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**LA THÈSE A ÉTÉ
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A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF MODERN STRUCTURE
OF THE YORUBA FAMILY AS FAR BACK AS
ODUDUWA PERIOD. (1700 to the present)

BY

Tope Olagbaiye

A Thesis
submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
through the Department of
Sociology and Anthropology in Partial Fulfillment
of the requirements for the Degree
of Master of Arts at
The University of Windsor

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1983

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Dedication

This work is on one hand dedicated to my family of orientation, in particular Mrs. I.K. Durodola, without whom my present academic achievement may have been impossible; because when all hopes seemed bleak at the death of my beloved father, she single handedly paid my way through high school. This is a fruit of that investment. On the other hand, to my family of procreation especially my very loving and always inspiring son, Victor-Temitope.

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PREFACE

This study is a descriptive analysis of modern structure of the Yoruba family as far back as Oduduwa period. The analysis describes the structural pattern of the Yoruba family as it occurred in the traditional days, and the recent changes it has undergone since then. It is believed that the Yoruba people had always maintained a form of family pattern which is rich in nature and content, before the penetration of the missionaries.

However, significant changes began to take a toll on its members; the impact of which was becoming apparent after the missionaries, explorers and, of course, slave raiders penetrated in order to establish a contact through trade and missionary teaching. In fact, their penetration had a far reaching ramification on the structuring to the family, as the introduction of money economy stimulated urban migration for socio-economic betterment of its members.

There had always been a form of temporary rural-rural migration or inter-village movement among the members of the family for the purpose of inter-village marketing. Farmlands were also acquired in other villages because the majority of the available lands then was owned by rural kings; so it became inevitable for farmers to acquire lands elsewhere. However, the economic potential posed by rural-urban migration did in fact favour the educated few, and those who had some entrepreneurial activities. As members urban migrated, a

temporary vacuum was left in the 'economic unit of production', and as soon as the migrated members become economically fit, the rural economy was revitalized through material and financial assistance aimed at educating their younger siblings, and to meet the needs of their parents left behind in the rural areas. The financial help among the family has become so vital for the continuity and strengthening of its kinship solidarity, because it has served some of the basic functions of a welfare programme that is non-existent in most developing countries.

The elaboration of modern structure of the Yoruba family emanates from the works of various authors who have written extensively on the trend of the family amidst social changes. The first chapter of this analysis provides in part an ethnographical representation of the Nigerians and the transition from the traditional family pattern to the modernizing one. Chapter two analyzes the theoretical framework and methodology being utilized; a rationale for their reliability and validity as they apply to, a) the network of activities based on financial assistance of kinsmen and b) to the suggested hypotheses. Chapter three focuses on the mythologies surrounding the origin of the Yoruba and their subsequent settlement into a well organized, role defined family compound. Chapter four discusses very briefly the migration pattern of the members, their initial settlement in the urban centers, and how their dispersal into individual

house units was responsible for a change in value. Chapter five considers some of the major factors that may encourage divorce among the Yorubas. Finally, chapter six recapitulates the general content of the analysis, the implications and limitations of the approach and a recommendation.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The Yorubas have often been characterized as urban dwellers even before the coming of the missionaries. The frequency of such urban movement away from the compound, within the last few decades has to a very large extent created disparity between the old and the new generation. A traditional family unit under such movement, must gradually experience a shift in its once deeply ingrained values. As a consequence of this shift, the Yoruba family must have under the influence of urbanization, technological pressure increasing literacy rate, importation of western values and its ideologies, manifested some changes.

In order to examine such changes in the system, structural functionalism is being employed. The reason being that it explained the ability of both the traditional and the modern family to co-function with a minimum tension without jeopardizing their tendencies toward an equilibrium stage.

Other objectives to be pursued will include, a) how much structural change has occurred among the members of the once traditional compound? b) if urban movement enhances literacy rate and individualism, what has it done to strengthen or weaken the financial obligation each member assumed? c) have the wives who now live separately maintained the same marital solidarity as studies on traditional family demonstrated? and d) has the frequency of parental

interference on their children's marriage resulted to
stability or instability?

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is a Country on the West Coast of Africa with an area of 554,262 square miles. It is approximately 1,215 miles from north to south and 678 miles from east to west and has a population of about eighty-six million inhabitants. There are various religious groups with Christianity having more than a dozen denominations, the Islam with various sects, Egungun (Masquerades) groups and Oshun, Shango (the god of thunder) etc. There are four main languages: English, Igbo, Yoruba and Hausa. English is the official language and Lingua Franca. The percentage of illiteracy is decreasing slightly, but it is estimated that about seventy percent of the population is illiterate. The Hausas who lived predominantly in the north have the highest rate of illiteracy; about eighty percent of their ethnic population is estimated to be illiterate.

The south-west of the country is predominantly occupied by the Yoruba, the east by the Igbo and there is an uneven representation of every ethnic group in the deep-south as a result of rural-urban migration which enhances economic opportunities for the migrants. The family patterns of both the Hausas and the Yorubas are very much alike in nature because of their polygamous orientations; while that of the Igbo is a direct contrast of the two because for the most part, it is monogamous. One possible reason for this

difference in pattern may be associated with the long time religious affiliation of the Igbo to Catholicism, which completely and ideally denounces polygamy and endorses the establishment of a more formalized marriage (the church wedding). This of course did not come into being until the coming of the missionaries. The Hausas who are predominantly Islamic, make it religiously acceptable to marry a minimum of four wives; and is only the man who, under the Islamic marital law, is allowed to divorce his wife. The Yoruba on the other hand, whose religious affiliation is divided into Christianity and Islam, makes polygamy not only a dominant form of family pattern but a preferred one. The pivot of this analysis is therefore to evaluate contextually polygamy, as it was, and still is among the Yoruba, and how some of the social forces, education, urbanization and western influence etc., have created disparity between the traditional family and the modernizing one.

THE FAMILY STRUCTURE

The traditional and the modern Yoruba family can both be characterized as systems having fundamental impacts on their economic survival and political orientations. Such impacts reflect the 'joint economic unit of production' formed by the traditional family members in meeting their basic needs. But as the members urban migrated, their economic survival was no longer dependent on a 'joint economic unit', but rather on earned wages which subsequently help

revitalize the rural economy. For their political orientation, the family members hold the claim of having descended from the same place, and that provides them with a sense of solidarity and common interest in political ideologies and participation. The traditionally held and probably true belief about polygamy is that it is a way of showing one's prestige in the society; the number of wives and children that a man has, is an indication of his socio-political status. The generally acceptable reason for this is that without the ability of the man to have many wives who would form with him, "a joint productive unit", he might find subsistence almost impossible. Having many children by the traditional parents is considered socially normal; because, a) they provide for the man additional labour during the harvest period; and b) because of a high infant mortality rate, parents had a high fertility rate to ensure that enough survive to make the family economy viable. The stable economic position of the man in this situation is very vital for the continued subsistence of his family especially for the wives who need the husband's financial assistance for an independent trade. There are basically two Yoruba philosophies about the value of children. 1) That Omo ni ere aye (i.e.; lit. Children are of economic reward). 2) It was desirable to marry an unattractive woman simply because of children. Both philosophies stressed the economic importance of children; and can also be put in another context to mean that the

total expenditure on the education of a child, usually on the first one, will eventually pay off, because when he (he, can be used comfortably here because education of a female child at that time was less important) completes his studies, and gets a job, the parents expect him to pay the younger ones' way through school. In other words, the responsibility of the parents to send the rest of the children to school became shifted to the successful child. This form of financial assistance or obligation still predominates in the Yoruba kinship network. Since the barren wives are constantly aware of the social and economic value of children, they sometimes encourage their husbands to have another woman who could bear children for them. As Sir A. Burns (1963:265) mentioned, polygamy is an old-established custom throughout Nigeria, and to the African it appears not only a reasonable but almost an essential institution. The number of a man's wives provides an indication of his wealth, in which form it is often entirely invested, and the labour of his wives adds to his income and permits to further investments. Children are not a financial burden in West Africa, but add to the wealth of the father, so there is no economic disadvantage in large families. Daughters are easily marketable as wives at an early age, and sons provide an unpaid labour supply. The fact that a wife could not bear children does not in any way produce any animosity between her and the newly acquired. Rather, the relationship between the co-wives will be such that recognises obedience and respect

