leave Katsina for work or for higher degrees when they have completed secondary schooling. The future for the girls includes marriage, of course, although probably not within the ward, and possibly for some of the girls, a career as a salaried worker; this will be considered in a later chapter.

The Marina figures for the 15-29 age group are less easily explained. Many of the young men inherit their father's occupation, and few find it necessary to seek their fortune in other cities. Since virtually all the family composition figures were obtained or verified by other ward residents, it seems likely that the above statistics are reasonably accurate. A few of the young men (5) are living with their friends in bachelors' houses (gidan samari, pl. gidajen samari) in other wards, and two are traders outside Katsina. But these seven only barely affect the total numbers.

Further information on the women included in the sample make the ratios more comprehensible. Of the 161 married women in the 131 compounds surveyed, more than half (87 women, or 54% of the married women) are in the 15-29 age bracket. Only eighteen of

these women are married to the seventeen married men in the same age bracket, all but two of these men being 25-29 years old. Young men marry younger women, and older men marry women as young as they can afford, and for whom they can successfully compete. This contributes to the imbalance in the younger age categories.

In Yarinci, the married female sample is less heavily weighted towards youth. Of the 126 married women included in the sample, fifty women (about 40%) are in the 15-29 age group; another three are under fifteen. Seven of these women under 29 are wives to the seven married men in the same age category.

In the 30-45 age bracket, sex ratios in the two wards are quite different. In Marina, the ratio is about one to one, while Yarinci shows a male-female ratio of 0.54. One of the factors responsible for the latter is the large number of married women in their thirties. Forty-six of the married women (about 37% of the married women in the sample) are in this age group; three-quarters of the married women in the sample are under forty. But another significant feature of the Yarinci population, and a factor in the gender imbalance, is the number of non-married women who have come to the ward to seek work in the houses of the aristocracy, or to benefit from the largess of distant kin, former patrons, or the descendants of former patrons. Some of these women are younger than thirty, but it is more frequently women who are less likely to remarry who utilise these resources. Class affiliations and obligations are very much a part of the Katsina social system.

It must be noted that while women without husbands are common in both wards, the number of non-married men is quite small - eight in Yarinci and fifteen in Marina. Only one man in Yarinci was still

unmarried by the age of 25; the two single men in Marina include one person who is mentally ill and unlikely ever to marry.

The last age category, persons 60 and above, again shows a much higher number of women to men in both wards (male/female ratio in Yarinci: 0.38; in Marina: 0.58). While the numbers are quite small, they do demonstrate the fact of greater female longevity.

The larger number of women compared to men in the middle range of ages (15-40) is a feature of many demographic analyses in Hausaland (e.g. for rural Zaria, D.W. Norman, 1974, p. 6; the Kano close-settled zone: M.J. Mortimore and J. Wilson, p. 31; the Sokoto close-settled zone: A.D. Goddard, J.C. Fine and D.W. Norman, p.9), although none of these studies show as high a ratio of women to men as exhibited by the Katsina data. The immediate possibility which occurs for the gender imbalance is the effect of polygyny.

Incidence of polygyny

Polygyny does not necessarily imply a gender imbalance in the population as a whole. The later age at which men marry (five to ten years later than women), reduces the number of potential husbands available. However, this characteristic must be balanced against the fact that women are not considered marriageable throughout their life span, while men may remarry at any age.

Polygyny in Katsina, as in other parts of Hausaland, is an ideal which, at any given time, is realized by only a small proportion of the male population. In Yarinci, of the 124 married men in the ward, 88 (71%) had one wife at the time of initial interview (Table 2-6).

Table 2-6

Number of wives per husband - Yarinci and Marina

Number of Wives	YARINCI		MARINA	
	No. of Men	% of Men	No. of Men	% of Men
One wife	88	71.0%	169	77.2%
Two wives	18 (a)	14.5%	38 (b)	17.4%
Three wives	14 (c)	11.3%	11	5.0%
Four wives	4 (d)	3.2%	1	0.5%
Total	124	100.0%	219	100.1%

(a) Two men have a silkiti marriage with one of their wives. One woman lives and works outside Katsina City; the other is maintained by her husband outside Yarinci.

(b) Three men have one of their two wives living outside the ward.

(c) Two men have a silkiti marriage with one of their three wives. Each of these two women lives in her own house, one within Yarinci and one outside the ward.

(d) One man maintains three of his four wives outside Yarinci.

The preponderance of such unions in Marina was even greater: of 219 married men, 169 (77.2%) had only one wife. Yarinci, with a high proportion of salaried workers, wealthy men, and members of the aristocracy, shows a higher incidence of marriage to more than one wife (1.47 women per married man) than Marina, with an average of 1.28 women per married man. In areas of greater prosperity, polygyny is more marked, as is demonstrated also by Wallace in her study of part of the population affected by a large-scale Kano irrigation project: 40% of the married men in the study had more than one wife (Wallace, 1978, p. 28). The Marina figure, based as it is on an artisan and farming population, is perhaps more representative of Hausa marriage patterns than the Yarinci data. The figures established by Hill, for example, are closer to the Marina results. Her Batagarawa study showed an average of 1.3 wives per head of farming unit, and 1.1 wives per dependent married man (1972, p. 23), while the later Kano research gave an average of 1.3 wives per married man (1977, p. 114).

A larger absolute number of Marina men practised polygyny than their Yarinci counterparts, but the number of wives in polygynous marriages was similar, in that about three quarters of the polygynous households in Marina included no more than two wives, while only half the Yarinci polygynous families included only two wives. Fifty-three Yarinci women, and sixty-one Marina women, are second, third or fourth wives. The Sex-age Distribution Table 2-4, for Yarinci, includes 87 married women who are sole or senior wife to their husbands, and another 39 who are junior wives (second, third or fourth wife). The Marina Table (2-5) includes 63 women who are sole or senior wife, and 24 junior wives.

Table 2-7 demonstrates the relationship in the two wards between men's age and number of wives. As the table necessarily includes only men whose ages were known, the totals are smaller than in the preceding table. The Marina data in this table are reasonably representative of the entire ward population; the average number of wives per husband is virtually the same (1.27 compared to 1.28) as in Table 2-6. The Yarinci data in Table 2-7 include all but one polygynously married man, while excluding 24 men with only one wife, and therefore shows a higher average number of wives per husband than occurs in the total ward population. However, the table does broadly indicate for both wards that polygyny tends to be the province of older men. In Yarinci, the incidence of polygyny is very high among men aged forty and above, and low among men in their thirties; none of the younger men had more than one wife. In Marina, the differences are less striking between age categories. The incidence of polygyny rises gradually with age until, among men aged sixty or more, there is a decrease.

The relationship between wealth and the incidence of polygyny is shown more clearly in Yarinci than Marina; the high level of salaried employment in Yarinci provides a rough income guide. Twenty-seven (77%) of the 35 polygynously married men are salaried workers. Fourteen of these occupy highly-paid positions, while the other thirteen are less well-paid, but still richer than many of their non-wage-earning neighbors. Another two men are known to be very wealthy, and only six men are not as immediately classifiable as well-off. While wealthy men may not have more than one wife, men who are married to two or more women tend to be among the richer ward residents. As men generally support their wives,

Table 2-7

Relationship of men's age to number of wives

Age of Men	YARINCI						MARINA					
	Number of wives				Total Men	Wives/ Husband	Number of wives				Total Men	Wives/ Husband
	1	2	3	4			1	2	3	4		
20-29	7	-	-	-	7	1.0	16	1	-	-	17	1.1
30-39	20	3	-	-	23	1.1	29	7	1	-	37	1.2
40-49	18	4	7	3	32	1.8	35	6	5	-	46	1.3
50-59	14	8	4	1	27	1.7	9	6	-	-	15	1.4
60 or more	5	3	2	-	10	1.7	11	3	-	-	14	1.2
Total	64	18	13	4	99(a)	1.56	100	23	6	-	129(b)	1.27

(a) Includes four-fifths of the married men in Yarinci.

(b) Includes about three-fifths of the married men in Marina.

and do not benefit from their wives' profit-making economic activities, marriage to more than one wife is not feasible for the poorer men in the community.

Residential Patterns: the Compound

Throughout this study, the domestic unit employed for analysis is the compound, a socio-spatial unit which includes all persons living within the house or houses circumscribed by the high walls which are a feature of Hausa urban residence, and which are only accessible through a single entrance.

I have purposely concentrated analysis around a clear-cut spatial unit rather than using the more commonly employed terminology or household or domestic group, because of the orientation I feel is inherent in their utilisation. It is my contention that the use of such terms blurs distinctions between significant social units, minimises the socio-economic importance of women in the society, and overemphasizes dyadic ties to the detriment of equally significant multiplex relationships.

One of the symptoms of the neglect of women in anthropological studies is the subsuming of women as wives and mothers into male-dominated social units. It is all to easy to do this, even with the Hausa data, but there are cogent arguments against such classification. For example, one of the ways in which women have "disappeared" in the literature on Hausaland is through the maw of the "production unit". Most of the work on Hausa society has been done in rural areas, with the consequent importance in the literature of the farming unit of production, which was often seen as coterminous

with the domestic group[1]. In most rural areas at present, however, and certainly in urban areas, women have no part in farming, and a limited part in production for the family as a whole. Certainly, Hausa husbands are responsible for food, clothing and shelter for their wives and children, and the economic role of women in performing domestic tasks and in child rearing is inextricable from family production. But each woman maintains also her own chosen craft or trade, which is very much a personal rather than family-oriented endeavour, with profits being personally earned, held, and utilised. The individual nature of women's trade is most apparent in the common practice of husbands purchasing foodstuffs from their wives for consumption by members of their family. Thus, even where husbands and wives live together, production by family members is undertaken for distinct and often non-coinciding purposes.

Another means of defining the domestic group, other than, or sometimes in addition to, production, is by laying emphasis on common consumption. This method, used by the Nigerian Federal Office of Statistics, and favoured by the Institute of Agricultural Research (see bibliography), includes in one household "all those who eat from one pot". This kind of model is even more deleterious in its effect of amalgamating individuals, especially women, into a pattern of seeming dependency. One of the remarkable features of the Katsina women's world is the spatial and social autonomy of many women, living away from their kin and maintaining a life-style relatively independent of the demands from, or constant interaction with, close

---

1. However, for detailed discussion of one form of Hausa farming unit, the gandu, see especially Hill (1972, Ch. 3), and Wallace (1978, Ch. 5). The latter study demonstrates also the disastrous effects of the imprecision regarding the composition of the production unit, upon the designing of Nigerian development programmes.

relatives. The fact of receiving food daily from another compound, often a compound in a different ward, does not alter this autonomy. Nor, for example, is a woman with several married sons, each of whom sends her food, a member of several households. The head of a compound, male or female, may be sending cooked food to several other compounds, even daily. This food may be a token of kinship, patronage, or friendship. Acceptance does not incorporate the recipients of the gift into the household of the donor.

In fact, the formula of common consumption becomes not only unwieldy but also positively misleading outside the single residence unit. One example of food distribution and redistribution will suffice. A 55-year-old Marina widow who lives alone in her late husband's compound receives food daily from one of her married sons, from her late husband's two brothers, and occasionally from her married daughter. From this, she in turn sends food to her youngest son and his wife, and distributes what she cannot consume to Koranic students and other needy persons. Neither are her youngest son and his wife part of her household, nor is she part of any other household, or combination of households. If her trade were food-processing, she might well add her own contribution to the distribution network, thereby increasing the number of sources of daily provision in the kin group, but without downgrading the autonomy of the distinct spatial family units.

A single compound, indeed even a single individual such as the widow above, may be a recipient and distributor of food. To reduce these bonds to unilateral dependency, or to fail to recognise the recipient's own social and often economic autonomy or near-autonomy, is to overlook the complexity of relationships involved in food-bestowal, both in terms of the donors and the ultimate recipients,

and in terms of the myriad ties which bind donors and recipients. The criterion of "responsibility[1]" offered by Wallace (1978, p. 16) in place of consumption as a more accurate measurement of salient social ties, presents as many problems as consumption when applied between compounds.

The nature of the urban community, with many women living together in all-women compounds, with women clearly supporting themselves or having the economic capacity for self-sufficiency, and with many women being compound heads[2], makes a different kind of categorisation of women, and of residence, imperative. By using the compound as the basic structure, the automatic assumption of dependency is avoided, and the many women-centred separate spatial units are given equal weight with all other compounds, including those housing conjugal and compound families, and those based on more complex ties.

And yet one other factor which militates against the use of the household or domestic group as an analytical entity is the frequently temporary nature of residence in the unit. Women in particular, who often change residence with every marriage and divorce, in a way are more mobile than men. The use of the term compound includes all persons co-resident at a given time, but does not make assumptions regarding the corporateness of the residential unit.

---

1. Accountability for feeding, clothing, and otherwise supporting a particular person, or group of people.

2. Hill points out that in Dorayi in the Kano close settled zone, no compounds are headed by women (P. Hill, personal communication).

Physical Layout of the Compound

The compound (gida, pl. gidaje), is built in Katsina of mud brick, often faced with cement or plaster, or increasingly of cement blocks. Most rooms are of flat mud roof (soro) construction, although metal roofing is fast replacing mud as the predominant roofing material, especially on new buildings. Thatched roofs are not common anywhere in the city, although individual rooms within a compound may be thatched, as are shelters (rumfa, pl. rumfofi) used for animals, and for outdoor trade.

Compounds are walled, facing inwards to the central courtyard or yards, although modern housing of wealthier families may include second-storey windows, usually in the compound head's set of rooms (turaka) overlooking the street. Access to the family living quarters (cikin gida - inside the house) is through the entrance room (zaure) or series of entrance rooms, which may lead first into a forecourt, or directly into the central courtyard and living quarters, which includes individual rooms for each wife, and a cooking hut. Almost all the Yarinci compounds, and more than half the Marina compounds, include a separate room or apartment for the compound head (mai gida). All compounds include at least a pit latrine (kewaye), and many contain a well, or, in the houses of a few wealthy men, a water tap (pumpo)[1]. Threshed grain is stored in an unused room in the compound, or in the corners of occupied rooms; the granary (rumbu) is virtually absent[2].

---

1. In 1971-73, tap water was available only about two hours in the morning and afternoon.

2. In only two of the 359 compounds in Marina and Yarinci was a granary evident. Hill suggests that the presence or absence of the granary may provide a useful distinction between rural and urban settlement (1972, p. xii).

Compounds of rich men contain a greater number of rooms, are larger, are often built of more durable materials, and may include electricity, but the general layout is basically as described above. In Yarinci more than in Marina, modern and costly improvements have been made to the compound, such as cross-ventilation in the rooms of the compound head, cementing of the courtyard, and the replacement of mud roofs with corrugated iron roofing.

Compound composition

Population of the compound varies greatly, from a single individual up to 27 people in Yarinci, and up to 24 persons in a compound in Marina (Table 2-8). The average population per compound is 6.8 in Yarinci, and 5.3 in Marina. Over 50% of the compounds in Yarinci, and almost 60% of the Marina compounds, contain five or fewer persons. These compounds house about one-fifth (20.9%) of the Yarinci population, and almost a third (31.4%) of the Marina residents. Half the Yarinci population (51%) and three-quarters of the Marina population (73.3%) live in compounds containing ten or fewer persons. Few compounds house more than 15 people.

The large number of small compounds has been partly explained above, in noting the separate residence of non-married and older women which is a feature of Katsina residential and social organisation. Thus, we find that 25 Yarinci compounds (about 20% of all occupied compounds) are headed by women. In Marina, 42 compounds (about 18% of the occupied compounds) have a woman as compound head. In about a third of these compounds (eight in Yarinci, fifteen in Marina),

Table 2-8

Number of persons per compound - Yarinci (a) and Marina

Persons in Compound	YARINCI				MARINA			
	No. of Compounds	% of Comp'ds.	Popu-lation	% of Pop'n.	No. of Compounds	% of Comp'ds.	Popu-lation	% of Pop'n.
0	3)		0)		1)		0)	
1	10)		10)		24)		24) (b)	
2	15)	51.9%	30)	20.9%	38)	59.1%	76)	31.4%
3	21)		63)		28)		84)	
4	10)		40)		23)		92)	
5	8)		40)		22)		110)	
6	5)		30)		28)		168)	
7	11)	26.4%	77)	30.1%	24)	31.3%	168)	41.9%
8	9)		72)		7)		56)	
9	6)		54)		7)		63)	
10	3)		30)		6)		60)	
11	3)		33)		5)		55)	
12	2)		24)		3)		36)	
13	6)	16.3%	78)	32.1%	5)	6.5%	65)	15.0%
14	4)		56)		2)		28)	
15	6)		90)		-)		-)	
16-20	4)	5.4%	73)	16.9%	2)	3.0%	34)	11.8%
21 or more	3)		75)		5)		111)	
Total	129	100.0%	875	100.0%	230	99.9%	1230	100.1%

(a) Excludes two compounds rented by Yoruba migrants.
(b) Includes six "bachelors' houses" (gidajen samari) whose actual population is fluid, but which always include a young unmarried man who is usually the owner.

the woman lives alone or with a child or children, either her own or fostered. Other women live in compounds together, with no men resident. The place of these women in the community, their economic and social position, and some of the factors inherent in their choice of life-style, will be considered in Chapter Three. As the importance of women-centred compounds is the main theme of the chapter, it is unnecessary to present additional data here. The absence of these women from the compounds of their children, siblings, or other kinsmen contributes to a preponderance of conjugal and compound family-based residential units in Yarinci and Marina.

It should be noted that the term compound head (mai gida)[1] refers to the resident considered the spokesman for the compound. In this study, the senior person in any compound occupied by a single family group is considered the compound head, as is the resident adult where the compound is occupied by an individual, or by an individual with children. This is irrespective of the actual ownership of the property, although the compound head often is the hereditary owner, or builder or buyer, of the compound. Usually the oldest man is the compound head, or, where no men are resident, the oldest woman. Where a son remains in the family compound on his marriage, and his father is dead, the son generally becomes the new compound head.

---

1. The expression uwar gida (mother of the compound) does not mean female compound head, but rather defines a woman in relation to her husband, as senior wife or sole wife. It is also a polite form of address for any woman.

Few men over 25 are unmarried; fewer still live alone (three men in Yarinci, two in Marina). Young men may join their comrades in bachelors' houses, the functions of which change as the boys for whom they are destined marry and bring in their brides. Yarinci had only three bachelors' houses, built by wealthy ward residents for their sons, while in Marina six bachelors' houses, former family compounds, awaited the marriages of the inheriting sons.

Usually a compound is not conveniently vacant for a newly-married son. Therefore, it is often necessary to divide the family compound, with mud walls erected to separate the sections, a new well and latrine dug, and another entrance cut to give each section independent access to the street. Thus, one compound will be split into two compounds or more, each physically independent from the others except insofar as they share common walls.

The most common single residential grouping in the two wards is that of the single conjugal or compound family: the husband, wife or wives, and their unmarried children (including children of either spouse as well as of both). In Yarinci, one-third of all compounds (42 out of 129) are occupied by conjugal or compound families only. The comparative Marina figure is about 44% (100 out of 230 compounds). I use the most restrictive definitions of conjugal and compound families here[1] in order to emphasize the very limited boundaries of many residential groupings in the city. This

---

1. Excluding rather arbitrarily thereby all compounds with foster children, and with non-married daughters who have returned from their husband's house either temporarily or permanently. Inclusion of these would swell the number of families under discussion considerably.

is important in terms of daily interaction, domestic power relationships, and individual autonomy, all of which will be considered in detail in later chapters. These residential patterns are very strikingly different from those described by, for example, M.G. Smith (1955) for rural Zaria, Polly Hill for Batagarawa (1972) and the Kano close settled zone (1974), or indeed, by any other researcher in Hausaland. In particular, there are far fewer multi-family kin-based compounds in the two wards. The economic links which bind the multi-family compounds in other areas are weak in Katsina City; income is mainly individually earned and utilised.

Multi-family compounds do exist in each of the wards, although the criteria for residence differ between the wards. Bases for residence in a Katsina compound include kinship, clientship, fostering and tenancy[1]. Kinship bonds are important in both wards, but non-kin ties are also significant in Yarinci. Table 2-9, setting out the relationship of adult males[2] to the male or female compound head in their respective compounds, gives an indication of the diversity of these ties, and of the prevalence of compounds with no more than one adult male resident. Eighty-six Yarinci men are heads of the compound in which they reside. Another 12 men are

---

1. One compound, in Yarinci, comprises only rent-paying tenants. None of the residents have any relationship to the non-resident owner of the compound other than the economic one of landlord and tenant. Nor are there kinship or clientship ties with other persons or families renting; each tenant maintains his section of the compound independent of co-residents in other sections of the compound.
   A few other compounds (one in Yarinci, three in Marina) include rent-paying tenants as part of the compound complement, along with compound members with hereditary rights to residence.

2. More detailed tables for women are included in the following chapter.

Table 2-9

Position in compound of adult men - Yarinci and Marina (a)

	YARINCI		MARINA	
	No. of Men	% of Men	No. of Men	% of Men
Compound head	86	64.7%	176	74.6%
Related to male compound head				
Son	1)		14)	
Brother, same father & mother(b)	5)		15)	
Brother, same father, diff. mos.	2)	7.5%	5)	20.8%
Brother, same mother, diff. fas.	-)		1)	
Other kin tie	2)		14)	
Unrelated to male compound head				
Malam	5)			
Client or servant (c)	8)	11.3%		
Other tie	1)		1)	0.8%
Free accommodation	1)		1)	
Related to female compound head				
Son	1)	1.5%	3	1.3%
Other kin tie	1)			
Unrelated to female compound head				
Client or servant	3)	3.8%	3	1.3%
Free accommodation	2)			
No compound head				
Rental	12)	11.3%	3	1.3%
Free accommodation	3)			
Total	133	100.1%	236	100.1%

(a) Includes all married men and non-married men, and all unmarried men 25 years old or more, in both wards.

(b) In two compounds, one in each ward, the junior brother was compound head. In both cases, the senior brother was over sixty and wifeless.

(c) Includes five servants of the Emir, living in his houses.

related by kinship ties to the compound head, while 35 men, or almost three-quarters of all men who are not compound heads, are bound through other links to the compound head or compound owner, or are renting.

The Marina figures demonstrate the difference in residential links in the two wards. One hundred and seventy-six Marina men are compound heads. Fifty-two of the sixty men who are not compound heads are resident primarily through kinship ties, although in some cases the kinship base masks certain class and craft divisions. This is apparent, for example, in three of the largest Marina compounds, with populations of thirteen, twenty-two and twenty-four respectively. The first of these is composed of several related praise-singers and their families, plus another, unrelated, praise-singer. The second is a compound of former butchers (very low status: none of the residents even mentioned their traditional calling); and the third comprises descendants of the former Emir Abubakar.

Women who are neither compound heads nor resident in their husband's house, show the same kinds of links (patron-client, kinship, etc.) as their male counterparts, but ties with female compound heads are proportionally much more significant.

Socio-economic differences in the women's sphere are less marked than those presented in the "male" ward description above. This is consistent with the limited interaction of the women's and the men's worlds, with the greater homogeneity of the women's world, and with the surprisingly autonomous behaviour of the Hausa

woman within the context of an ostensibly male-dominant society. These features of the women's world will be discussed in Chapter Three, and in subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER THREE

WOMEN-CENTRED HOUSEHOLDS, AND THE NON-MARRIED WOMAN

I begin discussion of women's career options by considering those categories of women which include women who pursue the career strategy of "non-marriage", a life-style which is both misunderstood and virtually ignored in the literature on Hausaland. The reasons for this misunderstanding are inherent in the context of the male legitimising structure in Hausa society, and in the utilisation of the androcentric reporting of male informants analysed mainly by male anthropologists. These points will be expanded below. Another reason for initial concentration on these options is to lay emphasis on the presence in the community of women who have adopted mutually supportive roles other than that of married woman, often living in residential patterns which provide an alternative to the more common model of male compound head and dependants. Thus, one finds multi-women households, and women-focused households, scattered through the two wards under study.

These households, which are a significant feature of Katsina social organisation, are a haven for non-married and other categories of women, and indeed by their existence as a refuge may themselves provide the impetus for a woman to reject remarriage. Residence in such households may be based on kinship ties, or on ties of friendship, fostering or clientship, and brings together women of different class, status, and life-styles into self-contained, coherent and close-knit social units. Rarely economically self-sufficient, although they could be, the women in such households receive food from outside the household, and yet practise crafts with which to maintain personal

networks and provide themselves with non-basic goods. The fact of the coalescing of very different life-styles into a single woman-centred world within the ward, means that the various options available to any woman, are immediately visible to all.

One may characterise the women of the two wards in terms of their marital status, marital pattern, and "marriageability". The categories are:

a) Married women, living with their husbands

b) Married women, residing away from their husbands

c) Non-married women

d) Old women

e) Other women

The first category represents the predominant women's life-style in the wards, and will be the subject of discussion in later chapters. Category (b) will be dealt with in greater detail in this chapter, as reflecting a women's role which partakes of both the men's and women's realms, and which offers women a degree of independence without losing the perquisites of marriage.

Category (c), non-married women, is in some respects the most interesting, inasmuch as it has been subject to the emic, and possibly etic, male bias noted above. This has resulted in grave misinterpretation of the career pattern of the non-married woman, with a correspondingly negative construction of her goals and aspirations. In this chapter, we will consider the factors which induce a gender bias into the understanding of the role and status of the non-married woman. We will illustrate the advantages inherent in the assumption and maintenance of this life-style, and discuss the nature of the pressures which militate against its more widespread adoption.

Old women (s. tsofuwa; pl. tsaffi), the constituents of category (d), do not on the face of it choose an alternative, in that one cannot avoid ageing. And yet, in one respect there is a choice. Some non-married women who do not wish to remarry capitalise on the social niche afforded by this option, donning the appropriate cultural trappings and relinquishing their more sexual womanhood. I exclude from category (d) women who are still married, for reasons detailed below. Thus, this category includes women who are widows and divorcées, who are very unlikely to remarry, and who are self-sufficient or are supported completely or in part by bonds of kinship, affineship or clientship. The category includes only women aged 50 or more, a statistically significant cut-off point, as will be demonstrated in the discussion of non-married women, which is also supported by a consideration of the changing roles of married women of similar age.

Category (e), other women, includes married women who have returned home for childbirth, women who have left their husbands but are not divorced, and women whose marriages are still in effect, but who have not seen their husbands for months, or years.

The numbers of adult women in Yarinci and Marina are 276 and 406 respectively, divided into the categories listed above as follows:

Table 3-1 Categories of Women - Yarinci and Marina

	YARINCI		MARINA	
	No.	%	No.	%
a) Married women, living with their husbands	176	63.8	279	68.7
b) Married women, residing away from their husbands	11	4.0	12	3.0
c) Non-married women	35	12.7	41	10.1
d) Old women	46	16.7	58	14.3
e) Other women	8	2.9	16	3.9
Total:	276	100.1	406	100.0

This chapter concerns mainly categories b, c, d and e: women often living apart from husbands, fathers or other males, and frequently coming together in mutually beneficial living arrangements. These women comprise more than a third of the adult female population in Yarinci, and almost a third of the Marina women. Emphasis will be be placed particularly on category c, non-married women.

The Meaning of Non-marriage

Non-married women (s. bajawara; pl. jawarawa[1]) are that category of women who have been, but are no longer, married, and who may marry again.

The completion of any marriage imposes upon the former wife a short but compulsory period of non-marriage, varying in duration according to the cause of marriage completion. Divorce requires the observance of a three-month period of idda, during which only remarriage to the former husband is possible. The time allotted is supposed to encourage reconciliation between the estranged couple, but more important is of sufficient duration to ascertain pregnancy and avoid paternity disputes.

Completion of marriage through death of the husband is followed by a series of mourning rites and a period of compulsory non-marriage (takaba) lasting four months and ten days. During the first forty days, the bereaved wife performs the bulk of the required ritual[2], which is

---

1. The more common terms are bazawara/zawarawa. The substitution of j for z represents a Katsina dialectical difference.

2. There are few observances required of a bereaved husband.

followed by three additional months, the equivalent of idda, of non-marriage. The subject of remarriage should not be openly discussed within the period of idda or takaba, but it is said to be common for arrangements to be quietly made at this time for remarriage, which is celebrated immediately after the obligatory non-marriage period. However, for many women, idda or takaba is not quickly followed by remarriage, and it is primarily these women, and the seeming conflict between ideal and real behaviour reflected in their actions, with the concomitant implications, which concern us here.

It is important to bear in mind that non-marriage (jawarci) implies marriageability. We have noted earlier that men's marital careers span their lifetimes, whereas women's are usually limited, in the case of widowhood or divorce, to no more than the span of their fertility. As a woman ages, there is less likelihood that she will remarry. During the entire fieldwork period (1971-73), no new marriages were contracted by any women aged 50 or more in either ward, nor were there either efforts or speculation that any of these women would marry again. Therefore, I have used the age of 50 as the division between marriageability and non-marriageability. A bajawara, a non-married woman, is a woman who considers herself, and is considered by others, eligible to remarry.

The fragility of marriage bonds in Katsina, the use of divorce as the ultimate, and yet easily operationalised, means of resolving the stresses and tensions inherent in marriage, the differential opportunity for remarriage for men and women, and the obligatory time delay between marriages, all contribute to creating a category of women who are non-married at any given time. Indeed, as shown in the table above, non-married women comprised about 13% and 10% of the surveyed female population. The ages of the women ranged from 14 to almost 50; they

had been out of their marital homes for periods from a few days to nine years. Most of the women were living with or near their kin, or were residing in patron-client based accommodation away from their relatives.

Whereas these women remain marriageable, it was evident that many were practising a distinct life-style, often over an extended period of time. Rather than being "between marriages", in the sense of looking forward to or expecting remarriage, these women were creating constructive and long-term careers outside of, and independent of, marriage. The women were respected members of the community, with a recognised life-style. Whether the option would be permanent was of less concern than the fact of the conscious career planning, with the associated residential and economic arrangements.

Mention of this career strategy is virtually absent in much of the available literature. Instead, the non-married woman who lingers without remarrying after the compulsory period of non-marriage is clearly devalued in status. Thus, M.G. Smith writes:

> "After obtaining a divorce young persons may choose to remain single. This condition is described as karuwanci (prostitution), and single persons of either sex are referred to as prostitutes ..."
>
> (1959, p. 244)

E.R. Yeld repaints Smith's uncompromising portrait of non-married women in her article on women's status:

> "Under Islam [women] have a religious duty to marry, and all unmarried women, including widows of child-bearing age, are considered anomalous and referred to as prostitutes."
>
> (p. 124)

Abner Cohen's analysis of non-married women in Sabon Gari, Ibadan, is somewhat more accurate, but fails to acknowledge the long-term non-married woman who is not a prostitute:

> "A divorced woman who does not immediately practise prostitution and who remains at home with her parents or other relatives is called bazawara ... But if the bazawara does not marry within a short time and if she begins to go out of the house in daylight she becomes known as prostitute."
>
> (1969, p. 55)

I suggest that these analyses are an incorrect rendering of the actual life-style of most non-married women, and that the misconceptions which produced these statements are the results of gender-biased values, reproduced in informants' reporting.

The Lexical Component of Sex-specific Ideology

I have pointed out that there is an emic categorisation of some women as jawarawa, non-married women. And yet this category was ignored or relegated to a minor residual position in the works cited. In Katsina, the term was more commonly applied by women than it was by men. I believe that in this instance, the utilisation of a particular lexicon with its associated beliefs, signifies the attempt to force a specific cultural viewpoint upon the listener, perhaps to mystify, perhaps to illuminate, depending on the context and the generally held values within the society, or within the given subgroup.

David Parkin, in summarising M. Bloch (1975), states:

> "... the formalization of speech can restrict the content of what is being communicated to a limited range of assumptions, expectations and responses ..."
>
> (p. 24)

Parkin, while agreeing that such a use of key verbal concepts can act to stifle expression and the exchange of new ideas, and so maintain the status quo, notes that such concepts also act as a cover under which changes in customary practice may occur. Thus, one should

> "see..verbal concepts, unverbalized ideas, and conventional activities as each autonomously based on their own internal systems of logical presuppositions, and yet, as autonomous systems, in constant interaction with each other and so making up the more comprehensive autonomy of a particular culture."
>
> (pp. 25-26)

The use of different terminology by men and women in Katsina is indicative of a distinct and significant divergence of views, attitudes, and values between the sexes. Men's preoccupation with prostitution (karuwanci) and prostitutes (karuwai) is a denial of a woman's valid emic category, and is thereby a symbolic denial of the existence of a category of women whose livelihood is not predicated upon male dependency. It is not that the terms for non-married women are only used by women: a man will be careful to characterise his sister or other kinswoman as a bajawara. But indeed the care with which one's kin are exempted demonstrates the nature of the category, and the negative connotations associated with it.

Women, on the other hand, are more likely to call any woman a bajawara who is non-married, and not living openly as a karuwa. Are the women, then, more "charitable" than the men? Are they more realistically defining women's roles and statuses? Or are they less concerned with defining women vis à vis men, especially in the context of male/female sexual dependency relationships?

The answer is found in the second and third suggestions. The women have little emotional, moral, or political investment in the concept of women outside their husband's houses occupying a negative or stigmatised position. Therefore, there is neither need nor impetus for their subsuming all non-married women into this category. And given the fact that many Hausa women have been, or will be, non-married women once or more than once, there is very clearly good reason to avoid

participating in cultural devaluation. The use of the category of bajawara/jawarci does in fact more realistically define women's statuses, as will be demonstrated in case studies and other illustrative data in this chapter. The category of non-marriage (jawarci) is recognised and verbalised by women, and recognised but ignored by men, for whom considerations of social control and the maintenance of male dominance are sufficiently compelling to influence the verbalisation of their perceptions.

The third suggestion advanced, that women are less concerned than men in defining women in relation to men, especially in terms of dependency relations, is also significant. The relegation of non-married women to the status of karuwai implies that the livelihood of these women is dependent on the largess of a man or men with whom they maintain a sexual relationship. The use of the non-married category (jawarci) says nothing of a woman's economic or sexual situation, except that she is no longer living with or supported by a husband. Her sexuality and her economic wherewithal are neither automatically assigned nor assumed. These considerations are not of paramount importance for other women in their relations with women.

Turning to the question of a woman's freedom of movement, it must be said that fathers of very young non-married women do tend to exercise control over their movement outside the house. However, even these young women go about more freely than they or their parents admit. There is concern about the adverse effect of local gossip. While there is a large component of self-interest in the dissemination of gossip, and a degree of rivalry inherent in the utilisation of gossip as a

means of "information-management"[1], the cumulative effect is more widespread and general. The seclusion of young non-married women is a form of tacit recognition of the assumption that female behaviour will generally be interpreted, at least by the men in the group, in a manner least creditable to the woman herself.

The Spatial Component of Non-marriage

Some women in the wards become karuwai, but this career choice is almost invariably associated with change of residence, a spatial demonstration of change in status and role. The attempt to practise karuwanci from one's parental home is so fraught with difficulty that it is not lightly attempted. The term for a woman dabbling in karuwanci, perhaps planning to begin a career, is mage da wuri, "cat with a cowry[2]". A cat can play with money, but does not really know what to do with it, and certainly cannot make effective use of it. Similarly, a woman living in her parents' house has not the freedom or the necessary conditions to properly pursue the practice of karuwanci, and may lose her reputation and be severely punished, without actually making any worthwhile monetary gain or having any real independence.

One of the problems for the young non-married woman is that, as she is again on the marriage market, she should be visible to prospective husbands, and therefore should have some freedom of movement. Ideally, news of a woman's return to her kin on the termination of marriage would be quickly known throughout the neighbourhood, whereupon suitors

---

1. See R. Paine for detailed consideration of these characteristics of gossip.

2. A traditional form of currency.

would approach the woman's kin and the woman herself, with due formality, to signal their interest. Unfortunately, this procedure greatly limits the woman's choice, and permits only a rather passive role. Movement outside vastly expands marriage possibilities.

Elsewhere, Hausa communities have established methods by which the non-married women might get sufficient public exposure without detriment to their reputations and without commitment. In Caranci, a town 25 miles from Katsina, non-married women prepare food or other commodities for the weekly market, which they attend. The women occupy their own section of the market, which is not altogether jokingly called the kantin mata, "shop of women". Marriage is often the outcome of the bantering and casual conversation initiated in the kantin mata. This expedient has not been employed in Katsina, where young women rarely attend the market even for buying. Many of the women traders are from villages, or are pastoral Fulani selling milk and butter. Hill found a similar situation, for she notes that "Nearly all the Hausa females who attend markets are older women, or girls, the former mainly acting as sellers " (1972, p. 291).

Male informants suggest that young non-married women in Katsina suffer from a surfeit rather than a lack of admirers. If a woman has many suitors, the men contend, she learns how to extract gifts and money from each, how to play one against the other, and generally how to obtain maximum economic benefit with minimum liability. This is particularly true when the woman's kin are in disagreement about whom she should marry, and fail to put pressure on her to accept a certain suitor. Where, for various reasons, the woman continues refusing her suitors, the men eventually lose interest in her, feeling that she has become too clever in her dealings with men, would not remain under a husband's

control, and would be too demanding in his house. Thus, the possibility of imminent remarriage recedes in direct relationship to the period of time spent as a non-married woman. It should be kept in mind, however, that the non-married woman may be actively constructing a career without marriage, and that the prospect of remarriage is less appealing than the opportunity to maintain the present life-style. This is a possibility that is not suggested by, or perhaps is not conceivable to, male informants.

Residential Ties of Non-married Women

In presenting the residential pattern of non-married women, a different set of categories is employed from that used for describing men's residence. The salient residential link is emphasised, rather than the relationship to the compound head[1].

The most common type of long-term non-marriage is associated with the residence of the non-married woman with or near her kin (Table 3-2). She may be partly, or less usually, completely dependent on her kin for food, clothing and shelter, her degree of dependency lessening with successful trade and with the assumption of greater responsibilities and freedom of movement similar to that maintained by married women of the same age or older.

---

1. For example, residential choice of a woman who joins her mother in the mother's brother's compound is more clearly understood through pointing out the maternal tie, than by stating that the non-married woman is sister's daughter to the male compound head.

Table 3-2

Residential ties of non-married women (a)

	YARINCI		MARINA	
	No. of Women	% of Women	No. of Women	% of Women
Compound head (b)	5	14% (c)	4	10%
Living with kin				
Both parents	5)		3)	
Mother	6)	40%	9)	41%
Father	3)		5)	
Other kin	11	31%	18	44%
Living with affines	1	3%	1	2%
Other residential ties				
Living with patroness	1)	11%	1	2%
Free accommodation	3)			
Total	35	99%	41	99%

(a) Includes all non-married women in the two wards.
(b) This category does not preclude the presence of kin, affines or others, but does make a clear statement of the relative status of the women under study within the compound.
(c) All percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

The most usual procedure is to join one's parent or parents (40% of the Yarinci women; 41% of the Marina women). If the parents are deceased, the non-married woman still usually returns to the natal home, often to join her brother who has succeeded to the headship of the compound, or her sisters. Two of the Marina compounds are composed only of sisters, living with their children in the family compound; one Yarinci compound also included non-married sisters living together, but in this instance in the senior sister's own house. Sixty per cent of the Yarinci women, and 72% of the Marina women, are living with one or more members of their family of orientation. Other kinship relations are also activated, especially in cases in which the non-married woman was raised by a foster parent, but these are relatively insignificant compared to conjugal family links. Four Yarinci women are living outside a kinship setting, mainly as clients, house servants, or guests of wealthy women in the ward. The same kinds of non-kin bonds which are of such importance in men's residential patterns in Yarinci are replicated in the women's living arrangements.

Some of the non-married women are compound heads, sometimes living with other adult kin, sometimes with only a child or children to share the compound. The choice of residence, and the presence or absence of senior kinsmen in the compound, are significant in predicting the likelihood of quick remarriage for the non-married woman.

Duration of Non-marriage

The initial intensive survey produced a number of women who were non-married, some of whom had maintained this status over a period of years. A second survey was carried out about a year later to ascertain the incidence of remarriage during that year among the non-married women. Of the 27 Yarinci women included in both surveys, about half (13) had remarried. In Marina, only a third of the women (8 out of 25) had remarried. Related to the ages of the women, these figures are as follows:

Table 3-3

Relationship of Age to Incidence of Remarriage among Non-married Women

Age of Women	YARINCI (N=27) Md.	Nonmd.	MARINA (N=25) Md.	Nonmd.
14-24	4	3	4	2
25-34	5	6	4	7
35-44	3	4	-	7
45 or more	1	1	-	1
	13	14	8	17

Whereas younger women are more likely to remarry quickly, return to marriage is not as immediate as the literature would lead one to expect. The consideration of infants hindering their mother's remarriage was also relatively insignificant. A woman does not remarry while suckling an infant of her previous marriage, but whereas weaning usually occurs after about one and half years, under certain circumstances

such as the imminence of remarriage, women can cut this period down to a year or less. On the other hand, if a woman is not eager to remarry, the nursing period will not be shortened at all. Only three women included above were nursing their infants at the time of the second survey; two of the women had been divorced while pregnant, and both the infants were only a few months old.

The Yarinci women show a greater propensity for remarriage than the Marina women, among whom none of the women aged 35 or more had remarried during the year. Among the factors operating here are the kinds of alternatives available to the non-married woman, especially in terms of extensive kinship and residential ties. It appears that where one has extended kinship bonds, and strong and established neighbourhood ties, the ward itself becomes the arena for movement, with no loss of propriety or respectability for the non-married woman.

Non-married women who do not want to remarry, and who continue to reside near or with their kin are said to be "living at home" (zaman gida). They are only latently on the marriage market, and in many instances have actively dissuaded interested suitors. Families with many daughters will often keep a room in the compound specifically for their use should they return for a visit (ganin gida), for childbirth (goyon ciki), after a disagreement with the husband (yaji), or for the indefinite zaman gida after termination of marriage.

The composition of the compound seems to be significant in terms of likelihood of remarriage, although this is also related to age.

Table 3-4

Relationship of residence composition to incidence of remarriage among non-married women (a)

	YARINCI		MARINA	
Kin base	Remd.	Nonmd.	Remd.	Nonmd.
No other adults/ only junior kinsmen/ other women	6	12	3	11
Father/ other senior kinsmen	7	2	5	6
Total	13	14	8	17

(a) Includes all women shown in Table 3-3.

Younger women are of course more likely to have living parents and other senior kinsmen, which is reflected in residential patterns. Women who remarried in Yarinci, who had been living with senior kin, had an average age of 24; the two non-married women were both nursing their infants at the time of the second survey, and were therefore ineligible for remarriage at that time. In Marina, the average age of remarried women who had been living with senior kin was about 19; the non-married women, including one nursing mother, averaged about 27 years of age. That very young women remarry quickly is probably due to a combination of factors, including many suitors, personal interest, desire for children, and parental control. Parental control, however, if exercised in spite of the woman's wishes rather than in conjunction with them, tends to be counterproductive over time.

Age is a contributing but not a causal factor in remarriage. Among women living as compound heads, with other women, or with junior kinsmen, the average age of remarried women was 35 in Yarinci, and 29 in Marina. The non-married women in the same category were younger

(about 31) in Yarinci, and older (about 33) in Marina.

The residential component is important inasmuch as women living away from senior kinsmen, and especially with a senior kinswoman, often find their surroundings so salubrious that continued non-marriage is preferable to remarriage. Mothers enjoy the company of their adult daughters, and the daughters' children, and there is probably not only a distinct absence of interest in remarriage for the non-married woman, but also a degree of informal pressure for retention of the younger woman's presence. Zaman gida would be especially alluring for the non-married woman when she is raising children of a previous marriage, whose welfare would not be as secure in the home of a stepfather. Conversely, women who have not had children, or who have few children, are more likely to want to remarry soon after the obligatory non-marriage period.

The Matrifocal Household

Matrifocal households are a feature more of Marina than of Yarinci, where among women, as among men, clientship vies with kinship as a significant factor in creating personal networks. But for the Marina women, the matrifocal residential pattern offers a number of advantages not necessarily available with remarriage. An example is the household of Hajiya Zuweira:

> Hajiya Zuweira and her family live in a house which she owns herself. The traditional family house was destroyed in the course of a road-widening project a few years ago, but a new family house, not Hajiya's, has since been built. Her family has resided only in Marina within living memory.
>
> The occupants of the house include Hajiya, her daughter Saude, Saude's two daughters, and one of Hajiya's granddaughters, a mentally ill ten-year-old whom Hajiya is fostering.

Hajiya, a woman of about 60, is a large-scale trader, specialising in the sale of sorrel (yakuwa), which is stored in sacks in the entrance room of the compound. She also sells small items, such as spindles, needles and salt, but this is only a minor aspect of her commercial activities. Her first husband, by whom she bore seven children, has been dead more than twenty years. She remarried, but had no more children, and outlived this last husband. Hajiya was sent to Mecca in 1971 by one of her sons. The sons share the duty of providing her and her establishment with food, clothing and other articles. However, Hajiya is sufficiently wealthy in her own right to buy almost anything she desires. And so too is Saude.

Thirty-year-old Saude has been living at home (zaman gida) for the past five years; she has been married four times. Her first marriage, to a relative, was neither her choice nor her wish. Within three weeks the marriage was over. Her second marriage was childless, and ended in divorce after four-and-a-half years. Her third marriage, also childless, lasted less than two years, and ended with the death of her husband. Only in her fourth marriage did she bear children, two daughters and a son. She lived with her husband, a salaried worker, for thirteen years. But when she was nursing their son, he left her and the children to open a shop in Kano, where he took another wife. The appearance of a co-wife, coupled with her husband's bellicose nature, tipped the scales for Saude in favour of divorce; she refused to join her husband. The husband kept all three children, and put their daughters in school. Saude was opposed to this, and the first time the girls came to visit her, she greeted them with "Kun zo" ("You've come"), and never sent them back. The boy remains with his father, and will be put in school.

After her divorce, Saude was courted by several men, including her ex-husband, who wanted her back. She refused to remarry the latter, and has cited care of her children as reason for not wanting to marry the others. Her stated concern that life might be difficult for the girls in her ex-husband's house, or in a stepfather's house, must be viewed in association with her absolute certainty of continued good treatment in their grandmother's house. And economically, Saude is as successful as her mother. A dealer in groundnut cakes and second-hand clothes, Saude uses her daughters to trade for her. The loss of their labour would be an economic blow to her.

As everything they need is already provided by Saude's brothers, any profit she makes may be used as she likes, for trading, for gift-exchange, for presents and trifles for the children. Given Saude's rather chequered marital career, one can understand her lack of enthusiasm for another attempt. Mother and daughter provide each other with company, share the joys and tribulations of raising the children, pursue and expand their economic endeavours, and are mainstays of community activities.

Forty-two of the Marina compounds (more than 18% of the total number of compounds) are women-centred or women-dominated. Mother-daughter units are important; indeed, eleven of the non-married Marina women are living in matrifocal households in which their mothers are effectively compound heads. In another compound, three generations of adult women live together, the non-married woman supporting her aged mother and her own daughter, who has left her husband. Usually the women in these households maintain one or more lucrative crafts, but benefit also from daily gifts of food from kin or affines living nearby. Hinde and her daughter Dije live in such a matrifocal unit, although in a state of virtual armed truce with Hinde's affines (Dije's kin) next door.

> Hinde, five times married, and about 50 years old, is the effective compound head of her late husband's share of the family compound. Hinde bore four children to the husband, but was widowed after ten years of marriage. She says she did not even complete takaba (obligatory period of non-marriage after death of a husband) before remarrying, this time to a man notorious for his drinking and carousing. She remained all of eleven days, and was divorced five days later. Her third marriage, to a drummer, lasted three years but was childless. She married another drummer and bore four children, only one of which lived long enough for her to carry it on her back. She left this husband and married again. The marriage, such as it was, lasted three years, including an eight-month stretch when the husband disappeared, and a fight during which Hinde's arm was broken. He was a gambler, and stole money from her when she had any. Hinde had been divorced from this husband for eleven months at the time of the initial interview.
>
> After each of her marriages, Hinde has returned to her late husband's family house, in which she has rights particularly through her two surviving daughters. The family compound has been divided into three parts, one of which is occupied by the late husband's surviving brother and his family. The dead senior brother's adult son and his family occupy the other third; each section is a compound now, with a separate entrance.

Hinde's feud with her brother-in-law is deep-seated and of long duration. He has never been happy with her own freedom of movement, and most especially with her choice of trade, which is large-scale meal production (tuwo-tuwo). The clear-cut division of the compound, with separate entrances, was rationalised on the basis of his dissatisfaction with the large numbers of men who came to the compound for food, thereby exposing his secluded wife to improper attention. The real reason was his lack of regard for Hinde, disapproval of her life-style, and his desire to separate himself and his family from her as completely as possible.

He baulked at repairing Hinde's section of the compound, saying that as she was cooking for sale, she had enough money to mend it herself. (He was mean; he refused to repair his own wife's room when she asked, giving the same reason. Her family advised her not to repair it herself, warning her that since she had no children with her husband, when she finished the repairs her husband might throw her out and marry someone else.) In Hinde's case, the stalemate led to tragedy: the roof of the room collapsed in the rains, killing her youngest child. It was immediately after this that the compound was officially divided.

Living with Hinde are her daughter Dije, two of Dije's children, and Hinde's oldest granddaughter, the daughter of Hinde's oldest daughter. Dije had been home a few months at the time of the initial interview. Her oldest child, a son, is with her first husband. Her two youngest children, a boy of two and a girl of five, both products of her second marriage, remain with her. Dije helps her mother with food preparation, which requires some heavy labour. Hinde adds to this income with the sale of manufactured cloth which she sells in nearby villages, and with hair-styling which takes her into all areas of Haben Birni. Her income is supplemented by the daily provision of food from her maternal sister, who lives in a neighboring ward. The sister brings the food for lunch and dinner herself, and irrespective of the fact that Hinde prepares vast quantities of food for sale. Two years after the initial interview, the family unit was unchanged, and Dije had no plans for, or interest in, remarriage at that time.

The term matrifocal is somewhat limiting, inasmuch as its meaning is "mother"-centred. Whereas this is accurate enough for two-generational or multi-generational kin-based compounds with female compound heads, as exemplified above, the terminology is misleading for single-person households, or for the multi-relationship women's houses which are more common in Yarinci. A term such as "feminafocal" might serve,

in that it permits the necessary breadth of network ties which distinguish these houses, but "woman-centred" is equally useful, and does not require retranslation at every turn.

It should be noted that widows fare particularly well in terms of obtaining continuing economic assistance, and maintaining women-centred households. Seven of the non-married women in Yarinci and Marina had been widowed before the initial interview. By the second interview, only one woman from Marina, who by that time was a widow for more than two years, had remarried. All the other women were living as compound heads in their late husbands' compounds, several with their children, and were supported by their husbands' kin as well as their own. That these women had not remarried is all the more interesting in that widows are able to bring their children to a subsequent marriage. As loss of their children was not a consideration, clearly other factors were responsible for their disinclination to remarry.

Some women living in their own compounds, or with other women in a women-centred compound, seem to require more autonomy in their trade and in their daily life than is consistent with Hausa co-residential marriage.

One such woman is A'isha, whose career has spanned five marriages and a period of karuwanci, and whose strength of will (some might say stubbornness) is a byword in Yarinci.

> A'isha, 45 years old, divorced, remarried, and divorced again in the period 1971-73. She lives alone in her house, formerly the family compound, which passed to her on the death of her mother. A'isha and her mother had lived together in the compound since A'isha's father's death. Although she has had no children of her own, A'isha raised three of her brother's children, two girls and a boy. She was given full authority to arrange the girls' marriages, which were to men the girls chose, and which have endured now for six and ten years; the boy is in secondary school.

A'isha was considered independent and willful even as a girl, and is said to have been engaged to seven men before finally marrying. Her fifth marriage, which ended in 1971, was to a carpenter who lived with her in her house, and pursued his trade. The marriage lasted three years, ending with A'isha's complaints that although he provided her with food, he gave her no money for clothing, or gifts at the festival of Id al-fitr[1]. Since 1963, A'isha has had a most successful trade in bean cakes, which she cooks daily near her house. She says she is "too old to be secluded", and has moved about freely since her fourth marriage.

More than a year after ending her fifth marriage, A'isha married a market trader after a short courtship. She made enquiries about his habits and character before agreeing to marry; her senior brother acted as marriage guardian. The suitor offered to buy her marriage goods (lefe), but A'isha requested cash instead, and returned £5 to his gift of £7. The husband maintained a wife and family in his own compound near the market, to which A'isha refused to go, remaining instead in her own home, where her husband would visit her every other two days.

The marriage lasted only three months. Whereas a husband has a responsibility to provide his wife with food and household expenses, A'isha's husband started bringing her money only when he spent time at the house. A'isha complained too that he would go straight from her house to his own, an affront to her in relation to her co-wife, but neglected her on his days with the co-wife. In fact, A'isha's husband could exert no control over her, and had no economic leverage to apply. While his wife and children in his compound depended on his support, A'isha had a successful trade which could and did sustain her. Indeed, even when her husband spent his nights at her house, A'isha deserted him before 6 AM to begin work. His visits to her house became less frequent and his support negligible. A'isha pleaded for divorce, and again became a non-married woman, living on her own except when her foster son is home during school holidays.

In this case, husband and wife had conflicting perceptions of the behaviour appropriate to the other, and the marriage foundered. For other couples, especially other wives, non-coresidential marriage such as that of A'isha and her husband is ideal in that it permits the woman greater autonomy without losing the benefits of marriage.

---

1. A husband should provide his wife, children, and other dependants with new clothing at this time.

Non-coresidential Marriage: Auren Silkiti

Many of the women who are compound heads are older women either widowed or divorced, or women living in non-coresidential marriage (auren silkiti[1]). Silkiti marriage is a union in which the husband and wife live in separate residences, with the husband visiting the wife at her home. The adoption of such a marriage pattern may be prearranged before the wedding is celebrated, or it may be a developmental phase in the marriage which occurs when the couple are no longer young. In about two-thirds of the silkiti marriages in each ward, each of the spouses was 50 or older. The men's and women's worlds converge at so few points that, with the loss of reproductive functions and the lessening of sexual interest, there are few spheres of mutual interest which keep the couple together. In all cases, the husband had at least one other wife, and so was not wholely dependent on his silkiti spouse for domestic chores. The arrangement is usually initiated by the wife, who stands to benefit more than the husband, and is especially advantageous if she wishes to escape from her co-wives, or to have more independence for the purpose of trade. The husband still provides some financial support, but relinquishes spatial authority.

Eleven wives in Yarinci, and twelve wives in Marina (about 4% and 3% respectively of the adult female population) were partners in silkiti marriage. Six of the Yarinci women, and seven of the Marina women, were compound heads. The other Yarinci silkiti wives lived in various forms of non-kin-based accommodation; only one of the

---

1. This is the same type of marriage described by M.G. Smith for Zaria as auren dauki sandanka, auren dauki kwarenka, or auren takalmi ("marriage of pick-up-your-stick", or "marriage of sandals"), (1955, p. 50).

remaining five Marina wives did not share a compound with kin or affines. The initiation and rationale of silkiti marriage is demonstrated in the case of Hajiya Uwani.

> Hajiya Uwani, a doughty woman of more than 60, has been married five times, two of those marriages being to her present husband. She has born many children, but only one son from a former marriage survives. Ever a businesswoman, Hajiya traded in cloth and clothing in the past, and is presently a wholesaler of locust bean cakes, which she buys herself in villages ninety miles south of Katsina. Profits from her trade paid for her pilgrimage to Mecca, and for her house, then a single room, which she bought before being divorced from her present husband, Sa'idu. Hajiya has been married to Sa'idu for a total of more than twenty years, and at one time was his senior wife. A fight with her co-wife was the immediate cause of her leaving her husband, and later marrying elsewhere.
>
> Hajiya married Sa'idu again after breaking her fourth marriage, but her position in her husband's house was altered. No longer senior wife, she would have been subordinate to her formerly junior wives, a state of affairs abhorrent to her. Indeed, Hajiya's personality is such that even in her relations with her husband, she behaves more like a senior sister and advisor than like a wife. She is an organiser, and arranged several of her husband's later marriages, an unusual role for a wife to play.
>
> Extremely status-conscious, Hajiya volunteered the information that she "wouldn't like to be poor", and that she "wouldn't like her co-wives to look down on her". Ensconced in her own house right outside her husband's compound, she moves about freely and pursues her trade unhindered. She has so expanded her house that she has been able to provide rent-free accommodation to a married couple newly-arrived in the ward, and still have sufficient space and privacy for herself. She goes into her husband's compound at will, and receives food and provisions from him, but has no specific marital obligations, not even being required to cook for the compound. Her obligations are so minimal, in fact, that some women in the ward were uncertain that the marriage still existed. She need not fear her co-wives, for she sees them no more than she wishes, and she leads a virtually independent life.

The career of an individual may manifest diachronically different types of marriages, and non-marriage, depending on the woman's priorities. An example of such a pattern is the history of Indo, presently

a non-married woman exercising the option of zaman gida.

> At the time of initial interview, thirty-two-year-old Indo had been living with two of her four surviving children in her late mother's house for three years. She had been married six times, with brief periods of non-marriage; she spent no more than four months between marriages. In spite of her youth, her last marriage, and part of the previous marriage, had been auren silkiti.
>
> Indo was married to a farmer in a village near Katsina when her widowed mother fell ill with the disease which eventually proved fatal. The mother had been fostering three of Indo's children, offspring of two previous marriages, and Indo returned to Marina with her infant daughter to care for her mother and the children. When her mother died, Indo remained in Katsina, her husband visiting her there, although he promised to support all her children if they would return to the village. His mother, meanwhile, exacerbated the situation by insisting that he was too young to have his wife at a distance. Indo says she feared the discrimination often meted out to the children of a deceased husband (pl. agololi) brought to a later husband's house, and was also concerned about the control exerted by her mother-in-law in the compound. She elected to stay in Katsina, and her husband divorced her.
>
> Her former husband, the father of one of her children, remarried her after idda. For both, silkiti marriage was initially satisfactory: he maintained two wives and children in a town forty miles from Katsina, and periodically visited Indo, bringing food and money. She, meanwhile, had successfully continued her mother's already thriving trade in small cakes, and she and her family were comfortable. Indo's closest kin tie is with her sister, married in a neighboring compound, but the sister can do nothing to assist Indo economically. Their senior brothers, although living in Katsina, contribute only sporadically. Thus, by circumstance and by choice, Indo remains much on her own. Her husband recognised the growing distance between them; he gradually cut down his contribution of food and money, even for his own daughter, and finally ceased to provide altogether. The marriage was then formally ended with divorce.
>
> As soon as she had finished idda, Indo remarried. This marriage was to a man of her choice, but was distinctly contrary to her kinsmen's wishes. The new spouse, who had unsuccessfully courted her when she was a maiden, was a butcher and therefore of low social status. Indo and her children remained in her late mother's house, and she was not secluded. Indeed, before she married, Indo impressed upon her suitor her intention to retain her freedom of movement and her separate residence, to which he concurred. She insists that otherwise she would

not have remarried. Even in arrangement of the marriage preparations, Indo took on responsibilities normally reserved to close kin. Most of the marriage gifts given by the wife's side to the husband's side, Indo bought herself, partly by selling her own wedding gifts received from her prospective husband. Marriage preparations were a joint effort by the two spouses-to-be, with little help from others.

This marriage, the culmination of years of mutual interest, lasted less than a year, foundering on the husband's gambling, womanising, and insufficient financial support. Indo sought, and finally received, her divorce paper.

Now, five years after her last divorce, she remains non-married, partially supported by her kin, but mainly providing herself for her own and her children's needs. She has received offers of marriage, all of which she has refused on the socially acceptable grounds of her prior commitments to her children.

Indo was particularly attracted to one of these suitors, a stranger recently arrived in the ward. However, not only was he not properly settled in Marina, but also he wanted to bring his present wife and family to live ensemble in Indo's small compound, barely large enough for herself and her children. She didn't hesitate to reject the suitor when she was advised of the living arrangements he had in mind.

One of Indo's daughters has married and been divorced, and has returned to her mother's compound in Marina. The household now consists of Indo, her non-married daughter, and her youngest, unmarried daughter, a nearly though not completely self-sufficient unit.

Old Age: Achieved and Ascribed Status

The majority of women who are compound heads (more than half in Yarinci; two-thirds in Marina) are "old women", women aged 50 or more who are no longer married, and who are, in the context of Hausa society, "unmarriageable". This category of women, which comprises about 17% and 14% of the adult female population of Yarinci and Marina respectively, is given for the sake of consistency a more rigid chronological boundary than is perhaps justified by Hausa practice. Thus,

while it is true that a woman aged fifty will not remarry, it is also sometimes the case that women less than fifty do not intend to remarry, and adopt the behaviour characteristic of the older woman, as in the case of Saratu.

> Saratu, about 40, did not remain long in any of her three marriages, and has born no children. Her last marriage ended two years ago, and she returned to her senior brother's house, where she shared a room with her widowed mother until the mother's death. Her mother's section of the family house is now her portion, in which she cooks food for sale daily. Saratu is raising her junior sister, given her to foster when the child was weaned and Saratu was in the home of one of her husbands; she has no plans to remarry. She has taken on the economic and social obligations of an older woman, cooking food on a large scale, going out, and taking on other responsibilities incumbent on the older woman. Saratu herself admits that when her mother was alive, she would tend to stay at home, but that she is now the senior woman in her brother's compound. She is supported both through her occupation and by her kin, particularly by a junior brother who sends food daily to their brother's compound.

Residential patterns (Table 3-5) show that older women without close kin nearby are often the recipients of free accommodation, usually provided as an act of charity, as a demonstration of arziki[1], or both. Some women came to the city specifically to seek work in a wealthy household, or to obtain some other form of employment. This was especially true where the woman's close kin in the village were dead, and her own economic resources insufficient.

Women born in the area, or associated with it through lengthy marriage ties and/or the birth of children, occupy the position of compound heads, or reside in the home of a kinsman or kinswoman. It is the former who are the founders of the matrifocal and women-centred compounds noted above, while even the latter may share their accommodation with their non-married daughters, as well as their unmarried biological and foster children.

---

1. Prosperity, or good fortune.

Table 3-5

Position in compound of older women - Yarinci and Marina (a)

	YARINCI		MARINA	
	No. of Women	% of Women	No. of Women	% of Women
Compound head	14	30% (b)	28	47%
Related to male compound head				
Mother	5)		14)	
Mother's co-wife	1)	22%	5)	37%
Other kin	4)		3)	
Unrelated to male compound head				
Client or servant	5)	13%	2	3%
Free accommodation (c)	1)			
Related to female compound head	6	13%	1	2%
Unrelated to female compound head				
Client	1)	7%	1	2%
Free accommodation	2)			
No compound head				
Renting	2)	15%	1)	8%
Sharing free accommodation	5)		4)	
Total	46	100%	59	99%

(a) Includes all women in this category in both wards.

(b) All percentages rounded to the nearest integer.

(c) If one agrees with Mauss that no gift is free, and that all gifts demand some response, then one might reject the notion of "free" accommodation, and prefer to classify the recipients as clients of the donor. However, in some cases, any form of reciprocity other than respect and gratitude seems so unlikely that this category is introduced here. Nor would the occupants see themselves as clients of the compound head except in the very widest sense of the term.

Residential Ties of Other Women

In both wards, a few women fit into none of the above categories. These include young women home for the birth of their first child (Table 3-6), women who have left their husbands but are not divorced, and women who were married, but had not seen their husbands for months or years. In a few cases, the husband was a soldier who had been transferred to a distant place. However, most of the women in this group were only nominally married, their husbands living elsewhere with other wives and children. Some of these marriages were close kin marriages, effected through pressure on both spouses. The kin groups continue to support the deserted wives and their children. The residential links of women in this residual category are varied: Marina links are again strongly kin based. The Yarinci figures, which included three domestic helpers, are too small to draw any general conclusions.

Table 3-6

Residential ties of other women (a) in Yarinci and Marina

	YARINCI	MARINA
Compound head		3
Living with kin		
Both parents		2
Mother		5
Other kin	2	6
Living with affines	1	
Other residential ties		
Living with patroness	3	
Rental	1	
Free accommodation	1	
Total	8	16

(a) This category includes the remaining women in the two wards, divided into the following sub-categories:

	YARINCI	MARINA
Women home for childbirth	1	3
Women who have left their husbands (yaji)	1	4
Women living apart from husbands (indefinite separation/husband has travelled/woman hasn't joined new husband)	3	9
Women whose exact marital status is unknown, living with and working for other women.	3	

Marriage as a Means of Obtaining Security

It should be clear from the data already presented that marriage *per se* provides no secure base for women concerned about their future welfare. In the intensive survey[1] in Yarinci, only four women of 50 or more were living in their husband's house, while another seven were in *silkiti* marriages. Compared to this are the 41 older women in the intensive survey with no husbands. In Marina, in the intensive survey, ten women of 50 or older lived with their husbands, while another seven were in *silkiti* marriage. Almost twice that number of women (32) were no longer married. As demonstrated above, demographic factors (such as death of spouse) are only a small part of the explanation.

Kin, most especially children, provide the firmest basis for security other than the women's own economic efforts. The birth of sons is particularly welcomed, in part because of expectations of future support. On the other hand, most women engage in some economic activity themselves which, if basic needs are already met, provides them with funds to spend as they wish.

Economic Activities of Women

This topic will be considered at greater length in the chapter dealing with the socio-economic roles of married women. The tables here (Tables 3-7; 3-8; 3-9) provide some idea of the range and types of occupations pursued by the categories of women already mentioned[2].

---

1. Includes only women whose ages were ascertained.
2. Excluding "other women": the category is too disparate in relation to its numbers to make a table worthwhile.

Only one occupation is included per woman - the most lucrative of her economic activities.

Most non-married women in the tables (about three-quarters of the women shown for each ward) have some remunerative occupation. Many of the women included as having no occupation had pursued some trade in their marriage, but had not resumed any economic activity as non-married women; this was especially true of women who had recently left their husbands. Among older women, it is usual to have some trade unless age and illness make its continuation impossible. Almost all the older women with no trade were too ill or feeble to carry out their craft.

Table 3-7, of non-married women and older women in Yarinci, shows a concentration of effort in two types of economic activity: preparation and sale of snacks; and domestic services such as pounding and grinding. The preparation of snacks and other foodstuffs is the most common economic pursuit of all categories of women, demanding a limited amount of capital and adaptable to the time schedules of women with other interests and commitments. The relatively large number of women providing domestic services is consistent with the class bias in Yarinci, and the numerous houses which employ women to assist wives with their work. Three of the non-married women and one of the older women have salaried employment, a feature noted previously among Yarinci men, whose access to salaried work is so much greater than that of Marina residents.

Marina women (Table 3-8) also tend to concentrate their economic activities in the area of snack-making and small-scale food processing. A few women are found following a variety of other occupations, although no women have salaried employment, and only two are engaged in the domestic services so important in Yarinci.

Table 3-7

Occupations of non-married women[1] and older women[2] in relation to age - Yarinci

Occupation	Age 14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Preparation and sale of snacks		2	1	4	15	22
Petty trade					2	2
Embroidery, knitting, sewing		1				1
Traditional crafts, e.g. spinning					2	2
Services, e.g. grinding and pounding	1	2	2		5	10
Salaried employment	1	1		1	1	4
Other occupation (a)			3	1	3	7
No occupation	2	3	1		7	13
Total	4	9	7	6	35	61

(a) Includes two hairstylists, two messengers, a midwife, a water seller, and one woman seeking employment.

1. Only women included in the intensive survey for whom age and occupation were known are shown here. The 26 non-married women represent about 74% of the non-married women in the ward.

2. The 35 older women represent about 76% of the older women in the ward.

Table 3-8

Occupations of non-married women[1] and older women[2] in relation to age - Marina

Occupation	Age 14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Preparation and sale of snacks		1	3	4(a)	5	13
Petty trade					3(a)	3
Embroidery, knitting, sewing	1	1				2
Services, e.g. grinding and pounding			1	1		2
Preparation and sale of meals			1		3	4
Large-scale foodstuffs processing			1		1	2
Large-scale trade of one or a few items					2	2
Other occupation (b)	1	2			5	8
No occupation	3	3			6	12
Total	5	7	6	5	25	48

(a) Includes one woman selling at the market.

(b) Each of the three non-married women assists her mother with her trade. The older women include two praise singers, two water sellers, and a midwife.

1. The 23 non-married women shown here represent about 56% of the non-married women in the ward.

2. The 25 older women represent about 43% of the older women in the ward.

Considering the two wards together, one finds that the women tend to favour certain types of trade. Among the non-married women, age is shown to be unimportant in the adoption of a particular trade. Traditional handicrafts are practised by many of the older women, but are not their most profitable economic activity, and therefore are barely represented in the tables. The category of "other occupations" includes mainly work which demands a rather peripatetic mode of operation, and therefore was not relevant in comparable tables dealing with married women living with their husbands.

Given the fact of intermittent support from the husband in silkiti marriage, and the impetus often given by the wife to initiate silkiti marriage, justified ostensibly in terms of devoting more time and energy to trade, it would be expected that these women would engage in some economic activity, and indeed this is the case. The Yarinci data (Table 3-9) shows three women with salaried occupations, one woman who is a large-scale trader, and the remaining women engaged in other, less profitable, occupations. No Marina women are salaried, but one is a large-scale trader, and one is a meal-seller. The major economic activity among these Marina women, as among all other categories of Marina women, is the processing and sale of snacks and other food-stuffs. The women in silkiti marriage have three separate sources of sustenance: their own economic pursuit; the financial support given them by their husbands; and the assistance provided by nearby kin.

Table 3-9

Occupations of women in silkiti marriage - Yarinci[1] and Marina[2]

	YARINCI			MARINA		
	Age (a)			Age		
Occupation	35-49	50+	Total	30-49	50+	Total
Preparation and sale of snacks	1	1	2	2	3	5
Petty trade		2	2	1		1
Traditional crafts, e.g. spinning		1	1			
Preparation and sale of meals					1	1
Large-scale trade of one or a few items		1	1		1	1
Salaried employment	2	1	3			
Other occupation (b)		1	1		2	2
Total	3	7	10	3	7	10

(a) I have telescoped age categories here because of the small sample, and the absence of very young women among silkiti wives.

(b) Includes a water seller in Yarinci, and a fortune teller and a caretaker in Marina.

1. The 10 Yarinci women comprise all but one of the women in silkiti marriages in the ward.
2. The 10 Marina women include all but two women in silkiti marriages in the ward.

The Women's World in Microcosm

Survey information from Yarinci shows twenty-five women-centred compounds, almost one-fifth of all the compounds in the ward. The links between residents tend to be more varied, and the organisation of the compounds more complex, than is the case in Marina. Acquisition of compounds also differs, inasmuch as four of the women compound owners are salaried workers, and used their wages to buy the land and construct the houses they live in. Two of the female compound heads, the widows of local aristocrats, control microcommunities within the walls of the compounds they occupy. By any criteria, they are women to be reckoned with in the ward, and their compounds cross-cut and subsume the class lines, emic categories, and life-styles coexistent in the ward. These houses are microcosms of the Hausa women's world.

> One such house is that of Hajiya Jaweire. The composition of Hajiya's household includes nine adults and six children. Hajiya, married only once and widowed several years ago, lives in the house of her late husband, and effectively controls the house. All persons living in the compound are there through her good offices, and remain there at her pleasure, although such control is circumscribed by the rights of continued residence, and in some cases of long-time service to Hajiya's kin or affines. Ties of kinship, clientship, and fostering unite the members of the compound with Hajiya, who considers herself responsible for the welfare of all the residents, and through whom all compound members are fed, clothed and maintained. Sent by her son to Mecca, Hajiya is given food by her children, other kinsmen, fellow members of the aristocracy, and neighbors from her late husband's traditional political area. Hajiya redistributes the largess daily, ensuring that all members of the compound receive an adequate share.
>
> All the women have at least one craft. Hajiya was one of the first women in the ward to own an Italian noodle-making machine, with which she cranked out miles of noodles (Hausa: taliya), sold all over the ward and outside it. Groundnuts are a major preoccupation in the house, with three of the women involved in various

phases of its production. Hajiya's sister, her only kinswoman in the compound, makes peanut brittle. Another woman roasts the raw groundnuts, while a third extracts the oil and makes groundnut cakes (kulli-kulli) with the residue.

The woman who roasts groundnuts is the only woman with a husband living in the house. A labourer, and a traditional client to Hajiya's husband, he helps support his wife and their three children, but relies also on the daily food provided in Hajiya's house.

The groundnut cake maker is married, but lives apart from her husband in silkiti marriage. The husband, one of the Emir's cooks, lives near the palace with his second wife and their children. He visits his first wife in her room at Hajiya's house, where all their children, and her daughter from her first marriage, also reside.

An ancient woman, once the "messenger" (jakadiya) to Hajiya's husband, and perhaps to his father before him, spent her days resting in the entrance room. She alone of all the women practised no trade. Another old woman resides in the house with her granddaughter, whom she is fostering. She does pounding to help support herself, and also deals in groundnut products. No relation to Hajiya or anyone else in the compound, she lives there through arziki, Hajiya's good will and generosity.

And yet two other women complete the compound population. Both are in their early thirties, and neither is married. One, Hajiya's foster daughter, has been a non-married woman for five years. She divides her time between Hajiya's house and that where Hajiya's married daughter lives. The most charitable statement regarding her rather free and easy life-style is that "she should have gone to the malams years ago to find a husband". Well-cared for, moving anywhere, she seems more than content with her independent existence. The other woman, from Kano, is a karuwa who settled for a short time in Hajiya's house. Of course she brought no men to the house, but it was a convenient all-found base from which she pursued her trade. After a few months she returned to Kano.

In Hajiya's compound, then, one finds the widow, the married woman living with her husband, the married woman in silkiti marriage, the non-married woman and the karuwa. The aristocrat and the commoner are represented, and interact in their self-contained world. Clientship and kinship play a part, and even transient woman are lodged and fed.

Two points are of special significance here. One is that this kind of compound is a stage upon which all classes and the exponents of all life-styles available to Hausa women relate to each other and assist each other. There are no difficulties inherent in the spatial and social conjunction of these disparate life-styles, and indeed there are benefits to be gained in terms of the women's differential and varied access to the resources of the community. The second point is that the women in these houses provide behavioural models for other women in the community, and that all women are aware of, and in contact with, women pursuing careers other than marriage. Thus, every woman has access to the knowledge of alternative life-styles, and can base her own career upon understood patterns, already pursued by friends or acquaintances who are an integral part of neighborhood life.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have presented, through case studies and quantitive data, some of the alternatives to marriage open to Hausa women. I have tried to emphasize these career options, inasmuch as they are either cursorily dealt with, ignored, or misinterpreted in much of the available literature on Hausaland. This refers particularly to the option of non-marriage, which provides a real choice, and is not a "career by default". I have taken pains to show that non-marriage can be of long duration, and, to women, is an honourable career strategy. I suggest that the maligning of non-married women is mainly a function of male bias on the part of informants and possibly researchers, and I hypothesise that this bias is evident even within

the Hausa lexicon, with different terminology employed by men and women. The use of sex-linked terminology is consistent with the distinction in world view, with men's perceptions of women's roles based on women's ties to men, and with men's concern with social control bound to the expectation or wish for sexual domination over women.

I have demonstrated the importance and prevalence of matrifocal and women-centred compounds, and have shown that the existence of these compounds provides a rallying point and refuge for all categories of women. Indeed, it seems that the benefits derived from residence in a woman-centred compound may exceed those of marriage, given specific circumstances enumerated in the text. The Hausa woman living without a husband, but near or with her kin is economically in a rather enviable position. She can usually expect food from her kin, or affines, or both, and she is very likely to be pursuing a trade by which she can provide herself with any additional needs. Even women who remain married may opt for silkiti marriage, often becoming compound heads in their own right.

All these options, and others not yet discussed, such as karuwanci, are visible within the ward, and often within the walls of a single compound, thus establishing role models for other ward women. The very fact that women of such varied life-styles can and do live together, providing mutual support and specialised services, emphasizes the bonds within the women's world, as well as demonstrating the differences in attitudes, options, and goals. One of the services, for example, is that of information dissemination. The women in the various categories, having access to different spheres of activity, and yet often with common interests, create information networks whereby even the most

secluded of women can gain knowledge of outside events of interest to herself and her family.

Women, as women, have more in common with each other than they do with men, even their husbands (in some cases, especially their husbands); this point will become more apparent in succeeding chapters.

CHAPTER FOUR

CHOICE IN MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE: THE QUESTION OF FEMALE AUTONOMY

In this chapter, we approach the issue of women's rights and women's autonomy through a study of the opportunities open to women in the context of marriage and divorce, the control exerted over women, and their response to social pressures.

We begin by considering the element of choice in first marriage, distinguishing between Muslim law and Hausa custom in the latitude permitted the young girl. We establish that it is no monolithic patriarchal authority structure with which the prospective bride is dealing, but rather that women as well as men may attempt to enforce obedience and submission from the girl with respect to a particular marriage. We attempt to ascertain the effectiveness of the pressures brought to bear, by careful examination of the data concerning duration of first marriage, and we discuss the value of marriage as alliance mechanism in the context of women's own decisions concerning their marriages.

The degree of choice open to the girl, and marital stability in general, are examined in relation to considerations such as the kinds of rights and obligations exercised by women in the kin group and in the marital home, the pattern of inheritance, and the significance, relative cost, and refundability of

marriage prestations.

Children are very highly valued, and part of this chapter is devoted to the influence that children, or lack of children, may have on the choices women make concerning marriage and divorce. The importance of fostering is stressed as a means by which women gain uncontested control over children, and by which more continuity is established in parent-child relationships than may be possible even with one's own offspring.

Analysis of divorce data in the two wards gives quantitative evidence of the prevalence of divorce as a means of ending an unsatisfactory marriage; these statistics are then related to age in order to clarify the marriage options open to the Hausa man or woman in a diachronic dimension. Examination of the divorce procedures utilised in Katsina lends weight to the hypothesis that women have considerable choice in marriage and divorce, and that they are active agents in pursuit of their own perceived goals; this is evident even from the time of a girl's first marriage.

Age at First Marriage

Marriage is the rite de passage by which a girl (budurwa) becomes a woman (mace) in Hausa society. Marriage to an unmarried girl is more highly valued, more expensive, and surrounded by more ritual than marriage to a previously married woman.

According to elderly informants in both wards, the age of a girl at first marriage has decreased in the last twenty to thirty

years, girls then not usually marrying until they had become young women of perhaps sixteen or seventeen. Concurrent with this, they say, was another custom rarely practised in Katsina today, and unrepresented in the data for either Yarinci or Marina,[1] of child marriage. In child marriage, the girl would be married before the age of ten, and would grow up in her husband's house. Child marriage does not seem to have had the same popularity in Katsina that it once had in Sokoto, particularly among the wealthy and former slave-owning families. They would send their daughters with one or more servants to her husband's home, the servants looking after the girl and assisting her with domestic tasks.

In yet another form of early marriage formerly practised, the girl would be promised to a young boy or young man from childhood. She would remain in her family home until old enough for marriage, but no other suitors would be considered or accepted. Such marriages, known as auren riko (marriage of looking after) or auren alkawari (marriage of promise) are rare now; no such marriage had been contracted in either of the two wards for more than thirty years.

For most girls, first marriage takes place at the age of thirteen to fifteen. If a girl is in school, marriage is delayed until she completes her education, but as most girls who have any western education at all complete only primary school, this affects marriage arrangements very little.[2]

---

1. I encountered only one case in Katsina, in another ward.

2. The effects upon women of the introduction of compulsory education, and of the growing interest in secondary education for women, are noted particularly in Chapters Eight and Nine.

Hausa Marriage: the Question of Choice

Parents assert that girls marrying now choose their husbands, as girls could not in the parents' youth. This study only partially supports that assumption. We attempt to ascertain the ideals, the expectations, and the opportunity structure within which a degree of choice is permitted to the unmarried and non-married woman, and the meaning of choice in the context of marriage.

An initial difficulty is in separating a woman's actual choice of spouse from her acquiescence to her parents' choice of a spouse for her. A well-bred daughter should show her parents respect, which may be manifested by her apparent unquestioning acceptance of their decisions. Since open protest often gains the girl very little, it is incumbent upon her to appear to accede gracefully to parental marriage arrangements, taking refuge in the possibility of subsequently gaining a rapid and uncontested divorce.

Direct confrontation between a daughter and her parents, such as a daughter refusing pointblank to accede to her parents' wishes, is most unusual. Indeed, direct opposition is avoided if possible in most Hausa dyadic relationships, in favour of a less aggressive means of securing one's goals. This is even more evident in relationships where one party is in a demonstrably subordinate position to the other, as the relationship between daughter and parent.

An additional consideration in this study of marriage choice is the fact that a father has the right, according to Maliki law, to bestow his daughter where he wishes. This is certainly the

case in first marriage in particular, as Shani points out:

> "...the virgin (for the purpose of the law, it is immaterial if virginity is removed in any way other than marriage), whether she has attained the age of majority or not, can always be given by her father or his executor without the necessary approval of the girl, through the exercise of the power of ijbar, marital constraint."
>
> (Shani, n.d., (b), p. 19)

There is thus religious as well as moral pressure upon the girl to marry where her parents wish, although she may break or flee from the marriage thereafter.[1]

The interpretations of Maliki law regarding marriages subsequent to the initial marriage differ. Some writers suggest that a woman can only be forced into marriage by her guardian in her first marriage. Thus Shani states:

> "...a woman who has been married before [cannot] be subject to this power of ijbar. The marriage guardian is simply an instrument for concluding the contract, and upon the request of the ward must conclude the marriage that she desires."
>
> (Shani, n.d., (a), p. 3)

However, according to M.T. El-Imairi, the father or his executor may impose his power to contract a marriage regardless of the woman's wishes upon a young previously-married woman (El-Imairi, p. 13). Thus, according to this interpretation of Muslim law, the Hausa father[2] has the right to exercise the authority which he likely considers inalienably his in any case, to bestow his daughter where

---

1. See Mary Smith, pp. 102-3, for an excellent description of such a first marriage.

2. This authority is extended to the father's close kin, particularly his senior brothers.

he wishes in marriages subsequent to the first one. The question of when the daughter is considered adult in terms of her having to give her consent to the marriage arrangements does not, in a number of the cases in Katsina, arise. Case studies among karuwai showed women in their mid-twenties being forced into second, third, or fourth marriages against their will.

But it is misleading to try to explain Hausa custom only with reference to Muslim law. What is at issue here is parental or quasi-parental control and responsibility, regardless of number of marriages, and also regardless of the sex of the authority figure. Thus, a girl's mother, senior sister, father's sister, or other kinswoman may arrange and insist upon a particular match. As long as the kinswoman is supported by other relatives, the marriageable girl is under heavy social pressure to submit to their choice. This is not to say that all parents or kin exercise such control over the young women, but rather that it is permitted and normative. The issue of parental authority should perhaps also be considered in the context of parental guidance. In situations such as some informants related, where the woman married the man of her choice in two or three successive marriages, each of which was unsuccessful, it is not altogether surprising that parents would decide to take a hand in arranging the following marriage.

Conflicting preferences within a woman's family as, for example, between her matrilateral and patrilateral kin concerning her prospective husband may give the woman some freedom to manoeuvre and a chance to avoid a marriage she does not want. However, if all her

kin wish her to marry a particular man, or if one relative or set of relatives has greater authority over her, their decision is difficult to countermand. However, families often do take their daughter's wishes into consideration, or at least attempt to avoid antagonising the girl. As Dry points out, "...a family will be circumspect in the amount of pressure put on a girl, for fear of possible subsequent domestic trouble" (1950, p. 93).

The "force" exerted in forced marriage is a matter of moral pressure and of individual comprehension and internalisation of filial responsibility and propriety. The rarity of blatant signs of pressure, especially in terms of open protest from the bride, acts to permit the perpetuation of the system. An enquiry by the Colonial Government into forced marriages in 1936 (two generations ago) brought the following response from the Katsina Resident:

> "...the Emir and Council...state categorically that forced marriages are not countenanced in Katsina....No case of coercion has come to my knowledge while I have been in Katsina."
> (Resident, Katsina Province, to Secretary, Northern Provinces, Katprof 1, File 1488/8, 29 September, 1936)

That this statement is utterly contradicted by case histories and informants' statements underscores the difficulty of recognising, much less dealing with, the familial pressures exerted.[1]

---

1. Some countries which have tried to counter parental coercion through legal mechanisms have met with little success. In Morocco, for example, according to law a bride must appear before the notaries to give her personal consent before the marriage may be recorded. However, almost all women are unaware of this law (and are not asked for their consent), and "it is not at all unusual for the bride to be constrained to accede to the wishes of her marital guardian, whatever her own feelings about the union may be" (Rosen, pp. 573-4).

With the attitude that a girl should be married initially before she is mature enough to question her family's choice,[1] is the related idea that marriage should occur before the girl herself makes any firm decision concerning whom she would like to marry. Thus, it is said, "Children do not know what love is" ("Yara ba su san so ba."), and therefore cannot reasonably choose a husband, a task more appropriate to their parents. Informants say that young girls are more eager to marry, than they are to marry a particular individual. Which is not to say that the girls do not make such a choice, but that their choice may not be treated with serious consideration. Although kin may impose their choice of spouse upon a girl in second, third, or subsequent marriages, it is in the first marriage that she is most commonly not at liberty to choose her mate.

First Marriage: Choice or Coercion

Forced marriage, marriage in which the girl is wed against

---

1. A number of Muslim countries, including Syria, Iraq, Jordan, Algeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Pakistan, have passed legislation regarding the minimum age at which a boy or girl may be married with his or her guardian's consent and the court's permission, and the minimum age at which the individual attains full competence to marry. In Pakistan, marriage of a girl under sixteen is a breach of criminal law (N. Anderson, 1976, p. 103). Non-Muslim areas of Northern Nigeria have legislated minimum age for girls, consistent with their traditional law and custom (E.A. Keay and S.S. Richardson, p. 268), but the Muslim North does not have comparable legislation. An attempt to establish a minimum age of fifteen for marriage was defeated in the Northern Regional House of Chiefs and the House of Assembly in 1950 (J.N.D. Anderson, 1954, p. 205).

her will, is known in Hausa as auren dole, or auren tilas. Although informants generally state that no girls marrying now are married against their will, this is contradicted by the women's marital histories. Nor is the statement that girls marry where they wish supported by the facts, although there is a tendency now (in the past decade) to permit the girl greater choice. This is borne out by the women's own statements and by reconstruction of marriage negotiations.

Informants agree that a girl may express her dissatisfaction with a proposed marriage to others, who will inform the girl's kin, but only "modern" girls are said to reject the advice or arrangements of their elders outright. In this respect, secondary school girls who, granted, form a tiny proportion of marriageable girls, are demanding far more freedom of choice in marriage than their younger, less well educated sisters. However, even among the illiterate girls, some will risk any damage to their reputations and suffer any abuse rather than go through with a marriage they do not want. One Marina girl, for example, refused to marry a butcher (ostensibly because of his low status) in a marriage arranged by her mother. On the second day of the ceremony, she vowed she would "go into the world" - become a prostitute - before she would marry the man. During the marriage week, when she should have been at home receiving visitors congratulating her on her daughter's marriage, the mother was in court with her daughter, being sued by the very angry rejected suitor, who demanded the return of all his marriage gifts. The girl was later married to another man.

If a girl does not want a particular marriage, she often does marry the man, but will then refuse to remain in the man's house, running home to friends or relatives, or leaving the area altogether. The unwanted marriage is called, ex post facto, auren ki or auren kiyo, "marriage of refusal". An example of conflicting wishes both between the parents, and between father and daughter, is the case of the reluctant Sueba, below.

> Sueba, a fifteen-year-old Marina girl, was raised by her mother, in the mother's father's house. Sueba and her mother had moved there after the divorce from Sueba's father, and the death of Sueba's grandparents. Sueba's mother maintains a silkiti marriage with her second husband, a trader and the father of her two young sons.
>
> Sueba spent her days trading for her mother and herself, moving widely inside and outside the ward, until she reached marriageable age; indeed, some suggested she had rather passed marriageable age, and should have been married sooner. The date for her marriage was set, and Sueba was to be married, whether to a suitor of her choice or not. Given her physical maturity, it was generally felt in the ward that marrying her against her will would be better than not marrying her at all.
>
> As Sueba was to be given in a marriage of alms, the name of her prospective husband did not have to be announced until the drawing up of the marriage contract, although in this case, the husband had been chosen and was known by the start of the wedding rituals. Of the few suitors who had come forward, some had been sent away by Sueba, while others had not pressed their suit. Most recent of the suitors was a praise-singer, who was rejected ostensibly because of his low-status occupation. Sueba's paternal kin, who are Koranic scholars, considered such a tie demeaning. Ward opinion was that this would have been a reasonable match: the suitor's mother was wealthy, and the man himself was healthy, which the prospective husband was not. However, by this time Sueba's father

had decided to marry her to his junior sister's son, Sueba's cross-cousin.

The chosen groom, who had been married once before, had palsy, and the marriage was condemned in the ward. The comment most often heard was, "The marriage of a well person to a sick person is unworkable!" ("Auren mai lafiya da mara lafiya ba ya yiyuwa.") Sueba's mother saw no future in the marriage and was already resigned to her daughter's inevitable return from her marital home. Even other paternal kinsmen had grave doubts about the marriage, which is said to have been forced through mainly by the will of Sueba's father.

Sueba herself is a very strong-willed, outspoken girl, and indeed her behaviour even before the wedding was far more demonstrative than would usually be seen in a young Hausa girl. She had always dominated her sick kinsman, and she swore she would beat him over the head with a pestle,should she be taken to his house in marriage. No other suitors appeared thereafter, and the marriage was made, with Sueba going through the ceremonies with little grace but submitting nonetheless. Gifts given by visitors at the rites were small, the lack of generosity being related to the dissatisfaction of both the bride's and groom's kin with the marriage.

Within a week of marriage, Sueba was threatening to leave, and abusing her husband. Her mother was called twice to calm and discipline her, and her father once. The marriage lasted less than a month, ending with divorce and Sueba's return home to do idda before remarrying. Her father had paid most of the marriage expenses, so repayment (ramuwa) to the husband's kin would have been minimal. However, as the husband's family are also Sueba's kin, they refused the return of any of their goods or expenses.

In Sueba's case, there was no consensus at all among her kin, not even the paternal kin agreeing with her father's choice of spouse. As her father was determined in this matter, there was

little to be gained by open confrontation, whether by Sueba, her mother, or even by Sueba's paternal kin, and Sueba waited until after the marriage to display her absolute opposition. Her own distaste for the marriage outweighed any amount of paternal control. Although her father could exercise his paternal authority by forcing his daughter into an unwanted marriage, no amount of authority could force her to remain.[1] Sueba's refusal to stay with her husband, and the divorce she so quickly engineered, represent a solution fairly frequently employed by young Hausa women, as can be seen in the following tables.

Tables 4-1 and 4-2, showing the duration of first marriages in Yarinci and Marina respectively, demonstrate clearly the importance of divorce as a means by which a young woman may extricate herself from an unwanted marriage. In Yarinci, 7.8 per cent of all first marriages shown foundered within a year; in Marina, the figure was even higher: almost a tenth (9.7 per cent) of first marriages ended in divorce during the first year. These rapid divorces represent almost a fifth of Yarinci first marriages which were terminated by divorce, and almost a third of Marina divorces in first marriage. In Yarinci, more than two-fifths (42.2 per cent) of all first marriages had ended in divorce; the Marina proportion

---

1. After idda, Sueba remarried, this time a middle-aged trader related to her through her mother. The marriage lasted only three months, Sueba again not settling in her husband's house. She had not married again more than a year later.

Table 4 - 1

Duration of First Marriage - Yarinci

	Total No. of Marriages	No. of Divorces	% of Total (N=65)	No. of Extant Marriages	% of Total (N=70)	No. of Deaths	% of Total (N=19)
Less than one year	16	12	18.5%	4	5.7%	-	-
1 - 1.9 yrs.	6	2		3		1	
2 - 2.9 yrs.	8	4		4		-	
			24.6%		12.9%		5.3%
3 - 3.9 yrs.	8	6		2		-	
4 - 4.9 yrs.	4	4		-		-	
5 - 9.9 yrs.	35	17	26.2%	16	22.9%	2	10.5%
10 -14.9 yrs.	25	9	13.8%	10	14.3%	6	31.6%
15 -19.9 yrs.	24	7	10.8%	14	20.0%	3	15.8%
20 yrs. or more	28	4	6.2%	17	24.3%	7	36.8%
Total	154 (a)	65	100.1%	70	100.1%	19	100.0%

(a) The 154 women from whom the above information was elicited represent 55.8 per cent of ever-married women in the ward.

Table 4 - 2

Duration of First Marriage - Marina

	Total No. of Marriages	No. of Divorces	% of Total (N=63)	No. of Extant Marriages	% of Total (N=110)	No. of Deaths	% of Total (N=23)
Less than one year	22	19	30.2%	3	2.7%	-	-
1 - 1.9 yrs.	10	4		5		1	
2 - 2.9 yrs.	8	2	25.4%	5	16.4%	1	8.7%
3 - 3.9 yrs.	12	6		6		-	
4 - 4.9 yrs.	6	4		2		-	
5 - 9.9 yrs.	31	13	20.6%	17	15.5%	1	4.3%
10 - 14.9 yrs.	36	8	12.7%	24	21.8%	4	17.4%
15 - 19.9 yrs	16	3	4.8%	11	10.0%	2	8.7%
20 yrs. or more	55	4	6.3%	37	33.6%	14	60.9%
Total	196 (a)	63	100.0%	110	100.0%	23	100.0%

(a) The 196 women from whom the above information was obtained represent almost half (48.3 per cent) the ever-married women in the ward.

was one-third (32.1 per cent).

The high rate of divorce among first marriages cannot be explained, however, only by reference to the presence or absence of choice in marriage on the part of the bride. Sixty-five first marriages in the two wards were particularly well-documented concerning the degree of choice of mate permitted the bride, and her support or opposition to the marriage; these findings are summarised in Table 4-3.

Marriages in which the woman actually wanted the spouse she married show no greater likelihood of survival than marriages in which the woman was given no choice, but did not actively dislike the husband. Eight marriages ended in divorce in each of these categories, with total marriages numbering 27 and 29 respectively. However, as five of the eight divorces in each category endured at least into the fifth year, dissolution of these marriages cannot be associated with marriage choice except in the most peripheral way.

The data suggest that it is more important to refrain from marrying a girl to a man she does not like, than to marry her where she wishes: six of the nine marriages made against the girl's will ended in divorce, four within the first year. Three of these brief forced marriages had occurred just prior to the beginning of field research. In this small sample, kin marriage appears more stable than it actually is in the wider population; this is discussed below.

Except among the most quickly sundered unions, the degree of choice exercised by the bride is not as significant as other

Table 4 - 3

Relation between Marriage Duration and Marriage Choice

Duration		Wanted Marriage			No Choice			Did Not Want Marriage		
		Divorce	Extant	Death	Divorce	Extant	Death	Divorce	Extant	Death
Less than year	Kin	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
	Non-kin	-	2	-	2	-	-	3	1	-
1 - 4.9 yrs.	Kin	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-
	Non-kin	2	2	-	1	1	-	2	-	-
5 - 9.9 yrs.	Kin	-	-	-	-	2	1	-	-	-
	Non-kin	4	6	-	3	3	-	-	-	-
10 yrs. or more	Kin	1	2	-	-	5	1	-	1	-
	Non-kin	-	6	1	2	3	3	-	-	1
Total		8	18	1	8	16	5	6	2	1

considerations in the continuation or termination of a marriage. Once the woman is in her marital home, other factors such as her relations with her co-wives, if any; her compatability with her affines, and especially with her husband; her fertility in the marriage - become far more important than any factors associated with her initial arrival into the compound. But no matter how long the woman remains in her first marriage, the possibility of divorce is always present, whether effected by her husband, or, perhaps more often, precipitated by herself. Even first marriage, the union most carefully organised by one's kin, surrounded by the most elaborate ritual, and designed to bring the young woman securely under the control of a chosen male other than her father at an early and impressionable age, does not always succeed. And frequently, the divorce is the result of refusal by the wife to continue the marriage.

This kind of behaviour, needless to say, wreaks havoc with the whole concept of establishing socio-political alliances through marriage, using women as the unprotesting pawns. Only among the upper echelons of the ruling class are such marriages made, and there other factors come into play to ensure marital stability. There are, nevertheless, various forms of preferential marriage in Katsina, the most important of which is marriage between close kin.

Preferential Kin Marriage

Marriage between kin (auren zumunci)[1] is most commonly arranged

---

1. The term used in contradistinction to this for any non-kin marriage is auren so, marriage of liking/love; i.e. based on definite choice.

between an unmarried girl and her kinsman, who may or may not be married. The optimum form of kin marriage is that between first cousins. Matrilateral and patrilateral parallel and cross-cousins are considered equally appropriate spouses. Preference for kin marriage is explained by informants partly in terms of the lessening of shame-avoidance relations existing between spouses and their affines, which would be cross-cut by pre-existing kinship ties. The Hausa believe that the close kin relationship between the two groups will foster better and closer interaction between the families, that kin will be more highly motivated to maintain the marriage, and that pressure could also be exerted to good effect upon the husband and wife, if necessary. Ronald Cohen, discussing a similar situation among the Kanuri, states that:

> "both the quantity and quality of interaction changes to greater frequency and more intimacy and friendliness when marriage occurs within the kin group."
>
> (p. 72)

However, when difficulties do arise in such a marriage, it may lead to dissension among the spouses' kin, and not infrequently to serious breaches between them. So whereas with a successful marriage, relations between the already kin-linked affines will improve, with breakdown of marriage, difficulties are likely to be exacerbated by the closeness of the related affinal groups. Conversely, disputes with the kin group may be magnified in the marital home, and the husband-wife bond split by opposing kin alliances.

The background of 115 Yarinci first marriages was known sufficiently well to designate these marriages as kin or non-kin. Only twenty-seven marriages (about 23 per cent) were kin marriages, and these showed no difference in likelihood of divorce than non-kin marriage. Of kin-based first marriages completed and extant, 40.7 per cent had ended in divorce; this compares to a 39.8 per cent divorce rate among non-kin marriages. It is significant that eight of the eleven unions between parallel or cross-cousins ended in divorce. The histories of the marriages suggest that more pressure is brought to bear to effect kin marriages, particularly between close kin, with correspondingly greater chance that the marriage not willingly entered into will fail.

Yarinci men, many of whom are not originally from the ward, generally seek local women for their second or subsequent marriages. Expedience is one factor, but informants also mentioned their own reservations concerning kin marriage: the pressures exerted by one's kin, and the recriminations and ill-will engendered in the event of divorce.

In Marina, 189 first marriages could be designated as kin or non-kin unions. Seventy-two (38.1 per cent) were between consanguineal kin; the remaining 117 were non-kin marriages. The divorce rate for non-kin marriage was virtually the same as in Yarinci: 39.3 per cent, but the divorce rate for kin marriage was much lower, at 20.8 per cent. As in Yarinci, there is more divorce in marriages arranged between very close kin. Thirty-three marriages, almost

half the number of kin unions, had been arranged between parallel or cross cousins; nine of these had ended in divorce.

Older women in Marina expressed the belief that kin marriage in the ward was more common in the past, and that divorce was less frequent. This does not seem to be the case, however. Based on women's marital histories, kin marriage was no more common twenty or thirty years ago than it is now; indeed, it may be slightly more frequent today. The data suggest also that the divorce rate for first marriages has not changed greatly.

The sororate is uncommon, with only six such marriages known or recalled in Yarinci and Marina. It always involves the replacement of the senior sister by the junior, the latter formerly being in joking relationship with her senior sister's husband. Indeed, a girl must demonstrate more respect towards her senior sister than towards her sister's husband. Sororate marriage may occur when the senior sister has died in the husband's house, and then only if there had been accord between husband and wife, the woman's family formally recognising this in the bestowal of the junior sister. Sororate marriage is especially likely if there were offspring in the former union, the assumption being that the junior sister would take better care of her sister's children than would a co-wife or a stranger. Either an unmarried girl or a non-married woman could replace her sister, although in all cases but one, the new wife had not been married previously. Marriage expenses may be but are not necessarily lessened; any reduction is taken as reaffirmation of the bonds of amity between

the two families.

The sororate is not a very popular institution among women - negative examples reflect general attitudes. Thus, in one instance a girl is said to have obtained charms to avoid marriage to her late sister's husband. In another instance, the junior sister is alleged to have sworn she would die if she were brought to the husband's house, and did die before the marriage ceremony was completed. Whatever the validity of the above case, it does demonstrate the strength of women's aversion to the sororate, and the difficulty of forcing filial obedience in marriage. The levirate is also known, but is rare; no cases were reported in either Yarinci or Marina.

Although men are far freer than women to decide whom they will marry, very occasionally pressure may be exerted, particularly to marry a kinswoman. Informants could only recall three occasions of men being forced into a marriage against their will - two in Marina, and one in Yarinci. One of these marriages, made two years ago, lasted less than a year. One is extant, and has lasted more than twenty years, but the husband stays away from the wife's home for years at a time; at the time of interview, he had been in Niger for more than two years, living with another wife and their children. The third marriage was made more than twenty years ago, was terminated by divorce and re-established, but here too the husband lives outside Katsina City with other wives, and returns infrequently. There may be other cases of forced marriage which were forgotten because they subsequently worked.

The meaning of auren zumunci extends to include intraward marriage, or marriage between members of families which are bound by ties of goodwill or friendship.[1] Marriages based on occupational links are not important in either ward, except among Koranic scholars (malams): the daughters of malams are often married to malams. In Marina, many men engage in the same occupation (e.g. dyeing),but consanguineal ties in the ward are so widespread that marriages between children of co-workers are primarily kin marriages.

In Yarinci, where craftwork is very limited, and inherited work more limited still, marriages between families with the same occupation is significant only in the case of malams: ten first marriages were of the daughters of malams, to malams. There is also class distinction in marriage arrangements, with eight first marriages within the ruling class, i.e. daughters of Emirs, District Heads, or Village Heads marrying men of similar background. New occupational links are represented by the marriages of five Yarinci girls to salaried government employees sharing the same office or bureaucratic branch with their fathers. Particularly as the women become more educated, the men whom they marry will be drawn mainly from this new elite. Even now, girls say they prefer such marriages, which provide entry into a new world comprehending different values and different opportunities from those in more traditional homes. This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Nine.

---

1. Abraham defines zumunci as (a) relationship by blood or marriage, or (b) clan feeling.

The Character of Courtship

The period of courting is a time during which the parents and other kin of the girl can manoeuvre for the most suitable husband, in terms of benefits to be derived not only by the girl, but also by themselves. The longer a girl remains unmarried, the more gifts she and her kin may be given by her suitors, while heavy competition between suitors will result in larger and richer gifts being presented.

The generic name for courtship gifts is toshi (Abraham: "present to win person over"), but this is usually qualified by the time of presentation or type of gift in question, and gifts are known by different names even in different wards within Katsina City. Courtship gifts include all gifts, from the present of sweets or cosmetics given as a mark of affection, to the gift of money - from a few pence to a pound given weekly (usually on Friday, which is also market day in Katsina) as earnest of intent to marry, to the suitcases of clothing, cosmetics, and jewellery given by the suitor's representatives to members of the girl's family.

The first formal gift which is made may be "the goods of conversation" (kayan zance), notifying the girl and her family of the suitor's interest, or na gani ina so (I have seen /the girl/ and I love /her/), this latter being a recent innovation, and a more costly gift than the former, which need be no more than a few cosmetics, and a small amount of money. These gifts may be preceded, or supplanted, by a gift to the girl's parents,

called "the goods of greeting the in-laws" (kayan gaida surukai) usually consisting of cigarettes, sweets, and kola nuts, and occasionally of more substantial offerings. In one case in Yarinci, a wealthy businessman spent £50 cash in "greeting" a girl's mother, and at least £250 in services to the girl's father, before formally presenting any gift to the girl herself.

The most important pre-marriage gift, which in some marriages may be the only formal gift to the girl, and is therefore sometimes equated with courtship gifts per se, is the toshin Sallah, given at the time of the feast of Id al-fitr. In Katsina, this gift is usually presented in one or more suitcases by the suitor's representatives to the girl's parents or guardian. The gift must be made every year the suitor courts the girl, and represents a fairly large outlay, the value of this gift being dependent upon the wealth of the suitor and his kin. The following example of toshin Sallah, which was given by a tailor and trader to a Yarinci girl, is representative of the kind of gift made in Yarinci and Marina in all but the most wealthy homes.

Toshin Sallah

4 yards of glossy material, for blouse and wrapper @ 12/- yard		£2. 8. 0
1 3-yard piece of imported printed cloth		3.10. 0
2 head scarves @ £1.5.0, @ 12/6		1.17. 6
1 blouse		1. 0. 0
1 pair Bata shoes		1. 0. 0
1 piece of cloth for undergarments		8. 3
1 pair of underpants		6. 6
1 large tin of talcum powder		3. 6
1 medium tin of talcum powder		2. 6
2 soaps @ 1/-		2. 0
3 containers of pancake makeup @ 1/6		4. 6
1 large jar of skin cream		3. 6
2 medium bottles of toilet water @ 1/9		3. 6
2 lipsticks @ 9d		1. 6
1 pomade		2. 6
1 suitcase		1. 0. 0
	Total	£12.13. 9

A girl receives as many such gifts as she has suitors to present them, as well as a variety of smaller token gifts throughout the year.

There can be negative repercussions to a lengthy and/or expensive courtship. If the girl subsequently refuses the suitor preferred by her family, often the richest or most generous among them, difficulties may arise in restoring money, clothing, and other goods. Ideally, all courtship gifts received should be set aside until the successful suitor is chosen, the unsuccessful suitors then being returned their goods. In practice, these gifts are often used to meet wedding expenses and other obligations. In a twelve-month period, eleven cases reached the Katsina courts for return of pre-marriage gifts, ranging in value from £2-3-0 to £467-8-10. But few cases are brought to court, repayment (ramuwa) usually being made by the successful suitor to his former rivals when the girl's family is unable to do so. Where the cost is excessive, the new husband may refuse the obligation, and divorce the bride rather than spend so much additional money.

An additional hazard of lengthy courtship is the possibility of the young woman becoming pregnant. Indeed, it is not unknown for a suitor purposely to get a girl pregnant, thereby vouchsafing the girl to himself, hastening the marriage and reducing marriage costs, the wedding then taking place forthwith, often with less ceremony and expenditure.

Especially in courting an unmarried girl, men are aware that they may be disappointed in their suit, no matter how early they

signalled their interest or how much they expended in courtship gifts. As the costs of pre-marriage gifts increase, suitors have begun to seek means of avoiding the heavy burden of courtship, entering into competition for an unmarried girl as late as possible, sometimes during the week of the wedding ceremony; this ploy has been made possible by the present popularity in Katsina of a very costly and elaborate version of "marriage of alms" (auren sadaka).

Marriage of Lies: the High Cost of Marriage in Katsina

According to an old Marina woman, around the turn of the century a girl to be given in alms marriage would be brought to the ward of Dan Marina (a seventeenth century Katsina scholar and saint), where her marriage guardian would give her to a passer-by; or the girl could be brought to any house and be given to the householder. Marriage of alms also involved the giving of the girl to a malam as a form of charity, with or without the recipient's prior knowledge. This kind of alms marriage, celebrated only with an unmarried girl, was later extended to become a means by which a father or marriage guardian might cement his relationship with a particular family, by marrying the girl into that kin group. All or most of the marriage expenses usually paid by the family of the groom were assumed instead by the bride's kin. Often the only cost to the groom and his kin was the girl's dower (sadaki), but even this might be paid for by her family. Only twelve alms

marriages could be recalled in the two wards in which the girl was actually bestowed as a gift upon the groom; none of these was recent.

A subsidiary function of alms marriage has been to provide a way in which an unattractive or unpopular girl might marry. Thus, in one house in which the daughter was recently married as alms, the family explained that alms marriage avoids confusion in the return of gifts to disappointed suitors, while the neighbours related that there had been no suitors, notwithstanding the wealth of the girl's family, and the fact that she would come to her husband's house well-provided for. Alms marriage, in this sense of limited expenditure by the groom's family, is more frequent between kin than between non-kin, and is common particularly where neither family has much money, or where the boy has been disappointed in marriage elsewhere. Marriage can be carried out cheaply and speedily, with details of expenses kept within the kin group.

In the prevalent form of so-called "alms marriage" in Katsina today, the unmarried girl being given as "alms" receives suitors and gifts, sometimes for a period of years, and competition is as fierce, and expenses for both spouses as great, as in any other marriage. Nominal alms marriage such as has become customary in Katsina, accompanied by vast expenditure, is called sadaki lake.

Differences between marriage of alms and "marriage of money" (auren kudi) in Katsina are primarily on ritual rather than monetary grounds. The differences hinge on the fact that in alms marriage, the husband is not formally acknowledged until the wedding day. Therefore, there is no engagement (baiko), an event which may occur

even a year or more before the actual marriage in auren kudi. The date of marriage is announced by the family of the bride, ostensibly without reference to the kin of the groom. Indeed, it is only after the announcement of the wedding date, that suitors are formally supposed to present themselves. Probably in most instances, as in the case of Sueba above, the groom has already been selected by this time. However, in other instances, this is the period during which other men may announce their interest in the girl, and occasionally win her with an intensive campaign of visits, gifts, and promises, much to the dismay of men who have been involved in courting the girl for months or years. The indirect dowry (lefe)[1] that is presented to the bride by the groom's family in auren kudi before the marriage takes place, is brought in alms marriage after the wedding, when the groom has been formally acknowledged; her family will already have given the girl their own lefe, symbolising their assumption of the obligations of alms marriage.

Both alms marriage (auren sadaka) and money marriage (auren kudi) are disparagingly known in Katsina today as auren karya, "marriage of lies", because of the excessive costs incurred by the kin groups of both husband and wife.[2] This kind of conspicuous expenditure

---

1. Named for the basket used by women in spinning, which traditionally held their few marriage gifts, the lefe is now brought in one or more suitcases, or in very large enameled containers. It resembles the gifts given during the Id festivals (toshin Sallah), but exceeds them in value and content.

2. The problem of high marriage costs applies primarily to a woman's first marriage.

has become widespread throughout the North, and in some areas, although not in Katsina, official (but ineffective) action has been taken to attempt to curb abuses. Thus, in Sokoto:

> "Stern measures to curb extravagance... were contained in a letter sent by the Sultan /of Sokoto/...following the recommendation of the Committee on Moral Laxity and Extravagance in the division...
>
> ...money given by the bridegroom to the bride before the marriage...will now be fixed liberally by elders, according to the status of the girl. The provision of gifts and other property deemed to be 'hypocritical' has been cancelled and no refund will be made in the event of the dissolution of the marriage."
>
> (New Nigerian, 10 Jan. 1973)

These measures are virtually impossible to enforce, but do point out the seriousness of the situation, and the general concern. As noted in the article, the problem is not limited to the groom and his kin. His expenses are matched and occasionally exceeded by the expenditure of the bride's family. Thus, while the groom's side provides the indirect dowry (lefe) and the "bridewealth" (dukiyar aure), among other expenses,[1] the bride's kin return a counter gift of money to the husband (kudin ango: "money of the groom"), and send the girl to her marital home with dowry in the form of grains, foodstuffs, and household goods. This equal expenditure is a traditional phenomenon; Guy Nicolas writes of the Hausa in Kantche (Niger) that:

> "Les dons et contre-dons qui constituent le gage du mariage ont aujourd'hui un caractère monétaire direct ou indirect...

---

1. See Hill (1972, pp. 293-5) for a descriptive list of marriage expenses incurred in Batagarawa, and for a useful compilation of sources of comparative data.

> Il est important de constater que les deux parties semblent dépenser à peu près les mêmes sommes."
>
> (1970, p. 120)

Marriage expenses vary according to the relative status of the families of husband and wife, their wealth, the good will engendered by the marriage, and the presence or absence of kin ties between the couple. Kin marriage may be less expensive, but its chances of survival if the kin are closely related have been shown to be less than in non-kin marriages. This contrasts with close-kin marriages in other societies, in which the low bridewealth is in part symbolic of the effectiveness of the kinship link in cementing the marriage bond. For example, among the Bedouin of Cyrenaica described by Emrys Peters:

> "...a parallel cousin marriage, especially to a first cousin, leads to serious difficulties if it is broken, and although the bridewealth is small these marriages are as stable as those where the bridewealth is twice as much or more."
>
> (p. 321)

The work of Max Gluckman (1950; revised 1971), followed by corroborative data from other societies, has demonstrated the relationship between stability of marriage and other features such as the level of bridewealth, type of kinship system, and rights of inheritance. The optative nature of the Hausa cognatic system limits a husband's rights over his wife, and the extent of control he can exercise over her. The woman has a wide network of kin to whom she can turn for assistance in the event of marital discord, and to whom she can return in the event of divorce. The relative similarity in expenditure between husband's and wife's

kin groups also tends to permit the woman greater latitude of action in choosing between marriage and divorce; she is not trapped in an unwanted marriage due to her family's inability to return high bridewealth. As she owns her own property, and as her rights to her husband's property are limited, neither she nor her family lose a great deal economically by her departure from her husband's home. Probably the major factor compelling women to carry on with an unsatisfactory marriage is their very real and justified fear of the loss of their children with divorce.

Parental Rights over Children

Rights over children in Hausa marriage are said to be vested in the father. As one woman expressed it: "Ba mu da 'ya'ya, ko daya." ("We women have no children, none at all.") The primary demonstration of this patriarchal control is in the retention of children in the event of divorce, although the degree to which men exercise this power varies from area to area. Thus, for example, Abner Cohen states that in Ibadan:

> "Every divorce carries with it also the potential loss, not only of the woman involved, but also of her daughters or foster daughters who will almost invariably follow her if she leaves."
>
> (p. 69)

Sam Jackson, working outside Kano at the Kadawa irrigation scheme, reported that Hausa women there also tend to keep their daughters (personal communication).

In Katsina, most women leave all their children with the children's father, excluding only children too young to wean; these are returned to their fathers after weaning. J.N.D. Anderson has noted that according to orthodox Maliki law, mothers should have custody of children until the children reach puberty, unless the mother marries outside the former husband's kin group. However, he found that:

> ".../some courts/ frankly follow the variant Mālikī view which corresponds more closely to local custom that a boy may be claimed by his father or other guardian at between five and seven years of age; while in some parts boys (and even girls in theory at least) may be taken from their mothers after the period of weaning. But this departure from the orthodox view is made largely academic by the fact that Nigerian women do remarry..., while the question of the custody of children is usually arranged by mutual agreement. The fact remains...that children are frequently taken from their mothers at much too tender an age...."
>
> (pp. 214-5)

This describes fairly accurately the situation in Katsina.

As demonstrated in Chapter Three, some of the non-married women manage to keep one or more of their children, but a woman almost always relinquishes her children from a divorce-terminated marriage before entering a new union. The number of women actually taking these children to a new marriage is extremely small. Only one woman in Marina, in a silkiti marriage, retained control over her daughter. In Yarinci, three married women each have a daughter with them from a previous marriage; one of the women lives apart from her husband in a silkiti marriage. Usually, neither the prospective husband, nor the former husband and father of the

children, wants the children in the new husband's house. Only children of a widowed wife, or foster children, are normally permitted to accompany a woman to a new marriage.

Fifteen men in Yarinci, and fifteen men in Marina, were raising one or more children of previous marriages which had ended in divorce. In Yarinci, the children of these men included twenty sons and thirteen daughters; in Marina, the men were raising sixteen sons and seven daughters. It is said (e.g. Cohen, above) that men tend to keep their sons. In Katsina, certainly, boys are almost always returned to their fathers, but many men retain their daughters as well. It is probable that more women would seek divorce, were it not that they would lose the care of their children in the process.[1] The number of children being shuttled back and forth might be larger still, but for the importance of fostering, discussed below.

Rights over children mean much more than the ability to keep the child, however, and these rights are shared to a much greater degree than is immediately apparent. While one must not minimise the blow to the mother of having to abandon her children to the ministrations of other women, one must bear in mind that children do often maintain close links with their divorced mother, visiting frequently if distance permits. As the children grow, a mother's influence often increases, particularly over her daughters. This is seen most clearly with respect to women's roles in the making and breaking of their children's marriages, but is evident elsewhere

---

1. Noted also by Hill for Batagarawa (1972, p. 24).

also. Women have access inside the house ("cikin gida") as men do not, and are therefore in much more frequent contact with their married daughters than are men.

The economic value of one's children has different dimensions in the city than it does in the rural area. Thus, married sons in the city are neither living with their fathers, nor farming communal land. While men in Marina may follow their father's trade, earnings are individually held and utilised. So, although fathers may keep their children in their home rather than permitting them to accompany their mothers, this guarantees no greater future economic claims or social control than may be exercised by the children's mothers. As girls usually marry by the age of fifteen, a father's socio-spatial control over them is even more limited and more brief than over his sons. And of course, once a girl is married and inside her husband's house, she is likely to see her mother far more than her father.

There is one category of children over whom women's control is virtually incontestable, and upon whose continued presence the women can depend: this is the category of kin-linked foster children.

Fostering in Katsina

Fostering, as used here, involves the rearing of a child or children by a person or persons other than his biological parent(s).[1]

---

1. Children of a divorced wife being raised in their father's house, are specifically excluded according to this definition.

The period of fostering varies, but often extends until the marriage of the child. In Katsina, the term for fostering is riko[1] (looking after; caring for). The use of the term fostering rather than adoption is appropriate, for the former is more suggestive of the trust (Hausa: amana) inherent in the relationship, and of the partial transfer of rights and duties over the child. As Esther Goody notes:

> "...the ties which link foster parent and foster child /are/ essentially affective and moral in character, based as they are on the reciprocities of rearing."
> (1971, p. 335)

The child's ties to his or her biological family of orientation are not severed; the individual retains the rights and obligations appropriate to his or her position in the kin group, although these may be attenuated or subsequently replaced in the course of time by links to the foster family.

It is through fostering that many of the long-term matrifocal units are created in Katsina. The institution demonstrates the vitality of affective ties, the strength and importance of a woman's lineal and collateral links, and the existence of opportunities for the fulfilment of significant female roles even outside the bonds of marriage, in spite of barrenness, and beyond the age of child-bearing.

---

1. Short-term care (Hausa: renu), corresponding more to baby-sitting than fostering, is a limited feature of child-care. Renu, looking after a child before it can walk or be left on its own, used to be the preserve of old women, but it is now more commonly undertaken by young women or girls.

Table 4-4, "Relationship of Foster Children to Foster Parents", shows the salient bond[1] linking each foster child in Yarinci and Marina to his or her foster parent. The table includes all foster children resident in the two wards at the time of initial interview: only married foster daughters who have returned to their foster parent's home are excluded from the figures.

Seventy-nine children were fostered in the two wards, fifty in Yarinci and twenty-nine in Marina. As is shown in the table, almost all the children were being fostered by women, and the vast majority (34 children in Yarinci, and 24 in Marina) were related by consanguineal kinship ties to the foster mother. Twenty-three Yarinci compounds (about 18 per cent) and twenty-four of the Marina compounds (about 10 per cent) housed one or more foster children.[2]

The strict differentiation of sex roles in Katsina, and, with seclusion, the continuing presence of women in the home, combine to guarantee that women dominate and control activities within the compound. Since it is with women that young children have the most intense and continuous relationships, the transfer of children to a particular woman acts to enhance social bonds already proven.

---

1. Where husband and wife are related, a foster child will of course be related to both spouses. The primary kin link only has been used throughout this exposition.

2. Fostering appears to be, or to have been, a more common phenomenon elsewhere in Hausaland. Thus, M.G. Smith records that in the two rural communities he studied, compounds in which foster children were living comprised 40 per cent and 29 per cent respectively of the total number of compounds in the villages (1955, pp. 21, 24).

Table 4 - 4

Relationship of Foster Children to Foster Parents

	Number of Children - Yarinci	Number of Children - Marina
Consanguineal tie to fostering woman		
Sister	1	3
Sister's daughter	6	4
Sister's son	1	-
Sister's grandson	-	1
Brother	1	-
Brother's daughter	4	2
Brother's son	3	-
Brother's granddaughter	-	1
Brother's grandson	1	-
Daughter's daughter	5	3
Daughter's son	-	1
Son's daughter	6	3
Son's son	2	3
Great granddaughter	1	2
Other relation (female child)	3	1
Affinal tie to fostering woman		
Husband's brother's daughter	1	2
Husband's brother's son	2	1
Husband's son's daughter	1	-
Husband's son's son	1	-
Husband's father's brother's daughter	1	-
Husband's father's brother's son	1	-
Other or no tie to fostering woman		
Foster daughter's daughter	3	-
Orphan girl	1	-
Orphan boy	1	-
Total	46	27
Relationships to fostering man		
Sister	-	1
Son's son	-	1
Orphan boys	4	-
Total	4	2

The very positive and optative nature of fostering as it is practised between consanguineal kin must be stressed. Emphasis is on the giving of the child. All but four of the sixty-one children being fostered by their kinswoman had previously been living in a complete family unit: the biological father and mother of the child were married and living together. Thus, this fostering is not a solution to a crisis situation, but rather is a symbolic statement reflecting the strength of the bonds linking often spatially-dispersed kin.

The bilateral nature of kinship in Hausa society is well demonstrated in fostering: sororal links are as important as fraternal ties, and daughters give nearly as many children for fostering as do sons. In the majority of cases, brothers or sisters who provide foster children are full siblings, although in some cases the siblings are linked through only the maternal or paternal tie. The sibling tie, however created, is important. As Jack and Esther Goody have pointed out:

> "...the bonds between siblings that have been loosened by marriage may be strengthened by bringing up...one another's children..." (1967, p. 226)

Yet while the pre-existing affective ties form the basis of these fostering relationships, a constellation of other factors are significant as immediate reasons that fostering occurs in a particular compound.

The benefits to the child are certainly taken into consideration. Fostering women are often among the more respected and wealthy women in the community, capable of undertaking the social and economic

responsibilities of fostering. No children were fostered in the poorest compounds in the wards, while in one of the richer households, three childless wives were fostering seven children among them.

Access to educational facilities has been shown in other areas to be an important reason for fostering, but is not significant in Yarinci and Marina. Most of the Marina children do not attend school, while almost all the Yarinci foster children have come from areas in which primary education is available.

Informants suggested that a foster child is usually a first-born child, whose relationship with his or her parents, particularly the mother, is made more difficult by the shame (kunya) inherent in the link. This very common belief is not borne out by the data; most foster children in both wards are not the first-born child of their parents.

Foster children are a valuable resource in a number of ways to their foster mothers. However, the economic importance of children during their early years has rather dwindled in the last decade. In Yarinci, where most children go to school, their economic value as hawkers of goods is greatly curtailed. The practice is still important in Marina, however: most of the foster children are girls, and many of these girls assist their foster mothers with their trade.

More important for the fostering women are the many benefits derived from the very presence of their foster children, including the companionship the children provide, and the minor services they

perform. Most women fostering their relatives' children have or had no other children with them at the time, as is demonstrated in Table 4-5.

Table 4 - 5

Children in Compound of Prospective Foster Mother

	YARINCI	MARINA
Children grown (a)	9	13
Childless	15	5
Own children in compound	3	4
Recently married	-	2
Total	27	24

(a) In one case in Yarinci, and in three cases in Marina, the foster mother was living with one of her adult offspring.

Twenty-three of the Yarinci women, and seventeen of the Marina women, had no other children in the compound. For women recently married and obliged to remain within the compound walls, the foster child mitigates her loneliness and is a welcome focus of interest. For barren women also, and women who have not yet given birth, foster children give some direction to their lives, and the opportunity to create a deep and enduring relationship.

In terms of the rights she has over the child, a woman may appear to "own" a foster child more than she does the children to whom she has given birth. Once a child is given to a kinswoman

to foster, it is rarely taken from her. Even if she bears her own children, she retains the foster children. If she divorces, she takes the foster children with her, while she will probably be compelled to leave her other children with their father. And when she remarries, she is often permitted by the new husband to bring her foster children with her.

It must be noted that none of this fostering would be possible for a woman in her husband's house without his express and unreserved agreement. The cost of raising the child is borne primarily by the foster mother's husband, and as is evident below, it is often the case that for the husband, as for the wife, the child is very much an integral member of the family, even at times to the extent of inheriting from the husband of the foster mother.

Fostering is usually initiated in a fairly informal manner. Long-term fostering often evolves from a temporary arrangement, such as the transfer of a child to a different household for the purpose of weaning. The degree to which the foster parent may effectively replace a child's biological parents is most evident in the procedures surrounding marriage, particularly in the case of a foster daughter. The biological father has the right to transfer his overt authority over his daughter to her foster parents, permitting the latter to receive and choose a husband for the girl from among her suitors, and to arrange the marriage. It is a heavy but welcome responsibility, involving a large outlay in money and goods, time and effort, and is the culmination of years of trust invested in the foster parents. The biological parents give up their own

opportunities for benefiting from a particular marriage, leaving this to the foster parents. The real parents remain au courant with marriage arrangements, attend the rites and contribute to the cost of the marriage, but the major burden will usually be assumed by the foster parents, assisted by kin and friends.

In some cases, foster sons relinquished rights of inheritance through their biological fathers, receiving instead from their foster kin, and assuming in all ways the rights and obligations incumbent upon a person born in the foster family. In other cases, in division of inheritance, the foster child was apportioned less than his due from his biological family because of his stronger ties with foster kin, from whom he would also inherit.

In the "children grown" category of fostering women, the most common dyad is that of grandparent-grandchild. In Hausa society, grandparent and grandchild are joking relations (abokan wasa), and enjoy a fairly tension-free association, in distinct contrast with the respect and shame noted in parent-child ties. A similar bond exists between great-grandparents and great-grandchildren. Where a child is being fostered by kin of the second or third ascending generation, however, joking is not entirely reciprocal, or at least is overlaid by respect and obedience towards the fostering parent.