because of the seniority in the house. Further, as D. R. Mickelwait et.al., (1976:11) mentioned, aside from child-bearing, a women's status is a reflection of that of her husband. To increase her own status, then, she may ask her husband to take another wife. This raises the family income, reduces the amount of work for the first wife and wins her status within the community where she may become an organizer of social activity. The hierarchical structuring of the wives takes this form; the first wife is called "Iyale" while the second or any subsequent one is referred to as "Iyawo". Seniority among the wives is by marriage, that among the children is by birth and a wife is junior to any child born before she was married and senior to whoever was born after she was married to the compound. It is an arrangement that defines the responsibility of each member to the compound and, according to N. A. Fadipe (1970:101), there are limits to the autonomy which that responsibility carries. This of course, does not mean that any senior member of the compound cannot punish any child behaving insolently toward his elders. Women, as well have the right to discipline any child, but such right will depend, as N. A. Fadipe (1970:102) mentioned, upon her age, the age of the child, and her actual relationship to the child to be corrected. In all cases, however, a report should be made to the father of the child.

The most common and probably the most preferred forms of marriages among the Yorubas are those conducted under the

native law and customs at least before the coming of the missionaries. There are four forms of marriage. The first involves a situation where the bride is carried on the shoulder of one of the relatives of the bridegroom to his residence. This act of carrying is what is known as Igbeyawo (marriage). Two wives of her extended family will remain with her in the room throughout the wedding night. The second one involves a situation whereby the widow of a dead kinsmen is inherited, usually by any of the older siblings. While both of these forms are considered legal, the former entails both the consent of parents and the payment of 'bride-price' the latter does not. Another difference is that the widow has the right to turn down such joining if she does not particularly like the choice presented her and only after that is she free to remarry outside the family. Once she remarries, her children will remain within the family and in addition, she will have to pay back the 'bride-price'. The marriage, according to L. Mair (1963:72), is in being so long as the cattle which made it are in the possession of the women's lineage; hence death does not dissolve the marriage unless the cattle are returned. A widow is not free to remarry without this formal divorce procedure, and if she bears more children they are legally the children of her dead husband. The third form of marriage involves a situation where a father presents his daughter in marriage without the payment of the 'bride-price'. This however, does not happen to everyone because the father giving his daughter to a man to marry or to live with and eventually become a

wife, must be convinced or told that the man is wealthy enough to take care of her. The fourth is the marriage under the ordinance which did not become a form of marital pattern until the coming of the missionaries. This is more prevalent in the urban areas than the rural.

The bride-price takes two forms: a) the monetary, the amount paid depends on the social status of the man since it is an occasion when a man establishes his worth as a husband and b) it is paid in form of material, most commonly, cattle or farm produce. So, whichever form her 'bride-price' takes, she will have to pay it back in the event of a divorce. It is necessary to mention at this juncture that the marriage ceremony depends a great deal on the wealth of the man; because the more wealthy the man, the more elaborate the ceremony. Those men who could not afford to lavish so much money on a marriage ceremony or to afford more than one 'bride-price', stayed monogamous. A man who remained monogamous as a result of poverty, mentioned N. A. Fadipe (1970:90), was not perceived as having a more affectionately married life than in the case of the polygamist. While some changes appear to be taking place slowly in the Yoruba marriage system as a result of urbanization, increasing literacy rate and western influence, the native law and customary forms will still be an unfading, integral part of it.

Within the traditional compound, the role of each member is uniquely well defined. The man is usually the head of the household whose responsibility includes disciplining of

the members, to the extent that when he returns, after having been out, grievances will be brought to his attention for judgement. He provides for the family through his labour, usually farm subsistence, and assists his wives financially to start a trade that will be economically independent of the family. Some of the wives may follow him to the farm to help while others stay home to take care of the housework. Those that go with him are usually responsible either for reaping the crops or the picking of seeds. The older children, on the other hand, will do just about any farm work the father himself does. The labour of those wives who help their husbands on the farm, and that of the children is unpaid as much as it is a "joint economic unit" and the prestige and economic survivability of the head of the household determines their own existence. Although there is no actual prohibition of women from hoeing and planting in kitchen gardens inside the towns, the Yoruba as a whole do not make use of the labour of women extensively on their farms in these capacities. As stressed by N. A. Fadipe (1970:148), the more important part of women's work on the farm, however, consists of changing the form of the various crops harvested so as to bring them to a stage or two nearer the point of ultimate consumption. Women are to a very large extent economically independent of their husbands. However, such independence will not ordinarily materialize unless the husbands provide their wives with some financial backing to make possible some form of petty trade in provisions or

other consumer goods. Such trade usually takes the form of renting a small store in a local or open market, converting a front portion of the house into a store or creating a kiosk in front of the house, and the profit from their trades is exclusively their own. From it they feed their husbands in rotation, clothe, feed their children and sometimes pay their way to school, if their husband either cannot afford to send all the children to school or because he decides not to give one child a higher education than the other. The successful child, as I earlier mentioned, not only feels obliged to send his junior siblings through school, but he also feels that there are other financial obligations he owes to other members of the extended family. When the next senior child completes his education as well, both successful ones jointly send the rest of the children through school. So it is a situation where the man often ends up spending very little to educate his children. Many Yoruba wives, mentioned J. S. Eades (1980:68), go to great lengths to pay their children's education if their husbands are unable to do so. Normally the father tries to treat the wives equally by sending an equal number of children by each of his wives to school. If any more go, it is because the mother has been able to find the money.

The traditional co-wives are disappearing in the urban areas. The man may rent an apartment outside for the other woman who he will visit rotationally. While this relationship is culturally sanctioned and may sometimes be referred to as

concubinage or "extra-marital", it poses a threat to the woman living with him at home who is probably married under the marriage ordinance. As T. Baker and M. Bird (1959:115) further stressed, in as far as the 'outside' wife will not have the high personal status of an official statutorily married wife. (an educated woman will only marry under the statute, therefore the majority of 'outside' wives are uneducated women) she stands, as it were, in a 'second class' position.

Most parents, especially those in the urban areas are beginning to recognise and respect the wishes of their children as regards their choices in marriage. A plurality of wives no longer enhances the status of men. Rather, a man's status in today's society is measured in terms of his level of education and potential for a good job or business. Most educated urban couples are very opposed to the idea of 'bride-price', irrespective of the tough position their parents are taking on the issue. Instead of the bridegroom paying for the bride-price, the bride would advise him to use the money to buy gifts for her parents; but the bridegroom may have in fact bought his parent-in-laws several gifts even before he married their daughter. There have been instances when the bride would use her own money to buy gifts for her parents and make the latter believe that the bridegroom had sent them. Urban couples are more concerned about the quality of life their children and themselves are having. Individual residence has encouraged them to save up enough money to build their

own house and to have a car or two. Men, stressed A. Izzett (1961:313), who formerly spent money on bridewealth now spend it on building house, first one in the town of their origin, and then secondly, in the town of their residence. In spite of change in attitude between the rural and urban families, parental blessing during marriage and the concern for such a union still play a major role among the Yorubas. A. Izzett (1961:312), states that when a young man has chosen a girl, he writes to her family head for permission to marry her. His letter has to be endorsed by family elders. The girl's family will then make enquiries regarding the character and position of the young man, and that of his family: insanity, criminality and physical defects are all taken into consideration. If the enquiries are satisfactory, the young man's family is informed that the proposal is acceptable and the two families meet for the 'thank you' ceremony. This family concern is being perceived nowadays as a form of formality that bears no significance on the already solidified relationship. If on the other hand the family enquiries provide some negative results, what the parents of both spouses can do is to advise their children, and nothing more than advise, on the pending danger should the marriage take place.