Through fostering,a woman who has passed child-bearing may still participate in the rearing of children, in effect, on two generational levels. The child assists the old woman, and benefits from her wisdom, and from her love, unrestrained by biological parent-child formality. That so few women living alone foster

children marks out those who do; most of the older women fostering are especially respected in the community for their industry, achievements, and/or wealth. And, as can be seen in Table 4-4, the tie established through fostering may be reinforced in a subsequent generation: three women were fostering the daughters of their former foster daughters.

Two of the older women, both salaried workers, have even taken upon themselves the fostering of orphans from the local orphanage. These are the only children in the two wards not related by kinship to their pro-parents, and it is only with regard to their care that the term adoption might be used in preference to fostering. I have followed emic categorisation by retaining the term fostering: in Hausa, caring for any child not your own is riko. The retention of the term fostering is also consistent with Esther Goody's findings concerning fostering and adoption in Gonja:

> "...the definition of what should be done to care for deprived children is related to the existing modes of delegating parental roles." (1971, p. 343)

The children's jural identity is unchanged, and their biological ties are known. The foster mothers expect the children to re-establish ties with their biological kin when they are older.

Very different from consanguineal kin fostering in terms of delegated authority and emotive response is the fostering by a woman of her husband's kin. In the two wards this included ten foster children - five girls and five boys. It is notable not only that seven of the ten were brought into the fostering family only with the death of both the child's parents, or of the father, or the

death or divorce of the biological mother, but also that the foster mother volunteered the information before it was sought; this did not occur when discussion centred about foster children of the woman's own kin. It is expected that women will foster own kin, but her husband's relatives are more likely to be fostered only in special circumstances.

However, the value of affective ties between a woman who has been married for several years and her husband's kin, must not be minimised. Over time, a woman may forge strong links with her affines, with whom she may have more contact than she does with her own natal group and cognatic kin. Fostering of a child related to her husband rather than to herself may even be initiated by the wife. Thus in one Marina example, the husband's mother had been fostering her grandson, the child of another of her sons and his divorced wife. When the husband's mother became too incapacitated by illness to continue to foster the child, his wife asked the husband to take over responsibility for the child, and to permit her to foster it. But in the event of divorce, the wife has no rights over such children, who remain with the husband's family.

Cognatic kin fostering is more secure, more irrevocable. Foster mother and child form a neat matrifocal unit, and are virtually unaffected by the vicissitudes of marriage and divorce.

Childlessness and the Stability of Marriage

While the presence of a woman's own children may keep her in

an unhappy marriage, childlessness is probably equally as likely to cause her to seek divorce. That childlessness is a factor in divorce is demonstrated in Table 4-6, based on first marriages in Yarinci and Marina.

Table 4 - 6

Relationship between Fertility and Marriage Stability[a]

	Extant Marriage/ Terminated by Death		Divorce	
	Fertile	Childless	Fertile	Childless
YARINCI	72	9	28[b]	13
MARINA	101	23	26	14
Total	173	32	54	27

(a) Figures are based on first marriages in Yarinci and Marina (Tables 4-1,2), but exclude all marriages of less than two years' duration.

(b) Includes two women divorced while pregnant with their first child.

Marriages of less than two years' duration are excluded in the table, as fertility in first marriage cannot be established at that time, and as other factors play such an important part at the inception of marriage.

Nearly half (45.8 per cent) of all childless marriages in the ward had ended in divorce, compared to less than a quarter (23.8 per cent) of fertile marriages. Childlessness in the early years of marriage may provide women both with the excuse to marry elsewhere

in order to bear children, and with the impetus to move because of the lack of offspring binding them to the marital home. The former reason probably becomes more compelling as women age; at least nine-tenths of the fertile women had given birth to their first child within the first five years of marriage. Childlessness is not usually given by women as a reason for marrying elsewhere except in retrospect; a subsequent marriage is later spoken of in terms of "destiny" (rabo) if it has proved fertile.

Thus, childlessness does not necessarily force a woman out of her marriage, either by her own will or her husband's, but is a contributing factor in divorce. However, where both husband and wife are comfortable with the marriage, the childless wife may remain: five of the nine childless Yarinci marriages had endured ten years or more, as had twelve of the twenty-three Marina marriages.

Frequency of Divorce

We have already established the importance of divorce in a variety of contexts. We have concentrated primarily upon first marriage, and upon the early years of marriage. For the maiden married against her will, divorce is the safety device providing eventual release from the unwanted bond. In some respects, divorce is a spur to the contracting of marriage, inasmuch as it is recognised that an unsuccessful or ill-advised marriage may

subsequently be dissolved.

It is eminently clear from the statistical data obtained within Yarinci and Marina and presented below, that divorce is an ever-present possibility in Hausa marital relationships, and may be operationalised at any time. With frequent divorce are found the concomitant features of easy remarriage, fostering, half- and step-siblings, and reabsorption of the woman into the natal compound or extended kin group, at least temporarily.

The statistics presented below concerning marriage and divorce in the two wards are based mainly on the detailed marital histories of 87 men and 155 women in Yarinci, and of 128 men and 189 women in Marina. All these persons had been married at least once, although they were not necessarily still married, or remarried, at the time of the survey.

In the tables, there may be some bias towards more stable and longer-lasting marriages, insofar as these were more likely to be recalled by informants than briefer marriages, or those completed in the distant past. Women's marital histories in which the actual number of marriages was uncertain, or in which the marriage duration could not be calculated, were not included. Thus, newcomers to the area whose marital histories in their original home areas were unknown, lacked internal consistency, or were incomplete, were not included for these tables, nor were the few men or women whose marital careers were so active that it was undesirable[1]

---

1. The recounting of an extensive and varied marital career is somewhat shameful, for it suggests that the informant lacked the patience and tolerance to maintain a marriage. Many women, even with only two or three marriages, presented truncated versions of their marital careers, which were then expanded through the additional information provided by neighbours and relatives. Barnes' generalisation that "an informant is likely to be more accurate in reporting his own marriages than in recollecting those of other people" (J.A. Barnes, p. 55) is consequently not applicable in the Hausa situation.

or impossible for them or others to recount all their unions completely. The data presented here are based on those histories which were fully recounted and internally consistent, which included all marriages contracted by the individual during his or her marital career, and which could be verified by resort to external corroboration, usually either by another informant, or through related information obtained in other inquiries.

More detailed information was obtained regarding the women in the two wards, and this is reflected in Tables 4-7 and 4-8, which are based on the duration of marriage, and which distinguish also between extant marriages and those completed through death or divorce. The format of the two tables follows that presented by R. Cohen (1971, p. 127) for Kanuri women. Both tables include the three types of divorce rate suggested by Barnes to distinguish between completion of marriage through divorce, and completion of marriage brought about by death of the spouse. These three types are:

A. The number of marriages ending in divorce as a percentage of all marriages in the sample.

B. The number of marriages ending in divorce as a percentage of all completed marriages.

C. The number of marriages ending in divorce as a percentage of all marriages except those which have ended in death.

(J.A. Barnes, p. 61)

That the A and C rates are equal in almost all categories, increasing only in the case of some of the longer-lived unions, indicates the importance of divorce as the main method of marriage completion. Using the data available in the two tables, we can calculate Barnes'

Table 4 - 7

Marriage Duration in Yarinci (a)

Marriage Duration	No. of Marriages	% of Total (N=253)	Acc. %	No. of Divorces	% of Total (N=102)	Acc. %	No. of Extant Marriages	% of Total (N=125)	Acc. %	No. of Deaths	% of Total (N=26)	Acc. %	Size of Sample/ Duration	% of Total	Divorce Rate/ 100 Marriages A	B	C
Less than 6 months	10	4.0	4.0	9	8.8	8.8	1	.8	.8	0	0	0	253	100	4	100	4
6 mo.- .9 yr.	16	6.3	10.3	11	10.8	19.6	5	4.0	4.8	0	0	0	243	96.0	5	100	5
1 - 1.9 yrs.	19	7.5	17.8	8	7.8	27.4	10	8.0	12.8	1	3.8	3.8	227	89.7	4	89	4
2 - 2.9 "	15	5.9	23.7	7	6.9	34.3	7	5.6	18.4	1	3.8	7.6	208	82.2	3	88	3
3 - 3.9 "	21	8.3	32.0	14	13.7	48.0	6	4.8	23.2	1	3.8	11.4	193	76.3	7	93	7
4 - 4.9 "	13	5.1	37.1	11	10.8	58.8	2	1.6	24.8	0	0	11.4	172	68.0	6	100	6
5 - 5.9 "	16	6.3	43.4	9	8.8	67.6	7	5.6	30.4	0	0	11.4	159	62.8	6	100	6
6 - 6.9 "	10	4.0	47.4	3	2.9	70.5	6	4.8	35.2	1	3.8	15.2	143	56.5	2	75	2
7 - 7.9 "	7	2.8	50.2	3	2.9	73.4	4	3.2	38.4	0	0	15.2	133	52.6	2	100	2
8 - 8.9 "	12	4.7	54.9	3	2.9	76.3	8	6.4	44.8	1	3.8	19.0	126	49.8	2	75	2
9 - 9.9 "	4	1.6	56.5	0	0	76.3	4	3.2	48.0	0	0	19.0	114	45.1	0	0	0
10 -14.9 "	39	15.4	71.9	14	13.7	90.0	20	16.0	64.0	5	19.2	38.2	110	43.5	13	74	13
15 -19.9 "	31	12.3	84.2	7	6.9	96.9	20	16.0	80.0	4	15.4	53.6	71	28.1	10	64	10
20 -24.9 "	20	7.9	92.1	2	2.0	98.9	13	10.4	90.4	5	19.2	72.8	40	15.8	5	29	6
25 -29.9 "	7	2.8	94.9	1	1.0	99.9	6	4.8	95.2	0	0	72.8	20	7.9	5	100	5
30 yrs.or more	13	5.1	100.0	0	0	99.9	6	4.8	100.0	7	26.9	99.7	13	5.1	0	0	0

(a) Based on the marital histories of 155 Yarinci women, who comprise 56.2 per cent of the population of ever-married women in the ward.

Table 4 - 8

Marriage Duration in Marina (a)

Marriage Duration	No. of Marriages	% of Total (N=290)	Acc. %	No.of Divorces	% of Total (N=103)	Acc. %	No. of Extant Marriages	% of Total (N=160)	Acc. %	No. of Deaths	% of Total (N=27)	Acc. %	Size of Sample/ Duration	% of Total Sample	Divorce Rate/ 100 Marriages A	B	C
Less than 6 months	7	2.4	2.4	7	6.8	6.8	0	0	0	0	0	0	290	100	2	100	2
6 mo. - .9 yr.	26	9.0	11.4	18	17.5	24.3	8	5.0	5.0	0	0	0	283	97.6	6	100	6
1-1.9 yrs.	19	6.6	18.0	8	7.8	32.1	9	5.6	10.6	2	7.4	7.4	257	88.6	3	80	3
2-2.9 "	16	5.5	23.5	7	6.8	38.9	8	5.0	15.6	1	3.7	11.1	238	82.1	3	88	3
3-3.9 "	17	5.9	29.4	9	8.7	47.6	8	5.0	20.6	0	0	11.1	222	76.6	4	100	4
4-4.9 "	19	6.6	36.0	11	10.7	58.3	7	4.4	25.0	1	3.7	14.8	205	70.7	5	92	5
5-5.9 "	16	5.5	41.5	7	6.8	65.1	8	5.0	30.0	1	3.7	18.5	186	64.1	4	88	4
6-6.9 "	10	3.4	44.9	5	4.9	70.0	5	3.1	33.1	0	0	18.5	170	58.6	3	100	3
7-7.9 "	19	6.6	51.5	7	6.8	76.8	12	7.5	40.6	0	0	18.5	160	55.2	4	100	4
8-8.9 "	9	3.1	54.6	2	1.9	78.7	3	1.9	42.5	4	14.8	33.3	141	48.6	1	33	2
9-9.9 "	6	2.1	56.7	2	1.9	80.6	4	2.5	45.0	0	0	33.3	132	45.5	2	100	2
10-14.5 "	47	16.2	72.9	12	11.7	92.3	31	19.4	64.4	4	14.8	48.1	126	43.4	10	75	10
15-19.9 "	22	7.6	80.5	3	2.9	95.2	16	10.0	74.4	3	11.1	59.2	79	27.2	4	50	4
20-24.9 "	22	7.6	88.1	2	1.9	97.1	18	11.3	85.7	2	7.4	66.6	57	19.7	4	50	4
25-29.9 "	14	4.8	92.9	0	0	97.1	11	6.9	92.6	3	11.1	77.7	35	12.1	0	0	0
30 yrs.or more	21	7.2	100.1	3	2.9	100.0	12	7.5	100.1	6	22.2	99.9	21	7.2	14	33	20

(a) Based on the marital histories of 189 Marina women, who comprise 46.6 per cent of the population of ever-married women in the ward.

three divorce rates for women in the two wards, which are as follows:

Yarinci

A. 40.3 per cent of all marriages ended in divorce
B. 79.7 per cent of all completed marriages ended in divorce
C. 44.9 per cent of all marriages excluding those completed through death ended in divorce

Marina

A. 35.5 per cent of all marriages ended in divorce
B. 79.2 per cent of all completed marriages ended in divorce
C. 39.2 per cent of all marriages excluding those completed through death ended in divorce

These figures clearly confirm the importance of divorce in Hausa society. In both wards, almost four-fifths of all completed marriages were terminated by divorce. More than one-third of all marriages in Marina, and more than two-fifths of the marriages in Yarinci, ended in divorce.

It is interesting to compare these figures with those obtained by Ronald Cohen for the Kanuri; the three divorce rates are: A. 64 per cent; B. 91 per cent; C. 68 per cent (1971, p. 124). Cohen states that his figures are not representative for the Kanuri as a whole, partly because of the urban bias, and partly because of the large representation of non-married women. The data presented for Katsina does not purport to represent any but the city-dwelling Hausa; the second source of bias is dealt with, insofar as the marital histories of a category of much married women, the karuwai, are analysed separately (see Table 7-4).

As the tables show, more divorces occur in the early years of marriage, and divorce is the most probable cause of marriage termination at that time. Divorce during the first year of marriage accounted for one-fifth (19.6 per cent) of all divorces in Yarinci. In Marina, the figure was even higher: almost one quarter (24.3 per cent) of all divorces represented in the table occurred during the first year of marriage. Almost half the divorces in each ward (48.0 per cent in Yarinci, 47.6 per cent in Marina) were effected within the first four years of marriage. And, while most divorces occurred in the early years of marriage, even among the longer lasting marriages divorce remains a possibility.

Tables 4-9 and 4-10, for Yarinci and Marina respectively, relate the age of women to the number of marriages they have contracted.[1] The same women and marriages upon which Table 4-7 and 4-8, showing marriage duration, are based, provide the data for these two tables. The information in Tables 4-9 and 4-10 represents individual marriage careers, and shows clearly the number of marriages entered into by each woman included in the samples.

In both wards, remarriage is a common option among the younger women. More than a quarter (28 per cent) of the Yarinci women under twenty, and nearly a sixth (15.8 per cent) of the Marina women in the same age group, had already contracted a second marriage. Among

---

1. See Table 7-2 for the relationship of age to number of marriages among karuwai. Table 7-3 provides a comparison of the three categories of women, with respect to age and number of marriages contracted.

Table 4 - 9

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages Contracted by Women - Yarinci

Age of Women	Total Number	% of Sample	Acc. %	Number of Marriages 1	2	3	4	5	6 or more
10 - 14	4	2.6	2.6	4	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 19	21	13.5	16.1	14	6	-	1	-	-
20 - 24	28	18.1	34.2	21	6	-	1	-	-
25 - 29	19	12.3	46.5	13	6	-	-	-	-
30 - 34	22	14.2	60.7	15	5	2	-	-	-
35 - 39	22	14.2	74.9	7	11	3	1	-	-
40 - 44	10	6.5	81.4	5	3	-	1	-	1
45 - 49	13	8.4	89.8	4	4	2	-	1	2 (a)
50 - 54	5	3.2	93.0	3	2	-	-	-	-
55 - 59	1	0.6	93.6	1	-	-	-	-	-
60 or more	10	6.5	100.1	4	4	2	-	-	-
Total	155			91	47	9	4	1	3
Percent in marriage category (99.9%)				58.7%	30.3%	5.8%	2.6%	0.6%	1.9%

(a) Includes on woman with eight marriages.

Table 4 - 10

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages Contracted by Women - Marina

Age of Women	Total Number	% of Sample	Acc. %	Number of Marriages 1	2	3	4	5	6
10 - 14	4	2.1	2.1	3	1	-	-	-	-
15 - 19	34	18.0	20.1	29	5	-	-	-	-
20 - 24	29	15.3	35.4	21	7	-	-	-	1
25 - 29	32	16.9	52.3	19	8	4	-	1	-
30 - 34	16	8.5	60.8	10	1	3	1	-	1
35 - 39	28	14.8	75.6	21	5	2	-	-	-
40 - 44	16	8.5	84.1	9	5	-	2	-	-
45 - 49	9	4.8	88.9	6	2	1	-	-	-
50 - 54	7	3.7	92.6	2	3	-	1	1	-
55 - 59	3	1.6	94.2	2	-	1	-	-	-
60 or more	11	5.8	100	6	2	1	-	2	-
Total	189			128	39	12	4	4	2
% in marriage category (99.9%)				67.7%	20.6%	6.3%	2.1%	2.1%	1.1%

women in their twenties, more than a quarter (27.7 per cent) of the Yarinci sample, and a third (34.4 per cent) of the Marina women, had contracted one or more marriages subsequent to their first marriage. Half the Yarinci women in their thirties, and 30 per cent of Marina women in their thirties, had contracted more than one marriage. Among Yarinci women forty years old or older, more than half (56.4 per cent) had entered into a second or subsequent marriage, compared to slightly less than half (45.7 per cent) of the Marina women of the same age group.

It is reasonable to expect the percentage of women who have contracted more than one marriage to increase with time. What is interesting here is the relatively small rise with age in the percentage of women who have remarried. From the percentages shown, and given that women in their late forties do not usually remarry, and that even younger women may not remarry, it appears that most women who marry again probably divorce and remarry, at least initially, fairly early in their marital careers.

One of the most striking features of these tables is the large number of women (two-thirds (67.7 per cent) of the Marina sample, and three-fifths (58.7 per cent) of the Yarinci women) who had contracted only one marriage. Some of these women are widows, some are non-married women; many are women still living with their first and only husband.

The vast majority of women in each ward (89 per cent in Yarinci, 88.3 per cent in Marina) had contracted no more than two marriages. The rather high average number of marriages per woman (1.63 for

Yarinci, and 1.53 for Marina) is raised by the remaining women, some of whom had contracted five or more marriages.

Men, however, tend to marry more frequently than women. Marital histories were collected for men in the two wards, with greater concentration on numbers of marriages contracted and completed than on marriage duration. Tables 4-11, 4-12 and 4-13, representing 87 men in Yarinci and 128 men in Marina, set forth the number of marriages contracted by each man in relation to his age at time of interview.

In Yarinci, the 87 men included in Table 4-11 had contracted 228 marriages, or an average of 2.6 marriages per man. In Marina, the 128 men who are represented in Table 4-12 had contracted 285 marriages, or an average of 2.2 marriages per man. Only about one-third (35.6 per cent) of the Yarinci men, and two-fifths (40.6 per cent) of the Marina men had married only once, as compared to almost three-fifths of the Yarinci women and two-thirds of the Marina women. The larger number of marriages for men is partly a function of the opportunity available to men to be married to more than one wife at a time, partly a function of the greater ease with which men can seek remarriage, and partly a result of the much lengthier span of time during which remarriage is expected and approved for men in society. Men remarry as long as they are physically and financially able. Younger women are preferred spouses for their fertility, their beauty and their strength, by men of all ages. Men may contract marriage with a constantly expanding category of women, while the women's pool of possible spouses inexorably

Table 4 - 11

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages among Yarinci Men (a)

Age of Men	Total Number	% of Sample	Acc. %	Number of Marriages 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
20-24	1	1.1	1.1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-29	5	5.7	6.8	4	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
30-34	12	13.8	20.6	7	1	3	-	-	-	-	1
35-39	8	9.2	29.8	6	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
40-44	16	18.4	48.2	5	4	4	1	2	-	-	-
45-49	14	16.1	64.3	2	4	1	3	1	1	1	1
50-54	12	13.8	78.1	5	3	3	1	-	-	-	-
55-59	9	10.3	88.4	1	2	2	2	-	-	2	-
60-64	7	8.0	96.4	-	3	1	2	1	-	-	-
65-69	1	1.1	97.5	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
70 or more	2	2.3	99.8	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total Number	87			31	20	14	11	4	1	3	3
Percent in each Category (Total 99.8%)				35.6	23.0	16.1	12.6	4.6	1.1	3.4	3.4

(a) These men represent about two-thirds (65.4%) of ever-married men in the ward.

Table 4 - 12

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages among Marina Men (a)

Age of Men	Total Number	% of Sample	Acc. %	Number of Marriages 1	2	3	4	5	6	8	12
20-24	2	1.6	1.6	1	1	-	-	-	-	-	-
25-29	15	11.7	13.3	13	1	-	-	1	-	-	-
30-34	23	18.0	31.3	10	10	2	1	-	-	-	-
35-39	15	11.7	43.0	6	6	2	-	-	1	-	-
40-44	28	21.9	64.9	9	6	7	2	1	3	-	-
45-49	17	13.3	78.2	7	5	3	2	-	-	-	-
50-54	10	7.8	86.0	2	4	2	1	1	-	-	-
55-59	4	3.1	89.1	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	-
60-64	7	5.5	94.6	1	2	-	-	2	-	1	1
65-69	1	0.8	95.4	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-
70 or more	6	4.7	100.1	1	3	2	-	-	-	-	-
Total Number	128			52	39	18	8	5	4	1	1
Percentage in each Category (Total 100.1%)				40.6	30.5	14.1	6.3	3.9	3.1	0.8	0.8

(a) These men represent more than half (54.2%) of the ever-married men in the ward.

dwindles. Since older women are inappropriate spouses for young men, and older men prefer younger women, there is little chance of older women remarrying, should they want to do so. However, as has been demonstrated in Chapter Three, there are cogent reasons for some women to prefer non-marriage to remarriage.

The relationship of age to number of marriages among men in both wards is shown in abbreviated form in Table 4-13.

Table 4 - 13

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages - Yarinci and Marina

Age of Men	YARINCI Number of Marriages				MARINA Number of Marriages			
	1	2	3	4 or more	1	2	3	4 or more
20 - 29	5	1	-	-	14	2	-	1
30 - 39	13	2	3	2	16	16	4	2
40 - 49	7	8	5	10	16	11	10	8
50 or more	6	9	6	10	6	10	4	8
Total	31	20	14	22	52	39	18	19

In Yarinci, almost half the men in their thirties included in the table had already contracted at least two marriages; in Marina, more than half the men in this age category (about 58 per cent) had married two or more times. Among men aged forty or more, the numbers of marriages contracted are much higher: only thirteen Yarinci men (about 21 per cent) had contracted a single marriage, while twenty men (about one third) had married at least four times. In Marina, about 30 per cent of men aged forty or more had had only one marriage;

about one fifth (22 per cent) had had four marriages or more. Although Yarinci shows a higher number of marriages contracted per man, in both wards about two-thirds of the men aged thirty or more had married at least twice.

The status of the marriages entered into by the men of the two wards at the time of interview is presented below:

Yarinci	Number	Percent of Total
Extant marriages	139	61.0 %
Marriages completed through divorce	74	32.5 %
Marriages completed through death	15	6.6 %
Total number of marriages	228	100.1 %
Marina		
Extant marriages	158	55.4 %
Marriages completed through divorce	108	37.9 %
Marriages completed through death	19	6.7 %
Total number of marriages	285	100.0 %

These figures produce the following divorce rates for men:

Yarinci	A.	31.1 %	Marina	A.	37.9 %
	B.	83.1 %		B.	85.0 %
	C.	34.7 %		C.	40.6 %

Marina divorce rates for men and women are similar; this is consistent with the fact that many Marina men are married to only one woman at a time, effecting in practice a kind of serial polygyny. Yarinci men show a higher percentage of extant marriages than do any other category of married persons. The incidence of polygyny is high in the ward: of the 228 marriages contracted by the Yarinci men, 54 (23.7 per cent) represent polygynous unions, i.e. the second, third or fourth wife married to the individual.

Divorce Procedures - Unilateral Repudiation

Muslim law in Nigeria reserves to the husband the right of talaq - unilateral repudiation of the marriage. Most marriages are terminated through pronouncement of the talaq, and require no recourse to the courts. The husband repudiating his wife need give no reason for his action.[1] A man can therefore divorce his wife if and when he chooses. However, it appears from marital histories that many divorces by talaq are also instigated or requested by discontented wives. In pronouncing the talaq, the husband relinquishes his rights to any return of marriage expenses as compensation, but this is not an important consideration in Katsina, as will be shown below.

Judicial Divorce

Divorce cases in the courts are almost always initiated by

---

1. Law reform in a few Muslim countries has curtailed the husband's non-accountability in divorce. In Syria, a woman divorced without reasonable cause may sue for compensation. In Morocco, Singapore, and parts of Malaysia, any woman divorced against her will may claim a consolatory gift through the courts. Tunisia has reduced traditional rights of divorce even more, in that "no divorce pronounced outside a court of law will have any legal validity whatever" (J.N.D. Anderson, 1976, p. 126). In other countries (e.g. Singapore, Pakistan) divorce through talaq is not operative until after a period of time during which court appointed arbitrators attempt to reconcile the couple. Other countries (Iran, Algeria, South Yemen, Somalia) and communities (the Isma'ili Muslims of East Africa) permit men to divorce their wives only on specified grounds, severely limiting their formerly boundless power of divorce (J.N.D. Anderson, 1976, pp. 124-9).

women. These cases represent only a small proportion of all divorces, but they certainly demonstrate one of the means by which women unhappy with their marriages can effect termination. Unfortunately, divorce cases brought to court for adjudication are an obvious target for any attempt to lower divorce rates, such as occurred during the colonial period.

By 1920, the numbers of divorce cases reaching the district courts were large enough[1] to prompt high-level administrative enquiries into the reasons for the upsurge - whether the increase represented an overall increase in divorce, or whether more cases were being directed to local courts which had previously been dealt with through local networks and informal pressures.[2] The Katsina District Officer rightly pointed out that many divorce cases do not reach the courts, and that therefore the figures are not indicative of total numbers of divorces, but did note that divorces that were terminated through talaq in the presence of witnesses were being settled in court, a point supported by reference to court records.[3] E.J. Arnett, the Acting Lieutenant

---

1. Katsina District Courts granted 430 divorces in 1919. In 1913 and 1914, for which records are available, the comparable numbers were 336 and 293 divorces respectively. (Letter from D.O. i/c Katsina Division to Resident, Kano Province, 13 October 1920 /Item No. 95/1920, File 1674/).

2. Letter from Resident Kano to District Officer Katsina, 22 September 1920 (File 1674).

3. For the years 1913, 1914, and 1919, divorces given by the husband account for 16.7 per cent, 18.8 per cent, and 30.9 per cent respectively, of all court adjudicated divorces in Katsina District. At the time, no court fees were charged and divorce through the colonial courts probably seemed more "official" than divorce at home.

Governor of the Northern Provinces, compiled the information sent from all the Northern areas, and added his own gloss on the data. Noting the increase in the use of the courts by women for divorce, he states that

> "It appears...that women have succeeded in asserting rights granted them by the Sharia but hitherto withheld. The motive inspiring the women is described by same /sic/ as an avaricious desire for a richer husband and by others...as a reasonable wish to escape from a position of subjection and practical servitude in which many husbands formerly held them."
>
> (Minute by his honour the Acting Lieutenant Governor on the question relating to divorce among Moslems, 4 February 1921 /File 1674/)

Almost all the remedies put forward by government officials to cut down numbers of divorces presupposed collusion on the part of the woman and her kin, or of the woman and her intended spouse, and penalised the litigant accordingly. Two of the suggestions would have required greater expenditure by the woman seeking divorce.

While these solutions to the "problem" of divorce were not enforced, another attempt was made two decades later. During the period from 1921 to 1940, divorce cases had shown "a steady and alarming rise".[1] In order to counteract this trend and to reduce litigation, a three shilling divorce fee was introduced in January, 1940. However, this fee was declared illegal according to Muslim law, and was abolished six months later.[2]

---

1. Letter from S. Macdonald Smith, A.D.O. Katsina, July 17, 1940 (File 1674)

2. Minutes of meeting 6 June 1940. Resident (of Katsina Province) R.L. Payne, Emirs of Katsina and Daura, et al. (File 1674).

However, the court fees did serve one important function for the women, which had been recognised earlier but dealt with in differing ways by the various courts. This function was to provide tangible proof of the break-up of the marriage. Some courts provided this proof by receiving legitimate court fees[1] from a husband, then giving the receipt to the wife; others gave the husband his receipt, and charged the woman a witness fee (kudin shaida), which was arbitrarily assessed by the court, and which had no basis in English or Muslim law, but which then provided her with her written proof of divorce.[2] This is a consideration for present-day Hausa women also, and is reflected in a breakdown of court divorce statistics.

The two Katsina Area Courts[3] with a catchment area of Katsina City and environs, heard 329 divorce cases during the one-year period from July 27, 1971 to July 26, 1972. All but two of these cases were brought by women. Men no longer bring their wives to court to divorce them, quite probably because divorce fees are now payable for all cases. Thus, a person seeking divorce pays £2 initially, £1 for the certificate of divorce,[4] and whatever additional

---

1. Under Muslim law, a fee is payable in divorce cases only in the event that one party benefits economically from the judgment. As this most often occurs when the husband is awarded the return of marriage expenses, he is most commonly liable to court fees.

2. From notes by S. Macdonald Smith (File 1674).

3. Katsina Area Court No. 3 has subsequently been established.

4. Area Court No. 2 charged only 5/- for the certificate until mid-October, 1971, when the cost was increased to £1.

sums may be levied by the court for calling witnesses and/or defendants.[1] And court cases are not only expensive, but also time-consuming. Bringing a case to court demands initiative and determination on the part of the litigant.

The divorce cases are categorised below in terms of purpose or disposition.

Table 4 - 14

Divorce Proceedings, Katsina Area Courts

		Total	Percent
1.	Divorce sought; granted with no compensation required	222	67.5
2.	Divorce sought; granted on payment of compensation by wife	26	7.9
3.	Divorce sought by husband, with return of his money and goods; granted by court	1	0.3
4.	Divorce sought by wife, with return of her goods; granted by court	7	2.1
5.	Divorce sought on grounds of no maintenance because of husband's continued absence; granted by court	18	5.5
6.	Divorce sought; reconciliation effected	17	5.2
7.	Request for confirmation of divorce; granted by court	6	1.8
8.	Disclaimer of divorce (case brought by husband)	3	0.9
9.	Incomplete cases	29	8.8
	Total	329	100.0 %

The Hausa recognise that no woman who refuses to continue with

---

1. These fees are at the discretion of the judge. Those sent to call witnesses ('yan kira) are often not government employees; the assessed fees are their only remuneration. (Personal communication from Malam Abubakar Atiku Yusufu, Inspector for Area Courts, Katsina)

a marriage can be forced to do so. Whereas according to strictly applied Muslim law, a woman could be denied a divorce indefinitely, the Katsina courts are far more lenient in their decisions. This is evident both in the overwhelming number of divorce petitions that succeed, and in the small number of cases in which compensation is required of the woman for divorce.

One explanation of the ease of obtaining a divorce is more derogatory towards women, for it suggests that any wife is dispensable, and can be replaced by another more willing or reasonable. Thus, a husband may be shamed into agreeing to divorce his wife by such taunts as "Is she your mother, that she is so important to you?" The husband's dominance is called into question, and women are relegated to an undifferentiated but subordinate category. Such a ploy denies the reality of women's control over their destinies, but appears to be the only way in which men can withdraw from a losing battle of wills without too great a loss of face.

Reasons for divorce, and grounds for divorce, are frequently different. Grounds, the legal bases on which divorce might be granted, are only sometimes advanced in the woman's petition, most commonly in cases of lack of maintenance, associated with desertion. In cases which do not involve desertion, the woman may cite legitimate grounds (e.g. insufficient food, cruelty[1])

---

1. Only the Maliki school of law recognises cruelty as grounds for judicial divorce (A. Phillips and H.F. Morris, p. 130, fn. 1).

or she may give other reasons which are not grounds in Muslim law, as to why she will not continue the marriage. Even when the woman gives sufficient grounds, other than in cases of desertion, this is usually denied by the husband, and the case continues as if the grounds had not been stated. Many of the divorce cases are very brief. The appearance of the court messenger with a summons forces the husband to act. For many, the very fact of their wife's having made this explicit statement, and having exposed the husband to official scrutiny, precipitates divorce. The messenger often returns with a letter from the husband attesting to the pronouncement of divorce in front of witnesses, with the date. The wife thereupon pays her £1,[1] is issued with her receipt, and begins idda.

The husband may come to court on receipt of the summons, and agree to divorce his wife there. Usually there is some explanation and denial of allegations on the husband's part, and he must decide what course to follow. Reconciliation, the ideal solution to marital disputes in Muslim thought, is not common now in the courts, occurring in only seventeen divorce actions (5.2 per cent of the total), although it was a more frequent alternative in the past. It is possible that some of the twenty-nine uncompleted divorce actions might have ended in reconciliation, but this is only conjecture.

---

1. Variously called in the court records kuḍin shaida (money of witness), kuḍin takarda (money of /the divorce/ paper), or kuḍin Ushira (Muslim court fees).

A phenomenon specific to Katsina is the custom of a father or other senior agnatic kinsman pronouncing the divorce formula. In one such case, a wife sued her husband for divorce on the grounds of lack of maintenance. The husband's father appeared before the court and pronounced divorce against his son's wife. This was accepted by the court, although there was no evidence that the husband could not come to court or that he had authorised his father to pronounce divorce (Kaita Alkali's Court, Case No. Civ. 372/395/1966, cited in Shani, n.d. (b), p. 6).

In another case, a wife sued her husband for divorce on the grounds of desertion and no maintenance. The husband's father answered the summons in his son's stead, divulged the young man's address, and requested that the court notify the husband of the pending divorce suit. Upon receipt of the letter, the husband wrote to the court asking that his parents send his wife to him. The court called the parties together (the aggrieved wife, her kin, and the husband's father) and informed them of the contents of the letter. Her family refused to send her, fearing that she might suffer in her husband's house far from her family, and the husband's father agreed to pronounce the divorce formula, which he did; the girl paid the court fee, and returned home for the compulsory three-month waiting period before remarriage (Katsina Area Court No. 2, Civ. No. 14/18/1/72).

Pronouncement of the talaq is the most common of the three main forms of divorce among Northern Nigerian Muslims; the other methods are khul' or mubara'a (divorce by mutual agreement) and

faskh (dissolution by court order). The third, faskh, is decreed by the court most often in cases of failure to maintain the wife because of desertion. The few other marriages which might have been dissolved by the courts, on grounds of chronic illness or sexual impotence, were terminated by the husband by talaq after the wife brought the matter to court. In the Katsina court desertion suits, the length of the husband's absence ranged from five months to ten years; in almost all cases, after a one-month period set ostensibly to gather news of the husband's whereabouts, divorce was granted. In Hausa custom, however, this is not so much divorce as a "setting aside" of the marriage (jinginad da aure), which could be reestablished without additional ritual or formalities other than idda, with the return of the husband, even if the wife had subsequently remarried.

According to Maliki law, a man who adequately maintains his wife should not be compelled to divorce her, although in certain circumstances he might be forced to accept compensation in lieu of continuing the marriage. When the wife seeks divorce, the husband may request a period of conciliation,[1] which is always granted, usually with the establishment of a date by which the husband, or both spouses, will return to report progress.[2] Many such cases

---

1. The husband uses the phrase, "Ina biko", to express his desire to persuade his wife to continue the marriage. Bargery defines biko as "efforts to conciliate (a) a runaway wife (by a husband or his deputy), (b) an enemy, (c) a refractory subject." The categories (a), (b), and (c) seem not altogether disparate, and in some aspects possibly synonymous.

2. According to J.N.D. Anderson, most Northern Nigerian jurists he spoke to admitted that if protracted efforts at reconciliation, or agreement over khul', failed, they "order a suitable refund of marriage payments and dissolve the union" (1954, pp. 209-10). This is consistent with decisions in the Katsina courts.

ended eventually with the husband pronouncing the talaq, after his wife's repeated refusal to return to her marital home. However, others were terminated through mutual consent, with compensation given by the woman (khul'; Hausa: hul'i, hakki), or, on court scrutiny, with no compensation.

The provision for a wife to secure divorce through payment of compensation is based on Sura II, Verse 229, of the Koran:

> "...if you fear they may not maintain God's bounds, it is no fault in them for her to redeem herself."
>
> (A.J. Arberry transl., p. 32)

It is generally agreed that the compensation should be no more than that which the husband has given the wife in marriage; an amount greater than that would be valid in law, but morally offensive (K.N. Ahmed, p. 264).

The legally recognised marriage payment in Islam is the dower, called sadaq, or mahr (Hausa: sadaki), which is only a minimal part of the marriage expenses incurred by the husband and his kin. But the courts tend to follow custom rather than strict Muslim law,[1] and the husband usually lists all the expenses incurred in marriage with the wife requesting khul', and demands their restitution as compensation for her release. However, the courts rarely recommend that the wife pay this amount, but rather take into consideration all expenses incurred by the wife and her family in the marriage,

---

1. The question of what costs should constitute compensation has long been unresolved, as is evident in the replies from throughout the North to a formal government enquiry into the question in 1926 (Memo No. K.1571/76 8 April 1927 submitted by G.J. Lethem, Acting Secretary, Northern Provinces /File 14887). No consensus has been reached, and the matter is left to the discretion of the court.

and set the two against each other. Other factors, such as length of marriage, issue, and consummation or non-consummation are included in reaching a reasonable settlement, although in law only the last of these should affect marriage compensation. Arbitrators are very rarely appointed by the court to examine the cases further, and decisions are generally made by the judge (alkali) on the basis of evidence presented by the contending couple and their witnesses. The following examples[1] illustrate some of these points:

Case A.

The couple were married for five months. The wife sues for divorce on the grounds of lack of maintenance (no food). The husband denies the lack of maintenance, and asks the woman to return. She refuses, and he offers to divorce her on the payment of his marriage expenses. They agree that he spent £21-9-6 on premarital gifts (toshi) and bridewealth (dukiyar aure), with an additional £14-6-6 for indirect dowry (lefe). His total expenses, therefore, amounted to £35-16-0. The wife brought to her husband in marriage £13, in addition to £7-3-3 in clothing and cash, for a total outlay of £20-3-3.

Judgment: Since the difference in expenses is small, the marriage lasted five months, and the couple had consummated the marriage, there was nothing for the wife to return. She should pay 5/- for her divorce paper.

(Katsina Area Court No. 2, Civ. No. 394/20/9/71, Mairo Dan Iyau v Sani Dan Iyau).

Case B.

The wife sues for divorce on the grounds of cruelty (beating and excessive sexual demands) and insufficient food. The husband agrees to

---

1. Area Court records are in Hausa; the translations here are my own.

divorce her on the return of his expenses of £201-0-3. These are listed in detail, and include all gifts for the three years prior to marriage. Her own contributions are then calculated, which include £30 in cash, and assorted foodstuffs.

Judgment: All the money spent on the woman when she was a maiden are in earnest of the marriage, which was later celebrated and consummated. Therefore, this money is irretrievable. The indirect dowry (lefe and na gani ina so) is not recoverable because the marriage has lasted six months. Other marriage expenses (£14 for the marriage, £15 returned to an unsuccessful suitor (kuɗin ramuwa), and £5 dower (sadaki)) are returnable. However, as the wife brought £30 and foodstuffs to the marriage, nothing need be returned except the dower of £5, since she is refusing the marriage because she is unable to meet her husband's demands.
She should pay £5, and £1 for her divorce paper.

(Katsina Area Court No. 1, Civ. No. 345/12/6/72, Halima ta Saulawa Katsina v M. Audu Saulawa Katsina)

Case C

The couple have been married four years. The wife sues for divorce on the grounds of lack of maintenance, and says her husband hasn't sought her return since she went back to her parents' house two months earlier. The husband denies this and asks her to return to his house; she refuses. He agrees to divorce her if she returns the £10 kuɗin ramawa (money returned to an unsuccessful suitor) which he had given her mother, and the mother had spent, and £7 money of seeking marriage (kuɗin neman aure). She refuses, saying the marriage is between them, and has nothing to do with her mother.

Judgment: Since they have been married long, have slept together, and she has done the housework, the court does not see that the wife owes anything. The divorce is confirmed, and the woman should pay £1 for her divorce paper.

(Katsina Area Court No. 2, Civ. No. 182/4/7/72, Inno Bagobiri Sabon Layi v. Iro Barirko Kofar Marusa)

In all these cases, Hausa custom works in favour of the woman, and acts to make divorce easier than it would be through strict interpretation of Muslim divorce law. Verdicts such as those reached in Cases A and C above are common in the Katsina courts, and act to swell the number of cases in Category One of Table 4-14, and reduce the proportion of cases in Category Two. Many divorce suits which included demands for khul' were eventually settled without compensation being paid to the husband, through judgment of the court. Indeed, in some cases the husband himself, on seeing the direction of proceedings, would agree to divorce his wife without further compensation. It is only in instances of non-consummation of marriage that the husband could expect to receive most of his marriage expenses, and even here the amount the wife brought to the marriage would be taken into consideration.

There is a general assumption among Katsina people that most divorces are taken to court for adjudication. This is utterly unsupported by court records and available data in Katsina, including the informants' own marital histories, but is probably given substance by the growing concern for written proof of divorce. However, not many women do apply to the courts for confirmation of divorce. During the year under consideration, only six women approached the court for verification of divorce. In these cases, whether the divorce was verbal or written, the husband was called to the court to confirm the divorce,[1] whereupon the wife could be issued with a

---

1. Reading of the court records suggests that some formal divorce cases were originally brought by the female plaintiff as simple confirmation of divorce, but became full-fledged divorce suits upon the husband's denial of divorce.

court receipt.

Many men in the city now divorce with a paper, which then provides the wife with her proof of divorce. For women married in their natal area, written proof of divorce is not necessary. If divorce occurs, knowledge of the event quickly spreads through the community. However, women living away from their natal homes, and especially karuwai whose backgrounds are often shrouded in secrecy, require some formal evidence of divorce to avoid any difficulties in remarriage; court divorce, or confirmation of divorce, is useful in this respect. Court divorce, unlike e.g. the single talaq, is irrevocable, requiring a new marriage ceremony even if the divorced woman is still in idda.

The disposition of divorce cases in the courts, with the large number of divorces granted, is indicative of the importance of the courts as the ultimate means by which a woman may finally effect release from an unwanted marriage, no matter how reluctant or unwilling her husband may be to release her. The minimal or nil compensation required of the woman makes court divorce tenable for women who might otherwise find divorce expenses so high that divorce itself becomes unrealisable. Although divorce remains easier for men than for women, both sexes have access to the means to effect divorce, and divorce remains a viable and frequently called-upon solution to unwanted marriage in the society.

Conclusion

Through analysis of quantitative and qualitative data concerning marriage and divorce, we have established that the Hausa woman has considerable latitude in the contracting and the termination of marriage. While social convention usually constrains the young girl to marry according to the wishes of her kin particularly in first marriage, the high incidence of early divorce is indicative of the woman's subsequent independence of action.

A woman's ease of divorce is associated with a number of structural factors, such as the cognatic nature of Hausa kinship, the woman's continued close association with her kin group, bestowal of marriage prestations of virtually equal value, women's ownership of property, and the relative unimportance of inheritance from the husband.

The use of women as pawns in the creation of alliances is generally contra-indicated in Hausa society, as the stability of the marriage cannot be guaranteed. Ronald Cohen, writing of the Kanuri who have a similar high rate of divorce, suggests that:

> "...the most important quality of /an/ alliance is the idea that the marriage was in fact initiated and carried out... Whether or not the union lasts, the noteworthy point...is the fact that the event haa taken place. The durability of the union is a matter outside the control, more or less, of the alliance that created it."
>
> (p. 181)

In Katsina, not only do marriages in which the girl is given

against her will have a low survival rate, but also any benefits accruing to the bestowal itself are fairly thoroughly cancelled out by the ill-will generated in early divorce. The spreading custom of deferring to the wishes of the girl concerning choice of spouse is in part an attempt to avoid the repercussions and recriminations involved in the rapid termination of a carefully arranged marriage. Alliances are better created ex post facto through enduring marriages.

Probably the only consideration that may keep a woman in an unsatisfactory marriage is the presence of children born to the union; men have and exercise the right of retaining their offspring. However, though denied control over their own children with divorce, women may still raise, and keep, the children of their kin. Fostering provides a measure of continuity in a woman's life, and acts as a living bond between a woman and her cognatic kin group.

The incidence of divorce for women lessens with age, with duration of marriage, and with fertility in marriage, but is an ever-present possible means of terminating marriage. Women certainly do not initiate all divorces, and indeed may be divorced utterly against their will. However, marital histories suggest that women may and do frequently seek and obtain divorce, either through the husband's pronouncement of the divorce formula, or through recourse to the courts. So whereas a woman may be "controlled" in certain respects within marriage, she cannot be forced to remain married.

And after leaving the marital home, remarriage is only one

of several possible career choices. Some women opt for non-marriage, discussed in Chapter Three. Other women, and particularly younger women, may choose to go to the city, to "see the world", and to partake of the opportunities and the uncertainties which are consequent upon entry into the world of karuwanci, or courtesanship. The reasons behind such a decision, and the nature of the option, are the subject of the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

ENTERING INTO KARUWANCI

According to Hausa dominant ideology, i.e. the ideology favouring men and often manipulated by women, the only proper role for women of child-bearing age is that of wife and mother. Ideally, through cooperation with kin and affines and submission to those in a superior relationship to her, the Hausa wife can expect to live peacefully in her marital home. Even in the event of divorce, the "obedient" Hausa woman can usually remarry without much difficulty through the assistance of kinsmen and kinswomen.

However, many women do not follow this course, and instead opt for another kind of career and life-style. We have examined in Chapter Three one of the options women choose other than marriage. Non-marriage, or jawarci, offers a number of benefits not available in marriage, and is a long-term life-style for a significant number of women. The career option is more clearly and freely recognised by women than by men: success in the career threatens the vested interests of men, and confounds the expressed dominant ideology regarding the appropriate relationships of women to men.

The women's career that men do recognise, and which hundreds of women were pursuing in Katsina during the research period, is that of prostitution, called in Hausa karuwanci. A woman practising karuwanci is a karuwa (pl. karuwai). This

category of women, lacking education or special skills which could afford them a niche in the modern economy,act out the role traditionally accorded to them and expected of them.

In the course of this chapter, we examine the rationale behind entry into the world of karuwanci, taking into consideration not only the women's own explanations, but also the sociological evidence of the women's histories and present behaviour. Here, as elsewhere in this study, we consider the women's verbalised responses in relation to the wider societal ideology, and in relation to the women's own model of society, and their perceived roles.

The latter part of the chapter is devoted to a statistical analysis of certain aspects of the women's careers. Utilising data concerning the women's behaviour during their early days as karuwai, we question the degree of stigma associated with karuwanci, particularly in relation to the women's severance of communication links and other ties with their kin. The large number of marriages already contracted by the karuwai prior to their entering karuwanci, in spite of their relative youth, suggests a certain dissatisfaction with their previous career strategy. The collected sociological data provide a key to understanding the pressures, and the aspirations, which induce the individual woman to enter into the world of karuwanci.

Karuwa: the Meaning of the Term

The word karuwa may refer to a male or a female. In the

masculine sense, according to Abraham, it signifies either a thief or a profligate man. However, the Katsina data suggests that there are positive characteristics associated with the term karuwa when applied to a man, as there are when applied to a woman in certain contexts. This underscores the ambivalence felt towards the individual who opts for an alternative life-style, and succeeds in it. Thus, the term may be derogatory or complimentary. In its positive aspects, it signifies a person who is smart, or clever, and is successful in his milieu. Or it may signify a lady's man, a man who is able to converse with women, make them comfortable, and who enjoys the company of women, although not necessarily to the exclusion of that of men. Thus, a man who has a "way with women" is also a karuwa, and is accorded perhaps a grudging respect by his peers.

Far more frequently applied to women than to men, the term karuwa refers to a woman living with neither her husband, nor parents, nor other kin, who is dependent totally or in part upon gifts from one or more men, for whom she provides sexual services. The spatial criterion is crucial, in that a woman away from her husband or relatives is no longer controlled by them, or guided by them. She has, by her physical removal from their presence, deviated from what is her socially appropriate place, in spatial and normative terms. In this situation, that she should deviate further is expected or assumed. Recognition of this is vital in understanding the activities and strategies employed by the

woman on her own. And, as demonstrated in Chapter Three, the spatial factor is also important in order to avoid subsuming non-married women into the category of karuwai.

One problem which arises in translating Hausa conceptions of karuwanci into sociological data is that of defining and discussing the karuwa without introducing the very negative western connotations associated with prostitution. Barkow (1971, p. 6) and Bernus (p. 156) use the term courtesan rather than prostitute, and, indeed, the Hausa karuwa is usually "courted" rather than being more starkly bought. I agree that courtesan is probably the most appropriate English term to describe the Hausa karuwa, but I fear that this word also presents a too limited picture of the karuwa. Thus,in order to mitigate the effects of preconceived notions and value judgments evoked by any of these imported terms, whether prostitute, courtesan, harlot or hetaira, and in order to provide a fresh setting in which to present the data, the Hausa terminology will be used herein. This also provides the most straightforward means of distinguishing the Hausa women selling their sexual services in Katsina City from other women whose soliciting techniques are more similar to those commonly practised in the western world.

Categorisation of Prostitution in Katsina City

Women selling sexual services in Katsina fall into two main categories, the Akwato and the karuwai; this is a generally accepted

emic distinction. Akwato, or 'yan how-much-you-go-pay,[1] are non-Hausa women who provide their services to any visitor at a prearranged price. Akwato is the Hausa name for the Idoma, who do form a proportion of this category of women in other areas. However, in Katsina the "Akwato" population is composed mainly of Tiv and Ibo women. Activities of this group correspond most closely to the western concept of prostitution. The women usually rent rooms in the larger clubs and hotels, and sometimes have their minimum price in writing on the door or in their rooms. Otherwise, the prospective customer and the woman must agree before having sexual relations on an acceptable price - thus the designation "how much you go pay". Karuwai consider such behaviour shameful, and have little respect for the women involved. Data on this group of prostitutes, the Akwato, is not included in the following pages, which is mainly a study of karuwai.

The karuwai are virtually all Hausa, and share many attitudes and values. Within the category of karuwai, however, some distinctions are evident. Some of the women, young and "modern", are more alive to the opportunities and accoutrements associated with the westernised segment of the society, than are the more traditional women. These women, known as 'yan good evening for their espousal of English and things modern, are distinguished by western dress, and behaviour more aggressive than that of

---

1. "'Yan", meaning children of..., is a term commonly used to signify "the people associated with, or who practise (some named activity or thing)".

the traditional women. Thus, the 'yan good evening will solicit in clubs and hotels, and even loiter on the roads leading to the elite section of town and the best night-spots in order to meet wealthy men with automobiles. However, once the woman has found a man, she expects to be courted and wooed much like her traditional colleagues, and will not reduce the relationship by engaging in pecuniary bargaining. The 'yan good evening share accommodation with their more traditional colleagues, and differ from them mainly in these stated aspects of behaviour, dress, and orientation.

The traditional karuwai form the vast majority of the population of independent women. They wear the standard Hausa dress of wrapper and blouse, may stay close to the house in which they are living, and are more concerned than the 'yan good evening with behaving in accordance with Hausa traditional ideals of womanhood. The differences in technique and orientation between the 'yan good evening and the traditional karuwai are not as significant as their common cultural base, and similar socialisation and inculcated values. The two sub-groups comprise together the totality of karuwai in the city, and are treated as a single category throughout this study. The karuwai, their activities, attitudes, and opportunities, are the subject of this and the following two chapters.

Geographical Area of Research

During 1972-73, more than five hundred karuwai were living

in Katsina City. Most of the women were living in rented rooms in houses where the tenants were primarily karuwai. Such a house is known as a gidan mata (pl. gidajen mata), a "house of women". Occasionally, one finds a single man, or, more rarely, a family, or in a number of cases, one or more transvestites or homosexuals in the same building. Many of the houses of women are clustered in Sabon Layi, the area of the city in which most of the non-Hausa residents live. Sabon Layi is not itself a city ward, either for the purposes of administration or taxation. Rather, it overlaps several of these wards, particularly Sha'iskawa and Yar'adua. It is in this area that the inexpensive hotels, beer parlours, and large-scale food-selling houses are found. The proprietors of many of these establishments are former or active karuwai. The two cinemas in Katsina are on the edge of Sabon Layi. Newcomers to the city, transients, newly arrived women on their own, and men looking for women, or for such night-life as there is, congregate around Sabon Layi.

In order to obtain the most comprehensive picture possible of the karuwai in Katsina, the researcher and her assistant attempted to identify and visit each house of women, and indeed every house when even one karuwa was resident. During the period of research, 123 houses in Katsina were occupied wholely or in part by karuwai. Every effort was made to establish the population of the house and the number of karuwai resident, and to obtain at least minimal census data from the karuwai present. Finding the houses of women, which outside the Sabon Layi area tended to be

scattered and multi-purpose, would have been considerably more difficult without the active assistance of the karuwai already interviewed, who directed the research to other houses and other women not yet included in the survey.

The houses are concentrated in certain areas of the city. Seventy-three houses of women, or more than half the total number, are located in Sabon Layi. Within these houses reside 353 karuwai, more than two thirds of those practising in Katsina City. The remaining karuwai and houses of women are located in other areas in which housing is available, and within which the women can most successfully carry on their trade. The city is expanding through private construction to the east and southeast, and a number of multi-roomed houses which have been built there have been occupied predominantly by karuwai. Indeed, nineteen houses of women are located in the area known as Sabuwar Anguwa (New Ward), which has been established on former farmland in the southeastern section of the city. This area is becoming more popular with the karuwai as the numbers of buildings and the population grow. While not immediately next to any single major source of clientele, the houses are not distant from the main Katsina lorry park (for vehicles from Kano and other points south), the Police Barracks, and the Army Officers Mess. Even closer to the main lorry park are the five houses of women located in the Kongo area, south and west, on the same side of the road as the motor park, and across from the Officers Mess. Another three houses are located near the radio station, north of Sabuwar Anguwa; also on the eastern side of the City are ten houses of women in a new area of

expansion near the Katsina Hospital.

Seven houses of women are on the perimeter of the Katsina city market, which is another centre of activity and the locus of strangers and traders from surrounding areas. Three of these houses are on the east side of the market, which is also the site of the lorry park for traffic to Niger and other northern destinations. Other houses are scattered in Haben Birni, the western half of the city. This side of the city is densely populated, with much of the land built upon or claimed by local residents. Most of the buildings are owner-occupied, or occupied by members of the owner's extended family. The basically residential pattern, the closely-linked networks of kin occupying the area, and the high density of settlement militate against the likelihood or feasibility of maintaining many viable houses of women in the neighbourhood.

Becoming a Karuwa: Precipitating Pressures

There are three major factors cited by women as the immediate precipitating cause of their leaving the security of the natal or marital home, and entering the untried world of karuwanci. These include disagreements with kin over marriage termination and marital choice; poverty; and childlessness. Another important factor, the desire for independence and for the benefits of karuwanci, was less often cited as the precipitating cause, but is probably of equal, or perhaps greater, significance. Each

of these factors is considered below.

a) Marital problems and marriage choice

According to the majority of karuwai, their first experience with karuwanci was precipitated by plans for them either to enter into a new marriage arranged by their kin, or to return to a former marriage they did not want. Some women, recognising that they had no other means of stopping the marriage, ran away. Others fled in order to demonstrate their disagreement or anger, so that their parents would take their objections seriously.

None of the Hausa karuwai in Katsina at the time of this research had entered karuwanci as an unmarried girl; all had had at least one marriage.[1] As reported in Chapter Four, most girls get married at puberty, and so would have had an arranged marriage, however brief, before leaving their home town or village to live independently. Case histories of the karuwai indicate that many of them were being forced into marriage against their will not only in their first marriage, but in subsequent marriages as well.

We noted in Chapter Four that women, as wives and daughters, are expected to be submissive to the wishes of husband and kin. Women are often consulted about major decisions concerning themselves, which predominantly relate to marriage. However, if there is a difference of opinion between the woman and her parents, the woman is expected to eventually acquiesce. If she does not agree, she may try to enlist the support of other

---

1 The one woman shown in Table 5-5 as never having married is a Jaba woman from southern Zaria.

kinsmen to plead her case. But whether she has had one marriage, or more than one marriage, if a woman opposes her family's choice of a new husband whom she does not want, she may choose the alternative of an independent existence which karuwanci offers.

The following case studies exemplify this situation, and the alternative open to the woman.

> Amina is in her early forties, older than most of the karuwai in Katsina. She was born in a village near Katsina City, but was raised in the City by her paternal grandmother after her father died. When her grandmother died, she was returned to her father's kin, who married her to their neighbour. She bore three children in this marriage, which lasted about nine years. After a disagreement, she took her husband to court and got a divorce. Her kinsmen were angry with her, but were forced to accept the fait accompli.
>
> After idda, Amina married a Koranic scholar whom she chose. She was married to him for three years, during which time she ran home several times, but was beaten and returned by her kin. She and her husband then moved to another village, where her husband's mother lived, and where it was customary for women to farm and fetch water. Amina refused to farm, and left her husband. She was afraid to return to her kinsmen, whom she knew would beat her, and return her yet again, and so she came to Katsina to hide. After six months, Amina went home. Her husband no longer wanted her since she had "ruined herself" with karuwanci. Her family had tried to find her without success, and they were also angry with her. To escape the calumny and beatings, Amina returned to Katsina to continue her career as a karuwa. She has had two marriages since, but is again divorced and practising karuwanci.

> Halima, sixteen, has been in Katsina four months, having come here from Kano State via Daura and Kano City. She was raised by her

> mother's senior sister in a town near her parents' village, and returned to her father's house for her first marriage, to her patrilateral cross-cousin; it was the first marriage for each. Halima stayed in his house for two years, had no children, and decided to leave. She went home, but her parents sent her back to her husband's house. Each attempt to leave her marital home produced the same result. Finally she fled to Kano, where she rented a room. She was found by a kinsman within a week, who told her to come home. He said that if it were her marriage that had caused her to run away, the marriage would be broken. She returned home, but was again taken to her husband's house. She remained there less than a month and fled, first to Kano, then to Daura, and finally to Katsina City. She has been away nine months and her whereabouts are unknown to her family. She swears she will not return to her first husband.

It may be a woman's mother and her kin who are adamant about a particular match, and attempt to force the girl into submission, as in the following case:

> Binta, who is in her late twenties, was raised by her father's senior sister near Daura. Her first marriage was arranged by the woman who brought her up, but Binta refused to settle in her husband's house, and the marriage was ended by divorce after three months. Her foster mother assisted her in obtaining the divorce. Her second marriage was to a man of her choosing, who lived near her natal home. Binta was the most junior of three co-wives in this marriage, which lasted five years. However, while the other wives were bearing children to their husband, she had none; she decided to leave this marriage and marry elsewhere.
>
> Binta returned home for idda, and found a man she wished to marry. Her mother, however, decided to give her to another man. Binta

> insists she couldn't argue with her mother because of "shame"[1], or refuse her choice pointblank, and so she ran away before the marriage ceremony and became a karuwa in a town near Katsina. She has subsequently married again, divorced, and returned to karuwanci.

It is apparent from these case histories, and from others collected during the period of fieldwork, that women are subject to the authority of their kin almost indefinitely. Even if such authority is not activated in a particular marriage, it remains latent for future arrangements, and the woman's means of avoiding or fighting such concerted authority are limited. This is demonstrated by the case of Asiya:

> Katsina-born Asiya, twenty-five, has been married three times. Her first marriage was arranged by her parents to a non-relative whom the parents respected. The marriage lasted only three months, with Asiya continually running back home. The marriage was ended and the husband received back his marriage payments. Immediately she had finished idda, her parents married her to a relative in a nearby village. Again, Asiya, who was only about thirteen at the time, was given no choice. The marriage lasted four years, during which time she had one child, which died in infancy. Shortly after this marriage, Asiya married a man of her choice, and lived with him for six years. She had no children, and decided to return home. She received her divorce, and did idda. She

---

1. Binta was her mother's second child, but the firstborn died before being weaned, and the shame and avoidance (kunya) of the first child partially devolved upon her. This, and the fact that she did not grow up with her mother, made their relationship rather formal.

> then discovered that her family were planning to marry her, in what would have been her fourth marriage, to a man she didn't wish to marry. Rather than go through yet another unwanted marriage, Asiya left Katsina and began karuwanci. She eventually returned here to see her family, and has remained in Katsina since, living in rented accommodation and visiting her family frequently. She has been a karuwa for two-and-a-half years.

No attempt it made here to show statistical data concerning reasons for entering karuwanci. Of all the questions asked of women, this was among the most delicate, and except with informants with whom there was particularly good rapport, the question was not asked at all. There is a strong sense of privacy which is the norm in Hausa society; one does not usually ask direct questions of an individual regarding personal behaviour or actions, most especially where these run counter to dominant Hausa ideals. To ask such questions is to invite either direct rebuke or, more commonly, fabrications created to satisfy the interviewer and to end as rapidly as possible the unseemly and impolite prying the informant feels herself to be subjected to. In the incautious use of such questions, the researcher risks alienating the informant and gathering inaccurate information. The problem of verifiability is particularly difficult among the karuwai, most of whom are relatively anonymous in the city, living away from home and kin, and confiding in few people. However, some of the karuwai have known each other for years; others are from the same area, or are related. The case studies shown here, and the data on which the research queries and the conclusions are based, are taken mainly

from the more responsive of the informants, and from those informants whose histories were relatively well-known to the researcher.

Many, many hours were spent in informal conversation with the karuwai. This was invaluable, and was a delightful change of pace from attempting to obtain the first-person statistical data which is peppered throughout these chapters. In fact, it became distinctly more like pleasure than work. Much additional and fascinating information was garnered in the course of these sessions, partly of a general nature, and partly relating to the respondents or their friends. Some of the more intricate case studies are a compilation of the woman's own story, and the glosses and supplementary information provided by her fellow karuwai.

b) Poverty

Poverty and insufficient food became more important as factors inducing women to leave home as the 1972-74 Sahelian drought took its toll of crops and herds. Departure from home in this instance usually refers to the natal home rather than the marital home. A wife who suffered from hunger in her husband's home would have returned to her family in any event, and she would not have been sent back to a life of privation and hardship. Nor is it difficult for such a woman to end her marriage, since even Muslim law, which strictly limits grounds upon which women may sue for divorce, accepts lack of maintenance as sufficient cause. However, the woman who returns to an impoverished natal home is in an awkward

position. No matter how strong the normative and affective bonds which tie her to her natal home, the fact is that the woman has laid upon her kin the burden of feeding and clothing yet another person, whereas that responsibility had been passed to another on her marriage. Rather than remaining at home and increasing the suffering of their families by diminishing the limited amount of food available to all, some women left their homes to make their own way, support themselves, and if successful, assist in supporting their kin.

If the woman's father and mother are no longer living, then her problems may be exacerbated in other ways. It can be made abundantly clear, either through abuse, avoidance, or excessive demands, that she is neither needed nor wanted in her kinsman's home. This is even more marked if she has finished idda and has refused the suitors who presented themselves. If the woman should then decide to "go into the world" (Hausa: tafi dendi; tafi yawon duniya), she releases her kinsmen from the obligation of providing for her. She betakes herself from an unpleasant situation and lacks the constraint of concern over the effect of the reflected stigma of her chosen career upon her parents.

c) Childlessness

Childlessness is often a contributing factor in a woman's decision to enter karuwanci. As shown in Table 5-1, about half (50.4 per cent) of the women included in the sample had never had children. The proportion of these women in each age category

Table 5 - 1

Births in Relation to Age Among Women Presently Practising Karuwanci

Age of Women	Total No. of Women	Never bore children		All children dead		Living legitimate children only		Illegitimate children only		Legitimate and illegitimate children	
		No. of Women	% of age categ.	No. of Women	% of age categ.	Number of children: 1 2 3 or more	% of age categ.	Number of children: 1 2 3 or more	% of age categ.	No. of Women	% of age categ.
14-19	73	60	82.2%	3	4.1%	8 2 -	13.7%	- - -	0 %	-	0 %
20-24	91	37	40.7%	12	13.2%	19 6 2	29.7%	6 - 2	8.8%	7	7.7%
25-29	43	20	46.5%	10	23.3%	5 6 2	30.2%	- - -	0 %	-	0 %
30-34	39	12	30.8%	4	10.3%	10 6 3	48.7%	1 - 1	5.6%	2	5.6%
35-39	11	2	18.2%	3	27.3%	3 2 1	54.5%	- - -	0 %	-	0 %
40-44	5	2	40.0%	1	20.0%	1 - 1	40.0%	- - -	0 %	-	0 %
45 or more	6	2	33.4%	4	66.7%	- - -	0 %	- - -	0 %	-	0 %
Total	268(a)	135		37		46 22 9		7 0 3		9	

(a) Includes all karuwai from whom the relevant data was obtained, and comprises more than half (52.7%) of the total number of karuwai in Katsina City.

is fairly high, ranging from less than a fifth of the women in the 35-39 year-old category, to four-fifths of the women in the 14-19 year-old bracket. It is clear from the table that for many of these women, childlessness cannot be equated with the inability to bear children. Almost half of the childless women (44.4 per cent) are in the 14-19 year-old category. Lack of children among these women is not so much an indicator of infertility, as a condition liberating them from marriage and the home and permitting them to enjoy the pleasures of karuwanci with no worries about children left behind.

Among other childless women, there is more likelihood that they may be barren; even women in their early twenties have been sexually active for at least five years. Heavy pressures are brought to bear upon the childless wife, sometimes forcing her from marriage to marriage in the hope that the new marriage will be more fertile than the last, and sometimes driving her from marriage altogether and into another option.

Childbearing is important to a Hausa woman as validation of her femininity and proof of her worth. Without children she may feel a failure, and may be treated by others as an incomplete woman and a useless wife. Many childless women have spoken of the intolerance and mockery they were subjected to by their co-wives, or of the dissatisfaction expressed by their husband's mother concerning their failure to bear children, as a major factor influencing their decision to leave their husband's house,

or as an immediate cause of their divorce.

For these women, entry into karuwanci takes them from a situation in which childbearing is of paramount importance into a world in which the birth of children is rather avoided than sought, and where other attributes of womanhood, such as beauty and sexual prowess, are of more significance. It should be noted that women who may originally have been capable of bearing children may lose that ability during their careers as karuwai through the effects of venereal disease. This is a serious problem in the city, and has probably contributed to the incidence of barrenness among the karuwai.

Women who have never given birth to children, and women all of whose children are dead, together form almost two-thirds of the total number of karuwai in the sample. Women without children have fewer ties and responsibilities binding them to the natal or marital home, and thus are more likely to display sufficient independence of action to break with their past and begin karuwanci. To this number may be added the ten women (3.7 per cent) who have conceived and given birth to children only in karuwanci.

The birth of children to a married woman, although it may strengthen the marriage bond, is no guarantee of continued security. For numerous reasons, spouses may wish to terminate a marriage, children notwithstanding. Nor does the fact of a woman's having living children necessarily deter her from being a karuwa. Almost a third of the karuwai in the sample (86 women: 32.1 per cent of the total) had one or more legitimate children. Very few women

had any of these children with them, however. Most children were with the father, or were being reared by matrilateral or patrilateral kin.

Nineteen women had given birth to one or more children out of wedlock, in karuwanci. It is probable that most karuwai who become pregnant try to abort; the most common abortifacients in use during the period of field research were medicines made from local plants. The treatment makes the woman ill for several days, but usually results in expulsion of the foetus.

A bastard (m. sheggi, f. sheggiya, pl. sheggu) bears the brunt of strong social disapprobation, considerably more than is directed towards his or her mother. A karuwai's steady lover may claim her child, usually by taking the responsibility of arranging for the naming ceremony and paying the necessary expenses. But even if he claims the child, if the woman is not married to him, the child is still a bastard.

The negative connotations of bastardy, and the very real disadvantages to be faced in the future by the hapless infant, particularly if it is a girl, seem unreal in the environment of the gidan mata, the "house of women". When the child is weaned, he or she is usually sent to kin of the karuwa to be raised, but until that time, the child lives with his mother. The karuwai vie with each other to play with, to love, to caress the child, and the child thrives in this concerted and seemingly endless attention.

d) Benefits of karuwanci

Thus far, karuwanci has been portrayed only as an option chosen instead of other, less palatable, modes of living. However, there are doubtless many women who choose karuwanci not as the lesser of evils, but as a positive preference.[1] Karuwanci gives a woman an opportunity to see the world, to "open her eyes" (buɗe ido). The life of the karuwa, with the freedom associated with it, permits a woman to travel, to meet people, and to gain a sophistication and awareness unattainable by the married woman. The karuwai are the harbingers of change and the fore-runners of progress in the Hausa women's world, bringing new ideas and new fashions; Jacqueline Nicolas describes the Nigerien karuwai as evoluées (p. 58). The karuwa can explore and play; she can divest herself of the responsibilities and duties of wife and daughter for a period of time which can be as long or as short as she desires. Karuwanci permits independence for a woman impossible to attain within the confines of the village or home, although at the cost of various other threats and disabilities. Karuwanci also provides a framework within which

---

1. One researcher waxed eloquent about what he perceived as the women's common, although concealed, feelings about karuwanci:

> "It should be noticed that almost every Hausa woman has a secret dream of herself as a great and successful prostitute, and seems to believe that it is only the uncertainty of the profession and the loss of social status involved which prevents her from immediately realizing the delectable prospect of unlimited men, money, liberty and cigarettes which such a life offers."
> (Dry, 1953, p. 151)

a woman can become well-known, wealthy, and respected within the community to a degree she could not attain in her conjugal or natal home. That a karuwa can command respect in her position and rise in status is not as paradoxical as it seems. The successful karuwa, sophisticated and well-dressed, returning to her village laden with gifts and brimming with stories of big-city life, is more likely to be treated as a visiting celebrity than as a shamed and fallen woman. The lure of the city itself may also be a factor in her choosing karuwanci. The bright lights and imagined excitement of the city might be very tempting to a woman accustomed only to the daily toil and unchanging nature of village life. Karuwanci also promises the possibility of a more successful and prestigious marriage than could ever be achieved in the village, for the karuwai have access to the entire gamut of urban men, including the educated, the wage-earners, wealthy businessmen, and even members of the aristocracy.

It is impossible to determine how important these positive features are in a woman's decision to opt into this life-style; they can only be viewed in terms of the merits of the alternatives facing the girl, their attractiveness to her, and the importance she attaches to them. But it seems clear that women may be drawn as much by the benefits accruing to karuwanci as by the need to avoid the disadvantages of another life-style.

Entrance into Karuwanci

No matter how compelling the factors surrounding a woman's

entry into karuwanci, the decision to begin is not lightly made. A woman who is not a karuwa will not counsel a friend to start; a karuwa who has remarried does not refer freely to her former career.

Sometimes women support and urge each other to leave the confines of the village for the lights and excitement of the city. Whereas neither would have left on her own, together they find the courage to move. This is illustrated by the case of Hadiza and Hannatu:

> Hadiza and Hannatu have recently left their home in Maradi, Niger Republic, about fifty miles north of Katsina. Both women are in their early twenties, and both have been married once.
>
> Hannatu has had one child, which died. She left her husband, and returned to her mother. Her husband did not want to divorce her, and only sent the divorce paper after she had been home a year. Her father died when she was a child, and she grew up with her mother and her stepfather. Hannatu's stepfather began pressing for her to return to her husband, which Hannatu did not wish to do.
>
> Hadiza, who lived in the same ward as Hannatu, had been married to her husband for seven years, and had born two children, both of whom died. She had also been divorced, and was again living with her family. The women decided to band together and to try their fortune elsewhere, since their future appeared distinctly unpromising at home. They rented rooms in a small mud house in Katsina, and at the time of interview were two weeks into their careers as karuwai.

Karuwanci is not the ultimate disgrace prostitution is in many other societies, but nevertheless the woman who chooses karuwanci will face a number of problems, not least of which is the initial

display of anger, shame, and disappointment on the part of her close kin. While this reaction will generally be replaced in the course of time by responses ranging from resignation to respect, the initial period of karuwanci, with the profound changes in attitudes towards the young woman, must be extremely trying for both the karuwa and her kin. Other difficulties face the karuwa in town. As a category, the karuwai are virtually defenceless, and are a most convenient target for harassment and scapegoating; this will be discussed in detail in the following chapter.

The Karuwa: a Statistical Profile

In the remainder of this chapter, we will examine more of the quantitive sociological data obtained from the karuwai, in order to construct a statistical profile of the women entering the profession. By this means, we should gain some insight into the general background of the incipient karuwa, and into the strategies she pursues once she has begun the career. In the course of this examination, we shall challenge and disprove some of the commonly held assumptions concerning the behaviour of karuwai.

Provenance of Karuwai

Given Hausa residence patterns of patrilocality, men are associated with a particular area from childhood to adulthood,

while women are more likely to change residence at certain specific points in their life cycle. Indeed, changes in women's social status tend to be associated with spatial movement, whether this be to a marital home, to the natal home, or away from both of these into karuwanci. Thus, the entry into karuwanci is usually clearcut, temporally and spatially.[1] The profound change from the protected, controlled, and dependent status of the wife or daughter to the independence and yet defencelessness of the woman on her own is marked by the physical removal of the woman from within the walled or fenced compound to the openness of a rented room, usually in some other village or town.[2]

However, while a woman will usually move away from home when she begins karuwanci, she may not move to a very distant place. There is a myth, generally accepted by the Hausa and disseminated in various studies regarding karuwanci[3], that the woman who has become a karuwa must flee far from home. In this way she will avoid the ignominy of her new status in the presence of her kin, she will live a more anonymous life, she will not accidentally meet friends or relatives, and she will not be placed in the

---

1. There is an ambiguous intermediate position between karuwanci and respectability; this is discussed in Chapter Three.

2. Bovin and Holtedahl, working in Niger, found that women could begin working as karuwai in their own village (p. 20). The Katsina women consider such behaviour shameful.

3. See, e.g., J. Barkow, 1971, p. 11. "A courtesan from Sokoto, for example, may be found in Funtua or Zaria or Kano, but not near home."

mutually awkward position of running into men of her own area who are looking for a woman with whom to have sexual relations. Another significant factor is that mentioned earlier in this chapter, which is that the flight itself is part of the woman's protest against a situation intolerable to her. So the move itself may be the woman's attempt to solve the problem of conflicting or unacceptable pressures brought to bear on her.

The woman's disappearance from home is often immediately followed by a frenzied search for her by all available neighbours and kinsmen who can be mobilised for the effort. The object is to find her before she is "spoiled" by karuwanci. The searchers will usually go straight to the nearest large town or city to try to trace the woman. If she does not want to be found, i.e. if her escape is meant to be more than a symbolic and short-lived protest, then it is incumbent upon the woman to go far enough away that she will not be discovered and sent home immediately.

The case of Halima described above, exemplifies the possible consequences of beginning karuwanci near home. Her family found her, promised to release her from her unwanted marriage, and then brought her home. It is not possible to know whether their promises were only a ploy to get Halima out of the city, or whether in fact they actually did intend to end the marriage, and then were affected by subsequent events. The researcher is of the opinion that in this situation any promises might be made, though not necessarily with the intention of keeping them, to dislodge the recalcitrant woman from her surroundings. At any rate, Halima

was brought back to her husband's house, and she was careful to cover her movements when she left home again.

A woman intent on beginning karuwanci will usually go far enough from her home that neither will she be found and abducted by her kinsmen, nor will she be subject to the wrath and castigation which would be directed at her until the initial shock of her absconding dissipated. But, while the woman begins her career as a karuwa by moving out of her locality, there are pressing motives which militate towards her remaining somewhere near her home, or returning to a nearby town. This is demonstrated by the Katsina data.

Table 5-2 is a space/time illustration of the provenance and length of career of 252 karuwai in Katsina. Among the twenty women who had been practising karuwanci less than three months, fifteen (75 per cent) were normally resident in Katsina Province, while two of the fifteen were from Katsina City itself. Fifty-two of the 252 women shown in the Table had been practising karuwanci for less than a year; thirty-seven of these women (71.2 per cent) were from Katsina Province. Of the total sample included in the Table, 169 women (67.1 per cent) were inhabitants of Katsina Province.

Not only do women from Katsina Province predominate in every category, but also they form the highest proportion of the total number of women among the most recent karuwai. This suggests that the period of a woman's initial flight and concealment from her kin may be very short indeed, following which the women move closer to their family and maintain communication with them.

Table 5 - 2

Place of Origin of Karuwai and Length of Time in Karuwanci.

Length of time in karuwanci	Total no. of women	Place of origin (a)								
		Katsina Province			% of women from Katsina Province (b)	Elsewhere in Kaduna State	Kano State	Sokoto State	Other States (c)	Other Countries (d)
		Katsina City	Katsina Emirate	Daura Emirate						
Less than 3 months	20	2	11	2	75%	-	-	2	1	2
3-6 months	20	-	15	-	75%	-	1	1	2	1
7-11 months	12	-	6	1	58%	1	2	2	-	-
1-2 years	85	4	48	4	66%	1	9	12	4	3
3-4 years	45	3	23	5	69%	1	4	7	2	-
5 years or more	70	8	32	5	64%	2	13	8	1	1
Total	252(e)	17	135	17		5	29	32	10	7

(a) Where places of birth and rearing differed, the latter was used for this and the following table.

(b) Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer.

(c) Includes Niger State (4 women), Borno (2), Bauchi (2), Gongola (1), and Plateau (1).

(d) Includes Republic of Niger (6) and Saudi Arabia (1). The woman from Sauda Arabia was born in Kazaure, Kano State, and accompanied her parents on pilgrimage to Saudi Arabia where she grew up. She returned to Nigeria for her marriage, and remained in Nigeria.

(e) Includes all karuwai for whom total time spent in karuwanci was ascertained, and represents half (49.5%) the total number of karuwai in Katsina.

The brevity of this period of concealment supports the contention that the "stigma" of karuwanci may be rather mild. This idea is implicit also in Chapter Three, in which the various categories of women are shown to interact closely.

To the individual woman, the "stigma" of karuwanci is really important only in relation to the perceptions and reactions of her kin, and of friends who knew her before she entered the profession. The very rapid reestablishment of links with one's kin surely suggests that the change in career does not devalue the woman as much as the literature would suggest.

However, the tendency of women from Katsina Province to work in Katsina City is probably based as much upon the primary importance of kinship bonds, as upon the weakness of the stigma of karuwanci. Family ties are strong, and few women want to move so far from their kin that they no longer hear of them, and are themselves lost to their families. Katsina City is "Headquarters" (hedkwata) for Katsina Province, and any woman from the Province staying in the city can keep in touch with her home, even be it through acquaintances of acquaintances; news filters through. Once a woman has established herself as a karuwa, and particularly once her family has accepted her new status, the woman has the opportunity of returning even nearer to home. Indicative of this kind of behaviour is the case of Habiba.

> Habiba, originally from Katsina City, is twenty-five years old, and has been married thrice, during which time she has born one child which died in infancy. She ran away

> from home prior to her proposed fourth marriage, to a man of her parents' choosing whom she did not like. She fled into karuwanci, but she was lonely and missed her family. When she returned to see them, they told her that whatever she did, they wanted to know of her, and hear of her. She was asked not to run away again, and instead she has remained in Katsina City, living in Sabon Layi and visiting her parents often. She has been practising karuwanci for two-and-a-half years now.

One of the older karuwai bewailed the fact that young women now "have no shame" (rashin kunya), and stay near home even as karuwai, but her objection was not so much that the girls would shame their families by their own behaviour, but rather that the families would become topics of general conversation, and that other unsavoury incidents in the family history would come to light. However, from the available histories of the older karuwai, it does not appear that it is only the younger women who stay near their families; this seems to be a practice of long standing.

Most women do not return to the very place their family is living, as Habiba did, but this may be partly a function also of the small number of karuwai from urban areas, which are the major centres for practising karuwanci. A study only of the provenance of karuwai permits consideration of a larger number of women. As shown in Table 5-3, of 346 karuwai in Katsina for whom the place of origin was established, 231 women, again two-thirds of the total number, lived in Katsina Province before entering karuwanci. However, it is not Katsina City-bred women who form the bulk of

Table 5 - 3

Place of Origin of Karuwai

Place of Origin		Number of women		Percent of total	
Katsina City	Katsina Province	20	231	5.8%	66.8%
Katsina Emirate		192		55.5%	
Daura Emirate		19		5.5%	
Elsewhere in Kaduna State		7		2.0%	
Kano State		41		11.9%	
Sokoto State		37		10.7%	
Other states (a)		14		4.0%	
Other countries (b)		16		4.6%	
Total		346 (c)		100.0%	

(a) States include Borno (6 women), Bauchi (4), Gongola (2), Plateau (1), and Benue (1).

(b) Republic of Niger (15 women); Saudi Arabia (1 woman).

(c) These women comprise two-thirds (68%) of the total population of karuwai in Katsina City.

the population of karuwai from the Province, but rather women from the smaller towns, and from villages and hamlets.

Urban women in general form a small part of the total population of karuwai. Only fifty-one women (about 15 per cent) of the 346 women in this sample) are originally from an urban area. These include the twenty Katsina City women shown in Table 5-3, and thirty-one women from other cities, including Kaduna, Zaria, Kano, Sokoto, Daura, and Maradi. The rest of the women come from differing locales, from towns to the rural hinterland. Indeed, seventy-three of the women (about 21 per cent) came from places so small that they described their home area in relation to the closest village or town, as for example, "kauyen Jani, kusa da Mani", which is "the rural area of the village of Jani, near the town of Mani". It is clear that the population of karuwai, like the population of Hausaland in general, is predominantly rural.

The karuwai generally begin their careers in a city. Out of 237 women from whom data concerning their early careers in karuwanci was obtained, 194 (about 82 per cent) began working as karuwai in urban areas. Katsina City was the starting place for 137 (about 71 per cent) of these women.

The city has many obvious advantages, other than the large population. These include the constant influx of strangers, a relatively large number of wage-earners and wealthy people, numerous activities and events for amusement, and a more comfortable and less toilsome life-style than is possible in a village.

Since farming is not the primary occupation of most of the urban dwellers, men tend to have money all year round, and so the karuwai are able to make a living throughout the year. In villages, cash on hand is high immediately after harvest, but tends to dwindle thereafter. With men and their families suffering prior to the harvest, there is little left over for the karuwai. Another problem may be the lack of privacy in a village or small town. Even in Katsina City, the gossip networks seem to keep all interested parties informed of every indiscretion and each affair. In a smaller social unit, the problem would be magnified a thousand-fold. Thus, the men themselves might prefer to go elsewhere for their women, especially if they could conveniently do so.[1] The karuwai who do work in rural areas tend to be the older and less attractive women who cannot successfully compete with the city karuwai. The majority of karuwai, sensible entrepreneurs that they are, go where the money and the action is.

Age at Entry into Karuwanci

As shown in Table 5-1, the karuwai are a relatively young population. More than a quarter (about 27 per cent) of the women included in the table are nineteen years of age or younger, while

---

1. Hill mentions that Batagarawa, six miles from Katsina City, with a population of 1,160, had one "visiting" karuwa not permanently resident there. There were no karuwai working in Dorayi, an area of dispersed settlement with a population of about 3,500, outside Kano City (Personal communication).

more than three-quarters of the women (about 77 per cent) are under thirty years old.

For 255 of the women included in Table 5-1, it was possible to ascertain the age at which they began karuwanci; this data is presented in Table 5-4 below.

Table 5 - 4

Age at Entry into Karuwanci

Age at Entry into Karuwanci	Number of Women	Percent of Total
10 - 14	32	12.5%
15 - 19	112	43.9%
20 - 24	72	28.2%
25 - 29	28	11.0%
30 - 34	8	3.1%
35 - 39	1	0.4%
40 - 44	2	0.8%
Total	255 (a)	99.9%

(a) Non-response came mainly from some of the older karuwai who would not admit to practising karuwanci. Their inclusion might increase somewhat the minimal numbers in the older categories.

It is not surprising to find that most women begin karuwanci while young, although the extreme youth of many of the women is noteworthy. More than half of the total sample (56.5 per cent) began karuwanci before reaching the age of twenty; more than 95 per cent had become karuwai before the age of thirty.

This is consistent, first of all, with the consideration that young women are most likely to be pressured by their parents and kin, while older women probably have sufficient seniority within the kin group to be fairly safe from undue persuasion. Other considerations include the fact that young women are probably more impressionable than their seniors, that they are less likely to have given birth to children, and that they would be more successful in karuwanci, attracting men with their youth and freshness.

Marital Status

It has been emphasised that the important factor in a woman's entering karuwanci is the movement away from home, from kin and affines. If a woman has physically left her husband, the existence of a formal bond of marriage will not prevent her from becoming a karuwa. Of the 268 karuwai in Table 5-1, thirty-eight (14.2 per cent) stated that they were still married. And from the case histories, it appears that at least seventy-one women (26.5 per cent) had been married while practising karuwanci at some stage in their careers.

Most of the karuwai (221 women; 82.5 per cent of the total)[1] said that they were no longer married, but some of the women weren't altogether sure of their answer. They had come into karuwanci direct from their marital home, and had not returned since. Most of these women felt certain that their husbands would have divorced them after they ran away into karuwanci, and that they hardly had to have divorce paper in hand to know that the marriage was effectively over.

But while marital status makes no difference in the practice of karuwanci, it does affect remarriage from karuwanci. Documented proof of divorce is becoming more popular among karuwai, and indeed is being demanded by some worldly-wise prospective bridgrooms before the new marriage will be solemnised; bigamy is punishable by a fine and/or a jail sentence.

Marriage before Beginning Karuwanci

As previously mentioned, all the karuwai but one had been married at least once before becoming karuwai. Information concerning previous marriages was elicited from 256 karuwai, which produced the data included in Table 5-5.

Given the relative youth of the woman entering karuwanci, one would expect that there would be a heavy preponderance of women who had contracted only one marriage, with a far smaller number

---

1. Nine women (3.4 per cent) did not answer this question.

Table 5 - 5

Marriages Contracted prior to Beginning Karuwanci

Marriages before Beginning Karuwanci	Number of Women	Percent of Total
None	1	0.4%
One	111	43.4%
Two	101	39.5%
Three	29	11.3%
Four	8	3.1%
Five	5	2.0%
Six	1	0.4%
Total	256	100.0%

of women having had two or more marriages. However, the proportion of women having had more than one marriage is very large, compared for example to marital histories of non-karuwai.

The women seem to show dissatisfaction with their former life-style, even before discarding it for karuwanci. Even from within karuwanci, however, those women who remarry demonstrate a penchant for short and multiple marriages. Perhaps the karuwai are more ambitious than many other women, or less patient, less willing to wait for change. Or perhaps they cannot bear the domination and control characteristic of Hausa marriage, particularly for young married women. In the following chapter, we shall consider in much greater detail, the life-style and career of karuwanci, which these women have chosen in place of marriage.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter has been to introduce the life-style of karuwanci, and the women who opt for the career. Karuwanci has been distinguished not only from western forms of prostitution, but also from the kind of prostitution which is mainly the preserve of non-Hausa women in Katsina. The "courting" aspect of karuwanci is patterned upon the wooing of a young girl by her suitor, and the comparison is apt; virtually all significant relationships in Hausa society have a strong economic component.

Three main factors were cited by women as the precipitating

causes for their entry into karuwanci. These include: unacceptable parental pressures regarding choice of spouse; poverty; and childlessness. All of these were probably significant to some extent, but in many cases may not have been as important as the reason the women did not cite: the many benefits to be derived from the practice of karuwanci. By assigning to external forces a major role in driving her into karuwanci, the karuwa draws attention from the possibility that she may have chosen karuwanci as a positive option. It is much easier, more socially acceptable, and less revealing, for a woman to justify her actions in terms of uncontrollable outside forces, than to admit her interest in the career of karuwanci. This is consistent with the passivity expected of women, and ostensibly internalised by them. The extent of the chasm between women's stated and actual reasons for their decisions, and the bases for the discrepancy, are inherent in the differences between men's and women's models of society, and will be examined in greater detail in the following chapters.

We have considered in some detail the question of the stigma attached to karuwanci. Negative connotations of karuwanci certainly exist, but the degree of shame, blame, and dishonour associated with exercise of the option appears to be rather less than the literature would suggest. We deduce this from the close links maintained by the karuwa with her family, from the speed with which these bonds are re-established once the woman has made the physical move into karuwanci, and from the fact that she remains near home while pursuing the career of karuwanci.

Rural and village women are drawn by the allure of karuwanci,

and indeed form the vast majority of the population of karuwai. Even prior to their entry into karuwanci, these women had already contracted a higher number of marriages than women of the same age in the wider population. In this respect, they appear to be perhaps less willing than their fellow women to accept the role of obedient and patient wives. Or the distinction may be a more profound one, with the women seeking the fulfilment of goals which are ultimately unrealisable within the confines of marriage.

In Chapters Six and Seven, we shall consider the benefits to be gained within karuwanci, the liabilities inherent in the option, and the kinds of goals and dreams which women may be seeking to realise by turning to karuwanci. However, we must first understand the organisational structure of karuwanci, and the nature of the ties that the karuwai, as a category of women, maintain with other members of the society. The opportunities open to karuwai are closely linked to the kinds of social contacts permitted or expected of the women. These features are examined in the following chapter.

CHAPTER SIX

ORGANISATIONS, ALLIANCES, AND NETWORKS

This chapter concerns itself primarily with certain aspects of the world of the karuwai. It concentrates upon the power relationships between karuwai and men, the networks which karuwai create with other women, the organisational structure of karuwai, and the ideology which the karuwai express in the pursuit of their careers.

Lacking legitimacy in the present socio-political situation, the karuwai are in a singularly vulnerable position vis à vis the dominant power structure. Even in the context of formalised social activities, men dominate and control. Exploitation is a constant problem which the women attempt to counter, insofar as possible, with the means at their disposal.

We will analyse the means by which women adapt to the male-dominated system, with particular reference to the women's networks, the creation and utilisation of which help women to successfully counter their political disadvantages. These structures, informally organised and maintained, provide women with the security they sometimes so desperately need, and are flexible enough to be easily operationalised at will.

The various kinds of dyadic relationships between women are examined with a view to establishing the bases of interaction among karuwai, and between karuwai and other women. The types

of bonds created, and their content, are an important indicator of the relative status of women, of the instrumental or emotional nature of the ties between women, and of the criteria by which women choose their friends, and their mentors.

The organisational structure of karuwanci comprises several different aspects of the women's relationship to the environment. In the political sphere, it encompasses investigation of the roles and responsibilities of the personnel who are traditionally assigned to advise, assist, or to control the category of karuwai, and extends also to examination of those persons and offices which have become closely associated with the karuwai in the course of changing political fortunes and governmental structure.

Research in Katsina shows that at the level of the gidajen mata, organisation is strikingly different from the hierarchical pattern generally portrayed in the literature; data concerning the organisation of the gidajen mata is presented, and reasons for the changed organisational pattern suggested. The process of procurement, like the organisation of the gidajen mata, demonstrates the strong degree of individual autonomy women manifest in their quest for clients, and in their daily living arrangements.

The karuwai generally use the male-dominant ideology to mask their real reasons for being karuwai, or for remaining in karuwanci, and to justify their position in socially acceptable terms; this usually means portraying themselves as helpless victims of the vicissitudes of fate. But as long as

they remain in the profession, they are targets for harassment, and have only limited security. This factor, plus the problems of daily competition for sustenance, take their psychological toll. The chapter concludes with discussion of women's resort to ritual - the reasons and the methods by which women seek to alleviate the insecurity and powerlessness of their position. The spirit-possession cult of bori, in particular, is examined in some detail.

Changing Power Relationships in Katsina: the Traditional Hierarchy and the Karuwa

It has been noted in Chapter Two and Appendix One, that Hausa women held important political roles and titles in the past. One of these was the title of Magajiya, which has now come to be more associated with karuwai, and karuwanci. The political power associated with women's titles in the past included control over women, especially over the adepts of the spirit-possession cult, and the independent women. In the course of time, as the cult became less associated with the state, its rites became more generally the prerogative of women. The karuwai, independent women living together in the "house of women" (gidajen mata) were often participants in the rites, which became centred in the gidajen mata.

With the loss of women's state-wide political power, control over women became fragmented. According to the dominant ideology,

husbands, fathers and other senior kin should rule women. The karuwai, however, lived away from these authority figures: the functions and title of Magajiya devolved upon the female authority figure in the gidan mata, usually the owner of the house who was also the eldest among the residents.

Much of the writing concerning karuwai is dominated by the figure of the Head of the Karuwai, the Magajiyar Karuwai. Appointed to her position by the traditional political head of the area (i.e. Village Head, District Head, etc.), she acted as liaison between the masculine power structure and the world of the karuwai, exercising authority over the karuwai in her area, and acting as leader, active or nominal, of the spirit-possession cult. The Magajiya acted as a buffer between the karuwai and others. "Others" extended from traditional title-holders and other government functionaries to clients and strangers. One of the functions of the Magajiya was to protect the women within her sphere of authority from those who sought to mistreat, misuse or defraud them. Thus, in Baba of Karo:

> "...if any man took a prostitute to his house and did not give her any money, she was to make a complaint to Magajiya, who would make the man pay the woman her money and also fine him. That is [the chief of the village] gave her authority to do this."
>
> (Mary Smith, p. 64)

The most striking feature of karuwanci in Katsina is the lack of this distinctive female role in the hierarchical

political structure noted in much of the literature available concerning karuwanci.[1] The Katsina situation contrasts strongly with the picture built up elsewhere of karuwanci, and also with the portrait painted by the women themselves of karuwanci as it had previously been practised in Katsina.

The woman holding the title of Magajiya, confirmed decades ago by the Magajin Gari (District Head of Katsina City and environs), left Katsina several years ago in order to take up salaried government employment in a town about thirty miles away. Her authority had informally been delegated to another woman, a former karuwa now married and living with her husband in Sabon Layi. This woman, chosen for her popularity and generosity, and for her ability to handle the rough elements who frequent the Sabon Layi area, should be the person through whom the karuwai are informed of events and decisions affecting them, and through whom the karuwai are represented. In fact, these tasks are now performed by men, or not performed at all.

The title and position of Alkaliya (female judge) were formerly in use in Katsina. The karuwai state that the Alkaliya was their own judge, to whom problems and disagreements would be brought. However, the last appointed title-holder died about fifteen years ago, and had left Katsina City some years earlier; no new Alkaliya was named.

---

1. See esp. Mary Smith, pp. 63-4, 136, 229-30; also A. Cohen, 1969, p. 63; M. Bovin and L. Holtedahl, pp. 21-22; E. Yeld, p. 127. An exception is J. Barkow (1971, pp. 7-8), whose description of rural karuwanci in Zaria in 1968-69 also shows a limited degree of authoritarianism.

Thus, the women lack overt political control or office, and have no spokeswoman or women's organisational structure to back them up in any interaction with the government. The relationship between the women and the authorities is rife with opportunity for exploitation, for the karuwai are recognised but not legitimised. Some of the functions and rewards of the former female political offices have been taken over by men, who play the various roles under the aegis of the Local Authority, partly as a spin-off of the effects of the civilian regime and the well-organised grip of the NPC (Northern Peoples' Congress) in Katsina, and partly as a result of the women's structural inability to regain their usurped political positions. The loss of the female title-holding system among the karuwai is the loss of yet another area in which women once maintained some formal specific authority and privilege, although even that authority was delegated from male office-holders in senior positions.

Three offices are particularly associated with karuwai in the Katsina area. Two of the offices, those of Sarkin Mata (Chief of the Women) and Jirayi, are traditional Local Authority titles, and are significant in villages and towns, but have virtually no importance in Katsina City. The Sarkin Mata in Katsina City has no duties at all now; most of the karuwai are unaware of his existence. According to the women, the Sarkin Mata should protect them and settle disputes among them. Perhaps at the time of his appointment (probably more than twenty-five years ago) he had some authority; at present no karuwa would consider

going to him for any assistance whatsoever. Outside Katsina City, the Jirayi has some formal control over karuwai, and informs them of events relevant to them, or which they are expected to attend. The Jirayi in Katsina City has only one function, that of disseminating information, and he shares this task with the most active, the most visible, and the most important of the officials dealing with women, the "Party Manager".

The Party Manager has virtually taken over the role of liaison between the authorities and the karuwai. A blacksmith appointed by the NPC during the civilian regime, this man has so thoroughly replaced the Magajiya as the representative of the authorities in the minds of the women that many karuwai know of no other figure acting or having acted in that capacity. During civilian rule, the Party Manager was in charge of all arrangements involving the karuwai and the NPC. Their compliance to party directives was his responsibility, and he dealt with their complaints, problems and requests. During political tours, he saw to the women's transport, food and accommodation. At present, the role of Party Manager is mainly that of informing the women of forthcoming entertainment and events which they may be obliged to attend, and selling them the required tickets, from which he often benefits, as will be shown below. His ties with the dominant political party and their activities gave him greater authority than that held by the Jirayi or Sarkin Mata, and he has capitalised on that impetus and maintained his position as middleman between the karuwai and the government.

The fact that a political appointee has become a more important figure than the traditional title-holder underscores the changes occurring in the wider political arena, and the transfer of power from the Local Authority to other political groupings. But this phenomenon is more apparent in another context: the demonstrated

loss of functions, titles, and offices among women and associated with women.

There is no office, no person, no title-holder protecting or defending the karuwai vis à vis the authorities, no person acting as their spokesman. The government itself has become so diffuse, with the police and the courts federalised (rather than being controlled, as formerly, by the Local Authority), and with new state and local government structures taking priority over the post-Jihad political hierarchy, that the traditional offices are losing their effectiveness and their significance. Thus, the disappearance of the Magajiya and the Alkaliya is as indicative of the waning importance of the entire traditional hierarchy as of the loss of women's formal political power.

A major change in the distribution of power and patronage occurred in the post-colonial era, with the ascendancy of political parties. The treatment of the karuwai by the NPC in Katsina was marked by contradiction, uncertainty, and an even higher level of hypocrisy than is usually manifested by politicians. For many karuwai, however, it was a golden age.

Women and Politics in Katsina

There is general consensus that the number of women practising karuwanci mushroomed during the civilian regime, although the policies and actions of the Party towards the karuwai were often inconsistent. As elsewhere in the far North, NPC was the dominant

political party, supported by the ruling elite and in turn bolstering their authority. Almost all the karuwai were involved in the political campaigns (there was little choice), and the campaigns were in support of the NPC. Women who supported other political parties, such as NEPU or NCNC, were usually induced to change their alliances or move elsewhere. The Party provided tangible support for the karuwai, although periodically it would express condemnation of the women, and withhold the largess the women had come to expect, and for which they worked. There was generally an understanding between the karuwai and the NPC organisers that if the karuwai cooperated with the Party, the Party would show its appreciation in terms of financial support and positive social sanctions. It was an article of faith of the time that "Siyasa sai da mace" (Politics can't exist without women). One of the most important means of wooing the voters and gathering the crowds, and of entertaining the politicians themselves, is the availability of beautiful young women. But there was an uneasy relationship between the karuwai and part of the local populace, who saw the increase of karuwanci as a sign of the deterioration of the town, and of the morals of its citizens. Periodically, an attempt would be made to move the karuwai out. Indeed, at one point, Katsina became known as a city without entertainment, dancing, hotels and women, and was avoided by the politicians. Katsina redeemed itself by importing and mobilising large numbers of karuwai to entertain on the arrival of an important NPC leader.

The women's wing of the NPC was composed almost entirely

of karuwai, many of whom followed the politicians on their campaigns, bringing in the crowds, and getting free travel and opportunity to ply their trade; many became quite wealthy in the process. As Northern women were not enfranchised during this time, there was no need to court the women's vote, or to educate the women concerning politics.

The women's wing was a convenient vehicle through which women could be organised to attract the voting population. With the close association of government and the political party, there was little difficulty in effecting and enforcing NPC decisions as they affected the karuwai. The women's wing was staffed by female officers, who acted on orders from their male superiors. Advancement for women required a display of obedience. The former leader of the women's wing of the NPC in Katsina, who has returned to karuwanci after an intervening marriage, explained that she was put in charge of the wing because she showed the proper respect, and did as she was told. Similar statements were made by women in senior positions in other organisations in Katsina which included both men and women. Thus, men acted through women who understood and practised the appropriate deferential behaviour in relation to them.

Exploitation: an Occupational Hazard for the Marginal Woman

The existence of karuwanci has never been fully legitimised in Katsina, nor indeed has it been elsewhere in Nigeria. Implementation

of suggestions that the karuwai should be subject to taxation would have the effect of normalising their position, and indeed seems to be the main reason that the women are not taxed now.[1] The situation differs strikingly with that of Niger, for example, where women are taxed, and where the karuwai are recognised as working women, contributing to government funds. The Nigerien political party, the PPN-RDA, has attempted to minimise the stigma accruing to the independent women by discouraging the use of the term karuwa and replacing it with the neutral zawara, non-married woman (Monfouga-Nicolas, p. 165). The Niger women are a mainstay of any celebration or holiday, and always form a contingent, identically dressed, in the parades which invariably constitute a part of the activities marking national holidays and festive occasions. Indeed, the government is so deeply involved in the activities of the independent women that, at least in some areas, even the election from among the women of a Magajiya must be approved by the local party committee (Bovin and Holtedahl, p. 22). Thus, in Niger the women are given a clear role to play, and legitimacy with equally clear lines of authority, minimising the difficulties inherent in the nebulous Katsina socio-political structure. The traditional rulers in Katsina have never been relieved of the responsibility for the karuwai, except insofar as the political party and the traditional constituted rulers share the load. With the ending of civilian rule in Nigeria, some of the political structures and figures have continued to operate alongside the former appointees, yet

---

1. In the pre-colonial period, "There was a levy upon all forms of handicraft and trade; this covered...even dancing girls and prostitutes" (Perham, p. 164).

without actually ever providing formal recognition to the category of individuals subject to their authority.

This has led to exploitation and abuse, the most blatant of which is the liberty taken by the liaison men as intermediaries between the women and the government, to enrich themselves, their superiors, and certain organisations at the expense of the women. It is difficult to follow at each level the machinations of the perpetrators and enforcers of a protection racket, which is the western equivalent of the Katsina phenomenon, but the basic structure is clear enough. There are numerous entertainments organised in Katsina, each on behalf of a particular club or organisation, many of which require for their success the presence of a bevy of independent women. These include the various dances at which a woman is chosen and crowned as Miss (Club/Product/ Organisation), the football matches, bicycle races, and other novelty contests held as fund-raisers for registered groups. The organisers have concluded, quite correctly, that if the women aren't there, the men won't attend, and so the forthcoming event is announced, house by house, and the women are required to be present, excepting only the older karuwai, and pregnant and nursing women. The men who announce the events, such as the Party Manager and Jirayi, sell the tickets for the occasion, usually costing from two to five shillings. If the women do not want to go, they nevertheless have to contribute, though usually they receive in return neither ticket nor receipt. The women are resigned to this form of extortion, believing that if they didn't pay, they

would be harassed by the authorities and probably sent out of town. The newsbringers, who benefit most from this attitude in terms of the contributions laid out by the karuwai, do not necessarily actively promulgate such notions, but also do nothing to disembarrass the women of their views. And, rather than testing the validity of these attitudes by challenging them, the women maintain a low profile, protect themselves, gratify the ticket-sellers, and pay.

The pressures exerted on the women are usually extralegal or illegal, but since the women have little defence, less security, no education, and no redress, they try to avoid confrontation. All the women fear being called before senior Local Authority office-holders, and there are enough stories circulating of women who were, to make the other women wary. In fact, in none of the cases related was any action actually taken against the offender; the threat is sufficient to enforce compliance. When action is taken against the karuwai, it is usually more spectacular and on a wider scale than this.

Voluntary Organisations: Male Domination; Female Participation

Women's authority has been replaced in the formal hierarchy, and other forms of control and influence are exerted through government branches, quasi-voluntary and voluntary educational and assistance groups, and previously, political party pressure groups.

"Official" organisations (i.e. organisations or clubs with charters, written rules, etc.), recruiting or mainly composed of women, are partly or completely controlled by men. This excludes women's groups informally organised such as the revolving credit (adashe) associations which are common among women all over the city. The best known savings association in Katsina, however, has been organised and is operated by one man, who had amassed sufficient profits at the time of field research to purchase a car to take him on his rounds.

The voluntary organisations do provide a number of benefits, and particularly the more active, ambitious, and gregarious of the karuwai tend to join one or more of these groups. Only one organisation exists in Katsina at present specifically for women. This is the Women's Club, founded in 1964 and closely tied to the government through the Local Authority Department of Social Welfare and the Department of Community Development. Composed mainly of karuwai, and with a high turnover in membership, the club included 120 members in 1972. The Women's Club provides opportunities for the women to learn modern handicrafts such as machine sewing, or to become literate in Hausa and/or English; the Club has thrice attempted to maintain a self-help arrangement of contributions and loans. However, not all these programs are offered at a given time, and the women may find more to be gained by participation in one or more of the twenty-eight mixed clubs in Katsina, some ward-based, others interest-oriented.

The Red Cross (later the Red Crescent) is a popular choice;

it not only teaches useful skills but, more important, sometimes provides entrée into the coveted junior-grade permanent government jobs at the Katsina Hospital and clinics. A club which generated considerable support initially was one whose rationale was the provision of a fund to cover the expenses of delivery for pregnant karuwai. Membership included about thirty men, mostly civil servants, and thirty karuwai; each member contributed a shilling each week. The problem with this club, as with other mutual assistance organisations, was the frequent unavailability of funds due to misappropriation by the treasurer.

None of these societies or clubs were initiated by the women, however, and the women's closest and most valued ties are usually their relationships with other women, often translated into bond-friendship or fictive kinship. For unfailing support, karuwai turn to other women, and to the women's networks which are the surest defence against the structural insecurity inherent in their chosen career.

Social Organisation of Karuwanci

It has been demonstrated that the formal traditional title-holding hierarchical framework no longer has much significance to the karuwai, except insofar as the women try to avoid confrontation with the authorities. Even at the level of the individual gidajen mata themselves, most of which are owned by women, there is a notable absence of the formal distribution of

authority written of elsewhere in Hausaland. Thus, there is no Magajiya in the gidan mata, no individual who formally acts as the middleman between the other residents and their clients, no person who considers herself, and is considered by the other women, responsible for them, and having authority over them. In most houses, there is basically an egalitarian structure, although in some houses there is an informal allocation of authority: one woman is considered senior to the other residents. Where such a situation exists, the senior woman, usually a karuwa or former karuwa, is designated as babba (senior person, big person) by the other women, but is not addressed by that term. The babba may deputise for the landlord, collecting the rent and overseeing house repairs. In this capacity, she is sometimes known as "manager" (manaja) by the other tenants.

The babba may act as a spokesperson for the women, but frequently does not. Her seniority is relative to other women in the house, but does not itself guarantee control over the other residents. The babba may be a resident who has been put in charge of the house by the owner, or she may be the woman who has resided longest in the house. She may be older than the other residents and thus merit their respect on that basis, or she may have a more forceful personality or be the most popular of the women. In those houses which are owner-occupied, the babba is invariably the owner herself, and in this situation certainly she does have authority over the residents, but this is directly related to her control over housing.

In some houses, the question of relative superiority arises

only in situations of conflict, where one woman dominates the others, or in which women inimicable to the strongest woman or women are forced to move elsewhere. The strength of a particular woman in a giden mata is evolved over time, increasing as her friends move into the house, and as the house-owner delegates authority to her. But there is no more clear-cut authority structure at the level of the individual house of women than this informally derived and organised system.

Karuwai are probably much less controlled than ever before. The loss of the traditional hierarchy gives more leeway to individual initiative and favours individual entrepreneurial skills. Women with these qualities are among the most successful of karuwai, and often maintain quasi-kin relationships with younger and less experienced karuwai. A significant vertical component in dyadic relationships between karuwai is the greater expertise or success of one of the two women.

When a girl arrives in town, she may have no friends, no place to stay, and no money. She will usually inquire for directions to the nearest gidan mata, where she can spend the night at least. But from the morning, the girl will begin to find her way around the town, meet other karuwai, and find the house(s) within which she relates best to the other tenants. For many girls, the most significant of early ties is with a woman who is older, more sophisticated, and more settled than herself, with whom she establishes a superior/subordinate relationship which is of mutual benefit, and which provides the junior woman at one time with a

friend, an adviser, a place to stay, and a chance to marshal her earnings to establish herself. The relationship is that of uwar ɗaki/ɗiyar arziki, and follows to some extent the pattern established between adult women and unmarried girls. The senior woman is usually established and relatively wealthy. The junior woman calls her senior by the respect term yaya[1], and may assist her with household chores. The two women involved in this bond in the city may be from the same town, or may have mutual friends or kin, but often the initial relationship is founded only on present needs and future expectations, with no former common bond.

Women food-sellers usually have at least one or two assistants whom they feed and shelter and with whom they may have this bond. However, this is the upper end of the spectrum of the uwar ɗaki/ɗiyar arziki dyad, involving more stability than is often inherent in these relationships, and usually also involving older women. The younger women often flit from town to town and house to house, alighting only briefly and making superficial acquaintance with the resident karuwai of the town. However, where this relationship is established, it creates ties of quasi-kinship which often outlive the women's karuwanci and wanderlust, and are manifested in mutual assistance, loyalty and contact even over a span of years.

For most karuwai, ties with the other karuwai are generally

---

1. A term of address given also to the senior of co-wives, used both by the junior wives and by the children of the house, including the senior wife's own.

easy and equal, where relationships extend deeper than mere acquaintance. The women often travel in groups, especially when going to organised entertainment such as the cinema, and frequently even when going to assignations. And, given the large number of houses of women in Katsina, and the high mobility of the women, it often happens that particular houses are rented mainly by a group of friends, fellow townswomen, older women, or by some other distinctive category of tenants. Indeed, to the researcher, many of the houses of women resemble nothing so much as sorority houses, each with its particular ambience and interests, and with entrance into the house restricted to women acceptable to the babba and/or the other residents. The spatial move from house to house is often accompanied by a mental shift from urban to rural, from generation to generation, or from city to city.

The women are looking for, or come across, a particular life style which is congenial to them, and they gravitate towards it and its advocates. The characteristics which influence the kind of women in a particular house affect also the kind of men who visit the house, and vice versa. Even characteristics of class are represented by some obvious, some more subtle means. The women in certain houses are better dressed and more sophisticated than their sisters in other houses, and it is the former that the senior civil servants and rich businessmen tend to patronise. There is in fact a quite striking distinction in the clientele of different houses: some houses tend to attract men from a certain traditional trade; some have a large percentage of young salaried

workers. Some "specialise" in soldiers, while others, with a preponderance of unsophisticated rural women, provide a more comfortable setting for visiting villagers unaccustomed to city ways.

Even different levels of feminine responsibility are represented in the different houses, with some houses tenanted by young women considered by their peers in other houses as 'yan iska ("children of the wind"; irresponsible people), sharing the same men and generally behaving in a manner inappropriate to a "respectable" karuwa. Once within karuwanci, the guidelines of proper behaviour are not as clear or as codified as those of the married Hausa women, but such as they are, they are adhered to, to varying degrees, by the different categories of karuwai.

The Practices of Karuwanci: Procurement

We have seen that success gives an individual karuwa higher status, but that a prime characteristic which marks relationships between karuwai generally is an ethos of egalitarianism, consonant with the lack of political ranking among the women. And this egalitarianism carries with it an independence of action which affects and influences also relationships between karuwai and others.

The process of procurement demonstrates well the freedom of choice and action which the karuwai command. Most women find their own men, usually by frequenting the places in which likely

clients will be found. There is a recognised set of activities and places which men and women seeking sexual partners frequent. Other than the gidajen mata themselves, there are bars, restaurants, clubs, hotels, and cinemas where women can always be found. Any event planned to attract a large number of people - racing, football, dances, arts festivals, etc., draws karuwai, and the women also pick up clients in moving about the town.

The widespread seclusion in Katsina restricts the frequency and duration of married women's movement outside the house, and equally it severely curtails any activities for married women outside their spatial sphere. Thus, married women go from their house to the houses of other married women. There are deviations en route in practice, although these are usually harmless or very carefully concealed, if the woman intends to continue her marriage. Women seen at dances, the cinema, football, or other forms of mixed entertainment are assumed to be karuwai. Men say they cannot take their wives to any such function because there will certainly be misunderstandings and embarrassing incidents if the wives are approached. There is the additional, less frequently offered explanation that the men's male friends, also known to the wives, will be there with their women friends. And the even more rarely offered excuse that the man's own friends among the karuwai might materialise. At any rate, the system as it presently exists, given the bonds of seclusion, is a self-perpetuating one. Women at these places and occasions are available; women seeking lovers operate from these convenient bases.

It is not uncommon for married men from all levels of Hausa society to have extramarital relationships, and to avail themselves of the services of karuwai. However, men of high status in particular, wealthy businessmen, traditional aristocrats, or civil servants, should conduct their affairs with discretion. It is usually in relation to these men of high social status that the services of a middleman, a kawali (f. kawaliya), are utilised. The kawali is the closest Hausa approximation to the western pimp, or procurer, but there are significant differences in their roles and rights. The kawali has no "stable" of women, inasmuch as he has exclusive control over no women. In fact, in the Hausa situation, the "stable" is in some respects one of men, rather than women, since a particular kawali represents the interests of one or several well-known men, although other men can also make use of their services. Thus, if a woman, or a group of women, is invited by a certain kawali to entertain, they could make an educated guess about the identity of the man or men seeking their company, from the kawali employed.

The work of the kawali is not full-time, and certainly, at least in the case of men, is usually not discussed or even mentioned, the role being considered somewhat shameful.[1] There are three

---

1. The reasoning here is partly that men should seek women for themselves, if they are seeking them at all, not for others. Partly too, the low status of the work is in the association of the individual with the demi-monde of karuwanci itself, and with the other categories of procurers. The Hausa term for seeking women for sexual purposes is neman mata.

categories of persons who act as procurers. These are:

a) men who provide these services as a part-time occupation;

b) women, usually karuwai or former karuwai, who are owners of a gidan mata;

c) 'yan daudu - transvestites, homosexuals and bisexuals who live in the gidajen mata, sometimes as owners.

In all cases, the same procedure is used. The interested party or, much more frequently, his delegate (usually a trusted servant), approaches the kawali and arranges for a woman or women either to go to a particular address, or to be ready to be collected in a vehicle, at a given time. The kawali farms out the work among the women he feels will be acceptable to the client, and whom he likes. The women show their appreciation for his assistance by giving him some of the money they receive. The amount the karuwa received would vary with the largess of the client, and his status. The "token of appreciation"[1] the woman gives to the kawali varies with her own good fortune and with her interest in maintaining contact with the kawali for future work. The kawali will of course favour the more generous women, and the women's openhandedness is increased with their access to free-spending men. The kawali's benefits are two-fold: he profits from the women, and also from the men who have sought his assistance, and

---

1. Goro, kola nut, is a widespread symbol of amity in West Africa. In Hausa culture the term is used generically for any small gift to express thanks or to show good will.

who either at the time or subsequently, send him some sum of money. These transactions are not standardised as some fixed percentage of fees, or at a flat rate. Each of the participants gives the amount consonant with his or her benefits, status, ability, and future expectations.

The karuwai are free agents; they may use the services of a number of procurers, or of one, or none. There is no duress or long-term commitment on either side, although karuwai living in the house of a kawali are probably more likely to arrange their assignations through their resident middleman than are others. With a modicum of inquisitiveness, finesse, and a good information network, a kawali can easily increase his earnings by knowing where his clients' favourite women are at any time[1], and by understanding and acting on the whims and desires of his customers.

Women who act as procurers are usually co-resident with the women for whom they act. The activities associated with the position of kawaliya are only a part of their numerous functions; this group of women will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Seven. In one respect, they are in a stronger position of control over the karuwai than the outside kawali in that they can attempt to command some obedience from their tenants in

---

1. Thus, for example, one kawali, a shopkeeper who spends much of the evening organising assignations while his shop assistant minds the store, boasted that he had discovered the new address of one of his customers' favourite karuwai, who had just returned to Katsina. He swore he would not divulge the information until he was certain he would be liberally recompensed for it.

return for the security of accommodation. On the other hand, any karuwa who feels she is being unduly pressured can move elsewhere, so the leverage is weak.

The third category of procurers, the 'yan daudu, are intermediate and intermediaries between the men's world and the women's world in numerous ways. The 'yan daudu include transvestites, homosexuals, and some bisexuals. The most striking sub-group within the category is the transvestites, who adopt not only the women's garb of wrapper and blouse, but also their mannerisms, style of speech, and activities; the adaptation is uncanny. Others of the 'yan daudu dress in men's clothing, and show no overt sign of their homosexuality or bi-sexuality; many of the 'yan daudu participate in bori. The presence of 'yan daudu in the gidajen mata (we met nine during our survey) is predicated on a number of factors. These include their assumption of female roles and their desire to associate mainly with women; their economic activities, which can be most conveniently undertaken within the walls of the gidan mata, and the ambivalence of their sexuality, which is as inappropriate as the "uncontrolled" sexuality of the independent women, in the male dominant society. These men, and the independent women, share a certain opprobrium in terms of the normative structure of the society.

The economic enterprises of the 'yan daudu are centred on three related activities: procuring, cooking, and prostitution. The relationship between these activities is in their close linkage

with the women's world. Procuring, the mobilisation of women for illicit sexual purposes, clearly demands close ties between the kawali and the women. The dan daudu, in his combination of male and female roles, can and often does mediate between men and women in this context. Not all 'yan daudu act as kawalai, but the fact that they are expected to do so, and that most participate, indicates the social expectations of their role. As the gidajen mata are conveniently located in the strangers' area of town, and as the women in the house provide an everpresent clientele for the food-sellers, the gidan mata is a reasonable site for food preparation. But clearly, the situation is rather more complex than this, inasmuch as the siting is a conscious choice of the dan daudu, who could work from other quarters equally as accessible, without remaining in the "women's house". The general location of the 'yan daudu is influenced both by their desire to remain near the women, as cited above, and by their participation in prostitution. The gidan mata acts as a cover for men seeking homosexual services. As Barkow points out (1971, p. 10), "When a man enters a courtesans' compound, who is to know the sex of the individual whose room he ultimately enters?"

While the 'yan daudu occupy an intermediate position between men and women, yet their maleness still gives them prerogatives and benefits in Hausa society. This is demonstrated in certain characteristic behaviour patterns of the 'yan daudu themselves, and of those who associate with them. Thus, for example, there was no female babba in any of the houses in which a dan daudu

resided. In all cases, the dan daudu or another man (either the house owner or his delegate) acted as babba or manager. The cooking done by the dan daudu is not everyday common fare. Rather, the 'yan daudu who cook, cook the better, more expensive, more prestigeful foods, such as fried chicken. The distinction is rather like that between haute cuisine in a fine restaurant, and home cooking, i.e. the women's food preparation.[1] So even in adopting women's tasks, the 'yan daudu distinguish themselves and their work by the use of costly ingredients, and the production of more expensive dishes. Their choice of foodstuffs is fitting in another respect: the preparation of ready-to-eat beef, either cut into pieces and skewered (tsire) or grilled in slabs (balangu) over an open fire, is the province of men. The 'yan daudu have appropriated the smaller animal, and the intermediate cooking process (between the men's open fire and the women's pots) for their own.

Some of the 'yan daudu are quite wealthy, owning their own houses, some of which they rent. Their economic activities give them access to considerable wealth, and indeed the bisexuals and heterosexuals among them are considered good marital catches. The marginality of their position as men is often counterbalanced in marriage negotiations by exceptional generosity in the payment of bridewealth and indirect dowry. Wealth is, in itself, an -

---

1. This situation is the obverse of the depressing, yet seemingly accurate, picture painted by Jules Feiffer: "Whatever ground woman manages to establish for herself, man abandons, denying its importance" (R. Morgan, p. 565).

important index of status in Hausa society; much wealth can nullify or greatly mitigate the effects of other negative status indicators. The karuwai maintain friendly ties with the 'yan daudu, but their closest bonds are with other women, both inside and outside karuwanci.

Women's Networks: Adaptation to Ostensible Male Dominance

The kinds of friendships and relationships which independent women build are usually of the instrumental type, contradistinguished by Wolf from the emotional friendships in which

> "the individual is strongly embedded in solidary groupings...and /the/ social structure inhibits social and geographical mobility." (p.11)

It has been established that the karuwai have lost control of the former political organisational structure which bound them, and which at present is more exploitative than beneficial. De jure kinship relationships are peripheral and insignificant in daily interaction, and indeed the vital organisational framework which governs women's behaviour vis à vis each other is that based on informal social networks which women create themselves.

Women's networks operate largely independently of the male power structure, and across the male perceived categories of women analysed in Chapter Three. It is in this context of differing sets of norms and values that network analysis is most

useful. Mitchell notes that:

> "The network approach...deliberately seeks to examine the way in which people may relate to one another in terms of several different normative frameworks at one and the same time..." (p. 49)

In the Katsina situation, a woman's network includes women who may practise life-styles different from that of Ego, but who share a common bond as women, with the particular general socio-political limitations and opportunities which that entails. The fact of common gender is the salient characteristic of the networks, and overrides otherwise divisive features. Epstein states that:

> "A network is made up of pairs of persons who interact with one another in terms of social categories, and who regard each other as approximate social equals." (p.110)

And yet the Katsina women's networks include women in patron-client relationships, and women of different social classes. A reasonable explanation, then, is that in the wider society the fact of womanhood is itself a leveller, uniting women and demonstrating a kind of common understanding and common cause in their relationships vis à vis men.

The finiteness, or boundedness, of networks, and the intensity of interaction within them has been the subject of considerable elaboration, and is a refinement which adds to the precision of network study. Epstein, for example, distinguishes between the effective and the extended network, taken from the perspective of Ego and including his or her links with others; the distinction is in the amount of interaction which occurs. The effective

network is more dense, or highly connected, and includes

> "...those people with whom /Ego/ interacts most intensely and most regularly, and who are therefore also likely to come to know one another...; the remainder constitute the extended network." (pp. 110-11)

The network as a whole "provides a covert or informal structure composed of interpersonal links which spread out and ramify in all directions..." (p. 111). For ease of exposition, I shall limit myself to Epstein's terminology in describing the actual mobilisation of members within networks, rather than using the terms "action-sets" and "quasi-groups" popularised by Adrian Mayer (1966).

Bonds among Karuwai

The women whom karuwai see most frequently are of course other karuwai, and it has been pointed out that the women tend to move to houses in which their friends are already living. Given that the women are competing for the same economic rewards, i.e. the largess distributed by their clients, there are necessarily certain implicit rules which order their relations with their fellow karuwai and their lovers. Thus, karuwai who are friends will not sabotage each other's established relationships, nor would they encourage the advances of any of their friends' accepted lovers. There are no such niceties, however, governing the behaviour of karuwai who are not close friends. The outcome of confrontation between karuwai after the same man may be physical

combat. The winner gets no guarantees, but very likely has convinced the loser that it would be safer, if less lucrative, to seek her lovers elsewhere. Physical confrontation is not common in Hausa society, and in this case demonstrates the lack of effective alternative means of redress. Considering the economic and emotional benefits accruing to the karuwa through the establishment of a stable relationship with her lover(s), it is not surprising that she will defend and protect these ties with all the means at her disposal. Nothing else provokes physical confrontations between the karuwai, but then nothing else is so vital to their socio-economic well-being. A karuwa may try to enlist her friends' aid in a quarrel, but it is equally likely that the friends would already have volunteered their services. In the context of physical confrontation, as in other interpersonal relationships, the individual's network is

> "...the reservoir of social relations from and through which /she/ recruits support to counter rivals and mobilizes support to attain /her/ goals."
> (Boissevain, p. 27)

For karuwai who are close friends, but who are living far from home, the ritual means by which they would demonstrate the strength of their friendship are often severely truncated, in that they lack the opportunities for mutual attendance, gift-giving, and participation in wedding and naming ceremonies of the friend's kin, which are such important indicators of mutual respect in Hausa society. (This limitation is often an economic blessing, especially for the karuwa who hasn't established herself

financially, in that it provides a breathing space during which her monetary outlay is minimal.)

Karuwai who live near home and who have made peace with their families, not only attend ceremonies as they arise, but also go accompanied by many of their friends among the karuwai. The appearance of this group of exuberant and open-handed women lends new life and excitement to the ceremony in progress, shames or stirs the assembled men into additional and competitive rounds of conspicuous expenditure for praise-singing, and generally enhances the festive atmosphere of the occasion. For the karuwai, their accompaniment expresses amity, solidarity, and mutual esteem. Even within the city, friends often accompany each other to ceremonies at the homes of married women with whom the karuwai may maintain very close links, and to whom the karuwai can turn in times of tension, or danger.

Association between Karuwai and Married Women

Among the most important ties for the karuwa are those she establishes with married women. The relationship is in one way inequitable, in that the burden of gift-giving and visiting is assumed only by the karuwa, but yet this imbalance is equalised in less tangible benefits to the karuwa. The most important of these is a modicum of security and shelter she cannot attain within her independent life style. For the married women, there are other, bitter, fruits of the relationship, in that it is

frequently through karuwai who are friends and acquaintances that a woman keeps au courant with the news of the infidelities and philandering of her husband.

There is an unspoken bond between women which unites them to each other in opposition to their men. Women sympathise with, empathise with, and inform each other of the goings on of the neighbors, and the misdeeds of their men. The categorisation of women into karuwai, married women, etc., is real enough in terms of distinct life styles, but ignores the more significant division between the women and the men. Related to this is the transitoriness of karuwanci; women move between the categories with ease - the karuwa of today is the married woman of tomorrow.[1] Friendships between karuwai and married women are sometimes initiated when the women are within the two respective categories, and meet at some neutral middle ground, such as a marriage celebration. Married women rarely visit a gidan mata, but karuwai can freely enter the houses of married women. Perhaps more often the friendship is initiated when one woman is a karuwa and the other is between marriages with the freedom to move about, but without necessarily having become a karuwa. And of course many such friendships begin when both women are karuwai.