When children ignore these negative findings, there is a greater opportunity for parents and other relatives to increasingly interfere in their relationships. Each family continues to find faults in either of the spouses and they

refuse to accept the fact that those ill-founded faults were consequences of their disapproval of the union. This negative behavior from the kinship group does not make less important their financial obligations to their kin; neither does it weaken their emotional ties to them. The impact of this behavior of relatives on the newly married couple is immense, and the tension arising from it thus marks the beginning of unfriendliness between the primary (family of orientation) and the secondary (family of procreation) families. Clan and sub-clan cannot just accept the fact that children are leaving them behind to enter a completely new life and if they had the choice, they would prefer keeping their children within their lineages to allowing him or her to marry. The marriage of the child on whom the economic survival of the family rests is sometimes seen as an event that withdraws or weakens the provider role he or she occupies. It is a double-bind kind of situation, because on one hand the parents favour marital life and on the other hand, they become rather apprehensive about whether the child's obligation to the family will continue or cease after marriage. The lack of emphasis on the secondary family, according to W. Bascom (1969:46), is due, in part at least, to its instability as contrasted to the permanent nature of the clan. It is a common Yoruba saying that "wives can come and go, and after divorce one has nothing to do with them; but one can never change his consanguinal relatives".

The traditional disregard of the Yorubas for their

secondary families has hampered their ability to relate to their daughters-or-sons-in-law on the best of terms, much less to appreciate the moral standards of the foreign individuals (i.e. the women in most cases), and what they stand for. The wife is traditionally treated as a secondary member of the family to which she is married; and not as a part of the whole. Husbands and wives are primarily treated as exclusively different individuals and only secondarily are they referred to as one union. This creates instability within the newly married homes, because the strong ties with kinship groups obscures ones ability to perceive the wives as individuals whose marital relationship one may slowly be ruining.

Contrary to the ruralite's concept of divorce as something that bears social stigma, the attitudes of the urban families to the same are very much different. Cases of divorce in the traditional family may be non-existent; a) either because of the fear that children left behind after a divorce may be maltreated by the rest of the co-wives and or b) because of the deeply ingrained value consciousness of the compound members. Urban couples have, however, adopted new sets of values which reflect their indifference to divorce. The new form of residence has precluded such close physical proximity among the urbanites and has given opportunities to individuals to rediscover themselves, not as a part of a larger unit, but as individuals. Also, the desire of urban members to exercise

control over what they possess, has contributed to a high rate of divorce or marital instability. As P. C. Lloyd (1967:180) rightly stated:

"In emphasizing the tensions that may arise between husband and wife in situations of rapid social change, one may suggest, perhaps, that a greater degree of marital unhappiness exists in modern Africa than elsewhere. There is, in fact, no evidence of such a gloomy situation. Divorce statistics are not available for a comparison of rates in the traditional societies with those among the educated town dwellers from these societies..."

The death of a polygamous man provides an opportunity to truly comprehend the amount of tension built over time amongst the wives, be they cohabitating or having separate residences. The means of rationalizing this built-in animosity in the traditional days is not different from the modern days. In point of fact, in any customary marriage where all the wives either cohabit or have separate residences, there is a natural tendency for those wives to 'witch' each other on the sharing of the dead man's property. Property, statuses and money have traditionally remained with and been shared by the descent groups, brothers and sisters and his children whether the latter are from the inside or outside wives. Further, W. Bascom (1969:46), reiterated that;

"When the father dies, his personal property is divided into approximately equal shares according to the number of his wives who have children, regardless of the number of children each wife has, except that a wife who has no children may receive only a nominal share to provide for her until she can remarry. Essentially, it is

children and not the wives, who inherit, and the oldest child of each wife gets one share in the name of all the children of his/her mother.

The distribution of property among children through their mothers, did not mean that the latter are always satisfied with whatever share they obtained. Any of the mothers who felt that she deserved more in their husband's property than what she was given, may feel jealous and decide to get even with any of the wives by 'witching' them. As there had always been competition among the wives over who prepared the best food for the man or who had the opportunities to have several children, this means that the man, while alive, had the tendency to favour one wife over the other. This subsequently led to a feeling of contempt among the wives over the man's property, and the only way to rationalize this feeling is to 'witch' themselves - an act which might have submerged if their husband was alive. When a woman dies however, her property can only be inherited by her children and not her husband. The unfriendliness that this situation created among the older and new generation Yoruba family is tremendous. This is one of the destructive attitudes of the "happy" co-wives, which I will refer to as "delayed jealousy", on which I hope to expand as I progress in this analysis.

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGYTHEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In examining the Yoruba family pattern, a structural-functionalist approach will be utilized which can either be perceived from a micro-sociological level or macro-sociological. The basic premise of the approach is that a social system, as in the case of the family, has integrated parts that are in constant interaction with one another to maintain an equilibrium state. The proponents of the approach have not at anytime claimed a complete equilibrium state, and neither am I suggesting anything near such claim, but that any social system is able to adjust to changes occurring within its parts. One proponent of this approach, M. Hutter (1981:44) views the society as:

"an organism that strains towards maintaining itself in some form of balance.... The concern is with the functional connections among the various parts of a system, whether the society or the family. Its constituent parts, husband-father, wives-mothers and children are bound together by interaction and interdependence... stability and order are implicitly viewed as being natural and normal. Conflict and disorder are seen as being deviant phenomena and as evidence that the system is not working properly".

The organism, stated A. R. Radcliffe-Brown (1956:263):

"is not itself the structure; it is a collection of units (cells or molecules) arranged in a structure,

i.e., in a set of relations; the organism has a structure".

Brown also adds to the notion of a structure consisting of a set of relations amongst unit entities, that the continuity of the structure is maintained by a life process which is made up of the activities of its constituent units.

The constituent units of a structure referred to by Brown very well fit the component members of the family—the father, mother, children and their extended members. Each member depends on and relates to one another through the 'joint economic unit of production' formed. Such a formed unit becomes so vital to the traditional family because the agrarian economy required more labour for a more efficient cultivation and a rewarding harvesting. Hence, the economic unit helped every member of the family in meeting individual's need. The relationship here is symbiotic, in that the head of the traditional family could not survive without the help of other members, and the other members could not survive without the head.

The theory did not account for the lazy in this situation, but because the head of the household was the only person who kept the profit generated from the joint labour, any act of laziness is obscured. As such, individual return was non-existent. Nevertheless, the participation of family members in the joint unit was socio-economically rewarding inasmuch as the agrarian life was the only one they know.

A.R. Radcliffe-Brown (1959:180) observed:

"The continuity of structure is maintained by the process of social

life, which consists of the activities and interactions of the individual human beings and the organised groups into which they are united. The social life of the community is here defined as the functioning of the social structure. The 'function' of any recurrent activity, such as the punishment of crime, or a funeral ceremony, is the part it plays in the social life as a whole and therefore the contribution it makes to the maintenance of the structural continuity".

Leading exponents of the structure-functional 'school', notably Merton, Parsons and Davis, in an attempt to reaffirm their positions on the equilibrium theory and also as a reaction to the discomfort created by their critics, have come up with a most sophisticated and cautious form of functionalism. Criticism did not come to life until the emergence of evolution and modernization theories which doubt the organismic standpoint taken by structure-functionalists particularly at the time when there seems to be a direct relationship between technology and family disorganization. P. L. Van den Berghe, et.al. (1956:294) mentioned that the 'structure-function' approach seems to involve the following postulates of elements:

1. Societies must be looked at historically as systems of interrelated parts.
2. Hence, causation is multiple and reciprocal.
3. Although integration is never perfect, social systems are fundamentally in a state of dynamic equilibrium, i.e., adjustive responses to outside changes tend to minimize the final amount of change within the system. The dominant tendency is thus towards stability and inertia, as maintained through built in mechanisms of adjustment and social control.