---

1. In discussing karuwanci with informants, male and female, it was interesting to note that the most vitriolic diatribes against karuwai and karuwanci were expressed by married women, who were least sympathetic to these women. This is doubtless due in part to the inherent threat posed by the karuwa to the peace and security of the married woman, in terms of the competition existing between the two categories of women for the same men. But another aspect of the reaction stems from the fact that for every woman, karuwanci is ever-present as an alternative. It is probably easier for the married woman to maintain the "correctness" of her choice of life-style by devaluing the possibility not chosen.

Among the married women, no one is as conversant with and sympathetic to the problems which face the karuwa as the former karuwa. The home of the married woman becomes something of a psychological base for the karuwa; she can be assured of a positive reception at almost any time. The house also may become a convenient depository for her goods if the karuwa is travelling, fighting with a lover, or being confronted by other dangers which threaten her possessions and, not infrequently, herself. In this last, most serious, situation, the house of a married woman provides the only and uniquely unassailable fortress immediately available to the beleaguered karuwa.

The Karuwa as Scapegoat

In certain respects the karuwa is the least protected of Hausa women; she lacks not only the protection of a specific male or males[1], but also a legitimised place in the socio-political system. The marginality, or notoriety, of karuwai is further increased by their association in the course of their work with strangers, and with criminal elements in the society. Easily identifiable, physically and politically defenceless, the women

---

1. One might conceivably argue that married women are even more defenceless, in that Islam condones limited physical chastisement of a wife. A maltreated wife could sue for divorce, but would be unlikely to secure her husband's conviction for assault, assuming she were knowledgeable enough to pursue the matter. A parallel situation existed until very recently in the west.

are prime scapegoat material, and an easy target for any group with sufficient political motivation, and/or wielding sufficient physical force.[1] The women are ever subject to harassment[2], and are periodically victims of pogroms which sweep through the North, bringing fear, trauma, and real physical danger.

In a time of major stress, which in the savannah region is usually precipitated by drought or the fear of drought, people search for means of ameliorating their plight. When no immediate material remedy is apparent, an attempt is made to placate God, to reduce the suffering of the people. In the Northern states, this begins with organised processions of men going daily to the prayer ground, and a series of special prayers at the mosque. Women who are permitted out[3] contribute in their own way, by

---

1. Wipper suggests that in Africa, urban women in general are subject to scapegoating, for many of the reasons set forth here (1972, pp. 346-349).

2. The British seem to have espoused wholeheartedly the prevailing Hausa treatment of karuwai. As early as 1915, a "marked increase in crime" in Katsina Division was treated, in part, as follows:
   "Prostitutes to be driven away. Natives of town to be given seven days to marry. Slave prostitutes to be returned to their owners."
   (Kano Province, Katsina Division Report No. 72, for the Quarter ending 31 December 1915, submitted by G.S. Brown, D.O., Katprof 1, Acc. No. 1279)

3. It is ironic that among the women are many karuwai, who of course are free to travel where they wish. Perhaps no category of women engaged in rokon ruwa is as fervent in their prayer, given the disastrous consequences visited upon this group in particular, in the event of continued drought.

making a circuit of the town, stopping to pray at the graves of all the saints, singing and praying for water. All these rituals are part of the process of "begging for water" (rokon ruwa). This is one of a limited number of ceremonies in which women practise men's roles, and wear men's clothing, the very reversal of roles marking the gravity of the occasion. Women congregating for prayer is one feature of role reversal, as too is the procession, echoing that of the men. The most striking feature, however, is the assumption by the women of their men's clothing and work tools, with which they progress through the city.

If the rain does not come, then resort to more severe expedients is required. The assumption is that the withholding of God's gifts is a punishment for the sins of mankind, and that if the delicts are stopped, and the perpetrators punished, banished, or otherwise penalised, then the city will once again be blessed with rain. The most visible of the sinners, and the ones upon whom the wrath of the populace falls, are invariably the karuwai, who are subjected to a campaign of mounting vituperation, threat and physical abuse. The last is usually the preserve of gangs of adolescents, who rampage through Sabon Layi, destroying the property of the karuwai, and assulting the women themselves.

The pressure builds, and the karuwai are eventually confronted with the ultimatum of getting married, leaving town, or facing the consequences, which are usually not expressed, the women having

already been exposed to them. It is at this time that the karuwai are most dependent on their married sisters, who may give them refuge, and who store their goods until the tumult and harassment end.

The last general expulsion of karuwai in the North before the recent drought, occurred in 1958 when the women were banished from Sokoto, Zaria, Kano, and other cities. According to informants, in Katsina an edict was passed that the independent women should marry, but the order did not threaten expulsion. The rapid, forced, and extremely inexpensive marriages to the karuwai, known as auren gwanjo[1], could be completed for as little as ten shillings, whereas before the edict, many of the grooms could not have afforded even the presents required by the prospective bride.

The drought of 1972-73 brought about renewed mass action against the karuwai[2] throughout the North. This is reflected in the news items of the period. The movement began in Sokoto, and the harassment spread from there. According to the New Nigerian, May 29, 1972:

> "There is commotion among unmarried women in Sokoto following an appeal from the Sultan advising them to marry.

---

1. Gwanjo - second-hand goods or clothing, especially the used clothing shipped in bales from the USA and Europe for resale in Africa.

2. There were a few letters to the Editor in the New Nigerian, ranging from perplexed to irate, pointing out the inequity of singling out only one of two consenting parties for calumny and punishment.

> Some elders and ward heads in Sokoto have estimated that within the first few days...nearly 200 free women got married in the town.
>
> Several hundreds of them have also left the town to other towns preferably outside Sokoto Division.
>
> Those who preferred to remain unattached were selling their properties...at give-away prices before they move out to other places..."

In the course of the next two months, the karuwai were forced to leave many of the northern cities - the New Nigerian of 23 July reported:

> "There has been an influx of unmarried women into Kano...
>
> Many landlords in the town are seizing the opportunity to make business out of the influx by ejecting their former tenants.
>
> /The women/ are said to be paying double the rent the original tenants in the affected houses were paying before they were ejected."

In Katsina[1] the situation was handled with some delicacy at the official level. The gangs of youths caused some damage and engendered considerable fear among the women, but there was no actual expulsion of the karuwai. The traditional government in the City have some control over the religion and morals of the indigenes, but there are limits in the extent to which this authority can be exercised. Not least of the limitations to the action of the Local Authority is the overlapping force of the Nigerian Constitution, which guarantees certain rights to the

---

1. A specifically Katsina-based and Katsina-limited victimisation of karuwai occurred in 1969, during which many of the women fled, or sought refuge with married women. The incident was of a few days duration only.

individual, including the right to live anywhere in the Federation.

The problem was solved by addressing the landlords in Katsina, almost all of whom are Katsina people, stressing the need for additional housing for the many (male) workers arriving in the City, and suggesting that rooms not at that time housing labourers be made available to them. The karuwai were not actually expelled from the town, but they were evicted from their rented accommodation and were unable to find alternative housing in the town. The option remained for the karuwai to solve their problems by marrying, and it is estimated that more than half the karuwai in Katsina married during the two weeks following their eviction.[1] That the women could find husbands on demand, as it were, and that so many of the women's lovers were willing to marry them very clearly demonstrates the element of choice in the continuation of a career in karuwanci, and the fact that a period of karuwanci not only does not necessarily diminish a woman's chance of remarriage, but may actually enhance it.

The removal or lessening of the particular threat which tripped off a pogrom against the karuwai brings in its wake an end to the pressure against this minority group. The women

---

1. Estimate made by the Katsina Social Welfare Officer. He thought that of the remaining karuwai, about half had left town, and the other half (one quarter of the former total population of karuwai) were hiding in the homes of other women in the town. These figures are at best educated guesses; the mood of the time and the fear of the women permitted no formal survey.

gradually filter back into the cities, emerge from hiding, and leave marriages into which they were precipitately pushed. A few months after the expulsion of the karuwai, which had given Sabon Layi the appearance of a ghost town, the women were back, and the area showed no sign of ever having had less than the pulsating life apparent then. But the women remain the prime scapegoats - defenceless, vulnerable, unorganised - for any future demonstration.

Attitudes and Ideology in Karuwanci

All the life-styles open to women have drawbacks, and benefits. The political powerlessness of the karuwai as a group in the face of mass action against them would seem a strong deterrent to exercising the option of karuwanci. However, the ease with which a woman can withdraw from karuwanci, and exchange that role for another makes the risks inherent in that career somewhat less threatening. For the individual karuwa, and the individual woman, there is always choice, always an option, and the choice, limited though it may be, will reflect the individual's own strategy, although the strategy itself may not be clearly worked out or expressed by the woman. Decisions are likely to be based on a combination of conscious and unconscious elements, but the decisions themselves can usually be viewed from a series of levels, and can be justified within the female conceptual framework, even when not necessarily correct from the male point of view.

Karuwai will justify or rationalise their career in karuwanci on male terms, when directly asked about their entry into the profession, and yet many of their responses were clearly lip service to the dominant ideology - this seemed evident, for example, in the offhand manner in which such replies were made, far different from the feedback received concerning other facets of the karuwai's careers. And it was also shown in the lack of internal coherence of the rationalisations and justifications. That women may have felt compelled by external events to enter karuwanci is not doubted, nor that the options may have been narrowed by individual circumstances. What is suggested here is that the women are not presenting the complete picture in presenting the generally accepted male ideology, and this, on inspection, should hardly be surprising.

There is probably no area in which male ideology and belief, and female action (and ideology) are so distinct as in the sphere of karuwanci. The very existence of karuwanci is a blatant indicator of the independence of women - the lack of male ability to maintain strict social and spatial control over the women of the group. And the sting of the reality produces a male view which is essentially negative and insulting to the women concerned, although usually assuming the mitigating factor of pressure of circumstances. From within karuwanci, it is the male ideology which extols the virtue of marriage, and provides the women with the oft-cited myth that they would marry immediately, if only their lovers would ask, and act (again, the passive woman). Another feature of the male myth provides an excuse for continued

karuwanci, on male terms - for example, the "service of the women to the community."

One young karuwa explained how she was contributing to the well-being of the community by providing an outlet for the passions of the unmarried men and travellers in the city, who might otherwise wreak havoc in the town through the force of their unsated desires. That these two categories of men seem not to be the major category of customers for the karuwai's services is almost irrelevant compared to the utter male arrogance which perpetuates such an explanation. Although one should also note the wit or ingenuity of the women in using the ideology for their own purposes and on their own terms.

Perhaps the most striking manifestation of the gap between the male ideology and the women's world is the probably more than two hundred marriages which were solemnised in the two weeks following the implementation of the plan for expulsion of the karuwai in Katsina. That such a large number of women were able to marry so rapidly when the necessity arose, throws into relief the falsity, or myth, of the women's helplessness, and of their inability to escape from their situation. It is in their interest to subscribe to male doctrine, at least verbally, in that the general assumption of their entrapment in karuwanci provides them with the excuse to remain, even to thrive, in the profession they themselves have chosen. Thus, the acceptance of the ideology of male dominance and male initiative provides legitimisation for the women's own strategy.

It is clear, not only from the very number of karuwai in Katsina, but also from the ease with which women move into and out of this particular category, and then into karuwanci again, that there must be certain very positive values which they associate with its practice. This conflicts with the "deviant" nature of karuwanci built up in the literature, and inherent in the male ideology, and with the threat of lowered status which is related to it.

The karuwai frequently justify their life style, or at least assert the blamelessness (outside of adultery and fornication) of their lives. While there is often a strong air of defensiveness about their protestations, there is also a ring of truth. A karuwa who was sent on pilgrimage to Mecca by her lover[1] railed against the hypocrisy of married women. According to her (and other respondents also), many married women use the pretext of attending ceremonies and rituals as a subterfuge to effect assignations with their lovers. Then they return to their husband's house cloaked in an aura of morality and fidelity. "At least," this karuwa continued, "we karuwai are honest about

---

1. It is becoming increasingly common for men to send their girl-friends on pilgrimage. The irony and the humour of this - the fulfilment of one of the five obligations in Islam as a by-product of an illicit liaison - is not lost on the Hausa. Thus, one hajj joke being circulated:

> A karuwa sent by her lover to Saudi Arabia for the pilgrimage was conducted to the area where pilgrims hurl stones at the representation of Satan. "Ah," she said, "why should I stone him? It was Satan who brought me here."

our behaviour, and don't have the added sins of mendacity and hypocrisy to burden our consciences."

Also, the transitory nature of karuwanci in the lives of women disarms both the criticism directed at an individual, and the stigma attached to her. There is the underlying knowledge that the woman will probably eventually leave karuwanci, and even the awkwardness of the moment can be mitigated by reference to the unknowable workings of fate (kaddara). The karuwa herself is somewhat protected from the wrath of her kin or vilification by her enemies by these considerations.

It should be noted that men have their problems too in relation to the karuwai. The more than five hundred karuwai earning a living in Katsina are proof that men obey religious injunction and moral precept no more than do the women. Hausa poetry vividly portrays the conflict of emotions and conscience which marks men's attentions to the women. Desire and fascination vie with revulsion, guilt, and surrender, as in the poem, "Karuwa", by Mu'azu Hadeja, three verses of which are:

"Mother of shiftless wandering,
Mother of intrigue and family strife,
Mother of hypocrisy,
Female hyena, inveterate cheat.

.....

She melts in order to wheedle,
She is seeking to make you consent
To the road that takes you to damnation,
It is a place of shamelessness.

She says there's no one like you,
You are delighted that she loves you,
She is crafty, you bring out your purse,
Even before you've started to say a word."
(Hiskett, 1975, pp. 157-8)

This conflict between intellectual understanding of the work of the karuwa, and the sway of passion, is one of the themes also of the poem by Hamisu Yaddudu Funtuwa, "Wakar uwar mugu", "Song of the Mother of Evil", which includes the following verse:

> "A harlot has no favourite, you understand,
> Whoever gives to her, he's her favourite,
> What she wants is to be given /money/ morning
> and night,
> Whoever gives a tart what she asks for,
> One of these days he will become her slave."
>
> (Hiskett, 1975, p. 158)
> (both translations by Hiskett)

Hiskett points out that the deceit and allure of the karuwa is a subject of such evocative power among the Hausa that it is frequently used to personify the temporal, as opposed to the spiritual, world. The profane world is:

> "...a faded harlot, foul and diseased, who nonetheless still succeeds in ensnaring unwary men by disguising herself in gay robes and with deceptive cosmetics."
>
> (1975, p. 80)

Thus, men are also portrayed as victims: victims of the seductive powers of women, and of their own passions and weaknesses.

Women are well aware of the double standard which sets them up as the prime targets for shame, insult, and ignominy, rather than the men who patronise them. The conversations and stated views of some of the karuwai make it clear also that they consider themselves, tempered as they are in the crucible of lowered status, rather finer than their partners. And for those women particularly who entered karuwanci with some degree of altruism, there is such

honour in their dishonour as to set them apart as models of filial piety, a point which is not at all lost on the women themselves.

Thus, one karuwa spoke of how she had prayed for rain during a dry spell, and a downpour followed. She genuinely believed that her prayers had been answered. Extended conversation revealed that she was supporting her impoverished parents and siblings, and she was aware of her importance, responsibilities, and sacrifice. The fact that she had several lovers, enjoyed the liaisons, and was at the time in the middle of an exhilarating affair with a handsome soldier she adored, detracted not at all from what she regarded as her forced and selfless duty.

It should be noted that the stigma of the status of karuwa does not really affect a woman much in the town in which she is pursuing her career; it is more relevant in her relationships with her kin, and with her friends and neighbors from her home area. However, if the woman is successful as a karuwa, even this dishonour may change to respect.

The juxtaposition of the male-dominant ideology in settings in which women are not practising (men's) ideal female roles may bring about some culturally inappropriate consequences (again, in male terms). By clinging to certain facets of women's ideal behaviour, the karuwai outrage others. Thus, women express those tenets of male ideology which support their own behaviour, no matter how contradictory the effects of that behaviour in practice. A good example of this is the number of women who prided themselves on the fact that they rarely went far from the gidan mata, and

did not flaunt themselves on the streets as some karuwai did. However, many of these women lived in houses in which food was cooked and sold, bringing in a crowd of men daily. And the effect of the women's self-imposed purdah was to make them more readily available for sexual encounters. The women manipulate the ideology to their advantage.

One other aspect of ideology which is important to karuwai and non-karuwai alike, is the relationship between the natural and the supernatural, particularly with respect to the effects the latter can have on one's life. To cope with insecurity, competition, powerlessness, and the other problems or difficulties which may be a feature of daily living, many women turn for assistance to the benefits of ritual.

The Search for Security: Resort to Ritual

The ceremonies, rites and beliefs which constitute the practice of bori, the Hausa spirit-possession cult, have often been associated with karuwai and karuwanci. Thus, for example,[1] M. G. Smith writes:

> "Female karuwai...are the traditional supporters and exponents of...bori, for which their status suits them.... as social deviants they are the traditional custodians of religious deviance in the spirit-possession cult."
> (1954, p. 25)

---

1. See also, among others, Mary Smith, passim; M. Onwuejeogwu, p. 291; J. Barkow, 1973, p. 71.

In Katsina, however, bori is neither the preserve of the karuwai, nor is it usually performed in the gidan mata, nor do the karuwai form the majority of the initiates and participants of bori. There are some karuwai among the adepts, but they form only a small proportion of the total number.[1] The association between women and bori is not a simple one, and the bases for the bond have changed over time, as the roles and status of women have changed, as Islam has become more strongly entrenched, and as new values and new interests supplant more traditional customs.

As we have seen in Appendix One, the relegation of bori to a subordinate ritual and political role had deleterious effects upon the socio-political status of the women who were its guardians, and who symbolised the fertility of the earth and the fortune of the community. These effects extended also to other bori adepts, and indeed to women in general. Attempts to crush bori were often met by strong resistance from women[2], but slowly and inexorably the cult lost ground to the rising star of Islam. Although bori has lost its pre-eminent role, and its adepts their superior status, the cult still exists, with major changes in its functions and changes also in the categories of persons who participate in and

---

1. The situation is similar to that described by A. Cohen for Ibadan, in which only four per cent of the karuwai were known to be bori initiates (p. 58).

2. See M. Hassan and M. Sha'ibu, 1946b, pp. 20-21, for the spirited defence organised by the royal women of Habe Abuja. Cited also in F. Heath, p. 63.

benefit from its rites.

In Katsina, the symbolic meaning of bori, the significance of its practise, and the very basis of its organisation have been changed with the withdrawal of political sanction. However, some of the traditional bases of authority have been maintained even in the face of official government censure, and even symbolically within the seat of power. On the other hand, a schism which has occurred among the adepts themselves has further weakened the temporal position of the inheritors of the ideological mantle of bori, while at the same time, and almost for that reason, forcing a reassertion of their superior spiritual resources.

Before considering the functions bori fulfils for its adherents, and the role it plays in the life of the city, one must recognise that bori in Katsina is not a single entity, but rather manifests itself in two distinct forms. The differences are both material and ideological, and are reflected in the participants and spectators attracted to each, as well as in the distribution of the ceremonies in place and time. These two main categories of bori adepts are known as the 'yan garaya and the 'yan ƙwarya, after the musical instruments[1] which are played to summon the spirits in their respective sects. Neither group denies the validity of

---

1. The garaya is a stringed instrument which is plucked or strummed. It is topped with a metal strip edged with rings to produce a jingling sound. Other instruments played by men include the goge, also a stringed instrument, and drums. A ƙwarya is any calabash. The calabash is turned upside down and drummed; it may be set in water to increase the resonance.

the other, but in certain respects tends to promote the authority and purity of their own bori vis à vis their counterparts.

The 'yan garaya include both men and women, although the number of women far exceeds that of men. The group attend and participate at gatherings which include both sexes. Wherever a major celebration is being held, one is likely to find a contingent of 'yan garaya. They associate themselves with the elite, and with the more westernised elements of the society, and indeed their rites are sometimes referred to as borin bariki, the bori of the "modern sector". The 'yan garaya include among their membership most of the karuwai who participate in bori.

The distinction between public and private bori, between bori meant as a profane public display and bori as an efficacious and religious art, is of great importance. In some areas, the distinction is that between city and village, while in other areas, as in Katsina, both forms of bori coexist. Onwuejeogwu distinguishes between bori rites staged in public, which he terms borin jama'u, and borin gida, staged inside the house. The participants of the latter are barred by their seclusion from attending the former, but are not shown to, or do not, constitute a distinct category of adepts. Indeed, he suggests that all bori adherents will attend public bori if possible, the married women sometimes joining surreptitiously (pp. 286-7). Barkow also notes an "entertainment form of bori" performed mainly in the gidajen mata, which contrasts with the curative bori of the village and of the Maguzawa (1972, p. 71). The composition of the bori groups is not included in

his analysis. The bori of Maradi is described by J. Nicolas as "bori de 'ville'" as opposed to the "pure" and medically important "bori de 'brousse'". The "degraded" city bori, according to Nicolas:

> "...tend à perdre de plus en plus sa dimension religieuse au profit d'une dimension plus nettement profane." (p. 111)

"Private" bori is very much more the sphere of the 'yan kwarya in Katsina, than of the 'yan garaya. The 'yan kwarya consider themselves to be the more proper or legitimate of the two groups of bori adherents, with a following of only women, most of whom are either married, or respectably non-married, i.e. not practising karuwanci. It may seem ironic that the adherents of a sect considered by non-practitioners to be perhaps antithetical to Islam, promote their particular faction by stressing[1] its strictness in terms of other Muslim/Hausa ideals. However, this is consistent with women's usual practice of emphasising those aspects of their actions which are correct according to the dominant ideology, and minimising those which do not conveniently fit into the ideological structure.

It is not only because of the respectable roles of the participants that the 'yan kwarya claim a superior position to the 'yan garaya, but also because of the spatial propriety and

---

1. The importance that the women attach to this was made clear during my compilation of a list of bori adepts, including their names, occupations and titles.

the receptive rather than aggressive nature of their rites. The 'yan kwarya engage in bori only within houses, for and with women. They do not seek ceremonies and occasions at which to act - they are sought. Only by invitation do they appear at a non-adept's house.

However, the passivity proclaimed by the 'yan kwarya is not apparent in either the structure of bori or its practice. With a hierarchy of offices even more detailed than that of the 'yan garaya, the 'yan kwarya manifest a continuous and personal interest in the trappings of local power. This is particularly appropriate in that the 'yan kwarya are the likely spiritual descendants of the adepts of the early bori cult, in which ritual and political power were inextricably linked. A number of the 'yan kwarya live within the environs of the palace (Cikin Gida), and their authority is said to be derived from one of the wives of the Emir, whom they describe as the "patroness" of their group.

The 'yan kwarya believe that they have access to more spirits (iskoki) than the 'yan garaya, and that they can invoke the spirits more frequently and with more ease than the latter. At the same time, it is clear that in temporal terms, the 'yan garaya have more power than the 'yan kwarya, not only through the group's closer association with the political authorities, but also through the individual men[1] and women who constitute the group.

---

1. The patron and prime mover of the 'yan garaya is a man well-known, or perhaps, notorious, in Katsina. His actions are often in conflict with the custom or indeed law of the area, but with his contingent of followers, he commands too much support to be treated high-handedly by the authorities.

The claim to greater supernatural power made by the group which recognises its own lack of political power is a feature noted among a number of possession cults, especially among those patronised by women in a particularly male-dominant culture, or by other politically ineffective categories of individuals. In the case of the 'yan kwarya, the belief may be augmented by their knowledge of the place they have lost in the upper echelons of political power.

The very practice of bori in Katsina is a form of confrontation between the ideologically legitimate male political structure, and the submerged traditional system, with a more active role for women. It is said that bori is officially banned in Katsina, probably based on a pronouncement by the Emir. Thus, bori is tacitly accepted as a non-legitimate activity, on an ideological basis, and now on the basis of direct political decree. It is questionable whether the practice has been curtailed; it appears to be flourishing.[1]

The rumours which circulate regarding the reason for the prohibition of bori are indicative of the subversive nature attributed to the cult. Thus, one explanation relates that the the practice of bori disturbed the Emir at his prayers, and the second that the bori adepts insulted one of the Emir's wives. The first version is symbolically accurate enough, with bori portrayed as an antagonistic force with regard both to the present

---

1. Noted also by Y.B. Usman (1972, p. 194).

political hierarchy, and to Islam. The second version is rather more interesting, for it appears to be an attempt to destroy part of the political rationale behind bori by removing its traditional support by female members of the sarauta. That the ban has not been effective is clear from the fact that the 'yan kwarya continue to play, deep within the palace. However, none of the present wives of the Emir are adepts.

Bori adepts in Katsina include married and non-married women, "respectable" women and karuwai. This is consistent with the contention that the lack of effective political power among women is a feature throughout the society, not limited to the karuwai although most strikingly expressed in relation to them. In terms of the benefits derived by its participants, bori equates closely to the zar described by Lewis:[1] the cult offers a means by which the socially deprived may obtain ends not attainable more directly, and it offers a method of alleviating the subservience of the political and social position accorded them in the wider society.

Some of the karuwai in Katsina attend bori ceremonies; a small number of these are initiates who participate in the rites. It is usually the less sophisticated karuwai who practice bori; many became adepts in their rural homes. But for the majority of the karuwai at the ceremonies, the rites are treated as a source of entertainment, the rural cinema in an urban setting. This is not to deny the value inherent in bori for its participants, as a means of gaining cathartic release of tension built up in

---

1. The benefit derived through ritual by the socially deprived is one of the points stressed in I.M. Lewis, Chapter Four: "Strategies of Mystical Attack; Protest and its Containment".

the wider society. It is rather to suggest that this is not the main function served by bori for the majority of karuwai, and that these functions are utilised by a wider group than are represented by the karuwai. For most karuwai, the lure of bori is not its practice per se, but the assistance rendered by its adepts. Given the animosity, insecurity, and competition inherent in the daily life of the karuwai, it is not unreasonable that they should resort to the use of whatever aid is available, material or psychological, to order and protect their lives and careers. To ward off or discover the causes of misfortune, to act against a foe, to ensure success in some enterprise - for these and myriad other reasons, the karuwai turn to the adherents of bori, particularly the more knowledgeable among them. In return for a payment in cash and/or goods, and the provision of animals for sacrifice to the invoked spirits, the bori adept aids the supplicant with information, supernatural protection, or whatever form of assistance is required.

However, equally or perhaps more important in this respect is Islam and the Koranic malams. Using different methods, the malams also provide every kind of supernatural aid[1], especially through the use of amulets (pl. layyu)[2], or "medicine" made by

---

1. Both bori adepts and malams can provide not only protection, but also more "aggressive" aid; one can take the supernatural offensive against an enemy. However, in discussing charms, amulets, and supernatural "medicine", rarely would an informant admit to this. Protection is socially acceptable; overt aggression is not.

2. Usually a verse from the Koran, wrapped in cotton or leather.

washing verses of the Koran from the Koranic board. While not all malams traffic in charms and counter-charms, many do, and they enjoy a lucrative trade from women[1], and more particularly karuwai. The decision to resort to a malam or a bori adept has little to do with the supplicant's religious convictions, and almost everything to do with the reported efficacy of the individual religious practitioner's product.[2] Thus, both bori and Islam offer an alternative or additional means by which the individual can cope with, or even influence, an otherwise neutral or hostile environment.

Conclusion

In the course of this chapter, we have further examined the socio-political position of women, concentrating particularly on the karuwai, who represent the most defenseless sub-group within the politically powerless mass of women.

Over the course of years, women have been systematically deprived of the authority that had originally accrued to them. With the diminution in political power among women, and the sharing of power by the traditional ruling class with other

---

1. Among married women, the most common reasons for resorting to a malam are the wish for children, jealousy between co-wives, and the desire to secure one's husband's (undivided) affection and attention.

2. Katsina has a longstanding reputation in the North as a place where the inhabitants are exceptionally well-versed in the use of charms and magani ("medicine"). For the outsider, this reputation pervades all of kasar Katsina (Katsina Emirate). For the inhabitants, the most feared area is Katsina City, and more especially Haben Birni.

political bodies, the traditional offices and titles relating to authority over women and redress of their grievances have become nominal or have been discarded altogether.

The women's most effective response to men's grip on the political system, and on formal organisations, is the utilisation of a more fluid system of networks and alliances. Relationships of karuwai with each other demonstrate the essentially egalitarian nature of the life-style. Such differences in status as there are, are based on relatively greater expertise and achieved individual success; bonds between karuwai with differing status usually have a particularly high instrumental content. Control within the gidajen mata is informally derived and exercised; the internal political structure exhibits a striking lack of authoritarianism compared with other areas in Hausaland.

As important as the ties binding karuwai together, are those uniting the karuwai with other women. These bonds, which cut across the categories of married women, non-married women, and karuwai, provide the karuwai with support and protection, and act to unite women into alliances in opposition to men. The informal networks offer a basis for services and security not available through formal organisational ties. This is especially important to the karuwai who, as an obvious, highly visible, and defenceless minority group, are all too frequently made scapegoats for the ills and tensions of Hausa society.

Analysis of the relationship between the expressed ideology of the karuwai and their behaviour demonstrates that the women's

ostensible acceptance of the dominant ideology is their best defense against their critics. Another facet of ideology, the body of belief concerning "man's" place in the universe, is as important to women as to men. While the position of the karuwai is insecure in many respects, this is also true of other women, inasmuch as women lack the power and authority wielded by men. Woman may resort to ritual to lessen or nullify the shortcomings, problems or anxieties inherent in their career choice, or in their very role as women. Thus, women may gain through ritual some of the authority and respect which they feel is otherwise lacking in their lives. The spirit-possession cult, bori, fills these and other important functions for a number of women, and retains also a deeper symbolic significance as the alternative ideology which gave women their now lost state-wide politico-religious power.

However, even given the problems and difficulties which confront the karuwa, karuwanci can provide the means by which a woman can become successful and respected in Hausa society, often to a degree impossible to attain in the woman's home area. The socio-economic rewards gained within karuwanci, and the options open to the karuwa, form the subject matter of the following chapter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

KARUWANCI: EXERCISING THE OPTION

This chapter deals with the life-style of the karuwa, with particular emphasis on the reasons that women remain in karuwanci, or return to it. In examining the choices open to the individual, and the decisions taken, we again encounter the dual ideology, and observe the ways in which women manipulate the dominant ideology to reach their projected goals.

Study of the quality and content of the heterosexual relationships of karuwai includes not only the women's ties with their lovers, but also the platonic friendships with men which are a notable feature of the daily life of the karuwai. However, it is examination of the women's relationships with their lovers which most clearly demonstrates the kinds of socio-economic benefits which are acquired through karuwanci, and which are not available to Hausa women pursuing other life-styles. The successful karuwa may be rich, well-travelled, and sophisticated, enjoying the attentions of a wealthy lover and having the power and influence commensurate with her position as his confidant and as intermediary for those seeking his assistance. Part of this chapter is devoted to analysis of status within karuwanci, focusing both upon the sources of social status, and upon the indicators of success and of failure.

The practice of karuwanci does not preclude a woman from engaging in other income-earning activities, and indeed these other occupations may be advantageous in increasing opportunity for access to possible clients, or in certain cases may be the means by which a woman

eventually leaves karuwanci, becoming associated more with her formerly subsidiary occupation than with her work as a karuwa. The effects of the practice of karuwanci upon occupational choice, the relationship between occupational choice and age, and the changing perceptions of the wider community with the karuwa's assumption of new occupational roles, are considered here. We concentrate particularly upon the older karuwai and former karuwai: their life histories are lengthy enough for one to observe the means by which such independent women organise themselves, their careers, and their resources in order to remain self-sufficient even when they can no longer depend for income upon their sexual attractiveness.

The chapter concludes with a detailed analysis of the marital careers of karuwai. The incidence of remarriage is higher among karuwai than among other women, and includes a surprisingly large number of marriages contracted from within karuwanci. The ease and frequency with which karuwai marry underscore the optional nature of karuwanci, while the brevity of such marriages suggests that karuwanci is preferable to marriage for a significant number of women. And yet, although karuwanci is usually a freely exercised option, it is politic for women to verbalise their situation and their choices in terms of the dominant ideology, which assumes a more passive role for women.

The extended case study below demonstrates, in the context of the values, priorities and decisions of one woman, the types of pressures and opportunities inherent in karuwanci, and the

possible responses to them. The exploitation of the dominant ideology for the realisation of a woman's goals is made explicit in the course of the study.

> At the time we met her, twenty-four-year-old Rahila was nursing her eleven-month-old son, offspring of a long-term liaison with her soldier lover. She had been living in the same gidan mata for the previous five years. The babba of the house, she was responsible for collecting the rent money for the landlord, and she was spokeswoman for the tenants, all of whom, like herself, were karuwai. Although not the oldest woman in the house, she had resided there longest, and was clearly respected by the other four residents for the strength of her personality, the depth of her friendship and loyalty both to co-residents and friends, and the ferocity of her rage when crossed or mistreated. Everything she does, she does wholeheartedly, grasping at life with both hands.
>
> Anything new interests Rahila. She learned to play football and became captain of the team; she joined clubs and was an active participant. She has always wanted to travel, but has been hindered by her successive pregnancies. Rahila was enthusiastic about the interviewing done in her house. She listened, participated, contributed useful information, encouraged the other women in the house to be open and expansive, and then showed the same good will in relating her own life history.
>
> Born in a village near Daura, Rahila was raised by her father's junior sister in Daura town. Her mother, who was one of four co-wives, was divorced when Rahila was a girl, but Rahila feels this hardly affected her, as she was living with neither of her biological parents. She does feel closer to her mother than her father, however, and stays with her mother whenever she returns to Daura to visit family and friends.
>
> Her first marriage took place when she was perhaps eleven or twelve years old. Her development was precocious, although she had barely reached marriageable age, and her guardian, who had no children of her own, was bent on arranging this marriage as soon as possible. Protests from relatives that she was too young were unavailing; the foster mother pleaded with Rahila's father

and other agnatic kin to be permitted to carry out the ceremony, and they agreed. The groom was a neighbour, though not a kinsman. He was Rahila's own choice, a young man who also had not been married before. Rahila married him, and was well-content in his house for the first four months, after which he had sexual relations with her for the first time. She found the experience both painful and frightening, and ran home to her father's house, from whence she was returned to the compound of her foster mother. Rahila wanted nothing but to be rid of this marriage, and ran to the houses of her friends when it appeared that her guardian was planning to send her back to her husband. During this time, Rahila herself spoke to her spouse, but she refused to return to him. Her explanation to us was that, "Once you fear someone, you cannot live happily with him." For three months the running and hiding continued, with Rahila threatening to leave altogether if the marriage were not ended. Finally the foster mother relented, fearing that force would result in her losing sight of Rahila altogether. Rahila went to the court, and there her husband agreed to divorce her.

Rahila's second husband, whom she married immediately after she completed idda, was an old man, and impotent. Having been traumatised by her first sexual experience, Rahila was quite willing to remain in this new, asexual, marriage. However, local gossip concerning the man's condition reached her kin, whose fears concerning her marriage she confirmed. The court case was rapidly concluded; impotence is grounds for divorce in Muslim law and the husband did not deny his disability.

Twice divorced and living in her father's house, Rahila was now no more than fourteen years old. At this time, a neighbour was to be married in Katsina, and Rahila joined the wedding party. During the course of the celebration, she met a young man she liked, was dazzled both by him and by big city life, and decided to remain in Katsina. She stayed with a distantly related family originally from her village, and from here sallied forth into the city, and into new relationships. She continued seeing the same man, who, she said, spoke to her of

marriage, but somehow never got around to fulfilling his pledge. Rahila eventually formally acknowledged her lover's lack of intention to marry her by moving more fully into karuwanci. She stated that in this way she might meet a man more trustworthy than the last. She had already found her opportunities for movement from her kinsmen's house far more limited than she would have wished, and she feared that her relatives in Katsina were arranging a new marriage for her. By this time, Rahila felt she had better arrange her own marriages in future, rather than leave the decision to others.

During one of her walks, Rahila had spoken with and taken a liking to a young bajawara (non-married woman) who was living with her parents in the town. Their friendship was immediate and strong; the two women were together daily. When Rahila spoke of moving, the girl pleaded with Rahila to stay with her and her family, which she agreed to do with pleasure. The girl's family treated Rahila like a daughter within the house, yet permitted her the freedom she needed to carry on her trade. Rahila was befriended by a wealthy businessman, with whom she maintained an affair for nearly two years. She regrets now that in her ignorance she made no effective use of the money he lavished upon her. He once gave her £100 for a house and land, but Rahila and her friends spent the gift in a huge drinking bout at a fellow karuwa's house. Rahila was young, and took her pleasures as they came.

After some time, Rahila returned home and made peace with her family. She told her parents of the generosity and hospitality of her friend's family, and the parents came to Katsina to thank them. The girl's father was asked to be "as a father" to Rahila as long as she remained parted from her own kin. The opportunity arose soon after, when the man acted as marriage guardian for Rahila and her next husband. The union lasted only eight months, and ended when Rahila was three months pregnant with her first child. Her husband, a salaried worker, supported her (sometimes only under duress) until their child, a boy, was weaned. Rahila took a room during her early pregnancy, but her husband found her,

beat her, and forced her to return to her friend's house. Their son was given to Rahila's former co-wife, who maltreated him, and so was subsequently brought to Rahila's mother, who still raises him.

Rahila rented a room again, but was only one month back into karuwanci when she remarried, much to her parents' delight. She bore a daughter to her new husband, but when the child was three months old, and after three years of marriage, Rahila was divorced. She went to stay with another friend, a karuwa living nearby. Until her daughter was weaned, she supported herself mainly by selling bean cakes and cigarettes. When the child was brought back to her husband, at eleven months,[1] Rahila returned full-time to karuwanci. Her friend with whom she was living spent every night away from home with her lover, so privacy was not a problem.

When we first interviewed Rahila, she had been living for more than a year with the father of her son, whom she refused to marry; he begged and pleaded to no avail. She feared, she said, his jealousy, which was problem enough in the present arrangement, but would be unbearable if they were actually married. And as a girlfriend rather than a wife, she had some independence and the opportunity to live her own life, without the question of approval or permission from another. According to Rahila, her lover was so persistent that she expended considerable money on charms to break the relationship, and then found herself pregnant. Her friends all advised her to stop trying to get rid of him, and to marry him instead. But Rahila's most important reason for not marrying the man concerned their child, Musa. Rahila and her lover are neither from the same area nor the same ethnic group. She fears, not without cause, that with the ties of marriage to support him, her husband would take Musa to his home, and she would not see her son again. (He had, in fact, claimed the child at the time of its naming ceremony, but illegitimate children are not well-received even into the paternal kin group). The two parents each had their own plan concerning

---

1. A girl is usually weaned by a year and five months, but Rahila's husband's kin wanted their child as quickly as possible. The girl is now living with the husband's junior sister.

Musa's future. The father intended to spirit his son away as soon as he was weaned, to bring to his relatives. Rahila, meanwhile, planned to take the boy to her village, which her lover didn't know, before he was weaned, thus preempting the father's strategy. Both parents loved Musa dearly. He basked in their attention, and that of all the other women in the house. Rahila made the first move, and brought Musa to her mother to raise. Fate intervened, and the child died shortly thereafter.

While the boy was with Rahila, her lover supported her with money, foodstuffs, clothing, furnishings and many other gifts. The romance had always been tempestuous, and Rahila brought the bulk of the goods to the houses of her friends for safekeeping. Sometimes when the two fought, her lover would pile all the goods in the middle of the room to show her all he'd done for her, threatening to take it all away; Rahila removed the temptation. At the time we met her, Rahila owned four beds (only two of which were in her room), including one four-poster decorated with mirrors which had cost £35. She had an impressive amount of clothing, including heavy brocades and embroidered materials[1], wax prints, sweaters, blouses and other expensive apparel. Again, most of this she kept elsewhere. Musa's father gave her £5 spending money each month[2] while they were living together, and bought her everything she needed. After Musa's birth, he also gave her six yards of cloth every month, worth £4-5-0 each. Rahila had them made into outfits if she liked the patterns; otherwise she sold the cloth and used the money as she wished.

After Musa's death, the relationship between Rahila and Musa's father became less

---

1. All of which are included together in Nigeria under the general soubriquet of "lace".

2. While in the inflation-battered west and certainly in present-day Nigeria, these amounts may not seem generous, it should be kept in mind that at that time, salaries for labourers, clerks, primary school teachers and low-ranking soldiers rarely exceeded £20 per month.

> compelling, and Rahila began seeing other men openly. The drought caught Rahila still in Katsina, now 12 years in Katsina, trying to decide whether to marry one of her several willing lovers, whether to leave the city, or go underground. She finally decided to marry a long-distance driver, and thereby have the best of both worlds. She would be on her own much of the time, but she would have her husband's financial support and the trappings of marriage. A year later, Rahila had produced a son by her new husband, and was devoted to the child. The marriage was on the verge of breaking up, and Rahila was securely ensconced with her baby in a rented room. It is not unreasonable to suppose that Rahila would pick up the threads of karuwanci where she had dropped them, if she had dropped them indeed.

The case history of Rahila, outlined here, hardly presents the picture of a frail woman buffeted by the winds of fortune. Rahila is a woman who creates certain goals for herself, and sets out to fulfil them, with the wholeheartedness and dedication she brings to all her actions. And yet the rationale behind her actions insofar as she has verbalised it, was garnered only in the course of long acquaintance and growing friendship. Her explanations of her conduct changed as she became more comfortable and less guarded with us, and this shift in reasoning is indicative of a corresponding move into the women's world view, related to women by women. This may be demonstrated, for example, in terms of the explanation offered by Rahila for not marrying her lover, the father of her child Musa. Originally, the query brought forth the reply (frequently cited by others also) that:

> "Men lie to you - they speak of marriage, but the talk never enters their hearts. It's only words."

Such an explanation fits well into the ideology which assumes decisions on the part of men, and passivity and receptiveness as the woman's role. The male acts, and the female then has the opportunity to acquiesce. However, as is clear throughout this history, and most especially in the context of Rahila's own carefully considered motives for refusing the marriage, the impetus for action, the planning and decisions regarding a woman's life, rest finally on the woman's own perception of her needs, and her priorities. That these perceptions are influenced by external factors, and by pressure from kin and friends, is not in question, but it must be recognised that the individual still maintains ultimate control over herself and her actions. As in the case study above, the actual pattern of a woman's activities, her decisions and her choices, can be seen as being aimed at maximising her own interests, although the rationale for her acts is usually contributed to the effects of more or less explicit outside forces.

Heterosexual Relationships in Karuwanci: Platonic Ties

For Rahila, as for other karuwai in Katsina, much of the day is spent within the gidan mata, or at the entrance to it. One of the women may sit outside selling petty goods such as candy, cigarettes, and kola nuts, and other residents gather round, chatting, laughing, perhaps doing a little embroidery or other craftwork. Often there are a few men in the group, not clients but local men who work or live in the area, with whom the women maintain friendly, tension-free,

non-sexual relationships.

The character of heterosexual relationships in karuwanci is strikingly different from that among married women, and nowhere is this more clearly evident than in the common platonic friendships existing between the karuwai and neighbourhood men. It seems that the very straightforward and manifest sexuality of the women, for that very reason, divests the women's non-economic interaction with other men of its sexual content. In other words, with the woman's decision to share her sexuality with others, comes the sloughing off of the armour of intrinsic unknowable (except to her spouse) femininity. By openly freeing her body, she is able to dispense with a burden of Hausa behaviour associated with the possession of women, and frees herself from a number of constraints associated with shame and passivity. She is no longer a privately owned sexual being, and in demystifying her body, becomes less woman and more human.

It is ironic that it is in this state of "rampant sexuality", as karuwai, that the Hausa women seem to be more alive, more aware, more open to new experiences, and less concerned with their rights and limitations as women. It appears that it is the desire for and prohibition of her sexuality which colours a woman's relationships with men. When her sexuality is no longer forbidden, then the very fact of her femaleness need no longer remain the dominant characteristic of her person, especially insofar as these heterosexual relationships are not initiated or maintained for sexual purposes.

The ambience in the gidan mata, and even more, immediately outside it, is one of openness, banter and congeniality. Many of the women are on friendly terms with their neighbours, but in a distinctly asexual manner; the tie is one of mutual assistance, acceptance and trust. Relationships of this sort are widespread among the karuwai, and duplicate or are analogous to the kinds of male-female bonds through kinship or affinal ties available to women living in their marital or family home.

Heterosexual Relationships: Sexual Liaisons

The heterosexual ties which are most vital to the karuwa for her continued career are of course those which she establishes with men who pay her in return for her sexual services. These relationships vary so greatly in content, duration, and depth of commitment, that the characteristics which distinguish liaisons from each other are more numerous than the features which they share. In this section, we consider the expectations and limitations of such relationships for both men and women, the means by which the bonds are created and maintained, and the benefits and liabilities associated with such ties.

The style of initiating sexual relationships in karuwanci has been mentioned briefly in Chapter Five, in comparison to the non-Hausa forms of prostitution. The karuwa expects to be courted by a prospective lover, to be given gifts and shown respect and appreciation, before she consents to have sexual intercourse with

the person. Her ability to demand the appropriate responses, which are similar in form to those of a suitor courting a prospective bride, depends on her popularity and income; a woman who is hungry is less likely to stand on ceremony about the niceties of courtship. But it does appear to be only the poorest of the karuwai who will agree to sleep with a man who is a complete stranger, and who has not opened negotiations with visits and small gifts.

Social status among the karuwai is predicated on a variety of factors, not least of which is the quality and quantity of the woman's lovers. The highest status men in the community will seek out the most beautiful, the most lively, the most desired karuwai to be their partners, the woman's own popularity being commensurate in her sphere, with the high status of her lover in his. Even if the karuwa was unknown before, the attentions and patronage of an important man will give her prestige, and increase her status. Once the woman has been singled out, however, it is likely that other men will interest themselves in her, since the patronage of one of the manyan mutane (s. babban mutum, "big man") acts as a public seal of approval, and spurs competition. The finesse with which a woman handles this situation, and the options she takes, will affect her future within the community.

The man who has singled her out, meanwhile, has to ply her with gifts, money, and attention if he is to keep her. His expenditure is at the same time a display of his wealth and status, an attempt to keep competitors at bay, and an indication of the

karuwa's own value, both to him and to the wider community, since his largess is taken partly as a measure of the karuwa's abilities. If the man intends to maintain the woman for himself alone, then his outlay must be great indeed, for not only must he provide for the woman and all her needs, but also he must maintain her in the manner to which she has become accustomed, and he must compensate her for her loss in earnings from other men. This is where the woman's tact is important; she must make the best arrangement she can, with the maximum profit to herself. But values are not measured in financial terms alone. There is prestige in not having to sell one's body to many men; there is security in having one man taking care of all one's needs; and there is the pleasure and satisfaction in relating in a multiplicity of ways to one individual. There is also the possibility, if the woman does not accede to her lover's desire to forego other men, that he may then jettison her, leaving her to her secondary lovers, none of whom will be able to look after her as comfortably.

This relatively long-term and stable relationship, in which the karuwa has only one lover (at least to his knowledge), is known as dadiro (e.g. Tana dadiro da shi. "She is his steady mistress"). The lover pays the woman's rent, and takes care of all her other expenses. The situation is fraught with tension, inasmuch as the man wishes to maintain control over the woman, yet lacks the cultural tools to do so. In some cases, he may install his mistress in one of his houses (not any which contain his wives), with one of his servants always available to run

errands and act as messenger for the woman. The lover can then visit the woman with less publicity than if she lived in a house with other women, and the nearly constant presence of his houseboy limits the mistress's opportunity to arrange and effect other liaisons. It limits, but does not preclude. The woman is not secluded, and can easily organise an assignation after sending the houseboy elsewhere, or even with his collusion. Some karuwai maintain a dadiro relationship with an important man, while having a boyfriend on the side, who is himself sometimes supported by the unsuspecting wealthy lover.

Either to the woman, or the man, or both, marriage is not necessarily more desirable than this long-term extra-marital relationship. The very essence of karuwanci is the spatial and social independence of the woman. As a karuwa, the woman can demand, and receive, gifts and tokens of affection from her lover. The man cannot physically control the woman; he attempts to do so through financial leverage. Her spatial freedom means too not only that she can accompany her lover, but also that she can trail him if she suspects him of being unfaithful to her. Thus, she can command a measure of fidelity from the lover to which his wives could never aspire.

Should the karuwa marry her lover, her position changes radically. No longer is she sought and courted, nor can she receive gifts from other men. If she marries into a household with other wives (a certainty if the man is wealthy), her treatment by the co-wives is likely to be harsh. They would long have known

of her relationship with their husband, will resent her presumption in coming among them, and by innuendo and differential treatment, will attempt to make her regret her previous relationship with their husband, and her decision to marry him. Ideally, the karuwa who remarries is then respectable, and no reference should be made to her past. Practically, this is not the case. The new bride can expect to be treated by her husband in the same manner as her co-wives; she will receive gifts and money only as his other wives receive them. There is also the bitterness of the realisation, once the former karuwa is in her husband's house, that the man will now quite probably search for another woman to take her place; someone else will be coddled, petted, and showered with gifts, diverting money and attention from herself and her co-wives.

For the man, the karuwa provides a form of companionship often lacking in the marital home, and not otherwise available outside the marital home. The restrictions of seclusion have their negative effects on husbands as well as wives. Few men would travel with their wives, even if they wished to, unless the destination is among kinsmen or married friends, where the woman can again be immured. Thus, men travelling on business or on government service, with accommodation in hotels or rest houses, either travel alone or with a karuwa friend who is comfortable in the setting, able to cope on her own, and unlikely to be a liability, requiring messengers and servants to cater to her needs. Since the karuwa can travel, she can and does share in a variety of experiences with her lover not available to the

secluded wife; these shared experiences then act to reinforce the closeness of the relationship between the couple. And, as the karuwa can be seen by others, the more beautiful the woman, the more will the lover's prestige be increased.

For a married Hausa man, the karuwa may also fulfil the role of confidant and friend; in the dominance/submission context of Hausa marriage, it is sometimes difficult for spouses to assume this relationship with each other. This is even more marked in the polygynous household, where the husband is enjoined to show no partiality among his wives. Many husbands maintain a rather formal facade before their assembled wives which renders difficult or impossible the freer bantering kind of relationship frequently established with a favoured karuwa. And, as earlier mentioned, relationships between karuwai and men generally display a candour and lack of reserve not apparent elsewhere among men and women in Hausa society.[1]

Thus, the relationship with the karuwa is of a different order from that with a wife, spatially, temporally, and qualitatively. Men who can afford to maintain a karuwa, and who wish to, depend upon them in their own allotted sphere, and may be remarkably constant to them.[2] In this respect, the women's role is much

---

1. This phenomenon has been observed in other parts of Africa also. Thus, Little notes that:

> "Paradoxically,...it is the...extra-marital relationship rather than the conjugal one that comes nearest to the egalitarian ideal regarded by the Euro-North Americans and increasing numbers of Africans as the proper basis of marriage." (p.117)

2. Some of the karuwai had been supported by the same man for eight years or more.

like that of the "outside wives" in southern Nigeria and elsewhere in West Africa. Indeed, some men maintain a more stable relationship with their karuwai than with their wives. It has been pointed out in Chapter Three that there is precious little long-term security inherent in marriage per se, given the high rate of divorce and women's greater longevity. Many independent women are better prepared for their old age than their married sisters, as will be shown in this chapter.

It might be inferred from the above that the karuwa maintaining a long-term affair with a particular individual is in a singularly influential position. This is indeed the case, the woman benefiting from her lover's considerable affection and trust, and displaying her own sophistication and knowledge. Her advice is listened to, when not actively sought, by her lover, and her unique position as confidant to an important man, and as an accessible individual, gives her opportunities to exercise influence unmatched by most other woman in the community, and most men. Wives may have their husband's ear, but their seclusion prevents them from being approached by supplicants wishing for assistance from their husband, and also limits their opportunities for proper understanding of matters not directly concerning them, and outside the house. The karuwa, on the other hand, is much more closely associated with the men's world, and knows more of it. She can forward certain suits and hinder others through a few timely words to her lover. Her favouring of particular individuals and cases is often dependent upon the good will she

has towards the petitioner, a will which may be sweetened by gifts of goods and money from the individual concerned.

Women in this category, mistresses of important and wealthy men, are without doubt the most successful of the karuwai, with a measure of influence and access to wealth greater than that of their colleagues. But this group occupy only the pinnacle of the wide-based pyramid of karuwai; most women never enter their ranks. The karuwai themselves usually did not name their lovers, but the dadiro relationships are well-known in the community. It was also simple to discover which of the important men in the community had steady karuwai; this category of women did not include even five per cent of the total number of karuwai.

Other women (as,e.g. Rahila discussed above) maintain dadiro ties with men less well-known and less wealthy. The relationships are as varied as the persons who contract them. One of the more popular karuwai in town, winner of several beauty contests, was dadiro with a young man working as a clerk in a government office. She spent most of her nights in the house he shared with his paternal aunt, and helped with the cooking and other domestic chores. She had been approached by important officials in the town, but seemed to prefer the relationship with her present lover. He was from a respected family, and had not yet married. The girl spoke wistfully of the impossibility of his marrying a karuwa for his first wife; clearly she was interested in continuing on a legitimate basis the style of life she had already established in his aunt's household. At the time of the interview, he was

visiting his family in Zaria, but had left £3 for his girlfriend's upkeep.[1]

In some cases, although uncommonly, women may have other lovers with the steady lover's knowledge and consent. The woman's decisions in a dadiro relationship are influenced not only by the expenditure of the steady lover, but also by such factors as her own financial and social expectations, and her forecast of future prospects with him or with others. For most karuwai, however, there is no single man who provides for them, and their sustenance depends more on maintaining ties with a number of men. As the less popular of the karuwai might be paid as little as two shillings for sexual intercourse, they have little option but to be available to almost as large a number of men as would request their services.

Socio-Economic Status within Karuwanci

Wealth is the most important criterion upon which the success of the karuwa, and her status, are based. The Katsina style of karuwanci is markedly different from that noted, for example, by Abner Cohen among the karuwai in Sabon Gari, Ibadan:

---

1. Two months after the initial interview with this karuwa, we heard that she had left Katsina; three months later she was married in Kaduna. She had broken with her dadiro lover after a series of fights over his infidelity; he had been seeking other women while she considered herself his steady girlfriend.

> "...they are not well-off, and the majority possess only a number of glossy gaudy dresses, and very little, simple furniture. Only a few of them have, in addition, a little jewellery." (1969,p. 66)

In Katsina, the acquisition of wealth among karuwai is not in doubt, although the manifestation and utilisation of such wealth differ greatly among the women.

Some karuwai display their riches in the manner befitting a married woman, i.e. conspicuous expenditure is directed towards room furnishings, and costly clothing. The most notable example of this was the room of a beautiful young woman from Borno, who was dadiro with a very well-to-do businessman whom she later married, becoming his third wife. The floor was covered with linoleum (a recent status symbol in Katsina at the time), and upon the linoleum were two of the largest, most ornate, and most expensive four-poster beds[1] available in the town. Both beds were decorated with matching yellow linens, including valances and testers, as well as sheets and pillowcases; a curtain of the same material hung over the door. Two large cupboards also stood in the room; each cupboard was full of expensive African prints and "lace", and each was decorated with glittering antimony cases from Mecca. Lining the bottom were the woman's eight pairs of shoes. She had her own short-wave/cassette recorder combination, and the surroundings proclaimed wealth, comfort, and ease; she had been in Katsina one year.

---

1. These beds are a status symbol, and are decorative rather than useful. Most women even with one or more four-posters use a cot or a mat for sleeping.

Riches are not always so clearly shown. Many karuwai take the same precautions as Rahila did, storing their valuables with married women or kinsmen in the town, rather than leaving them subject to the depredations of unruly mobs, or to the vagaries, whims and jealousies of rejected or disgruntled lovers. Not surprisingly, some of the wealthier women are among the most prudent in this respect, and do not openly display their fortune.

Since it was clear that affluence was a source of high status in the community of karuwai, as poverty was a mark of failure, I attempted to work out some means of assessing the relative waalth of the women. In this I followed the procedure pioneered by Polly Hill (1972, Chapters IV and V), of establishing and utilising local measures of economic capability. The two most easily noted by others were the clothing the women wore, and the food they were able to buy.[1] It is consistent that the Hausa, valuing economic success as they do, are extremely clothes conscious:[2] the style, newness, and cost of an individual's clothing affect, positively or negatively, others' perceptions of that person's social status. In addition, the karuwa, whose attractiveness is her fortune, is well aware of the importance of displaying herself to her own best advantage, and most try to acquire expensive and becoming cloth

---

1. Not included were the wealthiest women in the area, the owners of houses, hotels, etc. The purpose of this survey was more to make distinctions, insofar as possible, among the mass of karuwai whose assets were less obvious.

2. Hill remarks upon this with regard to Hausa men (1972, p. 69).

for wrappers, and foreign-made blouses and sweaters. A poorly dressed karuwa, if she attracts any men at all, will certainly not attract the richer ones among them. In discussing a karuwa's economic position, it became common to hear that "Tana daura zane sosai" (figurative for "she wears fine clothing"), or "Ba ta da zannuwa" ("She has no wrappers"; i.e. "She has no money").

As most karuwai do not cook, but rather buy food, their expenditure on this necessity was another gross economic indicator. Where even the meat in soup is paid for piece by piece, and the quality and cost of different dishes vary considerably, it is easy enough to ascertain the limits of the karuwa's funds; this measure is strengthened by observing the woman's initiative in sharing her food with others.

The third major indicator was whether, according to the other karuwai, a particular woman was "suffering".[1] This index was of a more composite nature, based on a number of factors including those noted above, of which other karuwai would be aware. Some of the poorer karuwai were objects of charity for the other women, receiving their cast-off clothing, a bite to eat, or the chance to do some service for a token fee. Women knew which women borrowed, lacking the necessary cash, and which no longer had sufficient credit even to borrow.

---

1. Again, see Hill (1972, pp. 58-9). I must mention that the categorisation as presented by Hill was then checked against a plethora of statistics, and was measured against other criteria. Such a cross-check was not possible in the case of the karuwai.

The carrying out of the survey was fascinating, in terms of what was learned of the many indices by which women rated their colleagues' success, and of the fine emic distinctions which marked differences in socio-economic status. However, in providing a general framework within which all the karuwai would be included, the survey did not prove a success. The information required was such that could only be obtained from third-party respondents. The decision to attempt the survey was based upon my growing awareness, in the course of interviewing, of the significance of certain socio-economic indicators among the women. This survey was not begun at the commencement of fieldwork among the karuwai, but later, when my understanding of their life style and goals became more definite. Because of the mobility of the karuwai, and the transitoriness of their mode of living, it became impossible to trace women who had the relevant knowledge of, and acquaintance with, all the karuwai who had been the subject of the original enquiry. Therefore, the information provided, while gratifyingly comprehensive concerning many of the karuwai, was scant or absent for too many others.

Occupational Opportunity within Karuwanci

Not all karuwai depend only on their sexual partners to sustain themselves. About a fifth (18.7 per cent) of the women in the intensive sample had some occupation besides karuwanci.[1] An age/

---

1. This particular enquiry into additional occupations provoked more ribald comments, suggestions, and innuendo, usually from the listening karuwai, than any other. They had their own ideas about what the respondent's "real" work was.

occupation table (Table 7-1) relates these two factors. Certain of the occupations are age-specific, although the most common occupation, that of petty trading, is practised by karuwai of all ages. This occupation is optimal for many women, in that it demands minimal capital, can be pursued at the woman's own convenience, and offers an opportunity to make a small amount of money while waiting for more profitable trade.

"Service", the work of waiting on tables and assisting with cleaning in hotels, clubs and bars, is work for the younger women

Table 7 - 1

Additional Occupations among Karuwai

Occupation	Total in Occupation	14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50 or more
Petty trader (cigarettes, kola...)	24	5	8	8	1	2
Waitress in bar/hotel	6	1	5	-	-	-
Food preparation:						
Yam, rice, soup, etc.	3	-	-	3	-	-
Tuwo	4	-	-	3	1	-
Cooked snacks	6	-	2	2	2	-
Assistant	2	1	1	-	-	-
Hairdresser	3	-	3	-	-	-
Baby nurse	1	-	-	1	-	-
Mattress seller	1	-	1	-	-	-
Total	50	7	20	17	4	2
Percentage in each age category	100%	14%	40%	34%	8%	4%
Percentage of total age group[1] with subsidiary occupation		9.6%	14.9%	34%	50%	66.7%

1. See Table 5-1 for total numbers in each age category.

partly because of their attractiveness and crowd-drawing value, and partly because the hours and activities demand a fair amount of resilience. The positions are sought after, for the waitresses have access to large number of prospective clients daily under good conditions, receive tips, and often free meals. The financial remuneration, however, is abominable. In one hotel, the hours were 8AM to 7PM daily, with a salary of £3 a month. In another hotel, the day shift worked from 8AM to 2PM every day except Sunday, when the hours were 8-12 AM and 5-8PM; the pay was £4-10-0 a month.

The other age-specific occupation is that of meal preparation, which is the preserve of the older women. This is neither a quirk of the data, nor a manifestation of purely economic factors. The assumption of the role of food producer demands a modicum of resolution in the actor, a certain amount of wealth to stake in the venture, stability of residence, and security of tenure. In order to establish, maintain and expand the clientele, the intending entrepreneur must avoid flightly or unconscientious behaviour, and must subordinate other activities to the interests of her food preparation; this is especially so in the case of those women who cook for sale twice daily. The women who cook meals (rather than snacks) for sale are some of the more established women in the area; conversely, the commencement and continuation of meal selling act to establish a woman as a person of stature in the immediate community. Very young women do not presume to enter into large scale food preparation;[1]

---

1. This was made explicit by one respondent, who asked whether she "looked old enough" to be a meal seller (<u>mai tuwo</u>).

the act of beginning such a business is a clear individual statement of acceptance of a certain level of maturity and discipline, and an implicit rejection of frivolity. The economic benefits underscore the woman's determination to be self-sustaining indefinitely, without dependence on a husband or lover(s). This point will be expanded below.

The Table clearly demonstrates that the assumption of a subsidiary occupation is positively related to age. Each age category of karuwai shows a progressively higher percentage of their numbers engaged in an occupation other than karuwanci. Less than 10 per cent of the youngest women had any additional occupation to karuwanci, whereas half of the karuwai between the ages of 40-49 had another occupation, as did two of the three karuwai over 50 years old. But while the ratio is clear-cut, the factors behind the proportions are myriad, including not only the question of the attractiveness of the karuwai in any particular age category, but also the characters of the women themselves, their motivations for entering karuwanci, their ability to maintain themselves with only the single occupation, their ambitions, and their determination or expectation of remaining in karuwanci, or as independent women.

Independent Women

The substitution here of the term "independent women" for karuwai is a meaningful one. For a number of women, the independent existence assumed originally as karuwai gradually supplants, in

practice and in their value system, the interest or desire to return home and/or to adopt a more passive female role. Such women, having spent a large part of their lives outside their marital or family homes, may find it difficult or undesirable to return to either, with their expectations of submission and subservience, and probably more limited economic opportunity.

The karuwa who has had no children when married, in particular, although she has a latent claim to residence among her own kin, may not wish to activate this in the face of ties which may have become all the more tenuous with the passing of time, and her own self-imposed exile. For a karuwa originally from a village, the harshness of rural life compared to the relative ease of urban living may be an immediate barrier to returning, but for any woman who has lived long elsewhere, the desire to return to her natal home must be balanced against the network of friends, acquaintances and clients built up over the years in her later residence. Moreover, opportunities for trade and economic independence exist in the city which cannot be found in a village setting.

Women who enter into karuwanci and who do not remarry do not necessarily remain karuwai; the change in perception of these women, is a function of the success they achieve in their subsidiary and subsequently primary, occupation other than karuwanci. Women who use the financial and personal opportunities they encounter in karuwanci for the realisation and maximisation of other economic endeavours, can carve for themselves positions of higher status. The initial stepping-stone of karuwanci becomes no longer socially

significant in the community perception of the individual, even if she has not remarried.

In Katsina, there is no separate and specific term to identify these women. Elsewhere in Africa, however, a similar phenomenon exists, with clear emic categorisation. The changing status of women in Kampala, for example, is in some respects identical to the transition noted in Katsina. Thus, the nakyeyombekedde is

> "...a woman who is not economically dependent on men because of her income from economic activities or from her investments... These women are often the female houseowners in urban areas... The term nakyeyombekedde can only be applied to an older woman, one who is at least 28 or 30..., for a woman rarely if ever can establish her independence before such an age. /She/ is a figure of some stability, /and can be distinguished from/ the malaaya, /who/ is economically dependent on men.
> (Halpenny, pp. 282-3)

As in Katsina, the older independent woman may or may not have lovers; this is no longer the main consideration in others' perception of them - their wealth and success take priority.

The use which the independent women make of their wealth is consistent with their self-reliance. Their aim is to ensure their own security, and the culturally approved means of so doing is through the acquisition of real estate. This is a strategy employed in other African cities also. Halpenny, quoted above, and Obbo (p. 291) point out the importance of property owning for women in Kampala. Bujra writes of early Nairobi women that:

> "Property was...a firmer base for long term security than marriage, but property could only be achieved through prostitution."
> (1975, p. 224)

And in a recent Nairobi study, Nelson demonstrates that the ownership of land, houses and businesses is a primary goal for women on their own, a goal which they will pursue with all the economic resources at their disposal (p. 298 and *passim*).

We have seen that Hausa women maintain close ties with their kin, even from within the career of *karuwanci*. They will often utilise their first substantial earnings to improve, repair, or rebuild the family compound. They may also build themselves a house in their home village in which they can reside on visits and to which they may eventually retire. However, they also build and buy elsewhere to obtain long-term income-producing investments.

Seventy-six of the 123 *gidajen mata* in Katsina, or more than three-fifths (61.8 per cent) of the total number, are owned by women. Almost all the houses were bought or built by the present owners; only five houses were inherited.[1] The 76 houses are owned by 71 women[2]; one woman has two houses, and one owns five.[3] There

---

1. Four of these houses are in Marina, reflecting both the density and length of settlement in the area, and also the distinctive character of *karuwanci* in the residential area. It is less overt, more hidden: one or two women live in a family house with some of the family members and practice their profession from that base, but meet their lovers elsewhere for sexual intercourse.

2. Nineteen of these 71 women had performed the pilgrimage to Mecca; many had paid their own way. One woman had gone three times, buying and selling real estate to finance the cost of travel.

3. This number comprises only *gidajen mata*. The owner of the five *gidajen mata*, for example, also owns the house she lives in, with no rooms for rent, and at least one other house with only male tenants.

is no standard price for plot and house in the city. Costs vary according to the size of the house and the type of construction, but the minimum cost of a house in poor condition on prime land (i.e. in an economically advantageous area) in 1970 was about £100. The cost of repairs would certainly equal the purchase price, and indeed those owners who discussed costs of purchase or construction and repairs, usually mentioned total expenditure as ranging from £250 to £500. However, once the house is available for occupancy, the income from rental provides money for repairs, and slowly but inexorably returns the owner's original investment, while the house gains in value through inflation.

Rental was least expensive in Marina, where rooms were let for as little as eight shillings a month, and no room rented for more than twelve shillings. In Sabon Layi, on the other hand, only two houses had rooms for less than ten shillings a month. Most rooms cost from fifteen to thirty shillings a month, with a few exceptional suites and rooms renting for £2-10-0.[1] In the eight houses with electricity, the rent was no less than £1 for any room.

Real estate provides both economic security and security of tenure for the independent woman. Of the 71 women house owners,

---

1. Inflation has resulted in tremendous increases in the past few years (i.e. between 1972/3 and 1977/8). Rental now is government regulated at between ₦4 - ₦10/month; the cost of buying even a delapidated five-room house is now about ₦700. (The Naira /₦/ was based on ten shillings; it is now equivalent to about 85p.)

51 lived in their own house, although not necessarily one of the gidajen mata. The strength of will of the women is reflected in marital patterns. Thirteen of the house owners were married. Seven were living in their husband's house, following the predominant pattern of virilocal residence. The other six married women, however, remained in their own houses, half living there with their husbands, and half maintaining a silkiti marriage, the husband visiting his wife in her home.

Once in her own house, the independent woman is in an excellent position to engage in some form of large-scale trade or sales; often this is a matter of continuing the work which has helped to provide her with the economic substance to initially acquire the house. Among the house owners who were occupying their own house, fully 43.1 per cent (22 women)[1] were engaged in the selling of cooked meals.[2] Almost all the women pursued some remunerative work, from government employment (one woman) or wholesale cloth trading (one woman), to selling cooked snacks (4) or cigarettes and kola (3); only one woman occupying her own house admitted to having no occupation.

These women also have the opportunity to act as kawaliya,

---

1. Includes two of the meal-sellers in Table 7-1.

2. The economic power which these women wield, the control they exert and the independence of action they require are caught in the Hausa proverb, "Mijin mai tuwo mijin banza ne." "The husband of a meal-seller is a useless husband." (i.e., the wife supports the family, and the husband is content to leave her in control of their sustenance, neither secluding nor supporting her, and behaving thereby in a manner altogether contrary to ideological expectations of male behaviour.)

and thereby gain some additional funds through channelling their tenants' activities. This is more likely to occur where the senior woman has some economic leverage over the younger woman, e.g. when the young karuwa is sharing the landlady's room(s), or through debt dependency. As wealthier members of the community, the house owners have the resources to supply food, clothing and/or accommodation on credit to the poorer karuwai, who are then under obligation to their creditors.[1] There are a few house owners in Katsina who are notorious for their exploitation of the karuwai who live in their houses. Turnover of rooms in these houses is very high, the women moving out as quickly as possible. Most karuwai who feel their actions are being overly constrained or controlled by the houseowner will move elsewhere; this is not difficult in Katsina where there is abundant housing for hire. Thus, the houseowner must be tactful in marshalling the services of her tenants, debts notwithstanding, if she expects to retain them.

The government has been, and doubtless will continue to be, the most important fount of riches for women in the community. In the past, this has been through employment opportunity; at present, government employment and more especially government contracts provide the means to amass great wealth. Four of the 71 house owners were formerly employed by the government, while five[2] are presently

---

1. A.S. Mohammed's study (1975, p. 13) suggests that up to forty per cent of the karuwai in his Sokoto example are "at the mercy of their 'matrons'..."

2. Four are working outside Katsina City, and are therefore not occupying their houses in the town.

employed. The major sources of employment for uneducated female labour had been in the schools, the Local Authority Police, and the health institutions. The first two sources are no longer possibilities. There is work for cooks and matrons in the boarding schools, but the most common position, that of craft instructress, has been abolished. The Local Authority Police has been absorbed into the federal Nigeria Police, and staff without minimum qualifications (which included most women) were released with pension or gratuity. All five of the women now employed are health workers.

Until quite recently (indeed, this decade), any woman who was employed was assumed to be, if not a karuwa, at least a woman who was worldly,[1] more knowledgeable than she should be. Such jobs were (and are) plums, and the obtaining of such employment usually demanded assistance in high places from a good friend. Thus, the well-placed karuwai were able to find salaried employment, and then parlay their earnings and pensions into real estate, which provides a continual source of funds and is a solid investment. Most of these women continue the momentum by engaging in food-selling on retirement, or petty trading after working hours.

As the above figures deal only with the owners of the gidajen mata in Katsina City, I have not included the five karuwai who have houses elsewhere,[2] or whose houses are not rented by karuwai. Two

---

1. The Hausa expression is similar: Ta taba duniya. "She has tasted, or tried out, the world."

2. In the villages, a house with rooms for rent (gidan haya) is invariably a gidan mata. There are few male strangers in such places, and those who are there tend to return home for the farming season. Karuwai are more valuable tenants, for they stay throughout the year.

of these women were craft instructresses before retirement; one of the five is a food-seller, making rice and soup twice daily. Also not included are the doyennes of the independent women, the women who have become so wealthy that they have entered into new and altogether more rewarding fields of endeavour. Thus, one has a large shop, while two women have become contractors, utilising their old relationships to obtain lucrative government contracts. Another woman is the owner of a hotel, houses, and a Mercedes. The fact of her vast wealth, and the business acumen and determination she has displayed, have made her an almost legendary figure in Katsina in her lifetime. Her "unfeminine" aggressiveness is further established in the role reversal stories surrounding her. It is said that "she marries men. She decides whom she will marry, and when she tires of him, she gets a divorce and marries someone new." In other words, she takes, and keeps, the (male) initiative.

Marriage among Karuwai

Divorce and remarriage are markedly higher among karuwai than among non-karuwai. Even at the time of their beginning karuwanci, this category of women shows less marriage stability than groups of other women, as exemplified in this study by the women of Yarinci and Marina; this has already been noted in Chapter Five in a table (5-5) showing numbers of marriages of women upon entry into karuwanci.

Table 7-2 relates the ages of 239 karuwai to the number of

Table 7 - 2

Relationship of Age to Number of Marriages

Contracted among Karuwai

Age of Women	Total Number	% of Sample	Acc. %	Number of Marriages 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10 - 14	2	0.8	0.8	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15 - 19	67	28.0	28.8	42	22	3	-	-	-	-	-
20 - 24	79	33.1	61.9	23	37	14	4	1	-	-	-
25 - 29	41	17.2	79.1	6	11	18	5	1	-	-	-
30 - 34	33	13.8	92.9	3	9	13	2	4	1	-	1
35 - 39	8	3.3	96.2	-	2	2	3	-	1	-	-
40 - 44	5	2.1	98.2	1	-	-	3	-	1	-	-
45 - 49	3	1.3	99.6	2	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
50 or more	1	0.4	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-
Total	239			79	81	50	17	6	3	2	1
Percent in Marriage Category (Total - 100%)				33.1	33.9	20.9	7.1	2.5	1.3	0.8	0.4

marriages each has contracted. This group of 239 karuwai includes all respondents for whom detailed and accurate marital histories could be compiled. The table is designed and presented in the same format as Tables 4-9 and 4-10 concerning Yarinci and Marina women respectively, with which it can be compared.

It is clear from Table 7-2 that most women who are karuwai have been married more than once, and that this includes many of the younger women. Even among the 15 to 19-year-old-women, more than a third have been married at least twice, although these marriages were not necessarily entered into from karuwanci. Once women do enter karuwanci, remarriage is quite likely, although the women may not remain long in their new marriages. Among karuwai only in their twenties, the average number of marriages is 2.23 per woman. As is clear from the table, more than a third of this age group have already contracted three marriages or more. Higher age categories follow this trend of multiple marriage, excluding only the small category of women aged 45 to 49, of whom two out of three had been married once only. Among all the karuwai age thirty or more, two-thirds had contracted at least three marriages. A comparison of the three groups of women in this study (Yarinci women, Marina women, and karuwai), presented in Table 7-3, shows even more strikingly the high incidence of remarriage among karuwai. In all but two age categories (women under fifteen, and women 45 to 49 years old), the women who are karuwai have remarried more often than the women of either Yarinci or Marina.

In spite of the proportionally larger numbers of older women

Table 7 - 3

Relationship of Age to Marriages Contracted by Yarinci Women, Marina Women, and Karuwai [a]

Age of Women	Yarinci					Marina					Karuwai				
	Total No. of Women	Marriages contracted				Total No. of Women	Marriages contracted				Total No. of Women	Marriages contracted			
		1	2	3	or 4 more		1	2	3	or 4 more		1	2	3	or 4 more
10-14	4	100% [b]	-	-	-	4	75%	25%	-	-	2	100%	-	-	-
15-19	21	67%	29%	-	5%	34	85%	15%	-	-	67	63%	33%	5%	-
20-24	28	75%	21%	-	4%	29	72%	24%	-	3%	79	29%	47%	18%	6%
25-29	19	68%	32%	-	-	32	59%	25%	13%	3%	41	15%	27%	44%	15%
30-34	22	68%	23%	9%	-	16	63%	6%	19%	13%	33	9%	27%	39%	24%
35-39	22	32%	50%	14%	5%	28	75%	18%	7%	-	8	-	25%	25%	50%
40-44	10	50%	30%	-	20%	16	56%	31%	-	13%	5	20%	-	-	80%
45-49	13	31%	31%	15%	23%	9	67%	22%	11%	-	3	67%	-	-	33%
50 or more	16	50%	38%	13%	-	21	48%	24%	10%	19%	1	-	-	-	100%

(a) This table is based entirely on information presented in Tables 4-9 (Yarinci), 4-10 (Marina), and 7-2 (karuwai).

(b) Shows percentage of women in each age category with the indicated number of marriages. Percentages are rounded off to the nearest integer.

in the Yarinci and Marina samples, fewer marriages were contracted per woman than among the karuwai. While about three-fifths of the Yarinci women, and two-thirds of the Marina women, had contracted one marriage, among the karuwai only one-third had had a single marriage. In both Yarinci and Marina, almost four-fifths of the sample had contracted no more than two marriages; the equivalent proportion of women among the karuwai was only two-thirds. The tendency to remarry among the karuwai is reflected in the average number of marriages contracted by the 239 women in the sample: the average of 2.21 marriages per woman among the karuwai is much higher than the 1.63 average number of marriages among Yarinci women, or the even lower 1.53 marriages per woman in Marina.

Marriage duration among the women who form the category of karuwai is significantly shorter than marriage duration in Yarinci or Marina. This is of course partly a function of age, among other factors, but also partly a function of the life-style of the independent women after they have entered karuwanci. The figures shown in Table 7-4, "Marriage Duration among Karuwai",[1] include all the marriages contracted by the 239 women included in Tables 7-2 and 7-3 above. The relative youth of the karuwai skews their unions towards the shorter-lived marriages, and away from the more stable end of the marriage continuum. Indeed, only eleven marriages (2.1 per cent of the total) contracted by the karuwai had endured fifteen years

---

1. This table is comparable to Tables 4-7 and 4-8, presenting marriage duration in Yarinci and Marina.

Table 7 - 4

Marriage Duration among Karuwai

Marriage Duration	No.of Marriages	% of Total (N=529)	Acc. %	No.of Divorces	% of Total (N=480)	Acc. %	No.of Extant Marriages	% of Total (N=33)	Acc. %	No.of Deaths	% of Total (N=16)	Acc. %	Size of Sample/ Duration	% of Total	Divorce Rate/ 100 Marriages A	B	C
Less than 6 months	67	12.7	12.7	66	13.8	13.8	1	3.0	3.0	0	0	0	529	100	12	100	13
6 mo.-.9 yr	49	9.3	22.0	40	8.3	22.1	8	24.2	27.2	1	6.3	6.3	462	87.3	9	98	9
1 - 1.9 yrs	94	17.8	39.8	86	17.9	40.0	7	21.2	48.4	1	6.3	12.6	413	78.1	21	99	21
2 - 2.9 "	85	16.1	55.9	77	16.0	56.0	6	18.2	66.6	2	12.5	25.1	319	60.3	24	98	24
3 - 3.9 "	55	10.4	66.3	48	10.0	66.0	2	6.1	72.7	5	31.3	56.4	234	44.2	21	91	21
4 - 4.9 "	44	8.3	74.6	42	8.8	74.8	0	0	72.7	2	12.5	68.9	179	33.8	24	96	24
5 - 5.9 "	44	8.3	82.9	38	7.9	82.7	4	12.1	84.8	2	12.5	81.4	135	25.5	28	95	29
6 - 6.9 "	22	4.2	87.1	19	4.0	86.7	3	9.1	93.9	0	0	81.4	91	17.2	21	100	21
7 - 7.9 "	20	3.8	90.9	19	4.0	90.7	1	3.0	96.9	0	0	81.4	69	13.0	28	100	28
8 - 8.9 "	16	3.0	93.9	16	3.3	94.0	0	0	96.9	0	0	81.4	49	9.3	33	100	33
9 - 9.9 "	8	1.5	95.4	7	1.5	95.5	1	3.0	99.9	0	0	81.4	33	6.2	21	100	21
10 -14.9 "	19	3.6	99.0	16	3.3	98.8	0	0	99.9	3	18.8	100.2	25	4.7	64	84	73
15 -19.9 "	4	.8	99.8	4	.8	99.6	0	0	99.9	0	0	100.2	6	1.1	67	100	67
20 -24.9 "	0	0	99.8	0	0	99.6	0	0	99.9	0	0	100.2	2	.4	0	0	0
25 -29.9 "	1	.2	100.0	1	.2	99.8	0	0	99.9	0	0	100.2	2	.4	50	100	50
30 yrs. & more	1	.2	100.2	1	.2	100.0	0	0	99.9	0	0	100.2	1	.2	50	100	50

or longer. Yet while we can understand the limited number of lengthy marriages,[1] the extraordinary number of very short marriages is less immediately comprehensible. Of the 529 marriages contracted by the 239 karuwai in the sample, 22 per cent (116 marriages) had lasted less than one year; nine of these (1.7 per cent of the total marriages) were extant, insofar as the women were aware. In both Yarinci and Marina, the comparative number of very short marriages was only 10.3 per cent and 11.4 per cent respectively, including six (2.4 per cent) and eight (2.8 per cent) extant marriages.

More than a third (36.7 per cent) of the total number of marriages contracted by karuwai were completed (192 by divorce, two by death) within two years of inception. In Yarinci, only 11.5 per cent of the marriages contracted were completed within two years (28 by divorce, one by death), while in Marina 12.1 per cent of the total marriages had ended (33 by divorce, two by death) within this period. Among the karuwai, as in the two wards, most completed marriages ended in divorce. This is much more marked among the karuwai than in Yarinci and Marina: only sixteen of their 513 completed marriages (3.1 per cent) ended in death. This compares with 20.3 per cent (26 deaths in 128 completed marriages) in Yarinci, and 20.8 per cent (27 deaths in 130 completed marriages) in Marina. Age is a partial but insufficient explanation. Even the longer lived of completed marriages among the karuwai (ten years and more)

---

1. It is necessary to bear in mind here that for a woman in her late twenties, it is already fifteen years since she was first wed. According to Table 5-4, nearly fifteen per cent of karuwai (from a slightly larger sample: 255) entered karuwanci late enough to have been capable of having such long-term unions, although most had not.

ended far more frequently in divorce than in death; this was not the case in Yarinci or Marina.

Fewer than half the total number of marriages among the karuwai survived to three years duration; 273 marriages (51.6 per cent) had already succumbed. In Yarinci, the equivalent figure was 14.6 per cent; in Marina, 14.8 per cent of all marriages were completed within three years. Fifty-two of these 273 short-lived marriages (9.8 per cent of the total marriages) among karuwai were marriages initiated after the women had already begun karuwanci.

Remarriage from Karuwanci

Karuwanci is a mode of existence within which women can meet marriageable men; most karuwai eventually remarry, and they frequently marry men with higher status and greater wealth than their previous husband(s). There is greater opportunity for former village women to contract marriages with urbanites, and a greater choice of men is available to them. As a woman is a potential karuwa, so is every karuwa a potential wife. As demonstrated in Chapter Six, karuwai can easily remarry in situations where they are directly pressured to do so. In less stressful periods also, remarriage is common. A second survey conducted two to four months after the initial interviews with the 239 karuwai included in these tables revealed that even in that short time, thirteen women had remarried;[1] one

1. Tables are based on marital histories as of the initial interview; additional information and clarification were obtained in subsequent interviews.

had already remarried, divorced, and returned to karuwanci within that period.

Marriage to a karuwa is inexpensive and includes a minimum of ritual, but manifests as inherent fragility. According to Abner Cohen,

> "informants emphasize...that to marry a prostitute a man must have a strong character himself, as, because of her love of freedom and independence she needs to be tamed and kept under constant control" (1969, p. 56)

However, the marital instability is marked also by a number of structural features.

In marrying a karuwa, a man may never have met his wife's kin; a non-relative living nearby often acts for the karuwa as marriage guardian (wali). In subsequent periods of marital stress, while the woman may turn to the guardian for support, he may have neither the authority nor the interest to assist her to any great extent. Nor will the husband stand in the same shame-avoidance and respect relationship to this man as he would to the woman's marriage guardian, usually her patrilateral kinsman, in her father's home. If the woman, dissatisfied with the marriage, returns to her natal home, it is questionable if the husband she married from karuwanci would follow her for reconciliation. Having not met her kin in the positive context of seeking the woman in marriage,[1] it is that much more difficult for the husband to first meet them in this more negative and confrontation-laden situation.

---

1. In one gidan mata, the babba attempts to persuade the prospective husband of any woman in her house to meet the woman's family before the marriage.

The influence of distance is important in other respects. The girl's kin will not be enthusiastic about a marriage which takes their daughter away from her natal home; they are less likely to encourage reconciliation in the event of a rift, even if they had not actively sought to separate the couple. In addition, these marriages from karuwanci, especially where the husband is a driver, soldier, or trader, often result in the woman settling at a distance even farther from her kin than she was when practising karuwanci.

The man's own kin may well be displeased with his marriage to a karuwa, most especially if he has not yet made his first marriage at home, which ideally should be to a maiden, a budurwa, although this is frequently not the case. Certainly, there is not the pressure from either husband's or wife's kin to maintain a marriage from karuwanci as that which is displayed concerning a marriage arranged at home. However, at the same time, the fact that a woman may not so easily turn to her kin may act to increase her dependence on her husband, and thereby strengthen the marriage tie.

The fragility of marriage from karuwanci is demonstrated in Table 7-5, which is based on the same sample of women and marriages, which provides the content of Tables 7-2 and 7-4. The marriages shown here are included in Table 7-4, but comprise only those marriages which have been initiated from karuwanci. None of the women's early marriages, contracted before entering karuwanci, are included. This table clearly demonstrates the optional nature of karuwanci, and of marriage from karuwanci. It shows the duration

Table 7 - 5

Marriages Since Beginning Karuwanci

Marriage Duration	No. of Marriages	% of Total (N=95)	Acc. %	No. of Divorces	% of Total (N=84)	Acc. %	No. of Extant Marriages	No. of Deaths	Size of Sample/ Duration	% of Total Sample
Less than 6 mos.	15	15.8	15.8	14	16.7	16.7	1	0	95	100
6 mos.- .9 yr.	12	12.6	28.4	9	10.7	27.4	3	0	80	84.2
1 - 1.9 yrs.	20	21.1	49.5	18	21.4	48.8	2	0	68	71.6
2 - 2.9 "	11	11.6	61.1	11	13.1	61.9	0	0	48	50.5
3 - 3.9 "	13	13.7	74.8	12	14.3	76.2	0	1	37	38.9
4 - 4.9 "	7	7.4	82.2	6	7.1	83.3	0	1	24	25.3
5 - 5.9 "	5	5.3	87.5	4	4.8	88.1	1	0	17	17.9
6 - 6.9 "	1	1.1	88.6	1	1.2	89.3	0	0	12	12.6
7 - 7.9 "	4	4.2	92.8	3	3.6	92.9	1	0	11	11.6
8 - 8.9 "	4	4.2	97.0	4	4.8	97.7	0	0	7	7.4
9 - 9.9 "	0	0	97.0	0	0	97.7	0	0	3	3.2
10 -14.9 "	2	2.1	99.1	1	1.2	98.9	0	1	3	3.2
15 -19.9 "	1	1.1	100.2	1	1.2	100.1	0	0	1	1.1

of 95 marriages initiated from within karuwanci. These marriages were contracted by seventy-one women, 29.7 per cent of the total sample of karuwai. The marriages themselves represent 18 per cent, or nearly a fifth, of all the marriages ever made by the 239 women included in the sample. Nearly a quarter of the marriages instituted from karuwanci (23 marriages; 24.2 per cent) lasted less than one year, while 43.2 per cent (41 marriages) were completed within two years. Almost all these marriages were arranged by the couple themselves, so the element of parental force, ignorance or lack of choice are not relevant here. A very few marriages had taken place under the pressure of government edict, but as the last major spate of edict marriages had occurred more than a decade earlier, this was not a significant consideration.

A caveat must be entered here. All the information utilised in these tables, and the analysis therefrom, is necessarily based on the life histories of women who have returned to karuwanci, i.e. are now karuwai. Of the successful, enduring and extant marriages from karuwanci, this study can provide little information, although the minimal amount available[1] supports the thesis of the fragility

---

1. Three of the women in Yarinci, and one in Marina, had formerly been karuwai. One of the Yarinci women was old and nearly blind, and lived with her son and his family, in her own house. Another, a woman in her late thirties in her third marriage, which had lasted eight months at the time of interview, was divorced within the next year. The third, subject of a case study in Chapter Three, had had six marriages, all of which had ended in divorce. She supports herself,with some assistance from her kin. The one Marina woman, 23 years old, was at the time of interview in her sixth marriage (see Table 4-10); the marriage was ended by divorce after one year. These were the only former karuwai known to me in the wards; there may have been others.

of marriage from karuwanci. A wider work would have required greater geographic mobility, and a rather different perspective from the present study.

Dealing with what information is available, it is eminently clear that, no matter the circumstances bringing a woman into karuwanci, there is an opportunity, if the woman wishes to avail herself of it, of exchanging the status of karuwa for that of married woman (matar aure). That women return to karuwanci thereafter, and frequently after a fairly short period of time, is probably influenced by the features noted above, and also by the altered expectations and expanded options available to the karuwa. The fact that the women have already experienced another mode of existence, in which they were forced to depend upon themselves and successfully did so, and could do so again, quite likely lessens their tolerance for what they see as an unsatisfactory marriage.[1] That nearly a third of the karuwai have opted to return to their independent life after having left it for remarriage supports this contention.

This movement back and forth between karuwanci and marriage underscores a notable feature of Hausa male-female relationships:

---

1. The opposite position, that after their struggles and difficulties on their own, karuwai are so grateful for the security and support of a husband that they make the most obedient and patient wives, is noteworthy in that the one karuwa who advanced it, so perfectly illustrates exactly the reverse. In her late thirties, an alhajiya and the owner of a house in Kano, she has been married four times; the last two marriages were contracted from within karuwanci. She returned to karuwanci less than a year ago, after her last divorce, and supports herself very comfortably with the sale of cooked meals.

their marked similarity in terms of the responsibilities, requirements, and expectations associated with them.

There is a pronounced economic component in most non-kin heterosexual relationships in the society, with support being provided by men. Any woman expects to benefit economically from her man, be he husband, suitor, or lover. Wives have independent economic activities, but usually do not provide for the household. Women receive, but do not tender gifts to men. Tangible material expressions of such relationships, whether in or out of karuwanci, are important. A woman in her husband's home is more certain of continued economic support than is a karuwa, but a karuwa with a steady lover is also in a reasonably secure economic position. Women do not bestow their bodies, their time, and their lives gratis; they expect some recompense.

Underlying much of the Marxist and feminist writing concerning prostitution is the assumption that "prostitution 'degrades', and that those who practise it are its 'victims'" (Bujra,1975,p.215). I have tried to show throughout this chapter that far from being "victims", the karuwai are often the victors in the struggle for autonomy. They sell their bodies but keep their freedom, and use their economic gains to secure an independent future. In many ways, married women are more exploited than karuwai, for the married women share or relinquish control over their bodies, their movement, and their children.

The emotional content and depth of commitment to a particular relationship are not easy to measure. In terms of duration, extra-

marital liaisons may last longer than many marriages. Divorce is common; the fact of marriage does not guarantee future security. And since a man may confide more in his girlfriend than in his wife, and may spend more of his time and share more activities and experiences with her, the relationship may be as rewarding or more rewarding than that with his wife, or wives. Given the structural form of Hausa marriage, and the behavioural expectations for husband and wife, it is clear that men may build up relationships with their girlfriends which are difficult to obtain within marriage. For women also, the roles of karuwa and wife have different benefits and liabilities: it is up to the individual to establish her priorities and preferences, and to act accordingly.

Probably the most important single feature which distinguishes the two types of ties, and the kind of commitment which either partner invests in the relationship, is the added dimension of children. Of course, even within karuwanci women get pregnant and give birth.[1] As we have seen in the case of Rahila, sometimes the prospect of undivided control and care of the child is more important than the social acceptability of marriage. It is quite likely the desire for children, children born with the assistance and approbation of kin, affines, and friends, which is the most significant factor drawing women to marriage, and to remarriage, just as it is the presence of these children which may keep women in marriages they

---

1. See Chapter Five for data concerning illegitimate children.

might otherwise wish to terminate. In the following chapter, we will examine the option of marriage, the most frequently chosen of careers among Hausa women.

Conclusion

Karuwanci offers scope for independence, self-assertion, and economic attainment generally greater than that available within the confines of marriage, or within the limitations of rural society. These opportunities, however, are associated with a degree of insecurity and vulnerability, especially in the initial stages and among the less successful, not encountered in other feminine life-styles.

The negative aspects of karuwanci are seen to be relative to place, time, and achievement. The stigma associated with the career option is most relevant in relation to the woman's kin group during the initial move into karuwanci, but with time and particularly with success in the profession, earlier disapproval is muffled, overtaken by grudging or open respect. During a lengthy career in karuwanci, a woman makes new friends, establishes new ties, and learns to depend upon herself and her abilities. By the time such a woman decides to leave karuwanci, her networks are probably more extensive in the city than in her home area, and her opportunities virtually unbounded. Her early career has paved the way to a comfortable maturity, with respect and admiration from her neighbours, and gratitude from her kin, often the

recipients of her financial largess.

Explanation, justification and rationalisation of entrance into karuwanciare usually based on insurmountable social and/or economic pressures in the natal or marital home. This reasoning is often advanced also for the continued practice of karuwanci, or is later discarded in favour of other socio-economic motivations. However, the ease of marriage from karuwanci, and the facility with which former karuwai return to karuwanci, suggests that the element of choice is rather stronger than is generally supposed. Women use these rationalisations for convenience, assuming the passive stance expected of them by men, and thereby keeping the independence offered by karuwanci.

The kinds of relationship women establish with men in karuwanci are often similar to those established in marriage, in terms of duration, expectations, emotional commitment, and economic benefits. However, there are fewer constraints for the karuwa than for the wife. Perhaps the primary value of karuwanci is the absence of continual overt male domination, and control by one's kin. For many women, the insecurity and initial stigma are a small enough price to pay for the freedom and opportunities inherent in the career option of karuwanci.

CHAPTER EIGHT

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC POSITION OF MARRIED WOMEN

The most frequently exercised career option among Katsina women is that of marriage. In the course of this chapter, we examine the life-style of the married woman, concentrating particularly upon analysis of the social and economic power relationships which exist between husband and wife.

We begin with discussion of the most striking feature of Hausa male-female relationships: the seclusion of married women. After presentation of the historical background of the practice and its present distribution, we consider its significance and value today, from both the male and female viewpoints. For women, seclusion has a positive value particularly in the opportunity it affords for carrying out extra-domestic chores.

Hausa married women, as other Hausa women, play a vital role in the economy. Besides playing their part in social reproduction, married women are a mainstay in the petty commodity production of the community, the profits from their activities being inalienably their own. Husband's and wife's economic position, like their social status, are distinct, although they may share class position and orientation. Women's crafts and trades are considered in some detail, as is women's utilisation of economic resources. In disbursement as well as in acquisition of funds, women act largely independently of men; marriage enjoins greater spatial than economic

the wealthy; a contributing factor was the availability of slave labour. This is noted, for example, in the Hausa poem "Bakandamiya" (The Hippo-Hide Whip), in which the poet, writing in the early 1900's, bewails the effects of the ending of slavery on the traditional way of life:

> "I have no slave, I am unable to practise seclusion,
> I have no slave girl to fetch water,
> To go to the bush and fetch me a little wood."
> (Hiskett, 1975, p. 104)

new starts

According to M.G. Smith, the ending of slavery produced an increase in rural seclusion, because of the refusal by former slave women to farm or collect wood, tasks not formerly done by free Hausa wives and concubines in slave-owning families (1954, p. 22). To what extent such refusal was tolerated, given the exigencies of rural daily life, is difficult to establish. Certainly, the free women were impressed into service on their husbands' farms, and did not take kindly to their newly-created duties. One of the reasons cited for the increase in divorce during the early years of British rule was the abolition of slavery, for now "Many wives must live a life of drudgery..." (D.O. i/c Katsina Division to Resident, Kano Province, 13 October 1920 /File 1674/). Hill notes for Batagarawa that:

> "Fifty years ago only the wives of practising malams were in purdah in the /town/."
> (1972, p. 22)

And she suggests that rural wife seclusion could not have become so prevalent,

> "...were it not for the high water-table /for wells/ and the ubiquity of the donkey, so that without inconvenience to themselves men could excuse women from their traditional function as beasts of burden."
> (1972, p. 24)

restraint.

As the husband is responsible for all household expenses irrespective of his wives' economic resources, married women are free to employ their economic surplus as they see fit. Particularly through judicious participation in the rituals surrounding life-cycle ceremonies, and through gift-exchange, women may effect changes in their social networks, and increase their social status.

Married women's relationships are examined not only with respect to their husbands, but also with respect to their children, co-wives, and other affines. Finally, the interrelationship between deference, power and authority within and outside the household is analysed, most immediately as it relates to married women, but extending also to other women in the society.

Seclusion: the Realities of Socio-spatial Control

"Marriage of seclusion" (auren kulle) is a primary feature of marriage in Katsina, and is particularly significant for the young bride: occasions on which the woman is permitted to leave the compound are limited, defined, and infrequent, although the strictness of seclusion decreases with length of marriage, age of the wife, and in some cases, economic dependence of the husband on his wife.

In the past, imposition of seclusion in marriage was mainly the province of the nobility, the religious functionaries, and

Certainly at present, seclusion is a prominent feature in Hausa marriage throughout Nigeria,[1] not only for the wife of the wealthy urbanite, but equally for the wife of the rural farmer struggling for subsistence. Goddard, writing of three villages in Sokoto, takes at least partial seclusion to be the norm for married women. D.W. Norman, in his study of three Zaria villages, notes the predominance of seclusion (p.10), while Hill states that in Batagarawa:

> "...virtually all women in the /town/, but not in the dispersed farmhouses, are in full Muslim seclusion, to the degree that during the course of a normal day they do not emerge from their compounds."
>
> (1972, p. 22)

The practice of seclusion in the Kano close settled zone is so severe that even

> "Older wives...usually remain secluded, to the point that any sixty-year-old seen walking towards Kano city /is/ almost certain to be husbandless."
>
> (Hill, 1977, p. 84)

My own limited research to the northeast of Katsina City revealed that seclusion there also was the rule rather than the exception.

Men attempt to justify seclusion on a variety of grounds, in the first instance with reference to Islamic injunction. This is based primarily on a verse addressed to the wives of Mohammed:

> "Remain in your houses; and display not your finery, as did the pagans of old..."
>
> (Sura 33:33 /Arberry translation/)

Since the Prophet's wives are taken as a model of good behaviour by the community of believers, exhortations directed to them have

---

1. Until recently, the vast majority of Hausa women in Niger were not secluded. However, seclusion is now becoming prevalent, particularly in towns and large villages (G. Nicolas, 1975, p.181).

generally been thought to be appropriate for all women. However, no women were prohibited from going out if necessary, although the Koran placed protective restrictions about them:

> "O Prophet, say to thy wives and daughters and the believing women, that they draw their veils close to them; so it is likelier they will be known, and not hurt..."
> (Sura: 33:59)

Shehu Usman ɗan Fodio strongly favoured seclusion, advocating a far more limited sphere of action for women than had formerly been theirs. Relying particularly on al-Madkhal of Ibn al-Hajj, he admitted of few circumstances which would permit free movement of a woman in the market, and discouraged attendance at mosque or funerals for any women except those beyond child-bearing age.[1] It is likely that the Shehu's proscriptions remained the ideal rather than the actual practice in most of Hausaland. If the incidence of seclusion altered at all, this may have been in cities such as Sokoto and Gwandu, which were most intimately connected with Usman ɗan Fodio and the Jihad.

The Koran legitimised and partly defined men's control over women:

> "Men are the managers of the affairs of women for that God has preferred in bounty one of them over another, and for that they have expended of their property."
> (Sura 4:38)

The position of women as legally and politically inferior to men is indicated in much of the literature on Islam.

---

1. See Ogunbiyi for a general discussion of the position of women as propounded by Usman ɗan Fodio.

In Hausaland, men's control over women is far less assured. The political parameters of women's status have already been discussed. Women's subordination and lesser legal status are summed up in the Hausa proverb, "Mace rabin mutum" ("A woman is half a man"). And yet, we have already seen that, in the matter of marriage and divorce, women will have their way. And in Hausa seclusion, there is strong evidence that the practice is a not altogether successful attempt on the part of men to keep one step ahead of the machinations of their women. Thus, M.G. Smith notes that

> "...the vast majority of /semi-secluded Zaria/ marriages are really ineffective attempts by the men, with the assistance of a quasi-religious myth, to seclude their wives completely and thereby obtain marital stability."[1] (1955, p. 64)

And Ronald Cohen, writing of the Kanuri, also suggested the uncertainty of the men's position:

> "...if /a wife/ is kept in the household and if all interactions between men and women are governed by rules of strict control in which any sexual content is severely limited, then possibly some of the opportunities for insubordination and sexual misconduct can be avoided." (1971, p. 93)

And whatever the value of seclusion as a means by which men protect the sexual and procreative rights they have in their wives from

---

1. Smith could not ascertain whether seclusion had any effect upon marital stability, because of the tendency of husbands to declare their wives secluded whether they were or not. In Katsina City, where women are virtually all secluded, there is also no means of measuring the relationship between seclusion and stability of marriage. Helen Abell, working in an area of rural Zaria with both seclusion and non-seclusion, noted that "The practice of kulle /seclusion/...was not found to be significantly associated with divorce..." (p.25), although it is unclear from her presentation whether the frequently divorcing women had been secluded or unsecluded in their former marriages.

alienation by other men, this must surely be negated by the prevailing custom of permitting the women to go out visiting in the evenings.

In Hausa attitudes towards fidelity, there is little of the Arabic concept of family honour, that "the man preserves his house, in great part, by protecting the modesty of his women" (Antoun, p. 680). A woman's infidelity is regarded more as an individual delict than as an affront to her husband's or her own kin group, to be avenged for the sake of family honour. Discovery will usually precipitate divorce, perhaps a beating, and the woman's clouded return to her kin.

Where women farm and gather wood and water outside the compound, their labour cannot easily be dispensed with. When seclusion is initiated in such cases, the prestige of the husband is probably an important factor in the decision. The woman in such a household is thereupon released from the toil of farmwork, fetching and carrying, and has the consequent leisure to pursue her own trade. Thus, women may deem seclusion to be a privilege, or a right.

We have already noted in Chapter Five, the case of one Katsina City woman who left her husband rather than participate in the farm labour which was expected of wives in the village where she married. The proceedings of a court case[1] in a village near Katsina City also demonstrate this point. In an area in which seclusion was becoming the prevalent marital condition, a wife who had assisted

---

1. Mashi Native Court Case No. 513/507/1964, cited in D.J. Hill, p. 318.

her husband on his farm demanded that she be secluded, or divorced to marry someone who would seclude her. She insisted that free movement was unbecoming of married women in the locality.

In Katsina City, where seclusion has been practised for generations, prestige is no longer relevant as a spur to seclusion. Rather, the absence of seclusion may result in censure of the offending husband, and

> "../even/ people in the lower economic strata, in spite of their strained economic circumstances,... keep their wives in complete physical seclusion..."
> (H. Adamu, p. 10)

Seclusion is explained by Katsina women, as by men, in terms of religious injunction, although women also note that their husbands' jealousy gives impetus to its practice. Women are socialised to expect seclusion in marriage; after the first year of marriage, the social and economic benefits of seclusion probably outweigh the limitations of spatial constraint.

Within the city, women tend to equate no seclusion with having to go to the market, a place which high-born women may never see, and which they are taught to fear.[1] Other women know the market from their girlhood, when they were sent by their own mothers to shop. Marriage means an end to that particular chore, which is taken over by children or servants. City women are spared altogether from the necessity of seeking water or wood, two of the laborious tasks of village women. With numerous wells and pipe-lines, Katsina

---

1. An expatriate teacher in the Katsina Women's Teachers College once set the girls an assignment which involved going to the city market. The immediate uproar from the girls and from their horrified parents resulted in the hasty withdrawal of the topic.

City women have relatively easy access to water. Where there is no source inside the compound, water is brought by children or by women water-carriers, often strangers in the community. Wood is sold in the market and throughout the city; only children on the periphery of the city gather branches and twigs. With seclusion, women are free to pursue their own economic interests, the profits from which are inalienably their own.

Women's social life is of course greatly affected by their seclusion. But the fact that women are limited in movement invests occasions when they do interact with particular significance. The initiation and maintenance of women's dyadic bonds, and networks, are considered in detail later in this chapter.

There is variation in the degree of seclusion imposed by husbands, depending upon temperament, background and education. Some, but by no means all of the more educated men, are not concerned about vigorously secluding their wives, while men of the ruling class, for example, tend to insist upon strict seclusion.[1] The woman's temperament is also relevant. Thus, timid or introverted women might find seclusion no hardship; it might even be a positive boon. More aggressive or more gregarious women would probably try to get their husbands to reduce the severity of seclusion fairly early in the marriage. The following description reflects the general pattern of seclusion in the city. With this in mind, let us consider the nature of seclusion, and its effects upon married women.

---

1 Changes in attitudes related to women's entry into the modern wage-earning sector are discussed in Chapter Nine.

Strict Seclusion: an Introduction to Marriage

Prior to marriage, most Hausa girls have virtually unlimited freedom of movement, especially during the daytime when many girls trade for their mothers. It is only the daughters of malams, and of some of the wealthy men, who have had some experience, albeit attenuated, of restrictions of movement before marriage. Thus, for most girls, the imposition of seclusion represents a sharp break with a past characterised by constant interaction with kin and friends, unfettered by spatial limitations.

Immured in her husband's compound, the new bride is completely immobile for a year or longer; during this time she is forbidden to go even to the entrance of the compound. The preponderance of single conjugal family units in the wards ensures that many of these young girls are suddenly faced with a situation where solitude becomes the dominating feature of their lives. Kinswomen visit whenever they can, but visits are limited by their own obligations elsewhere, and cannot replace the lost cameraderie of the young bride's peers. And since a girl's friends are marrying around the same time as herself, they are equally unable to leave their marital homes. Loneliness vies with boredom as the girls' primary cause of misery, for the bride is not permitted to begin a trade during her early married life: she must be seen to be manifestly dependent upon her new spouse.

The only deviation from the practice of total seclusion at the outset of marriage occurs if the girl becomes pregnant in the first few months. Following traditional Fulani custom, a woman is escorted back to her natal home about two months prior to the

birth, and then remains there until some months after the child is born. This custom of returning home for childbirth is known as goyon ciki (carrying the pregnancy). Haôe tradition is adhered to in parts of Marina: the woman remains in her marital home until the day of her first-born's naming ceremony, after which mother and child are brought to the woman's natal home. But other than this return home for childbirth, there is little or no opportunity for the young bride to leave her husband's house.

The strict seclusion with which a woman begins her married life is gradually lessened, beginning with evening visits to close kin and affines; in time, the young woman begins attending wedding and naming ceremonies which take place during the day. No woman attends funerals, and young brides do not usually participate in condolences. There are ceremonies which a husband is almost obliged to permit his wife to attend, such as those of his close kin living nearby. If a wedding or birth is being celebrated by the woman's kin, she may or may not be permitted to go, depending on factors such as distance, and length of time since her last visit. A woman expects to be allowed to return home periodically, and her husband cannot continually refuse his wife permission to do so, without good reason. In such a situation a man risks not only offending his affines, but also losing his wife. For a woman who feels herself unjustly treated will not stay in her marital home.

The same rationale governs attendance at other ceremonial occasions and functions. As a woman grows older, her obligations increase and her participation in ceremonies and gift-exchange

become correspondingly more important. Most women ask for permission to attend these functions as they arise, and husbands are expected to accede to their requests, within reason. The husband may baulk if, for example, he feels the woman is spending too much time away from the home, to the detriment of the daily running of the household. But women are also sensitive to the negative effects of excessive movement in terms of other women's perceptions, and try to avoid too much running around; this will be demonstrated below.

Women say that if the husband is away, the wife should remain at home. However, this may be more honoured in the breach than actually practised. Local myth asserts that seclusion is more severe in Haßen Birni than in the Fada area of town. Judging from Yarinci and Marina, however, it appears that this is not the case. The reasons include the proximity of close kin in Marina, and the frequent absence of the men from their homes, either on trading expeditions or in long hours of daily work. Women do not wander about the streets, but they do tend to go occasionally to see a neighbour or a kinswoman, if the need or wish arises. And if a child is ill, the Yarinci women in particular will rush the child to the hospital, seclusion notwithstanding. However, most married women spend much of their time at home. And certainly, the most valuable bonus of this "enforced" seclusion is the opportunity it affords for women to pursue their own craft or trade.

From their youth, Hausa women have a lively interest in and practical knowledge of the sale and distribution of women's craftwork and other products. Many young girls have assisted their mothers, foster mothers, kinswomen or others in trading. The hawking of

goods, known as talla or, if done for wages, tallau, is primarily the province of these unmarried girls. Girls may also establish their own trade, on a lesser scale than that of adults. For example, a mother may stake her daughter to a shilling's worth of cocoyam in season. All profits are the girl's, to be spent or ploughed back into trade. Even schoolgirls will periodically make some sweet or snack to sell in the neighbourhood for a few pence profit.

Besides acquiring knowledge of the technique of trading, the young girl is earning money[1] which she may use as she wishes, but which often is spent on items of plastic and enamelware which she will use to decorate her room in her husband's home. The money, or goods bought with it, will be entrusted to a woman older than the girl whom she likes and respects, thus initiating or strengthening non-kin bonds. The senior person in this hierarchical relationship of uwar ɗaki/ɗiyar arziki (mother of the room/daughter of fortune)[2] acts "like a mother" to the girl. Thus, with her trading income, a girl stakes a claim to independent income, and secures a financial and social interest in her own future life as a married woman.

Economic Roles of Women: the Statistical Background

The fact that women are in seclusion, yet participate fully in

---

1. Another source of funds is the small gifts from a girl's suitors,and friends, which, through modesty and/or self-interest, she would not usually mention to her mother.

2. See Chapter Six for the expression of this dyadic bond within karuwanci.

economic activities, often engaging in several different kinds of craft, production, or trade, has not been reflected in the statistics relating to women, resulting in an unbalanced and misleading portrait of the Hausa woman.

The 1931 Intensive Census figures classified almost all adult women as spinners (11,989), with about five hundred more listed as traders in alimentary products. Most women were included within these two occupational categories, with only six per cent of the women shown as having a secondary occupation also.

The 1952 census figures on women's occupations were less successful than those of twenty years earlier. Occupational categories for men were limited to six, including one for those not in the labour force, while women received even shorter shrift. All were included in only three categories, based on the classifications for men which were not equally applicable for women. Statistics for Magajin Gari District showed the following figures for women:

1,157	Agricultural and fishing
1,507	Traders and clerical workers[1]
24,182	All others
26,846	Total

The Government Statistician admitted that information on women's occupations was not altogether satisfactory:

> "The three occupational groups for females have not provided as useful an indication of primary occupations as the male groups... Undoubtedly Enumerators had great difficulty in deciding whether the duties of 'housewife' were or were not the primary occupation."
> (1952 Census, Covering Booklet, pp. 9-10)

---

1. In shops, all sales workers, market traders, and all clerical workers engaged in commerce.

It is likely that differing interpretations of women's roles, and the categories available, produced results from different areas of the North at variance with each other, although practice may have been similar. In analysing the pattern of Nigerian urbanisation through use of the 1952 census figures, Mabogunje is struck by:

> "...the most spectacular anomaly /in female urban employment/...in the densely settled zone around Kano. Some of these towns...returned over 50 per cent of their female population engaged in trading or craft."
>
> (1972, p. 166)

He explains the anomaly, as he sees it, by reference to the "great tradition of trading and craft activities in these areas" and the "high competition for survival."

> "It may be that because of the small size of holdings here, the women may be forced to supplement family income by trading and craft production."
>
> (ibid.)

In fact, Kano women control their own income[1] as surely and as securely as do Hausa women elsewhere, as described, for example, by Guy Nicolas (1975, p. 97), Polly Hill (1969, p. 398), and M.G. Smith (1955, p. 115). The anomaly is surely the low degree of female economic activities reported from other areas, due partly to the inaccurate perception of the nature of women's participation in the economy in Hausa areas, and the reflection of that inaccuracy in census classifications. That women remained at home apparently relegated housetrade to domestic activity, and thus to housewifely duty.

---

1. See Bashir, p. 11.

The situation had not been clarified by the 1963 Census. With a female population over fifteen of 715,662, only 27,176 women, or 3.8 per cent, were included in the "labour force"[1] in Katsina Province. A total of 3,858 women, or 8.2 per cent of the urban female population fifteen and over, were included in the labour force, mainly as street vendors (1,131), hand spinners (1,557), and domestic servants (444). Since there is no supplementary information concerning the definition or limits of these categories, or of the labour force itself, which includes 94.2 per cent of the male population over fifteen in the Province, but only 3.8 per cent of the equivalent female population, further statements cannot fruitfully be made, except to note that the large number of economically productive women is again ignored.

The inaccuracy of the census figures concerning women's trade should not be ascribed only to the blunders or misconceptions of the census enumerators, however, gross though those errors may have been. For it must be borne in mind that it was usually husbands, or male compound heads, who furnished all the information concerning a particular household. And, judging from my own experience, men are not likely to mention any occupation except "marriage" in speaking of their wives. It may be that a wife's economic dependence on her husband takes priority from the husband's point of view, or it may be more prestigious to gloss over the fact that one's wife has an independent source of income. The husband's response may be a means

---

1. The only gloss on the masses of statistical data was included in Lagos, Vol. 1 (of the 10 volumes of the 1963 Census at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, London): "The Statistical Tables are put out without any comment; this practice is considered necessary at this time."

by which to symbolically relegate the woman to a subordinate position vis à vis himself in the eyes of others, even if, or perhaps especially if, he is uncertain of his own socio-economic control over her. Or such a reply may simply be the means by which to politely answer enquiries and yet divulge the smallest possible amount of information. But no matter what the reasons for the response, the effect remains: the virtual absence of Hausa women's economic activities in Nigerian statistics, and the subsequent underrating or indeed ignorance of this vital sector of the Hausa economy.

Economic Opportunity in Marriage

Forbidden to leave the marital home and therefore unable to engage in trade herself, the young bride is not permitted to begin any occupation until she has been some time, usually at least a year, in her husband's house. But, paradoxically, a woman may not be wealthier for years than she is at the time of her marriage. Brought to her husband's house with the gifts presented to her by her own matrilateral and patrilateral kin, including the quantities of enamelware, brassware, and crockery which make up the room decorations known as kayan ɗaki, and recipient of the indirect dowry given by her husband and his kin, the girl owns goods of considerable value. Even the furniture of the bride's room is a gift from her own kin, the bed being provided by her father.[1]

---

1. This perhaps can be seen in terms of the transfer of sexual and procreative rights in the girl by her agnatic kin. The bed is the focal point of the (usually small) room, but may be more decorative than otherwise utilised.

But although the possessor of valuables which are incontestably her own, during her first months of marriage the woman may not sell these goods, or realise any financial benefit from them.[1] After she has spent some time in her husband's house, she may increase her stock, sell, give away, or replace items, but the freedom to do so is certainly not concurrent with marriage. These items are a major part of her wealth, and are an important indicator of her status.

The foodstuffs included in the bride's gifts from her own kin, known as gara, are perishable and are treated differently. Variations in their use demonstrate differences in perceptions of marriage rights and duties in the respective areas. Gara is provided primarily by the girl's maternal kin, and the bulk of goods is given by the mother herself. It includes all the foodstuffs needed for feasting and entertaining[2] when the bride has been brought to her husband's house and she is receiving friends and kin.

Katsina men state that these foodstuffs are actually given to the couple rather than just to the bride, and that part may even be held in reserve until the major entertainment and expenditure is completed, so that the bride and groom may enjoy the food themselves. But the women consider the foodstuffs to be the property of the wife, to be used as and when she wishes, although usually she shares

---

1. In Kano, the bride's mother and other relatives count and recount the dishes when taking them for washing, to make sure that none have been sold (Bashir, p. 73).

2. A wedding, with its days of ceremony, is the occasion par excellence for feasting. Thus the Hausa couplet:

"Lashe-lashe shi ne biki
Amarya ta ango ce!"

(Savouring and tasting are the essence of a wedding,
The bride is only for the groom!)

her foodstuffs with other members of the compound. In villages outside the city, it appears that the gara is retained by the bride, and is not necessarily shared with her husband, much less with co-wives and other affines.[1] Certainly, in divorce proceedings the gara was frequently shown never to have reached the husband and his kin.

The difference in men's and women's attitudes towards the purpose and possession of gara is perhaps indicative of a more general distinction in attitude on the basis of gender: the women seem to have a strong sense of their own individuality and of the inalienability of their possessions, while husbands associate their wives more definitely with the marital home than the women do themselves.

Conspicuous Leisure: an Indication of High Status

In Yarinci and Marina equally, women are barred from economic activity in the first year or two of marriage, but thereafter the pattern differs, some Yarinci women adopting a form of conspicuous leisure scarcely evident in Marina. This is a pattern which has recently gained ground in Yarinci, with women relinquishing their former occupation or not taking up any occupation at all.

A husband must provide his wife with food and shelter; the withholding of either is grounds for divorce. A woman's contribution

---

1. The variation in urban and rural practice was pointed out by an informant born and raised in Katsina City, who later spent ten years in a village a few miles away.

to the household is made primarily in services as wife and mother; the economic activity she engages in for profit is not a household but an individual venture, and profits obtained through trade are individually held. Thus, where all women have the "leisure" that seclusion affords, the ultimate demonstration of status and wealth is in the non-utilisation of the time available for personal economic advancement.[1] In Yarinci, younger women, and particularly women married to high-status men form the majority of this category (see Table 8-1). And for many of these women, especially those married into the aristocracy, there is yet another high status indicator in the form of female domestic servants to assist them with their work. Often it is the wives themselves rather than their husbands, who hire these servants who are then given a small monthly salary, board, gifts in kind, and assistance with ceremonial expenses. In their dealings with servants and with certain other categories of individuals, these women operate the same type of patron/client relationships usually described in the literature for Hausa men.

The demonstration of conspicuous leisure appears to be a specifically urban phenomenon. In other areas for which information is available, the vast majority of women engage in trade, with the wives of wealthy men having an initial edge over other women. Thus, in the Kano close settled zone:

> "...the wives of rich men...are those most likely to flourish..."
>
> (Hill, 1977, p. 173)

---

1. The corresponding western situation is outlined in Veblen, Chapter Three.

Table 8 - 1

Participation in Women's Occupations - Yarinci

Age of Women	Number of Women	Husband's occupation							
		Wealthy Salaried Worker (a)		Other Salaried Worker (b)		Wealthy Trader		Other	
		Occupation	None	Occupation	None	Occupation	None	Occupation	None
10-14	3		1		1				1
15-19	13		4		3		1	2	3
20-24	23	2	10	2	2	1	1	1	4
25-29	15	1	5	4		1		3	1
30-34	24	3	5	7	2		1	5	1
35-39	19	4	3	2		1		7	2
40-44	10	1	3	2				4	
45-49	9		2	3		1		3	
50 or more	4	1		2		1			
Total	120(c)	12	33	22	8	5	3	25	12

(a) Includes men earning £20 or more in salaried employment. This includes almost all the aristocracy in the ward, who are employed by Local Authority and state government.

(b) Earning less than £20 per month.

(c) Includes two-thirds (68.2 per cent) of all married women living with their husbands in the ward.

And in Batagarawa:

> "...the wives of poor farmers are as apt to participate in /house-trade/ as those of richer farmers, including the masu sarauta..."
>
> (Hill, 1972, p. 268)

Emmy Simmons notes that in the Zaria villages in which she did research:

> "...it is socially unacceptable /for a woman/ not to have an occupation..."
>
> (1975, p. 158)

In Katsina City, not engaging in trade is a route to higher status; in rural areas, the opposite may be the case.[1]

About two-thirds (68.5 per cent) of the women under thirty have no remunerative occupation. For a very few, this is due to the brief time they have been married; they are not yet permitted to begin a trade. For most, it is a considered decision. Among the wives of the wealthy civil servants, only a quarter of the women, irrespective of age, engaged in any occupation. Women married to other salaried workers are likely to have some trade, as do about half the remaining wives included in the sample. There is not the same pattern of conspicuous leisure displayed here as among wives of well-paid civil servants, even where the enabling wealth is present. There is a difference in life-style between the groups, based to some extent on the different criteria of social status in the respective groups. More than two-thirds of wives over thirty

---

1. Women's conspicuous leisure may fulfil different functions in other contexts. Thus, in one non-Hausa area in which women have traditionally helped to support the family, and where Islam is relatively recent, Muslim women are purposely turning from trade

   > "...in order to show that they are 'good Muslims'... /in this area/ a 'good Muslim woman' is defined as a woman who is totally dependent on her husband."
   >
   > (Drew, p. 197 fn. 1)

have some occupation,[1] the majority of older wives with no trade being wives of civil servants.

Most women can name a craft in which they engage, but for the women dependent upon their husbands, this tends to be an avocation rather than a money-making venture. Such crafts are practised only sporadically and provide little, if any, financial gain. The products are more often given away or used within the home than sold.

Crafts so named tend to be very light work - knitting, embroidery, crocheting - rather than food preparation or petty trade. For these women, it is the very lack of occupation which contributes to the enhancement of their own and their husband's status. The husband provides them not only with food, shelter and clothing, but also, directly or indirectly, with the money to meet all other expenses.

It must be noted, however, that a price is exacted from the elite women for their conspicuous leisure. Many working women speak of their occupation as maganin zaman banza, an "antidote to sitting about uselessly"; it provides some direction for the secluded woman. The tedium and boredom which is the lot of the high-status Hausa woman can hardly be imagined. With servants to do the housework and assist them with their children, and with no opportunity to leave the house during the day, the women quite literally have nothing to do. They may take naps in order to get through the otherwise never-ending day. Even the appearance of a peripatetic trader, particularly a trader of the luxury goods which the elite women can well afford, is a welcome

---

1. See Chapter Three for a discussion of occupations among non-married and older women. The small numbers included in the higher age categories in the tables in this chapter reflect the large proportion of widows and divorced women, compared to older married women.

break in the daily routine; viewing the few items for sale may be stretched into an hour or more.

In some houses, women will buy imported clothing for their children, jewellery, and other luxuries with the money their husband has given them. In other houses, virtually every necessity and most luxuries are bought for his wives and children by the husband. The wives are still given an allowance which may be used as they wish, perhaps to buy newer or more fashionable furniture or room decorations, or for gift exchange. Allowances for wives vary, but usually include one or two shillings each day, and from £1 to £5 at the end of the month, when the husband is paid. Ultimately, their husbands are the source of these women's wealth, although the lines through which income may be derived are varied.

Within the compound, for example, a woman organises daily activities and is responsible for some financial expenditure. The degree to which control of daily finances is in the hands of the wife differs from compound to compound. In some compounds the husband sends a servant or child, or goes himself to the market to make purchases for the compound. However, in most homes the wife receives the household money, often keeping some portion herself, without her husband's consent.[1] In Yarinci, husbands often demand a detailed account of daily expenditure, but wives still manage to supplement their own funds with household money.

And a woman may gain financial benefits from her husband's gift-exchange transactions. Men and women participate in extensive gift-

---

1. See Abner Cohen, p. 67, for a similar situation in Sabon Gari, Ibadan.

exchange networks; gifts from a husband's friend are often directed towards his household, i.e. his wives or children, rather than to the man himself, and thus provide yet another though perhaps infrequent source of extra funds for the Hausa woman; reciprocity for such a gift is incumbent upon the husband rather than the wife.

Marina (Table 8-2) presents a different picture from that of Yarinci: almost all women not newly-married engage in some occupation, with a range of crafts and trade items greater than in Yarinci. Almost two-thirds of the women not trading are recently married,[1] while even including these women, the twenty-three women with no occupation form only fifteen per cent of the total included in this sample. Figures for Marina, based as they are on a craft and trade-oriented population, may be more generally relevant to the wider urban situation than those of Yarinci. Nearly all the secluded women's occupations mentioned in the literature[2] are found in Marina, and some form of house-trade is carried on in most compounds. Whether women opt to engage in trade or not, they expect to be permitted to obtain independent income. Thus, in a successful divorce petition in a village outside the city, a wife obtained her divorce on the grounds that her husband restrained her from trading.[3]

---

1. About two-thirds of the women without occupations (14 out of 23) are nineteen or younger, but not all are recently married.

2. See particularly Hill, 1969, pp. 399-400; 1972, pp. 268-9; and M.G. Smith, 1955, p. 60.

3. Mai'adua Case No. 220/133 24/2/68 cited in D.J. Hill, p. 181.

Table 8 - 2

Participation in Women's Occupations - Marina

Age of Women	Number of Women	Husband's occupation: Wealthy Salaried Worker (a)		Other Salaried Worker (b)		Wealthy Trader		Other	
		Occupation	None	Occupation	None	Occupation	None	Occupation	None
10-14	4							1 (c)	3
15-19	29	1		1	1		3	16	7
20-24	30	1			2	1		23	3
25-29	27	2		1		3	2	19	
30-34	15	1						13	1
35-39	20			2				17	1
40-44	12			1		3		8	
45-49	7							7	
50 or more	9							9	
Total	153 (d)	5		5	3	7	5	113	15

(a) Men earning £20 or more per month in salaried employment.

(b) Earning less than £20 per month.

(c) Girl married in from Lomé.

(d) Includes more than half (54.8 per cent) of the married women living with their husbands in the ward.

Women's Trade - Yarinci and Marina

After some time in her husband's house, a woman may begin or learn some money-making occupation (s. sana'a, pl. sana'o'i) producing income for herself and her children, and for the ceremonial participation which looms so large in the community activities of the Hausa woman. The source of initial trading capital may come from the husband, especially in compounds in which the husband is a trader, but more commonly is acquired by the woman through saving over a period of time, or through the sale of some of her valuables. With her trading, a woman may be wealthier than her husband, and indeed it is not uncommon for Marina wives in particular to assist their husbands financially. However, men prefer to get loans from other men than from their wives. There seems to be clear recognition of the confounding of lines of authority where ostensible social dominance is coupled with economic dependence. Refusal or failure to pay back a loan, even a loan made by one's wife, is actionable in court, and recovery of a loan is not infrequently a feature of divorce proceedings.