4. As a corollary of 3), dysfunctions, tensions and 'deviance' do exist and can persist for a long time, but they tend to resolve themselves or to be 'institutionalized' in the long run. In other words, while perfect equilibrium or integration is never reached, it is the limit towards which social systems tend.
5. Change generally occurs in a gradual, adjustive fashion, and not in a sudden, revolutionary way, changes which appear to be drastic, in fact affect mostly the social super-structure while leaving the core elements of the cultural structure largely unchanged.
6. Change comes from basically three sources: adjustment of the system to exogenous (or extra-systemic) change; growth through structural and functional differentiation; and inventions or innovations by members or groups within society.
7. The most important and basic factor making for social integration is value consensus, i.e., underlying the whole social and cultural structure, there are broad aims or principles which most members of a given social system consider desirable and agree on. Not only is the value system (or ethos) the deepest and most important source of integration, but it is also the stablest element of socio-cultural system.

D. Martindale (1960:505) indicates that the ability of a system to maintain a state of equilibrium during crisis is comparable with a transition from a state of rest to motion due to disturbance of the equilibrium, whereby the process of re-establishment of a new state ensues. The impact of a deeply ingrained value consensus among members of the Yoruba family is so great that it provides a forum for a better understanding as to the need to accommodate even their less

fortunate ones. Such consensus in values therefore become integral parts of the family culture, and allowing a day-to-day functioning of the members. The inherent nature of culture in this regard cannot be underestimated. As. W. W. Isajiw (1968:89) pointed out that, a social system cannot be so structured as to be radically incompatible with the conditions of functioning of its component individual actors as biological organisms and as personalities or of the social system. The minimum requisite for 'support' among each component member within a system compliments each other.


A sufficient proportion of a system's component actors, must be adequately motivated to act in accordance with the requirement of their roles; positively in the fulfilment of expectations and negatively in abstention from too disruptive, i.e., deviant, behavior.

A social system must avoid commitment to cultural patterns which either fail to define a minimum of order, or which place impossible demands on people and thereby generate deviance and conflict to a degree which is incompatible with the minimum conditions of stability or orderly development. What B. Malinowski (1944:70) said about the cultural reality of the family may throw some light on the relationship that exists between the family of orientation and socio-cultural environment in which it occurs. He said, that the family at least, is a real isolate of cultural reality that can be identified and traced throughout humanity, and is a universal of all cultures.

RATIONALE FOR THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The rationale for the implimentation of the theoretical framework is based on the idea of W. L. Wallace (1969), in which he mentioned that there is a point of convergence integration and co-existence in two systems that are dialectically opposed to one another. The two models that he considered are, conflict structuralism and structural functionalism as proposed by Dahrendorf and Van den Berghe respectively. In them, Dahrendorf discusses the conflict structuralism which explains the social as an exchange of behavior between two or more participants-given that the exchange involves some injurious behavior. Van den Berghe on the other hand, discusses how conflict structuralism and structural functionalism compliment each other. Wallace's argument is that while societies do indeed show a tendency towards stability, equilibrium, and consensus, they simultaneously, generate within themselves the opposite of these. He sees the two models co-functioning in 3 levels; the thesis, antithesis and the synthesis.

Therefore, the dialectical approach as adopted by W. L. Wallace (1969:209-12), suggested that there is convergence between the two models of equilibrium which are compatible with an assumption of long range tendency of integration. Now, if integration, co-existence or tendency towards a convergence do become inevitable amongst the differences existing between the components of the old and



new Yoruba families, then, the three levels of theoretical synthesis can very well be equivalent to the shift from the traditional value to the modernizing value, and, a later co-existence of the contradicting values. If again, thesis-antithesis-synthesis chronologically represent an equilibrated, disequilibrated and the equilibrated stages, whereby the latter stage is hereby assumed to resolve the contradictions between thesis and antithesis, therefore, Wallace's theoretical synthesis can comfortably be superimposed on the different value periods that the Yoruba family structure is going through.

Hence, thesis level represents the traditional life in the family compound where the members were confined to and acted within the prescribed norms of the family. The antithesis level represents urban migration period when there began to emerge value disparity and conflicting views between those in the rural life and the urban. However, the contradiction between thesis and antithesis was subsequently resolved by the synthesis level; because there is now a shift in the responsibility of members which fosters co-existence in values. The younger generation, most of whom are in the urban centers, now subsidize the rural economy both financially and materially. The impact of such financial assistance on the survivability of the rural family is immeasurable.

The cooperative economic unit formed by the compound members of the traditional family, can also be equated with

Wallace's initially equilibrated stage when the family was strictly confined to and holding fast to the traditional values. Migration of some of its members to the urban centers, and their subsequent acculturation into the urban life, created value discrepancy between the rural compound and the individual urban type of dwelling. The discrepancy that emerged between two stages, has to some degree constituted a temporarily disequilibrated and disintegrated period for the family as an economic unit of production.

Labour and profit were withdrawn from such a traditional family unit and the migrated members by and large, were compelled out of emotional attachment to be financially obligated to those in the rural economy. The withdrawal of labour and profit from the agrarian economy and the temporary internal disturbance it created, means that the migrated members were playing vital roles in the continuity of the economy of the rural family. On one hand, it is an indication that those who migrated to the city expected to improve their economic lots and to provide assistance for their kinsman left behind. They accomplish this through monetary and material remittance. On the other hand, the fact that the migrated members were dispersed into different house units, means that some of them were economically strong enough to afford urban residences and to assume equally responsible roles, if not more responsible roles than their traditional parents. As a consequence of this, the traditional parents may lose their control over the children. The family members, both in the

rural and urban areas will, in the long run, as the theory contends, converge or be able to co-exist in spite of the disparity in value.

Wallace therefore reemphasize once again the synthetical postulates or elements of structural functionalism in his dialectical approach as:

- a) The adjustive change of the social system in response either to exogenous change, or to endogenous change in one of its part, is a condition to the maintenance of equilibrium.
- b) That functionalism has proven a powerful instrument in dealing with at least two major types of change: growth in complexity through differentiation, and adjustment to extra-systemic changes (e.g. problem of acculturation) (and economic production; I would add).
- c) That malintegration or maladjustive change can be resolved through revolution.
- d) And that different elements of a society can simply co-exist without being significantly complementary, interdependent or in opposition to one another. e.g. a subsistence economy can independently co-exist with a money economy even though the same persons participate in both, and even though they may both produce some commodities.

The implimentation of structural-functionalism is very important in this analysis in that it can explain the functional aspects of each member of both the traditional and the modern Yoruba family- a function that is so vital for their continuity.

The theory can evoke an understanding of the basic structural changes that have occured between the rural and the urban

Yoruba family as a result of urban migration. Further, it will make one understand that in spite of value differences that exist between the rural and the urban family, both are still able to co-exist. However, the period or extent of such co-existence cannot at this time be anticipated.

likewise, any sporadic tension that may ensue from co-existence can be submerged because, a) we are too apathetic to the polarization in the family values and its consequence and b) the larger percentage of the older generation whose subsistence is dependent on the financial assistance from children. When the economic survivability of parents is dependent so much on children, the former lose that traditional control which they once had. So also will the same dependency force some of the parents of unquestionably accept such co-existence of value differences.

The economic dependence of the parents on their children and the latter's continual urban movement allows one to generate several hypotheses.

HYPOTHESES:-

- (a) The less economic interdependence between Yoruba family units, the less the tension between wives and their in-laws.
- (b) The more economically independent the women, the less authoritative the men become.
- (c) The more prevalent neolocal residence, the weaker the emotional ties within the primary and secondary families.

METHODOLOGY

Modern Yoruba family analysis will rely very much on an ethnographically oriented secondary analysis that will follow, among many others, the descriptive work of W.A. Fadipe (1970 and A. Izzett (1959), who have represented traditional and modern views respectively. These early authors have to my best knowledge laid a foundation upon which recent authors have built; and from whose idea, in turn, I hope to make deductions that are intertwined with my reflexive experience. The research will also follow very closely the one conducted by J. Aldous (1962:8). Aldous measured the extent of kinship ties in urban centers in terms of a set of criteria. The criteria range from the form of residence to assistance between individual relatives based on normative expectations whether in the form of gifts or services. Likewise, inasmuch as our analysis has chosen to lay more emphasis on the financial assistance between kinship to explain the emotional ties between the latter, so will it be used to justify the functional continuity of the family in the absence of other institutions to look after the needy members.