Tables 8-3 and 8-4 give some idea of the range of married women's occupations in both wards in relation to age. Some women have more than one craft or trade, but here only the principal occupation is included. Women do not necessarily continue the same trade or craft over time, and will sometimes change occupation when moving to a new area, where other raw materials may be cheaper, or where competition or lack of profit forces a change. Certain occupations such as preparation of snacks, are popular with wives of all ages,

Table 8 - 3

Occupations of Married Women Living with their Husbands (a), in Relation to Age - Yarinci

Occupation	Age 14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Preparation and sale of snacks		9	16	9		34
Petty trade		1(b)	2		1	4
Embroidery, knitting, sewing			2(c)			2
Traditional crafts, e.g. spinning		1	3			4
Services, e.g. grinding and pounding	2	3	4	1		10
Large-scale foodstuffs processing		1		1	2	4
Large-scale trade of one or a few items			1	1	1	3
Salaried employment			1	2		3
Total	2	15	29	14	4	64

(a) Includes all women with occupations shown in Table 8-1.

(b) At roadside.

(c) Includes one woman with a sewing machine.

Table 8 - 4

Occupations of Married Women Living with their Husbands (a), in Relation to Age - Marina

Occupation	Age 14-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50+	Total
Preparation and sale of snacks	4	7	9	6	3	29
Petty trade	1	6	3		2(b)	12
Embroidery, knitting, sewing	12	23	10	1		46
Traditional crafts, e.g. spinning	1	5	1	3	1	11
Services, e.g. grinding and pounding	1	4	3		2	10
Preparation and sale of meals			1	1		2
Large-scale footstuffs processing		1	4	6		11
Large-scale trade of one or a few items		4	2	2	1	9
Total	19	50	33	19	9	130

(a) Includes all women with occupations shown in Table 8-2.

(b) Includes one woman selling in the market.

while others, such as embroidery and spinning, are practised by younger and older women respectively. Basic capital outlay, time consumption, and physical effort involved are some factors which prompt adoption of one occupation over another; these are considered in conjunction with the prestige value of particular crafts or trades. Some occupations are associated by Yarinci wives with the Haɓe artisan tradition, and thus are not practised in Yarinci. Indeed, there is a virtual absence of certain kinds of women's house-trade items, necessitating the sending of children or servants a mile or more, usually into Haɓen Birni, to purchase them.

The raising and sale of animals, a major source of wealth for village women, is of minimal importance in the city where limited space and the high cost of fodder make animal-rearing inconvenient and expensive. Where sheep and goats are kept, they usually belong to the women of the compound, who are responsible for their food and care. And in compounds where there is sufficient room, the care of other women's stock for a fee is a minor source of income. Some women, especially in Yarinci, do own animals which are raised and sold in their natal village, with part of the proceeds of the sale being made over to them.

The major occupation in Yarinci, and the second most common in Marina, is the preparation and sale of cooked snacks and light dishes, from the early morning beancakes (ƙosai) and gruel (koko) to the midday porridge (fura), cassava (rogo) and cocoyam (makanni), and the day-long groundnuts, tigernuts, cakes such as the wheaten alkaki dripping with honey, and other titbits. Some dishes demand long and arduous preparation, while others are easily made; all are the

province of women in the preparation, and it is often their children and assistants who do the selling. Food such as koko is sold from a fixed place, usually from the entrance room or at the roadside near the house. Some male petty traders sell snacks for the women producers, and certainly women whose husbands are traders take advantage of their shop, table, or tray for selling their goods.

Petty trade is more a man's than a woman's occupation. There is strong competition from male traders: the peripatetic small traders ('yan tebur) with their tables of wares along all the main streets; the market traders; and the shop owners. The presence of several daily markets in Katsina is probably also a factor in the small number of women petty traders. Women who are petty traders deal mainly in domestic wares for cooking and cleaning, or in cigarettes, kola nuts and sweets, although these last items are sold more by unsecluded women from the doorways of their houses than by secluded wives.

The craft category of embroidery, knitting and sewing is the most prestigious in that it does not demand strenuous labour, produces goods which are valuable in themselves, and yet offers only nominal profits in terms of time and energy expended, compared with other crafts and trades. Thus, women who have need of ready cash would probably favour some other trade; conversely, women for whom embroidery and sewing are their principal source of profit are usually well provided for by their husbands. It is a convenient occupation, particularly for women with young children, and capital outlay is small. It is far more important as a remunerative occupation in Marina than in Yarinci, where it is practised more as an avocation.

In a study of men's attitudes towards their wives' trading activities, Bashir points out that men are more tolerant of this type of work than of their wives' participation in food-processing occupations. Men's tolerance of their wives' work, especially of the more strenuous occupations, is roughly inversely proportional to their own status and position (Bashir, pp. 35-8).

In Marina, where this occupational category provides the primary profit-making activity for forty-six women, the most important single craft is the decoration of the heavily embroidered cap for men, the kube. Originating in Maiduguri, the fashion is said to have become generally popular during civilian rule, spreading from among Northern politicians and civil servants to the wider population. In Katsina, men (especially young men) and women have become skilled in this craft, which offers great opportunity for the talented craftsman or artistic mind; the whole surface of the kube is as thickly embroidered as tapestry. Men produce more varied designs than women, having the opportunity of seeing a whole range of styles daily both being worn and on sale. Men receive a better return for the finished product than do women, although this is sometimes a result of their doing their own selling. Women complain that much of the profit goes into the pocket of the middleman through whom they must sell, rather than into their own. Work will fetch higher prices if the execution is particularly good, or the design novel or in the latest style.[1]

---

1. The speed with which fashions in clothing change is quite incredible, fashions rapidly radiating from the largest cities (Lagos, Kano, Kaduna), into the smaller cities and towns. Cloth gains and loses popularity quickly; brocades used for men's and women's outfits are described in terms of incidents occurring at the time of their popularity, or recalling their first major public appearance.

Thirty-four of the Marina women embroider the kube, although the profit may be slim. The price of the finished product varies from about £1-10-0 to £10 or more; women quoted selling prices for their work of from £1-10-0 to about £3, depending on craftsmanship and quality of the thread used. The financial outlay is relatively small, as in the example below:

Cost of materials and labour

Six colours of thread, for 2 caps	£1-2-2 (a)	11-1
Patterned kube cloth		1-7
Joining of kube		5-0
	Total	17-8

(a) The cost of thread is less in quantity, so if possible a woman will buy enough for two or more caps at a time. Others buy a few threads at a time, spreading the cost over a longer period.

The design of the kube is drawn, usually by boys or young men, with pen on muslin cut to the correct size, which is then bought by the embroiderer. When the embroidery is completed, the pieces are sent elsewhere to be joined together and the edges finished with more embroidery; this is done by men or women.

The kube for which the above figures are given took about three weeks to complete. The woman receives from £2-10-0 to £3 for the finished product, which gives a profit of about 2/- a day if: the high price is reached; all work is sold; each takes no longer than three weeks. Profits vary enormously, in some cases being so small for time expended that the work is only marginally remunerative.

The category of traditional crafts includes spinning, weaving

on the wide loom, and the weaving of mats and fans.[1] Important though spinning once was, modern commercial thread has all but replaced local wares in the city, and spinning is now mainly a craft of older women in the town. Cloth weaving by men or women is very limited in the city: there were no male weavers in the two wards, and only two women, wives of a Yarinci man.

When asked their occupation, few women volunteer the information that their primary work is that of "service". Involving only physical labour with no skill or talent necessary, needing no expenditure and producing no saleable goods, this is the lowest status occupation among married women. The category includes work such as pounding (dakau), grinding (niƙau), and general domestic labour for wages (aikatau). The women doing this work include only three wives of salaried workers.

Cooking in quantity, large-scale foodstuffs processing, and large-scale trade are all sources of high profit, but require high initial expenditure. Preparation and sale of meals refers to the cooking of main dishes. In Katsina the traditional food is guineacorn porridge with a baobab-leaf-seasoned sauce (tuwon dawa da miyar kuka), but rice with a complementary sauce is also popular. The food is sold at midday or in the evening, sometimes with the assistance of junior kinswomen or hired help. Two married women in Marina have this occupation, which can be practised only by unsecluded or semi-

---

1. This is very popular also among the young karuwai, who weave these colourful little fans while sitting outside their rooms chatting with neighbours and friends.

secluded women.[1] The selling is done in the entrance room, and brings, among others, a stream of unmarried, non-married, and transient men with no wives to cook for them.

Large-scale foodstuffs processing in Katsina is primarily the processing of groundnuts into oil and cake, which are sold from the house and/or by hawking. The cake (Katsina: guru) is sold by some women in bulk, huge sacks being bought by Katsina middlemen for transport to southern cities. Hausa domestic consumption patterns assure a continuing market for the various forms of food preparation and processing. Simmons states that in rural Zaria,

> "'Prepared foods' consumption...was shown to account for 23 per cent of the daily cash expenditures on food by the average household."
>
> (1973, p. 56)

In Katsina, where every kind of food processing is conveniently available, the percentage is very likely higher than this.

Large-scale trade in the two wards includes the buying and selling of groundnuts, baobab leaves (kuka), kola nuts, kerosene, cloth, and grains. The commodity is bought in bulk elsewhere and brought to the city to be sold for a profit, and it may be bought cheaply in season and stored for a price rise. The limited importance of house-based grain trade, so significant in nearby Batagarawa (see Hill, 1969), is probably due to the presence of several thriving daily markets in the city.

---

1. In this study, the majority of women with this occupation are the independent women discussed in Chapter Seven. The women have the necessary freedom of movement, and their houses are conveniently located for the clientele.

The final category, salaried employment, is highly prestigious, being well-paid and within the modern sector, although some types of work are considered better than others. The three women in Yarinci with salaried employment are caretakers and labourers; two have bought their own houses, where they live with their husbands.

Market demand, relative wealth, physical condition, age, marital status, sex and number of children, and husband's position are some factors which may prompt a woman to adopt a particular occupation, or to change from one trade to another.[1] Women with unmarried daughters have a greater need to earn large sums of money to participate fully in gift-giving and ceremonial networks than do women with sons, or with married daughters. In the former case, the mothers have more limited ceremonial responsibilities, and in the latter case have already made the major contributions expected of them. A woman with will and perseverance can amass large sums of money, as in the following case:

> Hajiya Hassatu, forty-five-years-old and wife of a builder, sent herself to Mecca at a cost of about £200, and arranged the marriage of one of her two foster daughters, her own full sister.
>
> Daughter of a malam, Hajiya did no hawking as a girl, and had no occupation in her first marriage, which lasted nine months, or in her second marriage, which ended after one-and-a-half years. In her present marriage, she has had several occupations, engaging in two (large-scale trade and meal preparation) concurrently until achieving her first two goals, the pilgrimage to Mecca and an impressive marriage celebration for her sister.

---

1. Yeld suggests a status ranking of women on the basis of occupation, but the categories she uses are too broad to be meaningful here (Yeld, p. 128). The relative status of women is discussed in greater detail later in this chapter.

> Her two main sources of capital were an inheritance from her father, and the sale of her room decorations. With profits from early trade, she expanded her operations until the major expenditures of the Hajj and her sister's marriage, and has now reduced her work to only one type of trade, the preparation and sale of snacks, with which she continues ceremonial participation and buying of goods for the marriage of her second foster daughter, her paternal half-sister. Both girls did hawking for Hajiya.
>
> Neither Hajiya's husband nor her co-wife have been to Mecca; the co-wife, indeed, is one of the two older married women in Marina who have no occupation, although she may assist Hajiya.

Co-wives may have the same occupation, especially when the outlay or labour involved can profitably be shared, as in the processing of groundnuts, or when their husbands can assist them. Women may benefit from their husbands' own activities: in the two Marina compounds in which the household heads are long-distance traders of kola and fruit, the wives engage in their own trade of the same items, bought from their husbands.

Women will often maximise the opportunities presented them by their husbands occupation or position, albeit indirectly. Thus, the richest married woman in Yarinci, wife of a senior civil servant, trades in cloth which she obtains not only from traders, but also from her husband's widely travelled friends, relatives, colleagues and clients, and her own friends and relatives, who sell her at cost price not only materials from the major commercial centres of Nigeria, but also the high quality imported cloth brought in from Niger. Wealthy women such as she are in a position to help both socially and financially those who assist them, to extend patronage,

and to cultivate friendships, supported by gift-exchange, which might otherwise be closed to them, through differences in ascribed status; this will be explained below.

There is some correlation between women's occupations and their husbands' status and occupation. Thus, for example, all but one of the women with occupations married to wealthy salaried workers, were engaged in either sewing and embroidery, large-scale trade, or the preparation and sale of snacks. The first two are prestigious occupations for reasons outlined above; the third cuts across all criteria of age, wealth, etc. Trade of women with husbands in other occupational categories shows no regular pattern.[1] Large-scale trade is done mainly but not solely by women with relatively wealthy husbands. The women are sometimes from rich families themselves, and come into marriage with considerable resources.

The point to be noted is the very lack of exclusiveness of women's occupations. Women from all strata of Hausa society may become wealthy through application and perseverance, made of course infinitely easier with assistance from husband and family in capital, goods, and outlets. Some occupations are relatively more prestigious, and therefore women seeking to raise their status may avoid certain trades or prefer others for this reason. The ultimate option, as demonstrated in Yarinci, is engaging in no occupation at all.

As noted in the case of Hajiya Hassatu above, an alternative

---

1. A similar analysis done by Hill for Batagarawa did not show a close relationship between scale or type of trade and husband's occupation (1972, p. 334).

or supplementary source of wealth for women may be through inheritance. Few cases of inheritance are dealt with through the area courts,[1] most division being done by the kin groups involved, with reference to Muslim law and to the needs of the possible inheritors. Although in some areas a Hausa woman does not inherit from her father if she is already married at the time of his death,[2] married Katsina women often inherit part of their father's wealth. A feature of economic differentiation in Hausa society is the predominantly male control and ownership of land. Even when women inherit land, it is usually informally appropriated by their kinsmen, on the basis that secluded women cannot efficiently or effectively make proper use of it. A woman generally inherits very little from her husband, although a husband surviving a wealthy wife may inherit her property. Indeed, some men are said to have married wealthy older women in order to lay claim to their fortunes when they die. Women's possessions such as household goods, clothing, and jewellery generally pass to their daughters or other female relatives.

Utilisation of Economic Resources

The goods with which a woman is taken to her husband's house

---

1. Only forty-nine court cases concerning inheritance were brought before the Area Courts in Katsina City over a one-year period, with another fifteen cases, involving large sums, being heard in the Upper Area Court during the same period. It is generally only inheritance disputes which reach the courts.

2. Dangiwa states that a woman does not then inherit, since "she had been adequately provided for when she married, by her father, who provided the provisions with which she began her married life" (p. 25).

are the primary foundation of her material wealth, upon which she builds. Many women invest in adashe either daily or weekly, using the lump sum received for equipping their rooms, ceremonial gift-exchange, or other major expenditure. Men and women manage their money quite separately from each other, and keep knowledge of their savings, resources, and income to themselves.[1]

Women whose husbands are not particularly well-off will spend at least part of their income on their children, buying them clothing, treats and toys. Part also goes into buying clothing for themselves, and purchasing jewellery for themselves and their daughters. This is not only a necessary adjunct to proper attire, but also a convenient and easily realisable source of future funds. And when they are financially able, women will send money to their kin, and particularly to their mothers. For married women living with their husbands, the purchase of real estate is unimportant. Except for the two salaried women mentioned above, no married woman in either ward who was living with her husband had invested in land or housing.

Women are responsible for their rooms, and a good deal of money, thought, and time go into their decoration. The furniture in the room, other than the bed, is usually the wife's own purchase. In Marina, women are reckoned fortunate if they have an iron bed; most have little other furniture. The few rich young Marina women

---

1. One reason given by women for not using the local bank is that the savings book showing their balance might fall into their husbands' hands.

decorate their rooms in a style like that of Yarinci, however. In Yarinci, the rooms of women of wealth and/or of noble birth, contain four-poster bed(s), easy chairs,[1] linoleum, and, often, framed photographs and pictures on the walls. Most of the furniture is bought over time by the woman herself, although some may be bought for her by her husband.

The remaining room decorations are very much the province of the wife. The enamelware so dear to the women of Sabo (see A. Cohen, pp. 67-8) is in evidence,the shapes, patterns, and means of display changing nearly as rapidly as fashions in clothing. More important than enamelware, particularly in Yarinci, is the acquisition of china: dishes and cups are displayed in glass-fronted cupboards, along with jewellery, silver antimony holders, preferably brought from Mecca, gold-painted glassware, teapots, and other fragile and valuable items. Women spend hours arranging and rearranging the contents of these cupboards, and no small loss through breakage occurs in the rearranging. The goods, precariously perched one atop the other, are prey also to playing children, who can and do easily break either the glass of a cupboard or the contents with a misstep or a shove; children are fascinated by the glitter of the assembled treasures. Expensive brocades, lace, and lurex-threaded local cloth are also kept in the cupboards, which are the main displaycase of a woman's wealth.

The decor of her room is of high priority to a young married

---

1. The wife of one wealthy man, for example, has three four-poster beds, each impeccably decorated, and eight easy chairs.

woman. In unequal status relationships, the subordinate visits his or her superior. Thus, the woman's room is also a reception room, an extension of herself, and a reflection of and to some degree a factor in her achieved status.

Some money is ploughed back into trading activities, but much of a woman's wealth is spent on the ceremonial obligations, responsibilities, and mutually beneficial gift-exchanges which are of vital importance to her, and which are the socio-economic indicators of the nexi uniting women within and outside the local community.

Ceremonial Participation and Gift-exchange: the Foci of Bonds between Women

Women's ties and obligations are built up on varying foundations and require different responses, but they are operationalised most commonly and most significantly on the occasions of marriage and birth, extending to the naming ceremony. These events provide the major opportunity for interaction with other women for the secluded wife. The groupings of women mobilised for these ceremonies are recruited on the bases of kinship, friendship, proximity, and patron/client relationship.

The houses to which a woman is or is not invited, and the ceremonies to which she wishes to go and is permitted to go, reveal much concerning the woman's own self-image and projected ideal, her husband's interpretation of her status *vis à vis* others outside the compound, and the community's placement of her. Conditions of superiority,

subordination, and equality; of generosity and avarice; of friendship and enmity, are evident, noted, and maximised through the medium of ceremonial occasions. And as important as the presence or absence of an individual at a particular ceremony, is her activities within the sphere of gift-exchange. In practice, the two are closely, almost inextricably, linked.

There are a number of interrelated factors regarding women's participation at rites de passage. These include spatial and temporal considerations, as well as the more obvious activities of socio-economic transactions. All these factors provide scope for social manoeuvring. Participation varies for each individual in terms of frequency of attendance, relative status and number of network partners, and social status of the individual as manifested in the context of any given ceremony. The maintenance of, or change in, a woman's social position reflects the ability with which she manipulates the variables.

The Hausa expression, "Good-will is expressed by visiting" (Zumunci, a ƙafa ya ke) epitomises the belief that to prove or demonstrate friendship or respect, a person must visit another (his equal or superior). Almost all women more than a year in their marital homes have some freedom to go outside the home. Indeed, in Yarinci and Marina, only two long-married women, wives of the same man, were rigorously and totally secluded. It is significant that neither of the wives have children. Community opinion held that, if there had been children born to the marriage, it would have been impossible for the wives to remain at home. They would necessarily

have had to lay the ground work for their own later ceremonies, and those of their children. In Katsina, wives of the Emir are the only women who are expected to be completely secluded; even their infrequent visits to the hospital are a radical break with tradition. Schacht, who visited Katsina in 1950, wrote that

> "the Emir of Katsina[1]...encouraged his people to use the health services by sending his wives in case of illness and for their confinements to the women's hospital..."
>
> (p. 143)

The rigid seclusion of the Emir's wives is supported by socio-economic considerations, as well as by religious injunction: that others must come to greet them, rather than vice-versa, re-emphasises their superior position in the community.

For most women, by the time they have been a few years in their husband's house, the request for permission to go out in the evening to greet a friend or kinswoman who has given birth or who has just married, or to condole a bereaved relative or friend, becomes more of a formality than a matter for serious deliberation. The streets of Katsina come alive after dark with groups of women moving about visiting their kin, affines, and friends. The permission received from their husbands is usually specific for a particular destination, but no woman passes up the opportunity to visit a few additional houses en route, see a few more friends, and hear a little more gossip.

But it is in poor taste for a woman to be too available, for her to visit too frequently or to attend too many functions, appearing

---

1. In this case the former Emir, Muhammadu Dikko (d. 1944), father of the present ruler.

thereby to have nothing at all, or no one, to keep her at home. The visit of a woman who is always going from house to house is no longer a special event; it hardly merits a break in daily routine. Thus, even women with freedom of movement may limit their excursions. There is a point at which the freedom to go out becomes licence, and both husband and wife are condemned. The example of Amina serves to demonstrate this:

> Amina, the mother of six children, is the only wife of a low-paid salaried worker. Her husband maintains a standard of expenditure often in excess of his own earnings, and depends on Amina to help him with his debts and to support their family. Their expenditure is less for themselves than for their children, who are well-clothed and in school. Amina wears inexpensive clothing, and her room decorations are of an old-fashioned village style now out of place in the city. Rarely does the whole family eat at home. Usually one or more of the children are conveniently at a nearby house at dinner-time, thus taking some strain off the family food budget.
>
> Amina engages in a number of crafts concurrently. For some, she enlists the aid of her daughters after school and during vacations. Other goods she sells directly from the house. Amina can be found at most weddings and birth ceremonies in the ward, where she strengthens and extends her acquaintance with different groups of local women, who are the purchasers of her wares. She attends ceremonies to which she has not been invited, as well as those to which she has. She ascertains and indirectly solicits for the trade potential of various houses, but lessens her own value in the eyes of the assembled women.

Amina requires complete mobility in order to maintain her trade, by means of which she helps to support her husband and their large family. Her attendance at ceremonies is not valued as much as that of more secluded women, since she can and does attend any and all

occasions. Her husband cannot limit her movements without lessening her access to trading outlets, which would then reduce earnings being brought into the house. He and Amina are regarded by their neighbours with a mixture of pity and contempt, the latter being more directed at him, for his failure to maintain his wife and family.

The cumulative effect of all these considerations is the restriction of movement of young to middle-aged married women. Each woman must therefore carefully consider which ceremonies it would be most enjoyable, valuable, and useful for her to attend.

Ceremonial Attendance as Status Indicator

A ceremony involving a woman of high status, especially of the nobility (sarauta), will draw large numbers of women with differing motives. For other women of high status, friends of one or more of the wives in the house, the occasion gives an opportunity to reaffirm the bond, and to assert their own status not only by their attendance, but also by the company they keep at the ceremony itself. Women associate with others of the same status as defined by the complex of variables already noted above, sit with them, talk with them, and noticeably ignore or avoid others who, indeed, are not in a position to force their company. The groups so formed tend to station themselves apart, with the more prominent women given the best places. If there is music, it is toward these women that the praise-singers direct their

efforts.

Not least of the qualities considered appropriate to high status, particularly with the nobility, is generosity and open-handedness, and the giving of large gifts to the praise-singers is one means of displaying this. The singers respond with extravagant praise of the women who give most freely. Wives of wealthy traders, for example, or wealthy women traders, are not expected to spend as much on others as would the nobility, and indeed their ceremonies would likely be less well-attended. Actions of individuals of course temper the general attitudes.

The common people (talakawa) who come to ceremonies of the nobility do so for more than the hospitality they expect to receive. Their presence is a demonstration of respect, which is materially reciprocated with food, tobacco, sweets, and entertainment. As in patron-client relationships generally in Hausa society, the formal bestowal of respect and honour is an almost negotiable commodity, reciprocated with material assistance. For women attempting to move upward in status, invitations to ceremonies of women wealthier or, more important, of higher status than themselves, are invaluable, as too is entry into the gift-giving networks of higher-status women.

In other levels of Hausa society, attendance at ceremonies follows somewhat the same pattern, although there is not the same spread of women from all strata which is characteristic of ceremonies of the nobility. Women of higher status do not usually attend the ceremonies of lower-status women, although they may do so as a special mark of friendship or favour. Nor would there be the large numbers of persons coming to show respect. A woman's individual

generosity, personality, or popularity will gain her friends and/or dependants, which would be manifest at her ceremonies in numbers of visitors and gifts. The success of ceremonial activities is judged to a large degree on these two criteria. Women with daughters are particularly obliged to participate in the ceremonies of others, to assure a good turn out at their own daughters' marriages. Indeed, the very length of a wedding procession elicits comments from bystanders about the popularity of the bride's mother.

Both men and women have a fine sense of the relative importance to them of any particular ceremony, vis à vis their own status and position. Where the persons are of equal status, the element of reciprocity is vital in attendance and gift-exchange. If a woman has attended the ceremony of another, it is incumbent upon the latter to attend the former's. Refusal to attend, or excuses, would severely strain and possibly sever the relationship. Husbands sometimes refuse their wives permission to attend a ceremony at a house from which the women were not present at their own. Kin-based activities can be treated rather more cavalierly, in that non-attendance will not jeopardise or end the relationship, although it will certainly cause ill-will.

Gift-exchange and Social Integration

Gift bestowal is a tangible demonstration of ties of friendship of equals, or of superiority/subordination, or of patronage. The

kind of gift and amount given, and the response it elicits, help to indicate the type of relationship between the parties involved. Again, the judicious manipulation of one's gift network can promote an individual's position within the community. Gift-exchange plays a very important role in Hausa society as an indicator of significant dyadic bonds. Marriage, birth and naming ceremonies are the main arenas for gift-exchange, but other non-daily events are often marked by gift-giving. Gifts are also given often outside the context of any specific event as a token of friendship and good will.

Women present gifts to each other, and men to women, but women do not present gifts to men unless the dyad is one of unequal status, the woman being superordinate to the man. The term used for a particular gift varies with the occasion and/or the relationship between the persons involved; gifts are the accepted currency of social exchange. A return from distant places is accompanied with the bestowal of a gift (tsarraba); the value of the gift varies with the importance or status of the recipient. A gift brought to a wedding or naming ceremony will be met with a "gift of appreciation, or thanks" (tukwici), the value of which is proportionate to the cost of the gift given. On ceremonial occasions gifts are expected, and reciprocity follows. The importance of the gift is in its symbolic value as recognition of the relationship. On these formal occasions it is embarrassing, if not shameful, for a woman to arrive empty-handed (hannu biyu, "with two hands") if the tie is other than subordinate visiting superior. And even in this situation, an attempt is usually made to at least bring a token gift of

respect (gaisuwa).

In one pre-wedding ceremony in Marina, about £18 was collected for the bride and her mother. This money represented contributions by ninety-eight people, who gave gifts ranging from sixpence to two pounds, although only three donations exceeded ten shillings. Sixty-five of the contributors were kin to the bride's parents, twenty-one were primarily affinally related, and twelve were unrelated to the bride and her family. The large number of kin at this occasion is consistent with the closely related kin networks of Marina, and with this particular alliance, which was a marriage of patrilateral parallel cousins. Non-related invitees were almost all neighbours. This particular ceremony (kunshin taro) included the presence of drummers and praise-singers who announced each contribution, the amount and the donor, to the assembled group, passers-by, and all the neighbourhood within earshot.

Women will often divide their gifts to include small amounts from their young unmarried daughters and other kinswomen, in order to strengthen the girls' future gift networks. It is common now to compile a list of contributors and their gifts at any of these ceremonies in order to reciprocate properly on later occasions. The list also provides negative evidence of those who have not contributed, and these women are treated accordingly, often by non-participation in their own ceremonies.

Gifts exchanged by men of equal status or, often, by relatives, male or female, are directly reciprocated; a gift of equal value is presented to the bestower on an appropriate occasion. Such a gift

is known as gudummawa (assistance, "reinforcement"). The same term is used to refer to the gift given by a superior to a subordinate, although in this instance the recipient is not expected to return a similar amount. Rather, appreciation should be shown indirectly through service and loyalty. Between women of unequal status, the bond is characterised in terms of arziki (prosperity; good fortune). Thus, "Muna da abin arziki da ita." ("I am in a senior/junior, or superior/subordinate relationship to her.")

Between women of equal status, the predominant type of gift-exchange is that of biki, the same term used for a wedding celebration. Biki gift-exchange involves the bestowal of gifts, the value of which, at least initially, increases or doubles with each exchange, until one or both of the women can no longer afford the expense. The amount of the gift is then severely reduced, and the increase begins again. The occasion for the giving of biki presents are primarily weddings and births, but the opportunities have increased in recent years, with the greater display and celebration which now mark either of these occasions. Katsina wedding festivities for a maiden take a minimum of one week, and nearly two if one begins from the ceremony of "seeing the /bride's/ room" (ganin daki). Biki gifts are given even from the Monday of the "gathering to put on the henna" (kunshin taro); the ceremonies are not completed until the next Sunday. For a birth, biki gifts are given even before the naming ceremony, as "goods of blessing" (kayan baraka) during evening visits to the mother and child. Visitors to Katsina from other villages and towns have expressed astonishment at the lengths to which Katsina women go in finding opportunities for gift-exchange.

A woman wishing to begin biki with another woman presents her with gifts when the opportunity arises. Thus, if the potential friend gives birth, the woman brings gifts such as soap, powder, and cloth for the baby. If the recipient wishes to maintain the exchange, she reciprocates at a ceremony of the biki originator, with gifts worth twice the value of the original. Biki partners contribute not only to ceremonies directly involving their opposite, but also to events of the partner's close kin, affines, or even co-wives. Women begin biki relationships only after they marry, i.e. when they are socially adults, and can appropriately attend or be represented at ceremonies. Biki relationships may be initiated at any time in a married woman's life, but also may end from lack of interest by either party. The ending of biki may mean the ending of the friendship, and vice versa. Thus, one disgruntled Marina matron with married children mentioned that since she has been married, she has been doing biki with a certain woman, not only for her children, but even for her children's children. But at the last naming ceremony, the biki partner either did not see or had not been told of her friend's gift, and had spread the word around the neighbourhood that her friend had not provided. Hearing these stories, the friend was offended and said that now she would indeed no longer continue biki with the woman, since she had been unfairly accused of exactly the inattention she had made every effort to avoid.

Women usually do biki with friends rather than relatives, although if one has a close friendship with a kinswoman or affine, one may also initiate biki with her. The social position of women with whom a woman has biki relationships gives an indication of the woman's own

status, and biki relationships can be used to strengthen a woman's social position. A woman seeking to raise her status may well send gifts to women whose position is above her own, or to whose status she aspires. If the woman so approached responds at the solicitor's next ceremony, then the former is effectively legitimising the latter's move into a higher position. Women whose status and/or age differ greatly would not be biki partners.[1] The senior might assist the junior with gudummawa, and the junior would show appreciation with small gifts, attendance at the senior's ceremonies, and perhaps services on her behalf. Since, except among relatives, gudummawa presupposes an essentially unequal relationship between women, the donor would not necessarily attend the ceremonies of the recipient. The mode of gift-giving, and the networks of gift exchange established, provide a woman with her most effective means of defining and demonstrating her social position, interests and values. Paradoxically, the few instances of non-participation in biki show its importance in the society in general, as in the following example.

> Salamatu, the wife of a salaried worker, is a wealthy woman. Married for over fifteen years, she has had a number of crafts, and now trades mainly in cloth, glassware and jewellery. She has saved money through the local credit institution, adashe, and has sent her mother to Mecca, an expenditure of about £200. She spends only a small part of her money in biki, in which she has little interest. Although she has eight children, all but two, among the youngest, are sons. Salamatu participates in, and leads, various marriage rituals, without involving herself in biki. Indeed, in playing her ritual roles, she

---

1. See Mary Smith, passim, for a lively account of the kinds of criteria governing women's dyadic relationships, based on the experiences of Baba of Karo.

> sometimes receives more than she expends, the difference being profit to herself. Gifts which she does provide are usually not directly returnable, i.e. are gudummawa rather than biki.

Salamatu's disinterest in biki and the creation of a biki network is condoned by other ward members on two grounds in particular. The first is the youth of her daughters; it has not yet been necessary for her to seriously enter into biki relationships. The second reason is that she does not have to ask for or prove her equality with other women, since both economically and socially, she is superior to most women in the ward. Her high social position is one of the reasons she is frequently asked to take a leading part in marriage ceremonies.

The second example concerns two co-wives. The differing use they make of biki and gift expenditure gives insight into the means open to the married woman to create and maintain a particular persona within the community.

> The two women, Hassana and Rabi, are wives of another salaried worker. Both women are quite well off, but use their wealth differently. The senior wife, Hassana, like Salamatu above, is a trader, mainly of cloth, and makes a good profit from her trading. She also receives money from her husband, and interest from loans to other women, and men. Hassana spends much of her money on biki with women in the highest echelons of society in the town. She rarely contributes to ceremonies of her inferiors in the ward, preferring to conserve her resources for the major outlays of funds required for biki. In some of these exchanges, gifts of £40-£50 and more change hands.
>
> Rabi, on the other hand, has no craft or trade, and uses only the money she receives from her husband and his friends, which is nevertheless considerable. She is not involved in biki with the same category of women as her co-wife, but rather does biki with other, less exalted women in the town, and expends probably

> a greater part of her money in gudummawa and small gifts to neighbours in the ward. She is generous with her money, spending it as she receives it, and receiving little in tangible returns.

The co-wives had similar backgrounds before marriage; the difference in their present social positions has been effected by themselves. Hassana has established herself as one of the highest-status women in town, partly through her husband's position, partly through the wealth she has accumulated, and partly through her careful manoeuvring into biki relationships with women who would otherwise be her superiors. Her social position is somewhat above that of her co-wife, Rabi. Rabi, however, is more respected in the ward than Hassana, because of her openhandedness and concern with her neighbours, demonstrated by her generosity in distributing small amounts of money and gifts widely. Both women have augmented their prestige and importance within the women's social milieu through the careful nurturing of friendship and patron/client ties, manifested in their emphasis on differing but complementary aspects of the gift-exchange system.

We have considered, in various contexts, the question of the status of married women vis à vis each other. It is predicated on a number of bases, including the status of her husband, of her parents, her occupation (or lack of occupation), wealth, and her effectiveness in maximising the opportunities available to her through gift-exchange and participation in life-cycle ceremonies.

According to M.G. Smith,

> "Under conditions of...marital instability spouses cannot share the same social status. Indeed, the

> status differentiation of co-wives by reference to marriage-order precludes their status identity with the common husband....Moreover, since divorce rates are high and spouses change frequently, marital careers are highly individual and variable; accordingly, a man and his wife or wives are not treated as status equivalents, but sharply distinguished." (1959, pp. 244-5)

However, Smith himself points out that differences in marriage order are of significance primarily within the household, and are not as relevant in the wider society. And, while marriage careers are variable, a woman is married to only one man at a time: one of the important features in assessing the social status of a woman is the status of her husband. Thus, while the husband and wife may not share the same status, the husband's social position may be an important determinant of that of his wife. This is true particularly when the class background of the husband is higher than that of the wife. Marriage, particularly first marriage, is rarely hypogamous. However, if the woman has married down, she may capitalise upon her kin ties. The most striking demonstration of status is the conspicuous leisure associated particularly with the Yarinci wives.

Among working women, determinants of status include choice of occupation, and success or expertise in their chosen field; this factor of status-placement is relevant to all women with a craft or trade, whether married or not. All occupations are open to all women, but, as pointed out previously, the prestige value of occupations differs.

Any woman may improve her status through the careful utilisation of gift-exchange, and her attendance during ceremonial occasions. These virtually all-female enclaves afford the major opportunity for

the interaction of large numbers of women, and therefore offer the socially aspiring and ambitious women a convenient arena within which to pursue her goals.

We have noted in Chapters Three and Six, the participation of non-married women and karuwai in ceremonies and gift-exchange. It is primarily in the context of weddings and births that large numbers of women of varying life-styles meet, interact, initiate new friendships, and extend their networks. Such ceremonial activities are particularly significant to married women, in that they provide the opportunity not only for seeing their friends, but also for getting out of the marital home for at least a few hours.

The married woman living in her husband's house spends most of her time at home. The kinds of relationships she maintains within the home, the ideal and expected behaviour according to both men's and women's models, her actual behaviour towards compound co-residents, and the effects of this behaviour on her own position both within and outside the compound, are the subject of the following pages. Several combinations of persons must be considered: the wives in relation to each other; the wives acting separately or together in relation to their husband, and the husband vis à vis his wives; and the wife or wives in relation to their husband's kin.

Relationships between Co-wives

When she marries, the young Hausa woman enters a spatially severely restricted milieu, increasing the importance of whatever

interaction she is in a position to establish, and rendering necessary the strict structuring of relationships within the limited area. Within the compound, it is probably with respect to co-wives that relationships are most carefully defined. Slightly more than half the married women in Yarinci, fewer in Marina, are wives in polygynous households. Seclusion imposes on these co-wives (kishiya, from the base kishi, jealousy) constant interaction, unmitigated by the possibility of movement outside the compound in early marriage. Activities are strictly organised, and behaviour of the individual is often characterised by the high degree of patience and tolerance necessary to the maintenance of peaceful coexistence between wives of the same man.

Men rationalise the practice of polygyny on the basis that more wives can share and thereby lessen the household labour. The rejoinder from women (not spoken to the men) is that more wives and more children mean more work, not less. Men also refer to the need to refrain from sexual relations with a nursing wife.[1] A daughter should be nursed a minimum of one year and five months, a son one year and seven months. However, this is irrelevant in the context of Katsina, where many women bear a second child before the first child should have been weaned. The fertility, virility, or plain disregard of the post-partum taboo by Katsina men is summed up in the expression used of their wives: "Daga goyo sai ciki." (From unweaned child to pregnancy /without a break/.) The bearing of children in quick succession is called kwanuka, and is a source of some embarrassment to the wife. But no rationalisation

---

1. Sexual relations are forbidden during the first forty days after childbirth.

or explanation of polygyny is really necessary. It exists, hedged about by myriad practices and restrictions designed to mitigate if not erase the tensions arising from it.

What privacy is possible in the polygynous household is assiduously respected by each wife, while rights and duties with respect to their husband and each other are carefully organised, extending to strictly regulated behaviour towards visitors. Authority among the wives is based partly on length of marriage to the husband, partly on the temporally changing roles of the wives vis à vis their husband, and partly on personal characteristics such as a more forceful personality, or greater beauty, which may give one wife some ascendancy over the others, or over the husband; or on ascribed characteristics such as higher family status.

In Katsina polygynous compounds, duties towards the husband are arranged on a two-day basis: the wife whose turn it is assumes her duties before the evening meal, taking charge of food preparation, acting as spokesman, messenger and liaison between the husband and his other wives, bringing his meals, arranging for his bath and water for his prayers, and going to his bedroom at night. The entire gamut of duties and responsibilities in this context is subsumed simply under the term aiki (work). In compounds where the husband does not have his own room, he will go to the room of the proper wife in the evening to sleep. Where the husband has his own room, his wives need not spend the entire night with him, nor indeed will they remain long if they have children who have been left in their own room, but refusal of the husband to invite them, or neglect, is as deleterious to the marriage as their own refusal to accept

would be. A menstruating wife retains her place and her allotted days in the schedule. The husband has no right to sleep with one of his other wives during her days, even if she cannot have sexual relations with him. The actual arrangements which are made in a particular household depend in large part upon the degree of understanding, respect, and affection between husband and wives, and between co-wives. The stringency of prohibition among co-wives concerning their husband varies from compound to compound; in some, wives whose turn has not come for being with their husband are expected to refrain from approaching him even for conversation; in others, relations are more casual and less rigid, although the schedule is generally adhered to. Disregard by a husband of the proper schedule, i.e. sleeping with a wife on other than her allotted days, is sometimes brought as a complaint by a neglected wife in divorce proceedings.

Co-wives are rarely each other's closest confidants; the need for maintenance of some social distance in the spatially limited compound precludes this. Certain subjects are not discussed among them. The entry into the compound of friends or kinsmen of a co-wife demonstrates the careful delineation of authority, and the premium placed on privacy, among the wives. Thus, a visitor will greet the senior wife before joining her friend, if her friend is one of the junior wives. Conversation outside the wives' rooms, in the courtyard, is general, and any of the wives may join, but conversation within a wife's room is private, and other wives will not enter a co-wife's room without permission. In practice, the rules of behaviour among co-wives are implicit and understood, so that only in the breach is the proper procedure apparent.

The position of senior wife[1] often involves considerable responsibility in the compound and outside it. The Hausa proverb, "Uwar gida - sarautar mata; uwar gida - sakaren mata" (Senior wife - royalty among women; senior wife - laughing-stock among women) epitomises the opportunity presented to the senior wife, and the wages of success or failure in fulfilling the associated responsibilities.

The senior wife may act as her husband's representative among the co-wives, and among strangers and visitors. She may act as his representative outside the compound in the extensive ceremonial surrounding such rites de passage as birth, naming, and marriage, and she oversees ceremonies and festivities held within the marital home. She is responsible for the welfare of visitors to the compound, and should be shown particular respect by junior wives, often including non-reciprocal teknonymy. The other wives may address the senior wife as yaya, the same term used for one's own or one's spouse's senior sister. In some households, the relationship between husband and senior wife displays qualities of intimacy and depth not apparent in the husband's dealings with subsequent wives. In Katsina, certain men who are notoriously frequent divorcers of later wives, maintain and greatly value the longstanding marital bond with the senior wife.

While the relationships between co-wives are carefully controlled, the tensions inherent in the situation do surface, often in relation to the women's children. The children may be used as foils by the co-wives in their conflicts with each other, particularly if one wife

---

1. The status of senior wife is based on more than length of continuous marriage to the husband. A senior wife who is divorced, and then remarries her former husband, loses her seniority to wives who remained, or who married into his house during her absence.

feels another wife, or the wife's children, are being favoured by their husband. And the quarrels may polarise the household, result in divorce, and cause long-lasting ill-feeling among the offspring. Women raising their divorced co-wives' children have a reputation rather similar to that of Cinderella's stepmother. The fact that women reared by their mother's co-wife felt bound to mention their good treatment demonstrates the general assumption.

Given the distance between the men's and women's worlds, it is usually the case that women have more in common with each other than they do with their husbands. Each grows to know the friends, the interests, the strengths and weaknesses of the others. They may go to ceremonies together, cover up for each other, and intercede for one of their number when the husband is angry with her. They may also unite against the husband, a point discussed below. Thus, there are occasions on which they join together as wives and women; their actions are not totally or even primarily predicated on the basis of competition over the shared husband.

However, no matter how well women may interact when they have become used to each other as co-wives, rare is the woman who actually wants a co-wife, or who would agree to a co-wife if she had a choice in the matter. Indeed, one of the instances in which co-wives may act together is when they are faced with the prospect or the arrival of an additional co-wife. New wives often meet the combined hostility of the incumbent wives. Some women are known for the rough reception they mete out to their husband's new wives, and it takes courage and tenacity for the bride to remain in such a compound, no matter how wealthy or loving the husband.

Men differ considerably in the extent to which they confide in their wives.[1] This extends to marriage plans: some wives know nothing of an imminent marriage until they receive the kola nuts celebrating the union. However, a man's wives already in his house should be presented with a gift before the bride arrives. Called in Katsina kayan hidin aure (goods of telling of the marriage), the gift includes, on a lesser scale, the type of goods included in the bride's own indirect dowry (lefe), and is given the day the lefe is brought, or soon thereafter.

Marriage to a previously married woman is less strictly regulated than marriage to an unmarried girl, and the presentation gifts may be withheld until after the marriage if the husband is poor or in debt. However, the payment must be made, and certainly cannot be set aside in favour of another, later, wife. In a Katsina court case which took place during the period of research, a wife sued for divorce when her husband remarried, slighted that she had not received her own lefe when her husband had sufficient economic resources to remarry. The husband admitted in court that he had not bought the lefe for either wife, but promised that he would buy the lefe of the senior wife before that of the bride. This was agreeable to the senior wife, who returned to her husband's home.[2]

The gift made to the incumbent wives, provides them with the wherewithal to prepare themselves for the new wife's arrival. Status among co-wives is predicated on a number of bases, not least of

---

1. Ronald Cohen considered this, in association with other criteria, a significant factor in analysis of marriage stability among the Kanuri.

2. Katsina Area Court No. 2, Civ. No. 91, 4/4/72.

which is relative wealth. Present co-wives will not willingly appear in an economically inferior position to a new wife. And given that a wedding brings all one's own friends and relatives also to the marital home, a wife will try to show herself and her home to best advantage. In a neighbouring ward a successful cloth trader, the senior wife of a man about to remarry, completely redecorated her room, from new linoleum to four-poster bed before the wedding celebration. When the ceremonies ended, she sold on credit and for a profit most of the new room furnishings, which had by then served their original purpose.

The Relationship between Husband and Wife

We have noted that husbands might not confide in their wives, and, in previous chapters, we have discussed some of the difficulties in maintaining high-affect ties in polygynous marriages.

When a girl marries, she should demonstrate towards her husband respect, self-effacement, obedience and loyalty (ladabi da biyayya) and shame, or modesty (kunya), associated with non-reciprocal name-avoidance. As Clignet points out,

> "Deference...the ritual expression of unequal relationships...is clear-cut, standardized, and public."
>
> (p. 8)

However, a person displaying deference is not necessarily without power, nor is the public manifestation of deference necessarily consistent with private attitudes and actions. But in Hausa society, and in many other polygynous (and monogamous) societies, symbolically,

and in public, it must appear that men control their wives.

Women say that men who begin marriage by joking with, chatting to, and confiding in their wives, may be advised by other men to be less free and more forceful. If a wife makes major decisions in the household, or if her husband listens to and heeds her advice, or acts upon her criticisms, and this becomes common knowledge, the husband may find himself treated with some disdain by his peers. The expression, "Tana mulki da shi" (she controls,or governs, him) describes precisely this situation. Husbands dread the possibility of such a belief spreading about themselves, and may use drastic means to solve the problem. According to informants, several divorces by men in the two wards were primarily due to the wife's domination of the husband; the man could only end the situation by ending the marriage.

There is a strong feeling among both men and women that in conflict situations, the differences between husband and wife should be settled between themselves, with reference to no other compound residents, or to kin or affines. Co-wives in particular resent reprimands being carried out in front of the other wives, while men are shamed by the recriminations and dissatisfactions of one wife being disclosed in front of the other wives. A most unstable situation is set up, for example, when the husband belittles one of his wives in front of the others. If this continues, the other wives may well follow suit,with their husband's tacit approval, making life unbearable for the attacked wife.

Wives with a common grievance against their husband, however, may unite to confront him directly, each reinforcing the others.

Such concerted action arises from joint delicts, such as neglect of the wives, particularly if resulting from the influence of another woman. The male assertion that the secluded wife knows nothing of the husband's movements outside the house is unfounded. Through relatives, friends, and acquaintances, including karuwai and female peripatetic traders, women maintain sensitive intelligence systems continuously relaying information about their husbands. Women pay lip service to the idea that what their husbands do outside the compound is not their business, while learning exactly what their activities are. The husband faced by up to four angry wives has to take some action, be it to apologise and plead for peace, or stand his ground. In several of the polygynous households, all the wives have been divorced together following such a confrontation, while in other households, co-wives with a common grievance arranged to leave their husband at the same time, leaving him with no one to run the household and, by their actions, presenting their case to neighbours and friends. But it is not a decision made lightly; the husband will usually though not always take back some of his wives, but he may well divorce others. However, particularly when the wives are certain of their own innocence and/or unfair treatment by their husband, this is certainly the most strikingly effective method of focusing the attention of the entire community upon their misbehaving husband, much to his consternation.

Any wife who feels she has been dealt with unfairly in her marriage may penultimately[1] signal her discontent by returning to

---

1. The ultimate signal is the seeking of divorce.

her natal home, and getting the assistance of her kin against her husband. The return itself (yaji), for a secluded woman, is a demonstration of dissatisfaction with her marriage. Any overt move by the wife outside the marital home signals a rift, and transcends the husband-wife relationship. A woman might call in her relatives to mediate in a particular situation, but is more likely to return home. Her husband, if he wishes his wife to return, must himself, or through representatives, approach his wife's kin, to whom he is in a subordinate relationship, to seek reconciliation.

Before affairs reach this parlous state, however, wives, particularly long established wives, may have invoked the aid of their husband's mother, who is often an extremely valuable ally in women's relationships with their husbands.

Relationships with Affines

Relationships with affines (pl. surukai) are initially very formal, and are characterised by clear demonstration of respect and deference. One of the primary benefits of kin marriage (auren zumunci) is said to be the avoidance of the rather tense relationship which exists between certain categories of affines. A husband should maintain the same strict relations with his wife's parents as she does with his. However, since residence is virilocal, and the husband generally lives near his kin, the wife is more likely to be in contact with her husband's kin, than he with hers.

The lack of extended family compounds means that wives do not

usually live with their affines. However, particularly with respect to the husband's mother, non-residence is no guarantee of her absence. Older women are not restricted to their husband's compound, and have access, as do all women, to all compounds, most especially those of their children. These ties are particularly important in Marina, with its large percentage of locally-based kin groups. While relationships may initially be rather self-conscious and restrained between the new wife and her mother-in-law, in the course of time the tension disappears, and the wife may turn to her mother-in-law to assist her in disagreements with her husband. Thus, the mother-in-law may intercede with her son on his wife's behalf, often subtly bringing up a topic of disagreement seemingly independently, and taking the wife's side. A husband can reject the advice, of course, but would tend not to do so without a satisfactory reason. Where the relationship between mother- and daughter-in-law is good, the former may be the wife's greatest asset in dealing with her husband. Direct confrontation is usually counter-productive, but women may act together to achieve a desired goal which the individual wife cannot attain. While the husband cannot easily change his decision upon his wife's request, inasmuch as that could be construed as wifely domination, he is expected to bow to his mother's will insofar as this is not deleterious to his own welfare, or that of his family.

If a woman has a poor relationship with her husband's mother, her tenure in the marital home is seriously jeopardised. The husband's mother, even if not living in the compound, is usually living nearby.

If the ill-will between mother- and daughter-in-law is insufficient to convince the wife to leave her husband, then the mother-in-law may even speak directly to her son about the wife in order to end the marriage.

But the wife's mother too is a force to contend with, and men often complain of the influence their wife's mother continues to wield over her daughter after the daughter's marriage, sometimes alienating the woman from her husband, and eventually breaking the marriage. A husband may find such interference intolerable, but there may be little he can do to counteract it. The most immediate way is to keep distance between his wife and her mother by residing away from the mother-in-law. It is very rare for a woman to live in the same compound as her married daughter and the daughter's husband. In the one instance in which this occurred in the two wards, the husband spent more of his time with his other wives in another town. In one case, a widow lived in a room rented for her by her son-in-law; the two compounds were in the same ward, but social distance was maintained. However, whether the wife is near her kin or not, she retains her close social links, and returns for visits, sometimes of rather lengthy duration. The mother retains a great deal of influence over her daughter, and may well convince her to end her marriage, particularly if she feels her daughter has been slighted or mistreated. Court records during the period of fieldwork, and divorce histories of informants, demonstrate the important role played by the mothers of both husband and wife in the termination of marriage.

It is probably during the period of her life when her children are marrying that a woman has the widest influence and the greatest power. Her involvement and participation in gift-exchange has reached its widest limits, and her seclusion is no longer strictly controlled. Her sphere of influence includes not only her children, suitors, and spouses, but also her own kin and affines. We have seen in Chapter Four that the marriage arrangements for an unmarried girl, for example, offer an unparalleled opportunity for a mother or guardian to influence kin, affines and others, gain considerable sums of money, and/or directly assert her will and choice regarding the suitor to whom the girl will be given. If she has engaged in a trade, by this time she is well-known and expert, with an established clientele and a reasonable income. She is at the zenith of her social and economic career; her influence, wealth and power may continue to increase for another few years, and will then gradually taper off as she enters into the category of "older women" (tsaffi), relinquishing her authority, obligations, and responsibilities to the adjacent generation.

Deference, Authority, and Power

We have defined deference as the ritual and public expression of unequal relationships, but we have also pointed out that the relationship between husband and wife in practice may be rather less unequal, economically and socially, than the symbolic display would suggest. And we have noted in other contexts that the clear

display of deference, the unhesitating seeming acceptance and verbalisation of the male ideology, serves women in that it diverts suspicion from actual motives or models, and disarms criticism of actual roles. In a variety of ways, women exercise power vis à vis their husbands and other men, although the dominant authority structure is male-oriented. According to Clignet:

> "...authority emphasizes the legitimized processes by which decisions...are carried out, while the concept of power stresses the uncertainty surrounding the concrete exercise of decision-making processes, legitimated or not. Thus, the power of a person is defined as his or her ability to direct and exploit the behavior of significant other peoples and is, accordingly, influenced by their uncertainty regarding his or her relevant behavior. ...
>
> A second distinction between power and authority refers to the right to take initiatives...and to the right to challenge such initiatives. While authority pertains to legitimate initiatives, power is concerned with the degree to which these initiatives are challenged."
>
> (pp. 9-10)

In Hausa society, time after time women subvert the male authority legitimated by the dominant ideology, and "challenge male initiatives." A case in point is the significant role women play in the arranging of marriages. Attitudes and reactions towards women's behaviour differ according to the gender of the respondent. Men have described women's effective roles as "sabotage" of arrangements legitimately belonging to men. Women see their actions as a legitimate part of the women's sphere, which men disregard at their peril.

Thus, even in terms of perceptions concerning where legitimate authority lies, there are differences in men's and women's models. Throughout this study, the analysis of Hausa women's behaviour in relation to the expressed dominant ideology and in relation to their own perception of their roles has demonstrated this rift.

And the lack of fit between models opens up areas in which conflict may occur. Thus,

> "...feminine models of society, including women's perceived roles, goals, and modes of expression, may encompass expectations that do not overlap with those of their menfolk. The potential for conflict is inherent in situations where male and female models do not coincide."
>
> (Tiffany, p. 39)

That there is relatively little open conflict or disagreement between men and women is partly a function of the very limited interaction between the men's and women's worlds, and partly a function of the women's verbal acceptance of the male-dominant model.

Women's and men's interests, activities, peer groups and goals are usually so distinct that the two halves of society interact only in limited contexts. The women's world is very self-contained; men's activities are, in many respects, profoundly irrelevant to them. However, where the two worlds do intersect, the contradictions inherent in the simultaneous use of two different models become apparent.

And it is also apparent that men, as the ostensibly dominant figures in the equation, entertain deep unease and suspicion regarding women's behaviour, and fear the loss of their authority. This is nowhere as evident as in their misgivings regarding women's economic status and position.

Authority and Power: the Economic Dimension

Domestic labour, in the sense of socially reproductive labour within the domestic unit, is the duty of women in Hausa society, as

indeed it is the duty of women in all societies, except insofar as these tasks may be shared. This type of domestic labour includes activities such as cooking, house-keeping, and the provision of sexual services; child-bearing; and the socialisation of children. Domestic labour of this kind is "privatised" in Hausa society: the woman works for the husband, who controls his wife's reproductive potential. Men, meanwhile, have an obligation to provide virtually all the requirements for subsistence in the household.

However, women's "dependence" on men as providers is coupled with the women's own economic independence and autonomy: domestic activities include not only social reproduction as described above, but also the broad range of individual income-earning activities performed from within the home. In these economic activities, women labour for themselves, not for their husbands, and their profits and property are indisputably their own. And yet, even though women clearly own and have access to individual economic resources and activities, this does not, according to one perspective, necessarily reduce their dependence in the wider sphere. Thus, Sacks states that in class societies in which women are engaged in production, it is the differentiation of tasks which is the significant indicator of status, and that

> "...class societies tend to socialize the work of men and to domesticate that of women. This creates the material and organizational foundations for denying that women are adults, and allows ruling classes to define them as wards of men."
> (p. 220)

From this point of view, almost all women's occupations, even the most successful and profitable women's occupations, are relegated

into a category subordinate to those of men. In the craft and commodity system, economic roles are fairly strictly delineated by gender, and because women's work is carried out within the household, it can perhaps be overlooked or ignored in yet another respect. Women are quite literally not seen by the "wider community", i.e. men, to be gaining wealth independent of and irrespective of their husbands. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, men's dismissal of women's income-earning activities in defining women's status is probably indicative of this attitude: not verbalising the situation or underplaying it may minimise the felt threat to male authority.

And indeed there is a threat, noted for example by Bashir. In his study of the economic roles of Kano City women, he notes that men with low incomes express the fear that when women become rich, especially through their own economic pursuits, they will challenge the husband's authority (p. 12). Men believe that a wife's attitude towards her husband changes "for the worse" when the woman becomes wealthy (p. 26).

Thus, the other way of viewing this question of power and status is from the perspective of the microunit, in this case the marital home. Wards though women may be in the formal authority structure, in the context of daily interaction and control, the exercise of power and the lines of authority are far less clearly demarcated. The situation is one in which women's economic dependence as manifested by men's provision of household necessities coexists with economic autonomy in the form of independent women's occupations. And social dependence, demonstrated for example by seclusion, expressed

ideology of male-dominance, male "ownership" of children, is linked with the social autonomy apparent in women's actual socio-economic domestic position, easy divorce, and alternatives to marriage.

It is clear that women exercise power within and outside of marriage, and derive authority from their own legitimising model. Clignet states that:

> "An examination of the domestic power and authority held by an individual requires an examination of the discrepancies between the models of familial interaction prevailing in his social environment and the perceptions of the relevant familial actors about the actual nature of such interaction."
> (p. 10)

We have seen that in Hausa society, the discrepancies between the models, the difference in male and female perceptions of women's roles, and the separation of the men's and women's worlds, together provide women with a degree of social manœuverability, autonomy, and effective power altogether hidden with reference to only the expressed male-dominant ideology.

Conclusion

The most striking manifestation of male dominance is the imposition of seclusion upon young married women, a practice ostensibly based on a religious rationale, but with equally significant socio-economic implications. The fact that men are seen by both men and women to have the right to subject women to this form of spatial restraint underscores the element of male control in the society. However, we have demonstrated that the

social and economic benefits conferred upon women by the imposition of seclusion may be of more value to them than the loss of spatial mobility. Indeed, we have seen that in some cases seclusion has actively been demanded and assumed by women who otherwise would have retained their mobility. It is paradoxical that the very imposition of seclusion, by permitting women the opportunity to maintain, indeed to increase, their individual economic viability, has effectively strengthened many women's economic position vis à vis their husbands, and thereby their domestic authority.

There is an essential egalitarianism inherent in the women's occupational structure which is not evident in that of their men. No system of guilds or hereditary rights exists with respect to women's crafts or trades, although women may be bound by economic constraints to avoid, at least initially, the more capital intensive trades. The woman's choice of occupation is largely irrespective of that of her husband, and her status is only partly predicated upon that of her spouse. The recent assumption of a pattern of conspicuous leisure among the wives of senior civil servants, the Katsina elite, has become an effective means of demonstrating superior social status through a display of conjugal dependence and solidarity. The loss of economic autonomy is more than offset by the increased social status gained by this bold move.

For a working woman, her occupation not only keeps her from being totally dependent upon her spouse, but also may give her considerable domestic power. Her profits belong to her; she has freedom to use her resources as she will, and doubtless spends

much of her wealth in the series of gift-exchanges and ceremonies which are so important in the women's world.

Women's ceremonial activities are altogether oriented, organised, and attended by women. Men's attendance at rites de passage is usually limited to the actual Muslim legal ceremonies, such as the binding of a marriage (ɗaurin aure), or the naming of an infant (raɗa suna).[1] These ceremonies take only a few minutes, with the majority of participants dispersing immediately thereafter. Women's ceremonies, on the other hand, extend over hours and days: opportunities for interaction with other women in this context are many, although not all will be utilised, and they are of long duration.

Women's networks, analysed in some detail in Chapter Six, are most clearly and commonly mobilised on ceremonial occasions. Because women's interaction is limited both by the practice of seclusion and by general perceptions concerning the devaluing effect of excessive movement, women's very presence at a particular ceremony is imbued with significance, particularly if no kin ties unite hostess and guest; attendance itself has symbolic value. As these festivities are the only occasions during which large numbers of women interact, every aspect of the guests' behaviour may take on important social overtones. The opportunity par excellence for effecting redefinition of one's social status is through the medium of these ceremonial gatherings of one's peers, superiors and inferiors. Gift-exchange, predicated on the same bases as ceremonial attendance, provides similar scope for status mobility, and acts as the primary redistributive

---

1. The major exception is the gathering of young men during the night, or nights, before the first marriage of one of their number.

network for the wealth of Hausa women. The very limitations of the redistribution network are indicative of the apparent boundaries of the women's world, as are the limitations in production inherent in the domestic and individualistic nature of women's commodity production. These divisions are not absolute, however. It has been shown in previous chapters that women outside the confines of marriage may have significant economic power within the community.

Within the home, kin or affinal bonds take precedence over a transcendent "solidarity of women", although within certain contexts women will act together vis à vis men to achieve common goals. Particularly as a woman becomes older, she gains authority within her kin group, exerts control over her children, and through them their spouses, and generally gains access to power not apparent within the dominant ideology.

Through analysis of the actual power and authority of women, the contradictions between the dominant and muted models of society become manifest. And while women are shown to have more socio-economic control than is otherwise apparent, given the verbalised dominant ideology and the symbolic display of inequality, yet that control is more tenuous than that of women pursuing other career strategies. The benefits of marriage, such as control over one's children and a relatively enduring and socially appropriate heterosexual relationship, appear to be dearly bought.

In the concluding chapter, we consider the general exercise of power and the assumption of authority by women both within and

outside the women's world. We concentrate particularly upon the likely effects of national socio-political pressures upon the lives of Hausa women, and make certain predictions concerning their future status and roles.

CHAPTER NINE

CONCLUSION

Education: New Opportunities for Women

The effects of the broadened horizons and expanded occupational opportunities made available to women through education had begun to be felt in the city at the time of research, most particularly among the children of the women upon whom the study is based. It is only in the past decade that women's education in Katsina has had any perceptible effect, the extraordinary belatedness of its introduction and growth being a reflection of Hausa attitudes towards western education, the relative value given to men's and women's education, and the strength of the long-standing priorities concerning the appropriate roles of women.

At present in Katsina, two educational systems coexist. The Koranic schools (s. makarantar allo; makarantar Arabiyya) provide traditional religious instruction and training in Arabic; the "western" schools (s. makarantar boko) teach initially in Hausa and later in English, and offer the kind of academic curriculum common in the west. Within each of these systems, the attendance and training of girls has been given far less priority than the education of boys; in the case of religious education, this neglect is centuries-old.

The Muslim approach to education has placed responsibility for

the training of women and girls upon husbands and fathers; this was coupled with the ideal of female seclusion, or at least the separation of men and women in public gatherings. Thus, the education of women became largely an obligation to be fulfilled ultimately by men within the household.