The economic dependence of members on each other has become both a moral and emotional commitment, the interruption of which may have a lasting ramification on the family. In the concluding section of his study, P. Marris (1962:140) indicated that;

"only the financially self-sufficient,
however, can afford to be independent

of their family group. The rest depend upon its support as their best insurance against hardship. They do not enjoy old age pensions, sickness or employment benefits, a guaranteed livelihood... the tradition of family loyalty still fulfils a vital need".

The Yoruba family pattern is not immune to modernity inasmuch as it is operating within some of the social agents of change to which I alluded earlier. I will therefore critically look at the perspective presented and infer that in light of the recent trend, the traditional Yoruba family pattern must inevitably manifest some changes. This notion was alluded to by E. Hellmann (1959:733) that:

"The functions of the family have changed very greatly. With the change from a subsistence to a money economy, and from self sufficiency to dependence on wage labour only, the urban family has become completely dependent on the cash earnings of its members".

Other information relating to the analysis will be extracted from other publications under the auspices of UNESCO. An attempt was made to obtain a divorce record from the Supreme Court of the federation of Nigeria or the department of statistics, but was unsuccessful.

CHAPTER THREE

ORIGIN MYTHOLOGIES AND THE TRADITIONAL YORUBA FAMILY

This section of the analysis considers some of the myths surrounding the origin of the Yorubas as a people, and the family formation that evolved from it. It is a vital section because it will enrich a total understanding of the Yorubas, as tribal groups within a larger society. It will take into consideration as well, why the intra-tribal wars might be used as one of the factors affecting a normative culture of the family.

The Yoruba speaking people of south western Nigeria, lack any written or lettered history. What they have are oral traditional histories that are guided by hearsay and passed from one generation to the other. These myths are many, varied and bear different degrees of reliability that are subject to 1) the extent of the research and 2) the amount of exaggeration on the part of the researcher. As S. O. Biobaku (1973:29) rightly stated:

"It is clear that legends specifically concerned with the origins are especially liable to distortion, or even to pure fabrication. While they may preserve a genuine tradition of how the present state of affairs arose, they may equally be merely ingenious speculations or rationalizations. Moreover, origin myths are frequently tendentious, and suffer distortion for ulterior purposes, seeking to validate claims to superiority or suzerainty, or to friendship or community. But to say this is not to deny that material of historical value may not be derived from such myths.... embellished with miraculous elements".

Three mythological origins were suggested by W. Bascom (1969:7); 1) there were similarities to Jewish customs that identify the Yoruba as one of the ten 'lost tribes' of Israel. 2) That the great works of art from Ife was first reported by Leo Frobenius; indicating that the Yoruba culture had been introduced by Etruscans who reached West Africa by way of the 'Lost Continent' of Atlantis. 3) That Sir Flinders Petrie noted the resemblance of these heads of pottery ones from Memphis that suggested an Egyptian origin.

However, one myth that seems to have been more popular among writers, historians, archaeologists and sociologists is the Oyo-Yoruba origin which claimed the primacy of Oduduwa - the father of the Yoruba. Hence, most mythological traditions tend to lean more towards the belief that Oduduwa, who was believed to be the son of Lamurudu, king in Mecca (a Holy Land), was expelled from there because he had followers whom he indoctrinated and instructed to desecrate the Islamic religion and replace it with the worship of idols. As a result of this, he travelled westwards and wandered for ninety days until he got to a place where he finally settled - this place he named Ile-Ife. Because Oduduwa was too old by the time he finally settled at Ile-Ife, he could not, according to N. A. Fadipe (1970:33), organise an avenging expedition against the party which drove him out of Mecca, his native land. Ile-Ife has since then been referred to in the mythology as the earliest settlement and the spiritual origin of the Yoruba people. The site is marked by a granite column left

behind there after the death of Oranyan, the grandson of Oduduwa. This staff became the most notable Yoruba monument, according to R. Smith (1969:28). The eighteen foot high granite column known as the Opa Oranyan, or 'Staff of Oranyan' is studded with a mysterious pattern of 123 nails. The Opa is said to mark the grave of Oranyan, but no burial pit has been found in the vicinity, and it has been alternatively suggested that it was originally dedicated to Ogun, the god of Iron and war.

The only son that Oduduwa had, Okanbi, who apparently died before his father, had seven children who became the rulers of the early known seven towns of the Yoruba Kingdoms. The vast land inherited by Oranyan (Oranmiyan) contributed to the expansion of his Kingdom, such that it stretched to the South Western areas. Oranyan, according to the legend, decided after he had gained enough influence and power from other rulers, to travel back to Mecca in order to revenge on those who expelled his grandfather, Oduduwa, from Mecca. His efforts failed so he decided to settle down in or near the site of old Oyo (called Katanga in Hausa) which he made the capital of these kingdoms. Old Oyo became the centre of a powerful empire under the Alafin of Oyo (one of Oranyan's children) both economically, militarily and politically in the Yoruba land, thus making the rest of the kingdoms pay tribute and it occasionally interfered in their internal affairs. In an attempt by the rest of the kingdoms to strip the Alafin of the tremendous power that he had, frequent struggle arose which subsequently weaken their allegiance, and a total

disaffection in one another, became a commonplace. According to R. Smith (1969:159), there were two basic reasons for the disaffection among the political rulers of the kingdoms. Firstly, the competition for control of the new resources which derived from the territorial expansion of the kingdom and its share in the lucrative Atlantic slave trade upset balance of power between the Alafin and the Oyo Mesi (a ruler). Secondly, frequent intra-tribal wars which occurred, caused a total collapse of the Supreme government-- the Alafin of Oyo and the disintegration of its kingdoms.

Other towns that later developed were the result of the wave of refugees caused by intra-Yoruba wars. This does not preclude the fact that even if they are politically fragmented, they are still united in their common claim of having descended from Oduduwa and also of their having originally hailed from Ile-Ife.

It is therefore necessary to mention that the traditional family structure might have arisen as a result of the advent of refugee settlement created as a consequence of the intra-tribal wars. These settlements which encompassed families from different geographical locations, it may be mentioned at this juncture, marked the beginning of the kingdoms and the birth of the Yoruba co-extended family compound-Agbo-ile (lit. flock of houses). This would be expanded on later in this analysis. This compound is what most Yorubas will refer to as the beginning of a communal

life ever so well structured, both economically and politically and that which as a result of the cooperative efforts of its members, worked so well then- as a socio-political organization. Such organizations encourage the caring of one member by the other inasmuch as they see themselves as victims of the same circumstance. The fact that they were strangers in a strange environment as well, was good enough to stimulate a sense of togetherness that would develop into a continuity in their socio-political lives. Each member felt both economically and emotionally obligated to one another. They knew that their survival depended on interpersonal moral and emotional attachment. The obligation to support kin members indicated J. Labinjoh (1976/77:65), was directed not only to parents but also to brothers, uncles, aunts and cousins of all descriptions. If, as most authors claimed, only men were made for war in the early days of the gallant Yorubas, then it might be safe to say that a greater number of the war refugees were children, and females, married or unmarried, whose husbands have been displaced either by death or taken as prisoners of war elsewhere; then the majority of such waves of refugees were husbandless. Inasmuch as no mention has yet been made as to why the Yorubas institutionalized a polygamous type of family, neither did the myth of creation indicate that Oduduwa, the father of the Yoruba, have more than one wife, and he could not have had more than one because he had one son; then, the scarcity of men may very well explain this early polygamous

attitude. This husbandlessness must have triggered men's desire to have as many wives as possible. The economic situation at the time (farm toiling) also, was such that additional help was necessary on the farm to realize the anticipated farm profit. Hence, the rationale for the multiplicity of wives, by men, was that a) they were playing the role of Good Samaritans by repossessing those women who lost their husbands, otherwise, they might find life too uninteresting. b) They would be economically useful either on the farm during harvesting or the selling of farm produce and c) They would be able to bear many children, who would at mature ages contribute to the socio-economic position of the man. Rationalizing men's behavior in this manner set the stage for a superordinate and subordinate role within the compound.

THE COMPOUND: AN EARLY STRUCTURAL SETTING OF THE YORUBA FAMILY

The prevalent and usually the only known form of residence amongst the early polygamous families of the Yorubas was the compound (lit. flock of houses) which is referred to in the Yoruba language as Agbo-ile. It was a traditional compound that was surrounded by walls intersected by the roads radiating out from the centre- It was a 'chessboard' pattern of residence. This pattern so adopted become very significant because of intra-tribal wars and hostility that predominated the period. According to S. Johnson (1969:91) it formed a security against a sudden cavalry attack, and a safe ambush

for defence, as well as hiding places in a defeat or sudden hostile eruption. New compounds grew out of the old ones due to over population of the latter; and the chief of the neighbourhood in which such a new compound was to be built would have to grant that family compound permission to carry out such a plan. There were many sub-compounds within a particular neighbourhood of the parent compound of an extended family. Each carried out its own social and political functions independent of other compounds such that the election of a baale (the head of a compound) is absolutely within the compound's jurisdiction, even when the baale of sub-compounds are referred to as junior baale. G.A. Marshall (1964:41) points out that, theoretically, each person is a permanent member of the compound and lineage of his father, and can no more change his compound membership than he can his lineage membership. Nonetheless, the baale of the parent compound remained the most powerful. H.A. Fadipe (1970:106), further states that the compound is not only the most important primary group in Yoruba society but, where it is co-extensive with the extended family, it is also the smallest political unit. It is therefore impossible to understand what kinship entails for a Yoruba man or woman without understanding the compound as a social as well as a physical entity.

The compound type of dwelling amongst the Yoruba had existed before the coming of the Europeans. Irrespective of its poor architectural design, or its lack of land survey, it served as the strong, basic center for both social and

political units. As stated by J. Labinjoh (1976/77:65);

"Yoruba families were organized into compounds having both agnatic and cognatic lineages, and were three or four, sometimes more; generations deep. They were extended units which included a man, his wife (or wives), his brothers, sons, and sometimes grandsons with their wives. There was a feeling of belonging in the family group and individual activities were (or supposed) to be oriented towards the achievement of the group's objectives. Common interest and collective goals took precedence over individualism and self interest".

Whether agnatic or cognatic, and even where it does not form a residential unit, the Yoruba descent group, according to E.K. Askari (1969:75), remains a potent force in the lives of its members. The compound was occupied by a chain of polygamous extended families with husbands and wives having their different rooms. Children may sleep along the varandah, except if they are tender ages, or if they are females they would sleep with their mothers—all in the compound of their father's extended families. What made the compound so unique was the organizational activities of its members that stimulated a well structured hierarchical positioning with a high level of inter-dependency built within it, a common sense of obligation and solidarity. As a rule, noted M.A. Fadipe (1970:99), all members of a compound other than those women who have been admitted into it by marriage are related to one another on the father's side. The youngest members of a compound will generally be related to one another as brothers and sisters, as uncles, nephews, and nieces, and as first, second and remoter cousins.

FUNCTIONS OF EACH MEMBER

At the head of the compound is usually an eldest male member known as the Baale i.e., the father of the house, whose merits and personality earned him an election to the position. He had a very wide disciplinary power over both new and parent compounds. Among his many functions include the punishment of any act of misbehavior ranging from disrespect to elders to theft, and the settlement of disputes that involved any member of his compound. As G.A. Marshall (1964:57) indicated;

"If a wife has a dispute with her husband such that she leaves for her father's house, the father and some men of his lineage bring the bride back to her husband's house where they and the Baale (head of the compound) attempt to effect a reconciliation between the husband and wife".

He oversees the activities of junior baale in the sub-compound; such that when any of them committed offences that could bring disgrace to the co-extensive family compound, he would punish the individual. Conversely, those junior baale's made it a point of duty to report to him all cases that they found too complex to handle. As S. Johnson (1969:100) mentioned, "all important cases are judged and decided in the master's piazza, and he is responsible to the town authorities for the conduct of the inmates of his compound; hence the saying, ... "the master of the house must be privy to all secrets". His word is law, and his authority indisputable within his compound, hence also another saying, ... "the sauce which the master

of the house cannot eat or which is unpalatable to him, the mistress of the house must not cook", which when applied simply means that no one should go contrary to the wishes of the master of the house. It was also his duty as the most senior baale to levy taxes imposed on his compounds and to put together both taxes imposed on both the parent and sub-compounds. This position that he occupied may be characterized as being very pragmatic and functional in that he served as referee coordinating the smooth running of activities between the local authorities and the compounds. While it is the duty of every member of the compound upon getting up in the morning to go and pay respects to the baale, the latter usually went around his compound in order to satisfy himself that all is well with those in his charge. The role of the baales, especially the senior in the traditional compound was very multifunctional to the social, political and economic life of the compound members. Socially, they refereed behaviors of the members in such a way that peace was maintained at all community levels. Politically, he remained the strongest in the compound in determining the kinds of activities that go on; and economically; he was responsible for the collection of taxes that are put back into the maintenance of the community. The collection of taxes by the baale became functionally beneficial to him since the surplus from taxes became his personal use.

The baale, indicated W.A. Fadipe (1970:109), was

formerly responsible to the town or village authorities for raising the taxes imposed upon his compounds and for raising the levy of men required either for public works or for military purposes. He went on to say that, in the case of labour or military levies, he had to see that these services were equally distributed among members of his compound and that no individual got called upon on two successive occasions for services of any one kind. Not only was he arbitrating between his members and the outsiders, he also found it incumbent on him to give every assistance possible in the matter of attendance before the proper civil authorities.

Since the position of the baale was so prestigious and respectful, in fact, the person who occupied the position was relatively better-off than any member, as a result, there was usually a high degree of faith and trust that accompanied it. So, whenever there was misappropriation of funds for personal use, which are usually from taxes collected, the co-extended family compound members exercised no doubts in him as a good representative of his people. The mutual trust and confidence in the traditional baale was so great that even when he misused funds, they hardly had any remorse about it because his function within the compound outweighs the funds misused. This act of mutual trust in the appropriation of funds was amplified by N.A. Fadipe (1970:111), that;

"When the sum to be paid by the compound was known, the baale fixed the amount to be paid per head. Apparently, there remained some surplus after the amount demanded by the authorities had been sent and the baale felt no scruple in making use of it".

This happening however, did not mean that there was a diminution in his power to rule or that he was insensitive to the problems of the extended family members of the compound.

THE TRADITIONAL HUSBAND AND HIS FAMILY.

Apart from the fact that they provide for their respective families, the husbands of the traditional compounds also made it a point of duty to bring, at least once in a while, some produce of their farms to the baale (the father of the compounds) in appreciation of his leadership and its continuity. In order for these husbands to adequately provide for their families, they had two separate farms, one near the compound, about one or two miles away that served as a virtually non-profitable farm inasmuch as the produce was primarily for consumption. The other one, much further away and much larger, where poultry and smaller cattle were reared for the market and served both as a second home and as an investment. Days or weeks could be spent on this latter farm, depending on how much work had to be done. Fairs are held periodically, indicated S. Johnson (1969:118), in some central farm markets where these products are disposed of to market women from surrounding towns and villages.

The functions of the traditional father and that of his family here compliment each other. The desire of the man's family to work with him on those two farms, remained structurally functional in that they have made possible the payment of his dues, in form of gifts and taxes to the baale;

so enhancing his prestige within his own lineage. Likewise, the fact that the family members worked together on those two farms, partly stimulated a sort of family investment which can either be used as contribution towards the growth of another lineage compound, or the payment of brideprice for another wife. Hence, the latter increased his social prestige.