Even at the time of Shehu Usman dan Fodio, the private nature of women's religious training, and the greater social value placed on the education of males with its concomitant rewards, resulted in second-class treatment of women's education. Dan Fodio, two of whose daughters were scholars in their own right, protested strongly against this abuse, accusing the learned men (the ulama) of:

> "...leaving their wives, their daughters, and their captives morally abandoned, like beasts, without teaching them what God prescribes... How can they shut them up...in the darkness of ignorance, while daily they impart knowledge to their students? In truth, they act out of egoism, and if they devote themselves to their pupils, that is nothing but hypocrisy and vain ostentation on their part."
>
> (from Nūr al-albāb, in Hodgkin, pp. 194-5)

Yet by permitting women to attend his lectures, the Shehu was condemned for permitting the mingling of the sexes, with the possible consequences of immorality. This charge, brought by a Muslim scholar from Borno, was answered by the Shehu's brother, Abdullah, who stated that the obligation to root out ignorance took priority over women's seclusion (Hiskett, 1963, pp. 86-7). Recent pleas for the expansion of women's education (see, e.g., H. Adamu and S.A. Galadanci) are also framed partly or completely with reference to Muslim law and obligation.

At present, most girls (and boys) in Katsina attend only Koranic school; for girls, instruction usually ends with or prior to first

marriage. A few of the elite women continue their education through resort to women scholars, but this is uncommon, as indeed are the female scholars. A Sokoto woman descended from the Shehu suggested that:

> "...a woman's best way to an advanced Moslem education /is/ to marry a scholar, and be careful /not to/ argue with him too cleverly or he would stop teaching her."
> (Trevor, p. 4)

There were no widespread organisational arrangements available for the teaching of secluded women in the past, and there are few now.

The acceptance of western education for women has had to overcome these basic logistical difficulties, and many other socio-economic, political and ethical reservations. Objections hinged upon the possible effects of this training upon women's traditional roles and behaviour, and the conflict between western and Muslim/Hausa values. Fears were expressed concerning moral laxity, both interms of the content and the duration of western education,[1] and parents were concerned about the effect this education might have in making the girls discontented with their roles as secluded women. Objections were also based on socio-economic grounds: mothers feared the loss of their daughters as trading assistants. Objections from men probably sprang ultimately from their concern over loss of control of women with the introduction of new ideologies. Indeed, H.I. Kaita considers men's selfishness and "sense of domination" to be indirectly responsible for the slow gowth of women's education, partly through the continued practice of seclusion.

---

1. Girls in post-primary institutions have been called karuwan gwamniti (karuwai of the government) with reference to this long period spent without marriage, away from the control of father or husband.

In introducing women's western education[1] in Katsina, the colonial administrators were painstaking in their efforts to avoid offending local custom and to avert antagonism. Education for women was introduced only in 1930/31, with the objective of teaching:

> "...mainly hygiene, care of children and other domestic subjects applicable to the country with also an elementary knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic."[2]
>
> (E.J.R.Hussey, Director of Education, Kaduna, 1929; Katprof 1, Agency No. 400)

Education in the "Girls' Centre Katsina" was begun with the full accord of the Emir, within the palace compound. Initial plans to move to the Middle School buildings were quashed when the Emir and his Council moved the objection that

> "...it is contrary to their custom and their law for their girls to be seen in the street."
>
> (D.O. i/c Katsina Division to Provincial Superintendent of Education Zaria. No.129/1929/2, Agency No. 400)

By 1938, the number of girls being trained throughout the Province was only 154 (Katsina Province Annual Reports, 1938 and 1939). The building of a Provincial Girls' School was planned in 1952, although there was still considerable opposition to women's education, and more particularly to its utilisation outside the home. Thus,

---

1. Western education (for men as well as women) was introduced at a much slower pace in the North than in the rest of Nigeria, resulting in a grave educational imbalance between the two halves of the country. There was considerable opposition to western education, which was associated with missionary schooling. As the Muslim system of education could still provide judges, scribes and other civil servants, as some western schools were established for the future local leaders, and as the British administration depended upon the good will of the traditional hierarchy for effective control, the issue of widespread western education was not pursued.

2. This aspect of women's education, the emphasis upon women's domestic roles, accorded well with both British and Nigerian (men's) defining of women's roles.

> "One of the main obstacles...is...the shortage of women teachers. During /1953/ there were only three in the Province... Three girls from the Province left Girls' Government School Kano in December 1953, but not one has been allowed to train as a teacher, or to take up any sort of employment."
> (Katsina Province Annual Report, 1953)

Girls' education was in fact rarely extended beyond Junior Primary School. In 1955, the population of the four Senior Primary Schools in Katsina Province included 283 boys, and 3 girls (Report on Provincial Girls' School, Joan Blacklock, W.E.O. i/c Provincial Girls School, 31/1/55). As late as 1966, only about one per cent of girls in the North attended even primary school.

At the time of research, the level of formal education among the women of Yarinci and Marina, and among the karuwai, was very low. In Marina, six women in the ward had had some primary education; only one had reached Primary Six. Six of the Yarinci women had had some primary education; two had completed teacher training college, and one, a highly respected woman now retired, has been among the first Katsina-bred and trained primary school teachers. Seven of the karuwai had had some primary education; only two had completed Primary Seven.

It is with reference to the children of the women in the two wards that the shape of the future and the heritage of the past are most clearly apparent. In Yarinci, education is the rule rather than the exception. Of all children of school age (seven years old or older), only fourteen girls and eight boys were not enrolled. Of these, three boys and one girl were the children of Koranic scholars, and one girls had been raised elsewhere, arriving in Katsina not long before. In Marina, nine girls and eleven boys were enrolled in school. While in

Yarinci virtually all children go to school and in Marina virtually all children do not go to school, the situation in other wards is less straightforward. Generally, the government and familial priority has been to educate boys; this is reflected in the sex-ratios in the schools.[1] In 1973-4, the Katsina Local Education Authority sought to maintain a 2/3 - 1/3 ratio of boys to girls in primary schools; L.E.A. figures for 1972 showed 3,656 boys and 1,512 girls enrolled in the Katsina City primary schools.

The differing expectations and behaviour patterns in the two wards have been discussed in detail. Marina men are mainly artisans; their sons tend to follow the trade of their fathers, or an associated trade. Western education has been viewed by the men as an unnecessary luxury, taking children from their proper training, and perhaps making them dissatisfied with their traditional calling; all children receive some Koranic education. Women see western education as an alien institution removing their young children, both boys and girls, from their own labour force of commodity traders, and offering few useful skills in return.

In Yarinci, western education has been enthusiastically espoused by the traditional hierarchy and their clients. Many of the men in the ward are educated; the networks for obtaining salaried employment are operated by the present wage-earners. Boys have a good chance of obtaining salaried employment and of continuing with higher education

---

1. Schildkrout (1978) did research in two Kano city wards with somewhat similar socio-economic characteristics to those of Yarinci and Marina. She noted the prevalence of western education particularly in the ward composed predominantly of wage-earners; emphasis is more on education for boys than is the case in Yarinci.

through the good offices of kinsmen and patrons. During the research period, twenty young men still living in the ward were attending or had completed post-primary institutions; several boys had gone on to university.

For girls in particular, access to education has opened up a new range of opportunities. Girls are still more confined than their brothers: whereas all children attended primary school, most girls completed only primary school, and were permitted to extend their education no further. For a growing number of girls, however, primary education has led to higher education and, for a few, to a career in the modern wage-earning sector. Twelve girls in the survey were attending post-primary institutions; the majority were enrolled in Katsina's own Women's Teachers College, established in 1963. Secondary school and teacher training graduates are usually married immediately after completing their secondary education, and then are officially "under the control" of their husbands. But as noted in Chapter Four, these older girls are given (or insist upon) greater freedom in choosing a spouse, and tend to pick their husband from among the more educated men in the community; this is consistent with the idea that a husband's status should be at least equal to that of his wife. The opportunities available to the wife are particularly extensive outside Katsina, in one of the major population centres, and away from the constraining effect of kin and affinal disapproval. There has been no shortage of jobs for women, and until recently educated women were so few in number that little sex-typing was evident in salaried employment.[1]

---

1. Probably the first female university graduate from Yarinci has qualified as a medical doctor, and is an example for other young women in the ward to emulate. However, the lines are being drawn. In a 1975 conference speech, Alhaji Lawal Kaita, then a Permanent Secretary in the North Central State government, enthused about educated women establishi careers as "nurses, midwives, and social workers..."

This is changing now, with strong impetus from the educational system. Male/female enrolment in post-primary institutions in Kaduna State in 1971[1] showed men outnumbering women by more than four to one, with the imbalance being greatest in technical education (100 per cent male) and advanced academic education (79 per cent male). Women formed 29 per cent of the population of teachers' training colleges, and 38 per cent of the student body of the single commercial college in the state. Even in the girls' secondary schools (for advanced academic training), emphasis upon liberal arts subjects further directs women's career opportunities along limited lines.[2]

The opportunities presented by post-primary education are demonstrated by the histories of the first graduates of the Katsina Women's Teachers College. Almost half of the women completing teacher training at the W.T.C. (61 out of 129 women), from the first graduating class of 1967 through the graduating class of 1971, have been Hausa women from Katsina Province. Follow-up of the graduates in 1973 showed that forty-three of the sixty-one women were actively engaged in teaching in primary schools. Of the fifty-three married women, thirty-five were permitted to continue teaching,[3] while eighteen have remained secluded. Four of the women had not married, and four were non-married; all eight of these women were employed as teachers.

---

1. Based on statistics provided by the Planning Division, Ministry of Education, North Central State.

2. See particularly the article by F.M. Ighodalo concerning the barriers to female employment.

3. Two of the girls were known to have chosen their husbands partly on the basis of their promise to permit them to continue to teach.

The Hausa place a high premium on knowledge (ilmi), and this has helped to pave the way to acceptance of these new professionals. It is now accepted that a married woman may have the integrity to travel outside the compound to teach, and still carry out her responsibilities as wife and mother. Teaching is among the highest status occupations open to women in Katsina, the respect accorded to the teacher varying with her age and experience. Entry into teaching presents the woman with an opportunity to escape from the confines of the marital home, both physically and financially, and gives her the option to support herself if she wishes, with neither the stigma associated with karuwanci, nor the financial disadvantages sometimes associated with continued dependence on kin. Indeed, the economic value of educated daughters has become very markedly apparent. Wage-earning women, like their non-educated sisters, still treat their income as their own, to be spent as they wish. Thus, daughters are now supporting their aged parents, sending them to Mecca, and helping their brothers and sisters through school.[1] The roles that women play are beginning to assume greater significance in the wider society, as the women themselves gain confidence[2] and authority within the community.

---

1. Some of the Ahmadu Bello University female students have pointed out that their families have accepted only nominal bridewealth expenses from their prospective husbands, so as to ensure the inalienability of the women's earnings after marriage.

2. Jean Trevor, interviewing her former students from a Sokoto post-primary institution, found that although education had brought tensions, ninety-nine of the hundred women she spoke to wanted their daughters to receive western education, which
   "...made one more assured...and confident to meet new people... Most important, it would give their daughters the independence of mind and money to support themselves and their children /if their marriage should fail/..."
   (p.12)

There are problems: men may feel threatened by their wives' success, especially when husband and wife occupy similar positions in the wage-earning hierarchy; dissension may arise among co-wives who have neither the mobility nor the economic resources of their mate; and the working wife is herself caught between conflicting sets of ideals in attempting to combine career and home, and accepting all the obligations inherent in both. These difficulties can be solved as the roles and rights of the Hausa wife working outside the home become more clearly defined.

Educated women presently come from every level of Hausa society, from the palace of the Emir to the houses of former slaves. Women's education is beginning to be seen as a means by which girls can marry well, and be financially secure either married or not married. Fears that girls would be unable to marry after passing the age of 14-15, through being too old, too clever, or too sophisticated, have been unsubstantiated, and indeed the girls are courted by the wealthiest and most educated members of the community.

If the present scheme for universal primary education (U.P.E.) is completed,[1] and all children are required to attend school, this will have a profound effect also upon the practice of seclusion, with the loss of the main labour supply of the secluded woman. There will have

---

1. The political party winning the majority of seats in the 1979 elections, the N.P.N., has promoted the idea of quality instead of quantity education. Rather than rushing into compulsory universal education for which the necessary infrastructure of teachers and facilities is lacking, and very likely producing a decline in educational standards, they have campaigned for retrenchment and less precipitous action. Thus, the U.P.E. programme may well be shelved or given less priority in future.

to be major logistical changes if women are to be kept inside without their army of messengers and assistants. Seclusion is lessening among the elite, particularly in the larger cities; U.P.E. may hasten the process among the rest of the population.

Wider national issues and events are also shaping the future of Katsina society. In the 1979 elections, women in the North were finally enfranchised. In meetings held within the compounds, women were "educated" regarding the issues, and the voting procedures. Deprived over centuries of overt political power, the women have seized this opportunity to exercise some influence over the wider political structure. Although few women stood for office in these elections, a large number of women voted. Indeed, it is said that 70 per cent of the vote in the Katsina area was polled by women.[1] With their entry into the modern socio-economic and political domains, with the expansion of career opportunities and the likelihood of increased political power, it is clear that the roles, attitudes, and expectations of women are in the process of radical change. These changes will doubtless have a very marked effect upon future socio-political interaction within Hausa society.

Clarity to Ambiguity: the Manipulation of Models

Basic to this study is the concept of parallel constructs of

---

1. Personal communication, Senator Alhaji Abba Ali. On a more mundane level, voting in the elections provided women with an excuse for spending what was frequently the entire day away from home, in the company of one's friends.

society, exemplified in this case by male (dominant) and female (counterpart, or alternative) models. It has been our contention that, while these models overlap, there are wide areas within which the dominant and counterpart ideologies differ, and within which conflict may occur. However, we have shown that the possibility of conflict, which is inherent in the distinct ideologies, is minimised through considered strategy on the part of women, facilitated by the existence of strict social segregation in the society.

Through reference to historical sources, we have seen that the distribution of formal political power has not always been as inequitable as it is today,[1] and that women had significant political authority in the past. It appears that women's present exclusive social world is in part a response to their loss of formal political authority. But having accepted that formal political power, manifested in offices, titles, and a state political structure, are the preserve of men, we must then consider how significant these vaunted manifestations of men's power are to women. And it appears that their significance is limited.

Excluded from the men's world, women have created their own. The men's world, and men's evaluation of women's roles, women's status and women's behaviour, are more peripheral, less relevant. This disengagement from the men's world and the men's ideology is noted by Shirley Ardener:

---

1. I believe the recent elections, with the enfranchisement of women, may be the harbinger of a new and very different kind of political framework; it is the beginning of the end for the particular kind of male/female power relationships which have existed over the past several centuries in Hausaland.

> "While professing to support the values and codes of behaviour /of/ the dominant system, perhaps /muted groups'/ sense of value derives from a ...counterpart system...
> ...the principal measure for social success or for other satisfactions in the counterpart model may differ from that of the model of the dominant group, and therefore their acquiescence at being placed low down on the latter's scale for success may occur because the placing seems unimportant or irrelevant to them, since they may not necessarily be 'unsuccessful' or 'unsatisfied' according to the logic of their own muted model."
>
> (1975, p. xvii)

We have taken this theoretical framework one step further, for we have posited that women actively support the dominant model in certain circumstances, and that this support is indicative of a political strategy on the part of women. The alternative model is "muted", but the muting is a bid to retain women's present autonomy. Thus, although the women's ideology can be and is clearly expressed among women, women present a more ambiguous persona to men. The women's facade of verbal and symbolic deference to men is coupled with an ideology and tradition of individual and independent action.

This autonomy has a strong economic component; we have seen the control that women exercise over their own individual economic activities, usually within the field of commodity production. We have noted that this very vital facet of the Hausa economy has been "lost" in the overriding categorisation of women as wives, mothers and sisters, and we have suggested that this minimising of women's economic roles is a function of men's desire to contain and control the independent aspects of women's life-style. The men's and women's craft and commodity systems are sufficiently separate for there to be little overt competition between men and women in this respect, and

the domestic aspect of most women's trade makes its practice appear somewhat less threatening. But the ability of women to control their individual economic resources, to acquire and distribute social valuables, and to convert these valuables into other forms of wealth which are inalienably held, or are utilised in the women's own redistribution network, has important consequences and implications for the understanding of women's power, in spite of an ideology of overt male dominance, and women's symbolic deference.

The ambiguity which is a feature of the lack of fit between men's and women's models, reflected in women's clear choice of career strategies, and men's refusal to accept women's autonomy, is clearly manifested even in lexical differences between men's and women's models of women. We have seen that the career option of jawarci, non-marriage, is virtually ignored within the dominant ideology. It is clear that, in male terms, this career strategy represents women's refusal to accept their allotted role in social reproduction, and engenders considerable hostility on the part of men, who are thereby deprived of what they see as their rights in women's reproduction. Having no control over reproduction rights, men claim sexual control instead, and consign the women to the category of karuwai. Parkin has demonstrated the close relationship which exists between cognitive categorisation and semantic expression. Men's lack of acceptance of the category of non-marriage is a striking semantic demonstration of the significant discontinuity between men's and women's models of women, and women's actual rights and roles.

Yet another feature of the ambiguity inherent in the dual model

of society is in the spatial placement of women. According to the dominant ideology, wives are secluded, and women are in the houses of men. Their place is known and clearly defined, both spatially and ideologically. And yet we can see that it is women who change location with every marriage, and end of marriage, and indeed with virtually every change of life-style. In a way, women can be perceived as permanent migrants in Hausa society, and their freedom of choice in opting for a particular life-style, or out of a less successful life-style, gives their career decisions an almost entrepreneurial quality.

Men's World, Women's World

While not denying the constraints placed on women by the practice of seclusion, we have also demonstrated that this places constraints also upon men. Thus, in Hausa society, men are virtually excluded from all houses except those of their kin. Men's access to most houses extends no farther than the entrance room. Sexual compartmentalisation begins very early, before adolescence. Boys learn early to eat "outside", either in the entrance room or sometimes outside the house altogether. They sleep where other boys sleep, away from the women's quarters. In poorer compounds, this may mean in the entrance room, or possibly in a bachelor's house; in wealthier houses, separate rooms may be set aside. The boy has been effectively ousted from the women's area, and becomes a visitor in his own natal home.

Houses, the entire assemblage of houses, comprise the women's world. A woman, even a total stranger, may enter any house; a man may enter few.

Accustomed from youth to be outside the women's quarters, men are virtually strangers in the home. And in this respect, all houses can be seen as women-dominated: the house is women's space.

We have noted that men feel threatened by wives' economic dominance within the home, that they resent women's control over self, for example as this is expressed in the career option of jawarci, and we have noted that men stress the need to control the karuwa if she can be induced to relinquish her independence. And we have seen too how ineffective that control is, through reference to divorce statistics. Women's symbolic deference and verbalisation of male ideology is not sufficient to outweigh their very clear-cut actual power and independence. In a number of ways, the women's world and men's world represent separate socio-economic systems operating semi-independently, bound together on the one level through tacit acceptance of the male dominant ideology. Men are vested with the trappings of social control, and women retain the freedom to maintain their own world, with minimal reference to the wider social structure, and with a degree of autonomy which would be enviable in many seemingly less "male dominant" societies.

Theoretical Implications

There can no longer be any question of the value, benefit, and indeed necessity of research concerning women, preferably by women. I associate myself here with Rayna Reiter's succinct statement of the problem:

> "We need new studies that will focus on women; it cannot be otherwise because of the double bias /male bias, and male dominance/ which has trivialized and misinterpreted female roles for so long. Yet the final outcome of such an approach will be a reorientation of anthropology so that it studies humankind. Focusing first on women, we must redefine the important questions, examine all previous theories, and be critical in our acceptance of what constitutes factual material. Armed with such a consciousness, we can proceed to new investigations of gender in our own and other cultures."
> (p.16; emphasis in the text)

There are a number of sociological approaches to the study of women. This work has focused upon women's models, and upon models of women. In discussing the use of models, Shirley Ardener suggests that:

> "We need to examine carefully the models of both the dominant and muted groups...in order that we may learn more about the relationship between them and how this became established."
> (p. xxi)

The importance of this approach is undeniable, and indeed has been of prime importance in this work. However, this is only one facet of the study of models. Equally important, although less stressed, is the study of the internal structure and logic of the model, and more particularly of the perceptions of women within the women's world concerning their roles, their interrelationships with other women, and, in general terms, the values and attitudes which constitute the ethos of the women vis à vis other women. Associated with this is a study of the actual socio-economic and political bonds, alliances, and networks which play an intrinsic part in the daily interaction of women with women.

There has been so little research done on women's models and women's ideology, that it seems somewhat precipitous to cavil about

the direction of research at this early stage of development of the conceptual framework. However, there is a problem implicit in what appears to be an overemphasis on the relationship between models, and more specifically upon the influence of dominant upon muted group, and vice versa. And the problem has its roots in our own perceptions of our roles in society, and the political implications of these perceptions.

It is more than the decades-deep male-biased ethnographic and anthropological studies which keep women sociologists and anthropologists searching for the key to women's "real" place in society. It is equally our (Western women's) preoccupation with our roles vis à vis men, with our status in the shared cultural universe, and with our concern about the disproportionate power wielded by men in our own societies, which makes us fasten so tenaciously upon similar configurations in other cultures, and forces us to continually pose the question of women's power and influence particularly in relation to men.

There is more to women's roles, there is greater value in women's models, than can be comprehended by constantly viewing that ideology in the mirror of the dominant model. We are pleading for a more comprehensive approach. We recognise that it is the utter disregard of the women's world and of women's perceptions which has very rightly led to the strong criticism of traditional monographs, and we are not suggesting an approach which perpetuates the error from the opposite perspective; we do not intend to ignore the male ideology, the wider political structure, or the formal systems of power and belief. However, we do suggest that too little attention is being paid to the actual interrelationships within the women's world, due to the emphasis

upon a comparative models approach. Caroline Ifeka's discussion of the "female factor" in anthropology follows what appears to be more fertile lines of enquiry. According to Ifeka:

> "The sociological significance of the female factor lies in the extent to which it determines the political and cultural structure of the society." (p. 562)

This refers to the composite structure of society, rather than to only the formal/male/dominant system, for she emphasises that:

> "We have to investigate the external relationships of women to the rest of society, and the internal ordering of women within female status systems." (ibid.)

The present work has been organised on the basis of this type of approach. The two lines of enquiry are complementary; neither can be discarded or ignored without greatly impairing the value of the research, and possibly presenting a misleading portrait of significant social relationships.

The concentration upon a monolithic approach to the understanding of formal political power has tended to relegate women's models, and women's options, to a secondary status. This seems to be indicated, for example, in much of the analysis of women's roles in sexually segregated societies (where, for example, women are secluded). Thus Bujra, in reviewing the work of V. Saifullah-Khan, states:

> "The formal powerlessness of women in...a context of /extreme sexual segregation/ may be marginally offset by the existence of a compensatory 'women's world' within which women have 'exclusive responsibilities'..." (1978, p.32; emphasis mine)

The stress here, as in most studies of women in situations of overt male dominance, is upon the misfortune of women's lacking "formal" social control.

We suggest that a large part of the problem of placing women's roles and rights in realistic perspective is in the difficulty of cracking the code by means of which women insulate their world from possible encroachment from outside. For symbolic behaviour is used to "mystify", to shield from possible threat the actual opportunity structure used by women, and the women's counterpart model of society. And it is in the context of the misunderstanding of the relationship between symbolic behaviour and actual socio-economic control that much of the misconception regarding women's roles, rights, and opportunities must lie. Cynthia Nelson's statement regarding Middle Eastern women is particularly apt in this respect:

> "...there exists internal evidence that our images /of women, and women's power/ are incomplete, that the dynamics of power and authority are much more subtle than we have been led to believe, and that our theoretical perspectives about the position of women...must be the common-sense world of the actors themselves."
>
> (p. 561)

In order to understand the values and the actual social roles of the counterpart group, it is necessary to concentrate upon interaction within the group, to study the models they use, and to examine the situational context within which a particular model is employed. In conjunction with this, one must study the interrelationship between counterpart and dominant groups, both in terms of the symbolism employed, and in terms of the socio-economic indicators of relative status and authority. Through this approach, one may reconstruct a consistent and internally logical symbolic and behavioural system of relationships within the society. And through the use of these constructs based largely on emic perceptions, one may gain a finer and more truly

comprehensive understanding of the parameters of power, the differential use of symbolic systems, and the position of women in society.

APPENDIX I

Women's Political Power in the Savannah: the Historical Dimension

What is known of early Hausa history is mainly culled from royal chronicles, which only fortuitously provide information concerning the vast majority of members of the society. Another historical source, travellers' narratives, tends to be androcentric. Any attempt at reconstruction of the life-style of women in earlier periods of Hausa history is fraught with difficulties, although a general picture might be painted based on what historical information is available, and drawing especially on anthropological studies of Hausa culture less directly affected by the Jihad of Usman dan Fodio. For this purpose, the work of Guy Nicolas, most especially his Dynamique Sociale et Appréhension du Monde au sein d'une Société Hausa (1975) is unparalleled for detail, wealth of information, and for immediate relevance: the Katsinawa, upon whom the work is partly based, and who are now resident in Maradi, were the pre-Jihad rulers of Katsina, and have retained many of the Habe traditions which have been lost or greatly altered in Katsina.

The political power of women, which is still recognised symbolically in Katsina, has been eroded over the course of time, most particularly in a series of major upheavals in the past two hundred years, but also through a gradual diminution over the course of several centuries, as women's titles and offices were transferred to or assumed by men.

Women's political importance has been closely allied in practice, and validated by socio-religious justification, with greater political power apparent in the past. There was a general pattern of women's power in the Hausa States, supported by the myth of origin, similar gender-based offices, and a framework within which the state religion

was mainly the preserve of female devotees, led by a woman or women of the ruling class. The continued success of the realm was held to lay in large measure in the efficacy of the rites conducted, with fortune ultimately reposed in the person of the ruler, usually but not always a male.

The early history of Hausaland, as exemplified in the creation myths and "king" lists, is a portrayal of female political control, with a break in the tradition exemplified in the Bayajida legend[1], which validates the authority of and lends authenticity to the Hausa states, among which is Katsina, which are known as the Hausa bakwai, the original seven Hausa states. Daura, the first of the seven Hausa states according to the legend, shows a tradition of matriarchy as manifested by the names of seventeen queens given as the earliest rulers of Daura (Palmer, 1928, Vol. 3, pp. 142-3; Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p. 154). The suggestion by A.E.V. Walwyn (Palmer, 1928, Vol. 3, pp. 136-7) that the queen list is more a description of the institution of matriliny, later displaced by patrilineal descent, is unconvincing given the evidence that queens ruled elsewhere in the savannah, and the strong supportive mythology and history. The historical sources suggest the existence of early matriarchy which subsequently gave way to male rule, but with an ideology which permitted the resumption of political power by women over both men and women.

The seven "legitimate" Hausa states share the tradition of the Bayajida legend, and at least five share also a history of political

---

1. H.R. Palmer (1928, Vol. 3, pp. 133-4), but included also in Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 145-6. This version is from a chronicle of kings (girgam) of Daura. The legend is included in other sources, with variations. Some of these are noted in Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 147-151.

power exercised by women[1]. This is shown most clearly among the people never conquered by the Fulani, and in a less distinct form even within the Fulani Emirates formed during the Jihad.

The political importance of women in the Habe kingdoms varied, but is most strikingly shown in the history of the kingdom of Zazzau, within which ruled the most famous of Habe queens, and perhaps the best known of Habe rulers, Queen Amina. According to the Kano Chronicle:

> "Zaria, under Queen Amina, conquered all the towns as far as Kwararafa and Nupe. Every town paid tribute to her."
>
> (Palmer, 1928, Vol. 3, p. 109)

The most quoted information of Queen Amina is taken from the writing of the Emir Muhammad Bello in Infak al Maisuri, and presented in English in several works[2]. Kano and Katsina are said to have paid tribute to her; she waged war in Bauchi, and extended her rule to the south and west, all the way to the banks of the Niger. So many exploits and achievements are attributed to her (one example is the building of city walls), often with conflicting dates in different sources, or chronologically impossible juxtapositions, that it is no wonder that at least one historian has suggested that Queen Amina represents "a myth with its roots in an earlier matriarchal era" (H.A.S. Johnston, p. 260). Indeed, rather a large number of writers are eager to relegate

---

1. I have no information regarding the history of Rano; the Biram version of the Bayajida legend maintains that Biram is the "Father of the Hausa People" through marriage between Diggera and Biram, whose offspring include Daura, the eldest of six children and therefore the senior of the Hausa Seven after Biram (see Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 118 and 484).

2. As, e.g. Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p. 217; F. Heath, p.5; E.J. Arnett (1920), reprinted in A.H.M. Kirk-Greene, 1972, p. 8; Denham and Clapperton, p. 162. The original English translation of Infak al Maisuri by E.J. Arnett (The Rise of the Sokoto Fulani) is difficult to obtain.

female rulers to "myths of matriarchy" and "myths of matriliny". However, Hogben and Kirk-Greene (pp. 216-218), among others, present Amina as a historical figure, and date her accession to the throne of Zazzau at 1576.

Queen Amina was the daughter of a Habe ruler whose sex varies according to the source[1]; the balance of evidence suggests that this ruler, Bakwa Turunku, was the mother of Amina, and of another daughter, Zaria, who lent her name to the capital of the State, and of the present Emirate.

The Gobirawa, or people of Gobir, preserve a history of a queen who ruled during the period of settlement at Birnin Lalle in the present-day Republic of Niger, northeast of Sokoto. The time of this settlement is given by Hogben and Kirk-Greene (p. 369) as early eighteenth century, and by Nicolas (1969, p. 203) as some time around or after the fifteenth century. According to Nicolas, the tomb of this queen, Tawa, is still venerated by the inhabitants of the area, and from the time of her reign the Gobirawa assumed the sobriquet "sons of Tawa". The history or legend of Tawa exists side by side with the Bayajida legend as a validation of Gobir political legitimacy.

---

1. The quotation by Emir Bello noted above, for example, includes a phrase regarding Amina which has been translated into English variously as "daughter of the ruler of Zazzau" (Hogben and Kirk-Greene; Heath), "daughter of Sarkin Zakzak /connotes male ruler/ (Arnett), "daughter of the Prince of Zag-Zag" (Denham and Clapperton). The Hausa version from which Heath, at least, takes his translation, actually reads " 'yar sarauniyar Zazzau" (M. Hassan and M. Shaibu Na'ibi, 1946a, p. 5), which should be translated as "daughter of the queen of Zazzau. I am grateful to Mr. A. Kani of the Northern History Research Scheme, Ahmadu Bello University, who translated the passage for me in two of the Arabic texts (C.E.J. Whitting, 1951, and A. Gumi, Cairo Edition, 1964). In both, the Arabic translates as "daughter of the Emir of Zekzek".

Before the jihad of the early nineteenth century, the political authority of women was an established fact in states throughout the savannah, and nowhere more so than in the Empire of Borno. Magira, Magaram, and Gumsu, all women's offices and titles, were traditionally associated with control of property and the exercise of power. However, only one woman actually held sway over the entire Empire, her authority being as regent rather than as ruler (Mai). She was the "lady of the great white horse. Me Aisa, a princess of the blood, daughter of Danama" [sic] (Palmer, 1912, p. 79), who reigned in the sixteenth century. Whatever may have been the initial factors responsible for women's high status in Borno society (Palmer [1950, pp. 162-3] suggests the practice of matrilineal descent, brought perhaps by the Tuareg with whom the Borno nobility had important marriage alliances), it is clear that Borno women have maintained some power and influence for nearly a millenium (see Hogben and Kirk-Greene, pp. 92-3, 314-5 for exemplification).

In many of the savannah states, a tradition of women's political power is reflected in the mythology of the states, and of the groups of people who, through migration and/or conquest, became associated with the larger political entities. Control over the state appears to have been infrequently exercised by women, or perhaps is selectively remembered[1]. Women's political power probably reached its zenith around the sixteenth century, with women ruling in some of the Hausa kingdoms and Borno. In Katsina, women's titles and politico-religious authority were becoming firmly established (Usman, 1974, p. 64). At the time, Borno influence was considerable in Hausaland. Katsina paid tribute (gaisuwa) to Borno, after the downfall of Songhai in 1591, but as Y.B. Usman

---

1. The name of Tawa, for example, does not appear in any of the extant king-lists of Gobir.

points out (1972, pp. 184-7), this tribute might have been less in response to political domination than a reflection of Borno religious and cultural hegemony. There was extensive movement of people and goods throughout the savannah, a fact which is concealed in the emphasis in the literature on warring between West African states (Usman, 1972, p. 175).

A widespread system of women's titles and offices, conferring specific authority to the holders, appeared to exist ubiquitously in the Habe states, supported by strong religious authority. The terminology differed, but the women usually exercising political power included the "queen mother" (not necessarily the mother of the incumbent king), and the sister(s) and/or daughter(s) of the ruler. The "queen mother", called the Magira in Bornu, was known as Iya in Habe Abuja and Katsina. The royal sister or daughter was called Magajiya in Katsina, Zaria, and Kebbi, Magaram in Bornu, and Sarauniya or Mardanni in Habe Abuja. The kingdoms of Damagaram (Zinder), Gobir and Daura appear to have maintained a single important royal female title, which were, respectively, Magaram, Inna and Magajiya. Among the Nupe, three royal titles were conferred: Nimwoye, Sagi and Wogbo, but the basis of bestowal has changed with other political changes. However, the women eligible for the titles are subsumed in the categories above.

Information concerning these titles and offices is sketchy, partly because the holders, not being rulers, do not appear on king lists, partly because of a lack of structural significance of the offices in historical terms, and perhaps partly because of conscious effort in the states which were conquered in the Jihad to minimise the former political significance of women. Such material as is available gives some idea of these women's power, wealth, and influence. Kanta, the

famed ruler of Kebbi, "is said to have given eighty-four towns of Yauri to his daughter when she was Magajiya Kebbi [sic] at Silame" (Hogben and Kirk-Greene, p. 246). In Zazzau during Habe rule, certain "fiefs" were traditionally administered by the Iya, Sarauniya, and Mardanni. While none of the women were eligible for succession to the kingship, the Sarauniya and Iya in particular were consulted by the king on matters concerning royal women and other women of the palace respectively.

In Abuja in 1829, "Iya Rumfa built the Iya ward ..., [Sarauniya] Zainabu built the Magajiya ward". (M. Hassan and M. Sha'ibu, 1946a, p. 10 [my translation]). Such contributions are in strong contrast with the very negligible duties said to be "traditionally" assigned to the female title-holders, such as preparing the food for an annual Muslim feast, and redistributing the deceased king's concubines. Perceptions regarding traditional practices have probably been influenced by subsequent cultural changes, including the present largely honorary nature of the titles.

The political power of women over women was seen by Shehu dan Fodio as one of the manifestations of the un-Islamic nature of the Habe states, as is suggested by this passage in the Kitab al-Farq:

> "One of the ways of their governments is that (a man) puts the affairs of his women into the hands of the oldest one, and every one (of the others) is like a slave-woman under her."
>
> (M. Hiskett, 1960, p. 567 [parentheses in the text])

For women, the most important consequence of the successful waging of the Jihad for women, however, was the loss of their ritual authority, one of the bases of the political power which they had formerly exercised in the context of what was in many respects a state religion. The pre-eminence of Islam, which had hitherto co-existed with the cult

of bori (spirit-possession), forced the latter into eclipse, and as it lost its political legitimacy, so did its adepts suffer a similar fate. Secular power had been reinforced by ritual, largely controlled by women, which was symbolic of the state. The hierarchy within the ritual sphere was associated with the ruling class, and with the high status of women within it. In Katsina, from around the sixteenth to the nineteenth century:

> "The palace ... remained a stronghold of various cults of the iskoki /spirits/ under the Maidaki, and other senior wives and concubines ... it is likely that most of the Sarakunan /rulers of/ Katsina ... patronised shrines of the iskoki ..."
> (Y.B. Usman, 1974, p. 72)

Where the traditional Habe religion retains its formal political significance, one finds the continued importance of female politico-religious figures, exemplified here by the Inna of Gobir:

> "Deuxième personnage du royaume, selon l'étiquette, la Inna est une femme du lignage royal choisie par le Sarki pour l'assister dans sa charge. Son autorité officielle s'étend sur les femmes et les adeptes des cultes de possession (bori), dont elle est la grande prêtresse.
> (G. Nicolas, 1969, p. 208)
>
> Son investiture est soumise à un cérémonial analogue à celui de l'intronisation du roi.
> (p. 219)

That these women are reckoned a political force is without doubt. Nicolas notes, for example, that the former Inna of Gobir was called to Niamey in 1963 and given financial compensation in return for her acceptance of the new Chief of Gobir (1969, p. 208).

In Katsina (Maradi), the Iya, who is most often a sister of the Sarki,

> "joue un très grand rôle dans la vie politique du pays. ... sa principale fonction consiste à diriger /toutes les femmes adeptes du Bori/ ainsi que les femmes libres du royaume. Elle les juge, vérifie leurs dispositions et prélève une taxe annuelle ... auprès de toutes les adeptes. Elle commandait jadis egalement plusieurs villages ... dont les impositions lui revenaient. La Iya accomplit par ailleurs des sacrifices aux divinités.
> (G. Nicolas, 1975, pp. 151-2)

The actual process of withdrawing titles and offices from women in states affected by the Jihad was often a matter of realizing short-term goals rather than of making a political statement regarding the status of women. Thus, in Zaria, women's titles were bestowed upon daughters of the first Emir, but were subsequently removed from women and either retired or assumed by men, or, in one case, retained "at a purely titular level" (M.G. Smith, 1960, p. 131).

Women in Katsina City state that even after the Jihad some women in the ruling class exercised power. The wife of a District Head, they suggest, would hear and judge disputes in her husband's domain, and would tour the District to resolve problems concerning women throughout the area. Her authority could be transcended by her husband, although in practice her decisions were final and binding. Male respondents disagree: they deny the existence of female political power in the Emirate either today or in the past. It should be noted that the office and title of Iya are now bestowed upon men; the Iya is still the highest ranking member of the traditional hierarchy after the Emir, and is the senior member of the Emir's Council.

The title of Magajiya has been retained within the ruling class, but has been shorn of real political significance. Conferred only upon daughters of the Emir, the title is not automatic, but rather may be given upon petition by the woman's husband to the Emir. Only

one of the present Emir's daughters has been created Magajiya. The wife of a Local Authority Councillor, she acceeded to the title directly upon her husband's appointment to higher rank, and thereby enhanced her husband's position as much as her own. Her rise in status is through her father's pre-eminence and her husband's upward mobility, but her accession brings no additional power or authority.

Thus the political experience of Hausa women has declined gradually over the course of centuries, with some sharp breaks, as at the time of the Jihad and immediately thereafter. Where the Jihad was unsuccessful, women play, or played until recently, a much more significant political role. That women in the post-Jihad North were already political minors when the British arrived is apparent from the dearth of reference to them in official documents, except for occasional mention of marriage customs or divorce.

Presumably the subordination of women accorded with British policy and predilections which favoured the continuance of a male-dominant society. By this time, women's "overt" political power had become virtually non-existent.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abba, Y. 1971 "Labour Migrants in Katsina: Perspectives on Labour Migrants in a Hausa Traditional City", B.Sc. Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University.

Abell, H.C. 1962 "The Role of Rural Women in Farm and Home Life", Report to the Government of Nigeria (Northern Region) on the Home Economics Aspects of the F.A.O. Socio-economic Survey of Peasant Agriculture in Northern Nigeria, Rome (mimeo).

Abraham, R.C. 1962 Dictionary of the Hausa Language, University of London Press Ltd., London.

Adamu, H. al-R. 1971 The North and Nigerian Unity: Some Reflections on the Political, Social and Educational Problems of Northern Nigeria, Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria.

Africanus, L. 1896 The History and Description of Africa, done into English in the year 1600 by John Pory, and now edited by Dr. Robert Brown, 3 vols., Hakluyt Society.

Ahmed, K.N. 1972 The Muslim Law of Divorce, The Islamic Research Institute, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Aluko, S.A. 1965 "How Many Nigerians? an analysis of Nigeria's census problems, 1901-1963" in Journal of Modern African Studies, Vol. 3, 3, pp. 371-92.

Anderson, J.N.D. 1954 Islamic Law in Africa, H.M.S.O., Colonial Research Publication No. 16.

Anderson, N. (see also J.N.D.) 1976 Law Reform in the Muslim World, University of London Legal Series XI, The Athlone Press, London.

Antoun, R.T. 1968 "On the Modesty of Women in Arab Muslim Villages: A Study in the Accommodation of Traditions", American Anthropologist, Vol. 70, No. 4, August, pp. 671-697.

Arberry, A.J. 1964 The Koran Interpreted, Oxford University Press, London.

Ardener, E. 1972 "Belief and the Problem of Women" in J.S. La Fontaine (ed.), The Interpretation of Ritual: Essays in Honour of A.I. Richards, Tavistock Publications Ltd., London, pp. 135-158.

Ardener, E. 1975 "The 'Problem' Revisited" in S. Ardener (ed.), Perceiving Women, Halstead Press, New York, pp. 19-27.

Ardener, S. 1975 "Introduction" in S. Ardener (ed.), Perceiving Women, Halstead Press, New York, pp. vii-xxiii.

Aswad, B.C. 1967 "Key and Peripheral Roles of Noble Women in a Middle Eastern Plains Village", Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 139-52.

Bargery, G.P. 1934 A Hausa-English Dictionary and English-Hausa Vocabulary, Oxford University Press, London.

Barkow, J.H. 1971 "The Institution of Courtesanship in the Northern States of Nigeria", Genève-Afrique, Vol. X - No. 1, pp. 1-16.

Barkow, J.H. 1972 "Hausa Women and Islam", Canadian Journal of African Studies, VI, ii, 317-328.

Barkow, J.H. 1973 "Muslims and Maguzawa in North Central State, Nigeria: an Ethnographic Comparison" in The Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. VII, No. 1, pp. 59-76.

Barnes, J.A. 1967 "The Frequency of Divorce" in A.L. Epstein (ed.), The Craft of Social Anthropology, Tavistock Publications, London, pp. 47-99.

Barth, H. 1857-58 Travels of Discoveries in North and Central Africa, 5 vols., Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans & Roberts, London.

Bashir, M.K. 1972 "The Economic Activities of Secluded Married Women in Kurawa and Lallokin Lemu, Kano City", B.Sc. Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria,

Bernus, S. 1969 "Particularismes ethniques en Milieu urbain: l'exemple de Niamey", Université de Paris, Mémoires de l'Institut d'ethnologie - I, Institut d'ethnologie, Musée de l'Homme, Paris.

Bloch, M.	1975	"Introduction" in M. Bloch (ed.), Political Language and Oratory in Traditional Society, Academic Press, London/New York.
Boissevain, J.	1974	Friends of Friends: Networks, Manipulators and Coalitions, Basil Blackwell, Oxford.
Bovin, M. and Holtedahl, L.	n.d.	"The Karuwa Institution: Women's Alternative to Marriage in Eastern Niger", Unpublished MS.
Bujra, J.M.	1975	"Women 'Entrepreneurs' of Early Nairobi", Canadian Journal of African Studies, Vol. IX, No. 2, pp. 213-234.
Bujra, J.M.	1978	"Introductory: Female Solidarity and the Sexual Division of Labour" in Patricia Caplan and Janet M. Bujra (eds.), Women United, Women Divided, Tavistock Publications Ltd., London, pp. 13-45.
Clignet, R.	1970	Many Wives, Many Powers, Northwestern Univ. Press, Evanston, Ill.
Cohen, A.	1969	Custom and Politics in Urban Africa, Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., London.
Cohen, R.	1971	Dominance and Defiance, Anthropological Studies No. 6, Paul J. Bohannan (ed.), American Anthropological Association.
Cunnison, I.	1966	The Baggara Arabs: Power and Lineage in a Sudanese Nomad Tribe, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
Dangiwa, A.M.	1971	"The Changing Role and Status of the Hausa Woman of Northern Nigeria", Thesis for Diploma in Development Studies, Ruskin College, Oxford.
Denham, Major D. and Clapperton, Capt.H.	1826	Narrative of Travels and Discoveries in Northern and Central Africa in the Years 1822, 1823, and 1824, John Murray, London.
Drew, C.F.	1975	"Economic Roles of Women in an Expanding Market Town: a Case Study in Mangu, Benue-Plateau State, Nigeria", M.Sc. Thesis, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Dry, D.P.L.	1950	"The Family Organisation of the Hausa of Northern Nigeria", Unpublished B.Sc. Thesis, Oxford University.

Dry, D.P.L. 1953 "The Place of Islam in Hausa Society", Unpublished D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University.

El-Imairi, M.T. 1977 "Marriage in Islam: Its Basic Rules and Regulations", Al-Ilm, No. 2, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, January.

Epstein, A.L. 1969 "The Network and Urban Social Organization" in J. Clyde Mitchell (ed.), Social Networks in Urban Situations, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp. 77-116.

Farrag, A. 1971 "Social Control among the Mzabite Women of Beni-Isguen", Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. 7, No. 3, pp. 317-327.

Friedl, E. 1967 "The Position of Women: Appearance and Reality", Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 97-108.

Galadanci, S.A. 1971 "Education of Women in Islam with Reference to Nigeria", Nigerian Journal of Islam, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 5-10.

Gluckman, M. 1950 "Kinship and Marriage among the Lozi of Northern Rhodesia and the Zulu of Natal" in A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and D. Forde, African Systems of Kinship and Marriage, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 166-206.

Gluckman, M. 1971 "Marriage Payments and Social Structure among the Lozi and Zulu" in Jack Goody (ed.), Kinship, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth, pp. 227-247.

Goddard, A.D. 1973 "Changing Family Structures among the Rural Hausa", Africa, Vol. XLIII, No. 3, July, pp. 207-218.

Goddard, A.D., Fine, J.C. and Norman, D.W. 1971 A Socio-economic study of three villages in the Sokoto close-settled zone, 1. Land and People, Samaru Miscellaneous Paper 33, Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University.

Goody, E.N. 1971 "Forms of Pro-Parenthood: The Sharing and Substitution of Parental Roles" in Jack Goody (ed.), Kinship, Penguin Books, pp.331-34

Goody, J. and E. 1967 "The Circulation of Women and Children in Northern Ghana", Man, N.S. Vol. 2, No. 2, June, pp. 226-248.

Grove, A.T. 1952 Land and Population in Katsina Province, Government Printer, Kaduna.

Gumi, A. (ed.) 1964 al-Infāq al-maysūr, by Muhammad Bello, Cairo Edition.

Halpenny, P. 1975 "Three Styles of Ethnic Migration in Kisenyi, Kampala" in David Parkin (ed.), Town and Country in Central and Eastern Africa, International African Institute, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 276-287.

Hassan, M. and Sha'ibu, M. 1946a Makau, Sarkin Zazzau na Habe, Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria.

Hassan, M. and Sha'ibu, M. 1946b Tarihi da Al'adun Habe na Abuja, Gaskiya Press, Zaria.

Heath, F. 1952 A Chronicle of Abuja: the English translation of M. Hassan and M. Sha'ibu, Makau, Sarkin Zazzau na Habe and Tarihi da Al'adun Habe na Abuja, Ibadan University Press.

Hill, D.J. (ed.) n.d. Select Cases from the Area Courts of the Province of Katsina, Northern Nigeria, Vol. III 1953-1968, Centre for Islamic Legal Studies, Faculty of Law, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Hill, P. 1969 "Hidden Trade in Hausaland" in Man, Vol. 4, No. 3, September, pp. 392-409.

Hill, P. 1972 Rural Hausa: a Village and a Setting, Cambridge University Press, London.

Hill, P. 1974 "Big Houses in Kano Emirate", Africa, Vol. XLIV, No. 2, April, pp. 117-135.

Hill, P. 1977 Population, Prosperity and Poverty: Rural Kano 1900 and 1970, Cambridge University Press, London.

Hiskett, M. 1960 "Kitāb al-Farq: a Work on the Habe Kingdoms attributed to 'Uthmān Dan Fodio", Bulletin of the S.O.A.S., University of London, Vol. XXIII: Part 3, pp. 558-579.

Hiskett, M. 1963 Translation of Tazyīn al-Waraqat, by 'Abdullah Ibn Muḥammad, Ibadan University Press.

Hiskett, M. 1975 A History of Hausa Islamic Verse, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, London.

Hodgkin, T. 1960 Nigerian Perspectives, Oxford University Press, London.

Hogben, S.J. and Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. 1966 The Emirates of Northern Nigeria, Oxford University Press, London.

Hunwick, J.O. 1971 "Songhay, Bornu and Hausaland in the sixteenth century" in J.F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, History of West Africa, Vol. 1, Longman Group Ltd., London, pp. 202-239.

Ifeka, C. 1975 "The Female Factor in Anthropology" in R. Rohrlich-Leavitt (ed.), Women Cross-Culturally: Change and Challenge, Mouton Publishers, The Hague, pp. 559-566.

Ighodalo, F.M. 1976 "Barriers to Participation of Nigerian Women in Modern Labour Force", Paper presented to the National Conference on Nigerian Women and Development in Relation to Changing Family Structure, University of Ibadan, Nigeria (mimeo).

Johnston, H.A.S. 1967 The Fulani Empire of Sokoto, Oxford University Press, London.

Kaita, H.I. 1973 "Women's Education in the Northern States of Nigeria 1950-1972", Paper for Dip. Ed., University of Nottingham.

Keay, E.A. and Richardson, S.S. 1966 The Native and Customary Courts in Nigeria, Law in Africa No. 18, Sweet & Maxwell Ltd., London, and African Universities Press Ltd., Lagos.

Kirk-Greene, A.H.M. 1972 Gazetteers of the Northern Provinces of Nigeria: 1, The Hausa Emirates (Bauchi, Sokoto, Zaria, Kano), Cass, London.

Konan, M.M. 1975 Occupations and Family Patterns among the Hausa in Northern Nigeria, Samaru Miscellaneous Paper 52, Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University.

Kuczynski, R.R.	1948	Demographic Survey of the British Colonial Empire, Vol. 1, West Africa. Oxford University Press, London.
Lewis, I.M.	1971	Ecstatic Religion, Penguin Books Ltd., Harmondsworth.
Little, K.	1973	African Women in Towns, Cambridge University Press, London.
Mabogunje, A.L.	1968	Urbanization in Nigeria, University of London Press Ltd., London.
Maher, V.	1974	Women and Property in Morocco: their Changing Relation to the Process of Social Stratificatic in the Middle Atlas, Cambridge University Press, London.
Mayer, A.C.	1966	"The Significance of Quasi-Groups in the Study of Complex Societies" in M. Banton (ed.), The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies, ASA Monograph 4, Tavistock Publications Ltd., London, pp. 97-122.
Meek, C.K.	1925	The Northern Tribes of Nigeria, Oxford University Press, London.
Ministère des Colonies	1911	Documents scientifiques de la Mission Tilho (1906-1909), Emile Larose, Paris, 4 Vols.
Mitchell, J.C.	1969	"The Concept and Use of Social Networks" in J. Clyde Mitchell (ed.), Social Networks in Urban Situations, Manchester University Press, Manchester, pp. 1-50.
Mohammed, A.S.	1975	"Prostitution as a Social Problem in the North-Western State - Sabon Garin Sokoto Case Study", B.Sc. Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.
Mohsen, S.K.	1967	"The Legal Status of Women among Awlad 'Ali", Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 153-166.
Monfouga-Nicolas, J. (see also Nicolas, J.)	1972	Ambivalence et culte de possession, éditions anthropos, Paris.
Morgan, R. (ed.)	1970	Sisterhood is Powerful, Vintage Books, New York.

Mortimore, M.J. and Wilson, J. 1965 Land and People in the Kano Close-settled Zone, Department of Geography Occasiona Paper No. 1, Ahmadu Bello University.

Nadel, S.F. 1942 A Black Byzantium: the Kingdom of Nupe in Nigeria, International African Institute, Oxford University Press, London.

Nelson, C. 1974 "Public and Private Politics: Women in the Middle Eastern World", American Ethnologist, Vol. 1, No. 3, pp. 551-563.

Nelson, N. 1977 "Dependence and Independence: Female Household Heads in Mathare Valley, a Squatter Community", Ph.D. Thesis, University of London.

Nicolas, G. 1969 "Fondements magico-religieux du pouvoir politique dans la Principauté du Gobir", Journal de la Société des Africanistes, t. XXXIX, fasc. 2, pp. 199-231.

Nicolas, G. 1970 "Circulation des biens et échanges monétaires en pays haoussa (Niger)", Cahiers Vilfredo Pareto, Revue européenne des sciences sociales, 21, pp. 111-120.

Nicolas, G. 1975 Dynamique Sociale et Appréhension du Monde au sein d'une Société Hausa, Institut d'Ethnologie, Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle, Paris.

Nicolas, J. 1967 "Les juments des dieux": Rites de possession et condition féminine en pays Hausa, Études Nigériennes No. 21, IFAN-CNRS.

Norman, D.W. 1967 Reprinted 1974 An Economic Study of Three Villages in Zaria Province: 1. Land and Labour Relationships, Samaru Miscellaneous Paper No. 19, Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University.

North-Central State of Nigeria Classes, Enrolments, and Teachers in Schools and Colleges of North-Central State in 1971. Planning Division, Ministry of Education, Kaduna.

North-Central State of Nigeria 1972 Statistical Year Book 1970, Military Governor's Office, Economic Planning Division, Kaduna, Nigeria.

Obbo, C. 1975 "Women's Careers in Low Income Areas as Indicators of Country and Town Dynamics" in David Parkin (ed.), Town and Country in Central and Eastern Africa, International African Institute, Oxford University Press, London, pp. 288-293.

Ogunbiyi, I.A. 1969 "The Position of Muslim Women as stated by 'Uthmān b. Fūdī", Odu, N.S., No. 2, October, pp. 43-60.

Olusanya, P.O. 1966 "Adequacy of Existing Census and Vital Statistics for Demographic Research and Planning", Nigerian Journal of Economic and Social Studies, Vol. VIII, no. 1, March, pp. 141-50.

Onwuejeogwu, M. 1969 "The Cult of Bori Spirits among the Hausa" in Mary Douglas and Phyllis M. Kaberry (eds.), Man in Africa, Tavistock Publications, London, pp. 279-305.

Paine, R. 1967 "What is Gossip About? An Alternative Hypothesis", Man, N.S. Vol. 2 No. 2, June, pp. 278-285.

Palmer, H.R. 1912-13 "The Bornu Girgam", Journal of the African Society, Vol. XII, pp. 71-83.

Palmer, H.R. 1927 "History of Katsina", Journal of the African Society, Vol. XXVI, No. CIII, April, pp. 216-236.

Palmer, H.R. 1928 Sudanese Memoirs. Three volumes, Lagos.

Palmer, H.R. 1950 "Review of Y. Urvoy, Histoire de l'Empire du Bornu", Africa, Vol. XX, No. 2, April, pp. 161-3.

Parkin, D. 1978 The Cultural Definition of Political Response: Lineal Destiny among the Luo, Academic Press, London.

Pehrson, R.N. 1966 The Social Organization of the Marri Baluch, Viking Fund Publications in Anthropology 43, Aldine Publishing Co., Chicago.

Perham, M. 1960 Lugard: The Years of Authority 1898-1945, Collins, London.

Peters, E.L. 1978 "The Status of Women in Four Middle East Communities" in Lois Beck and Nikki Keddi, Women in the Muslim World, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., pp. 311-350.

Phillips, A. and Morris, H.F. 1971 Marriage Laws in Africa, International African Institute, Oxford University Press, London.

Population Census of Nigeria 1931 Crown Agents for the Colonies, London.
Vol. I - Nigeria, by S.M. Jacob, 1933.
Vol. II - Census of the Northern Provinces, by N.J. Brooke, 1933.
Vol. V - Medical Census, Northern Provinces, by Dr. R.C. Jones, 1932.

1952 Population Census of the Northern Region of Nigeria, 1952, Department of Statistics, Lagos, 1953.

1963 Population Census of Nigeria, Federal Office of Statistics, Lagos, 10 Volumes.

Prothero, R.M. 1956 "The Population Census of Northern Nigeria 1952: Problems and Results", Population Studies, Vol. X, No. 2, November, pp. 166-183.

Reiter, R.R. 1975 "Introduction" in R.R. Reiter(ed.), Toward an Anthropology of Women, Monthly Review Press, New York, pp.11-19.

Riegelhaupt, J.F. 1967 "Saloio Women: an Analysis of Informal and Formal Political and Economic Roles of Portuguese Peasant Women", Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 109-126.

Rogers, S.C. 1975 "Female Forms of Power and the Myth of Male Dominance: a model of Female/Male Interaction in Peasant Society", American Anthropologist, 2, pp. 727-756.

Rogers, S.C. 1978 "Woman's Place: A Critical Review of Anthropological Theory", Comparative Studies in Sociology and History, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp. 123-162.

Rosaldo, M.Z. 1974 "Woman, Culture and Society: A Theoretical Overview" in M.Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, Woman, Culture, and Society, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

Rosen, L. 1978 "The Negotiation of Reality: Male-Female Relations in Sefrou, Morocco" in L. Beck and N. Keddie, Women in the Muslim World, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., pp. 561-584.

Sacks, K. 1974 "Engels Revisited: Women, the Organization of Production, and Private Property" in M.Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere, Woman, Culture and Society, Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

Schacht, J. 1957 "Islam in Northern Nigeria", Studia Islamica, VIII, pp. 123-146.

Schildkrout, E. 1978 "Age and Gender in Hausa Society: Socio-economic Roles of Children in Urban Kano" in J.S. LaFontaine (ed.), Sex and Age as Principles of Social Differentiation, ASA Monograph 17, Academic Press, London, pp. 109-137.

Shani, M.I. n.d.(a) Digest of Maliki Family Law, Gaskiya Corporation, Zaria.

Shani, M.I. n.d.(b) "The Impact of Custom on the Islamic Law of Divorce in the Northern States of Nigeria", Centre for Islamic Legal Studies, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria (typescript).

Simmons, E.B. 1973 "The Economics of Consumer-oriented Food Processing Technology in Northern Nigeria", Samaru Agricultural Newsletter, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 56-72.

Simmons, E.B. 1975 "The Small-scale Rural Food-processing Industry in Northern Nigeria", Food Research Institute Studies, Vol. XIV, No. 2, pp. 147-161.

Simmons, E.B. 1976 Calorie and protein intakes in three villages of Zaria Province, May 1970-July 1971, Samaru Miscellaneous Paper 55, Institute for Agricultural Research, Ahmadu Bello University.

Smith, H.F.C. (Abdullahi) 1961a "A Fragment on 18th Century Katsina" in Bulletin of News, The Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. V, no. 4, March, pp. 4-6.

Smith, H.F.C. (Abdullahi) 1961b "A Further Adventure in the Chronology of Katsina", Bulletin of News, The Historical Society of Nigeria, Vol. VI, No. 1, June, pp. 5-7.

Smith, H.F.C. (Abdullahi) 1971 "The Early States of the Central Sudan" in J.F. Ade Ajayi and Michael Crowder, History of West Africa, Vol. I, Longman Group Ltd., London, pp. 158-201.

Smith, M. 1954 Baba of Karo: A Woman of the Muslim Hausa, Faber & Faber Ltd., London.

Smith, M.G. 1954 "Introduction" in M. Smith, Baba of Karo: A Woman of the Muslim Hausa, Faber & Faber Ltd., London.

Smith, M.G. 1955 The Economy of Hausa Communities of Zaria, Colonial Research Series No. 16, HMSO, London.

Smith, M.G. 1959 "The Hausa System of Social Status", Africa, Vol. XXIX, pp. 239-252.

Smith, M.G. 1960 Government in Zazzau 1800-1950, Oxford University Press, London.

Strathern, M. 1972 Women in Between, Seminar Press, London.

Sutton, C., S.Makiesky, D. Dwyer, and L. Klein. 1975 "Women, Knowledge, and Power" in R. Rohrlich-Leavitt (ed.), Women Cross-Culturally: Change and Challenge, Mouton Publishers, The Hague, pp. 581-600.

Sweet, L.E. 1967 "The Women of 'Ain ad Dayr", in Anthropological Quarterly, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 167-183.

Tapper, N. 1978 "The Women's Subsociety among the Shahsevan Nomads of Iran" in L. Beck and N. Keddie, Women in the Muslim World, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass., pp. 374-398.

Tiffany, S.W. 1978 "Models and the Social Anthropology of Women: a Preliminary Assessment", Man (N.S.) 13, pp. 34-51.

Trevor, J. 1973 "Western Education and Moslem Fulani/Hausa Women in Sokoto, North West Nigeria", Centre for African Studies, S.C.A.S. (mimeo.).

Usman, Y.B. 1972 "Some Aspects of the External Relations of Katsina before 1804", Savannah, Vol. I, No. 2, December, pp. 175-197.

Usman, Y.B. 1974 "The Transformation of Katsina: c. 1796-1903. The Overthrow of the Sarauta System and the Establishment and Evolution of the Emirate", Ph.D. Dissertation, Ahmadu Bello University.

Veblen, T. 1957 The Theory of the Leisure Class, George Allen & Unwin Ltd., London.

Wallace, T. 1978 "Rural Development through Irrigation: Studies in a town on the Kano River Project", Centre for Social and Economic Research, Ahmadu Bello University (mimeo).

Whitting, C.E.J. (ed.) 1951 al-Infāq al-maysūr, by Muhammad Bello, Luzac.

Wipper, A. 1972 "African Women, Fashion, and Scapegoating", The Canadian Journal of African Studies, VI, ii, pp. 329-349.

Wolf, E.R. 1966 "Kinship, Friendship, and Patron-Client Relations in Complex Societies" in Michael Banton (ed.), The Social Anthropology of Complex Societies, ASA Monograph 4, Tavistock Publications Ltd., London, pp. 1-22.

Yeld, E.R. 1960 "Islam and Social Stratification in Northern Nigeria", British Journal of Sociology, No. 11, pp. 112-128.

Court Records

Katsina Area Court No. 1 — Civil Record Books, Nos. 3, 4, and 5. July 27, 1971 - September 25, 1972.

Katsina Area Court No. 2 — Civil Record Books, Nos. 5 and 6, April 15, 1971 - September 9, 1972.

Upper Area Court Katsina — Civil First Instance Record Book, Vol. V, 13/1/71 - 28/6/73.

Upper Area Court Katsina — Civil Appeal Record Book, 1971-72.

Archival Sources

(from the National Archives Kaduna)

"Katsina Division Quarterly Reports, 1915",
Katprof 1, Acc. No. 1279.

"Katsina Province Annual Report - 1938",
S.N.P. 17/4, Agency Mark 30876, Acc. No. 4785.

"Katsina Province Annual Report, 1939 - Returns"
S.N.P. 17/4, Agency Mark 32072A, Acc. No. 5020.

"Annual Report - Katsina Province 1953"
Katprof 1, Agency No. 4247, Acc. No. 1245.

"Marriage Custom etc. etc. Correspondence
relating to (1927-36)",
Katprof 1, File 1488, Acc. No. 613.

"Native Courts - Devorce [sic] in (1920-41)",
Katprof 1, File 1674, Acc. No. 655.

"School for Girls - Katsina" (1929-32),
Katprof 1, Agency No. 400, Acc. No. 248.