THE CO-WIVES

Given the traditionally overt polygamous attitude of our fore-fathers, the primary function of women, and of course the ultimate reason for their marriages into the traditional compound was to procreate, to take care of their husbands, the house and occasionally to help bring their husbands' farm produce to the market for the improvement of their economic lots. For this service, said N.A. Fadipe (1970:149), she usually receives a commission. All the wives of a compound have certain responsibilities on occasions such as weddings, funerals and naming ceremonies for new-born babies. Only secondarily are some of them engaged in other forms of industrial activities such as spinning of thread, dyeing, palm oil making, beer brewing, the manufacture of beads, pottery and hair styling; these crude industries were of course traditionally dominated by women. Just as boys, as I mentioned in the early chapter, helped alongside their fathers on the farms, so the girls helped their mothers in these local industries that were supposed to prepare them, then, for a traditional career. Unmarried girls assist their mothers, as indicated by N.A. Fadipe (1970:149), at whatever may be

their occupation.

The young wives of the compound were primarily concerned with having their own children, because of high premium placed on them within the compound. An infertile wife would feel unworthy of the compound, until she bore a child, preferably a male child who will keep the lineage name alive. As a matter of fact, the young wife, apart from her bashfulness and a high degree of respectfulness amidst the chain of extended family, has to make herself worthy of acceptability into the compound by being very helpful to all senior members of the compound including the wives who preceded her either in age or in marriage. The older a woman gets, the more important her position within the lineage for as a senior member of the lineage she would be consulted by men and women of the lineage about many kinds of affairs. New wives of the compound must, according to N.A. Fadipe (1970:115), be obligating and helpful, and ready voluntarily to relieve members of her husband's family as well as senior wives of the compound of a great deal of manual work which would otherwise have fallen to their turn. A great deal of drudgery and heavy work normally falls upon junior wives, whether they like it or not. She does not become divorced from this manual work until she starts having her own children, at which point her responsibility to the compound became diversified. While these dual occupational activities provided for them a sort of income and a subsequent attainment of their limited freedom, regard for male dominance

is still high. Rather than seeing their minor economic independence as instrumental for disrespect to their parilineage and an eventual liberation, as the western women would advocate, the women have maintained and observed in lineage of respectful atmosphere towards their husbands and the baale and vis-a-vis the senior members.

The dual occupational activities of the wives which started in the compound, marked a normative pattern for the economic independence of the Yoruba women. Their ability to combine these two roles suggested that they were just as viable as the urban wives, as the analysis will later indicate. The function which the traditional wives fulfilled in this regard is measured in terms of their financial contribution to ceremonies in which they might be compelled to participate. Also, because of their income, other financial obligations which would have become a burden on their husband, have been alleviated. This was emphasized by G.A. Marshall (1964:195), women not only assume almost complete responsibility for feeding themselves and their children, they also buy their own clothes and most of their children's clothes. This is particularly true in the case of girl children.

6

CHAPTER FOUR

MIGRATION PATTERN AMONG THE YORUBAS: ITS SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC IMPACT.

The aim of this section is not to elaborate on either rural-rural or rural-urban migration as experienced by the older and younger generations, rather, it is to focus more fully on the social consequences of migration as typified in Lagos or other Yoruba urban centers like Ibadan or Oshogbo. But because the penetration of the missionaries gradually stimulated economic growth which attracted potential migrants, rural-urban migration became not only a crucial factor for a change in both values and structure, but a bridge demarcating differences between the rural and the urban family.

Although migration is a very widespread phenomenon, hardly any people migrate simply because they want to migrate. It is a symptom of many underlying causes that affect an individual, a social system or community. Rural-rural migration among the Yorubas predated the penetration of the missionaries into any of the West African countries. The purpose of which was to provide for members of their family so that the man can maintain the provider's role as it is traditionally given. The Yorubas, mentioned W. Bascom, (1969:3) are the most urban of all African people, and their urban way of life is traditional, dating back well before the period of European penetration. Why they have been so characterized as urban people has not yet been very clear. It

is however believed that the frequent inter-tribal wars which sent waves of refugees to different tribal geographical locations may have influenced the formation of a quasi community; or the fact that most of the villages were, and still are, at a close proximity to one another, evidently encouraged inter-village movement. But just how the Yoruba became a city-building and city-dwelling people, mentioned J. Gugler et al., (1978:16), remains an open question.

Inter-village movement in the early centuries was unquestionably done on foot and may have taken several hours or days. Until the mid 1930s, reiterated J.C. Caldwell (1969:128), walking was an important means of migration, but in recent times it has been of little significance. Road transport, and above all Mammy lorry transport, completely dominates the picture and by 1963 competing bus routes were beginning to spread. Rural-rural migration was the foremost type of migration ever experienced by members of the Yoruba family; and was primarily aimed at selling farm produce and to trade in other consumer goods on the market day in the neighbouring towns. Women from a monogamous house who engaged in a trading pattern of this form would return home at the end of each market day to look after other domestic activities. As G.A. Marshall (1964:79) pointed out;

"Local trade was carried on daily in the market places within the towns. Periodically traders came from various directions to exchange goods from their different areas among themselves as well as to sell to and buy from local people".

But the situation in a polygamous home is quite different. The wife that went out all day did not have to come back home to take care of her husband; rather, those wives at home would be responsible for such activities. However, the profit made from this trade is usually hers. The initial stage of rural-rural migration experienced by men was the one that involved travelling to and from the farm in the neighbouring town in which he had acquired farmland due to its scarcity in the home village. The man if polygamous, as it was and is still usually the case, would take with him one or two of his wives to assist him during the harvest period. This may mean spending days, weeks or even months there depending on the volume of work. The farm therefore served both as a source of income to his family and as a second home. If education attainment has encouraged rural-urban migration of the recent decades, as the analysis will later suggest, it has done nothing or has had no influence on rural-rural migration of the past. There was the desire and the ability to work hard together to survive with the family within the limited agrarian resources; and the lack of any other skill outside rural agriculture could not have encouraged urban movement.

MALE URBAN MIGRATION

If population is used as one of the indices for urbanization, then the census of 1931 as reported by W. Bascom (1955:446), must have placed many of the Yoruba towns in comparable position with other urban centers of the Western

societies. Thus these Yoruba towns began to attract many members of their people because better economic opportunities were anticipated. The geographical location of Lagos stimulated early development there. The mining and trading centers and administrative headquarters subsequently encouraged a gradual dissociation from the traditional family compound for an anticipated better life in urban centers such as Lagos, Ibadan or Oshogbo. W. Bascom (1962:704) suggested that, more males of employable age go to Lagos than to other Yoruba cities because of the opportunity for employment. Not only that, there is the illusion that urban life means leisure life providing all the basic conveniences which are usually not available in the rural areas. Further, the study conducted by W. Bascom (1955:703), using the 1952 census, indicated that 56 percent of males who migrated to Lagos were engaged in skill oriented occupations as opposed to agriculture oriented employment. Males migrants were either married or single, and are usually aged between 15-50. But because males have traditionally delayed married, the assumption can be made that a majority of the migrants was single. Studies thus cited have born witness to the fact that because female children have historically been denied any formal education, there was a preponderance of male job domination in the urban centers. This preponderance was alluded to in the rural-migration study conducted in Kampala by C. Obbo (1980:27) who reported that out of 35,409 of total

migration of Kenya, 61.5 percent was male while 30.1 percent was female. In Tanzania, the total migration was 4,657; 67.1 percent was male and 13.9 percent was female. The ratio is 2:1 in the former while it is 4:1 in the latter. If this percentage difference can be taken as a generalized migration pattern across Africa, then, it can also be taken that rural-urban migration among the Africans, as evident among the Yorubas, has traditionally favoured males. The reason for this disproportional representation is due to the traditional belief that a woman is only valuable so long as she can have high fertility and take good care of her husband. Hence, her educational pursuit was not deemed necessary, much less the thought of migration. Men's advantage over women in educational attainment has not only given the former a far greater chance to be involved in both early and recent urban migration, but has also encouraged their occupation dominance and women's dependence on them. As J. Connell, et.al., (1976:67) stated, the propensity to migrate rises with the level of education, not only because of the type of education offered, but also because those with high attainments are most likely to aspire to jobs that demand such attainments, and to find that the differential rewards in urban areas for such jobs are especially great. Although some migrants were sponsored by their older siblings who have settled down in the urban centers, to take the advantage of better education, economic opportunities and accommodation that the urban centers offers.

There is a far reaching economic ramification on the rural family owing to its male migration. Labour and profit became withdrawn from the 'joint productive unit'; leaving a vacuum that created temporary or permanent disequilibrium in the system of production. The temporary aspect of it can evolve from the fact that the economic segment, usually the eldest child, that became dismembered from the economic unit, can always be replaced by the younger siblings left behind. The permanent aspect of it has dual advantages; a) it means that while the dismembered economic unit can substitute his toil on the farm with the remittance of money and material from the urban centers, b) it also means that his absence reduces the beneficiaries from the farm produce. This, S. Amim (1974:99) referred to as, of economic benefit to the village because there is one less mouth to feed.

FEMALE URBAN MIGRATION

Women have recently begun to gain parity with men in their desire for gainful employment in the urban centers. One of the factors that has stimulated this is education, which cuts across sex, ethnicity and religion. The tendency after the early 1960s, reiterated C. Obbo (1980:27), has been for the numbers of male and female migrants to even up. A far more settled population is emerging partially as a result of the educational facilities offered for African children in the towns, and particularly due to the stabilization of the urban labour force and rising wages. During the transition period to the town, mentioned J. C. Connell (1969:127), most children left by fathers back in the village are looked after

by immediate relatives-mothers, if present, or otherwise grand-parents, siblings or uncles; some may later stay with more distant relatives. Non-relations, friends, chiefs, elders, play an almost negligible role in caring for family members during the period of transition.

Until recently, the idea that females, especially the single ones, migrate urban wards, has never been perceived gracefully by traditional parents. This was not typical of the Yoruba alone, but the same pessimistic feeling pervaded the rest of the African countries. C. Obbo (1980:26) in her study on Kampala mentioned as well that all single female migrants were branded as 'prostitutes' or 'loose' women who were intent on satisfying the sexual needs of male migrants and consuming some of their money, but were not destined for marriage. Such a perception about females as individuals who could not take care of themselves if they migrate to the city has a far reaching meaning that is a concomitant of their perceived traditional role. In order to keep women in the village, stressed C. Obbo (1980:28), the majority of men have developed arguments justifying women's role as part of African tradition, a tradition that until recently denied the education of women. Their education was considered unimportant and not as profitable as that of men because when a woman marries she no longer bears her father's name and her husband would be responsible for all her needs. Their roles and contributions in the rural areas as farmers, wives, mothers, and homemakers

often prove a hinderance to female emancipation.

Since the propensity to urban migrate has a direct relationship to age and education attainment and also articulation, it can then be rightfully said that a greater percentage of male migrants are single and if married, it would be monogamous as of the time of migration. And, if monogamy, as defined by early authors, means 'poor', (i.e. the individual's inability to pay for more than one 'brideprice'), then those male migrants were probably poor. Hence, urban migration was seen as a way to satisfy their desire for a better socio-economic standard. As pointed out by C. Obbo (1980:70), economic factors may be the primary cause for rural-urban migration, but not all poor migrate. Poor in this context can have two meanings. On the one hand, it can be relative to education and the inability to survive in a rural economy; or on the other hand it can be relative to rural economy and the obligation to feed many mouths in the polygamous residence, in which the man's purse is drained.

There are four categories of women in the urban centers who make up the modern structure of the Yoruba family. These include, 1) those women who lost their husbands and refused to be leverated into their former homes. 2) Those who accompanied their husbands and later acquired a trade 3) those who have formal education and have engaged in entrepreneurial activities and 4) the female off-springs of all the categories. Those in the third category are those women C. Obbo (1980:75) referred to as, 'tired of village life', 'tired of digging',

they want to seek their fortune and try their luck. They and those in the fourth category are those who the analysis will later identify as debunking the subjugated image of traditional wife and adopting the urban values that stood in sharp contrast to the rural values.

FIRST RESIDENCE IN AN URBAN ENVIRONMENT

The primary problem faced by each migrant, according to J. C. Caldwell (1969:128), is job and accommodation. Some migrate without the smallest idea of what job they will want to take up or where to live. However, those who have relatives in their anticipatory home generally find their new environment easier to cope with. And those relatives become teachers or models to watch in order to better understand the mores of the new society. This relative-friends, or tribesmen connection to the anticipatory migrants is a useful mechanism promoting and accelerating urbanization. The host not only feeds and in some cases clothes the new migrants, but also helps in getting them jobs. As J. Gugler and W. Flanagan (1978:120) pointed out, the family has played a most important role in sponsoring the training of the migrant and securing accommodation and work upon his or her arrival in the city. It will continue to provide the individual with everything that is of need. They may stay for a period ranging from months to years before, and even after, securing urban employment. The result in most cases is over crowding and a heavy burden on the host. It is not uncommon for relatives of an incoming migrant into any of the urban centers to help him or her negotiate a temporary residence with other distant

relatives or friends who live within their tribally homogeneous neighbourhoods. The continuity of family obligation based on the kinship ties in the rural residence, has also become a functional aspect of the urban family as expressed in help rendered to new comers. This residential obligation is further reported by A. Adepoju (1974:129) who found that out of 416 migrants residing in Oshogbo, an urban center, more than 50 percent of them on first arrival stayed with friends or relatives; and the remaining percentage found their own accommodation. Hence, the salience of the strong bond that ties an individual to his extended family.

THE URBAN FAMILY AND CHANGE

While cohabitation was overtly practiced in the rural polygamous compound with untold possibilities of tension among the co-wives, the residence of the urban polygamous family does not encourage it; a) because of the structural make up of the latter, b) not every member of the traditional compound urban migrated and c) not all the married migrants were accompanied by their wives to the urban centers. The homes of relatives in which new migrants stayed on their arrival, were only to serve as temporary residences pending the initial socialization of the individuals to the new environment. But the communal spirit of caring and supporting again became evident in the urban residences, serving as functional aspects of family solidarity. Unlike the traditional compounds which developed as outgrowths of the old ones, the residence of the urban family is a modern house unit.

Most urban couples, monogamous or polygamous, do live separately from other relatives because they are economically independent, and they may also prefer that because the young couple often find the authority being exercised by senior members as irksome. Further, as A. Izzett (1961:306) stressed, the interest parents have shown in all the intimate detail of their married life, is seen as interference. Neolocalism has become the fashion of those urban couples who can afford to have their own home, and the family house has in most cases been rented out to generate profit that could be redirected to other family project; be it in the rural or urban center. For urban couples, who sent for their parents to live in the urban center, the family houses of either are usually not seen as alternatives considering the unfriendly atmosphere of them. Such parents are often accommodated within a close proximity, and depending on the finances of the new couples, their parents may be provided with a maid to help run errands and assist in other domestic works. As pointed out by P. Marris (1961:142);

"The family house is no longer the house in which most of the members of the lineage live. It may be rented out, and the income used for the benefit of the family; or it may provide a home for dependent relatives".

Young couples often feel obligated to accept one or two children from any of their less fortunate relatives to stay with them. These children will help run errands and will eventually be sent to school. Even young unmarried men who

share a residence together, often have their younger siblings with them to help them in their domestic work and they may be wholly or partly responsible for their schooling. The emphasis that Yoruba culture lays upon seniority noted A. Izzett (1961:308) gives these young men the right to demand implicit obedience and to exercise full parental control. The fact that these young unmarried men accommodate their younger siblings, is functional in that it helps reduce the problem of crowding within the house; and again it is a responsibility they have to assume since they are not married yet. However, the educated parents completely oppose the idea of letting some relatives train their children. They view it as promoting juvenile delinquency so long as most of those children are believed to be maltreated, underfed and often engaged in heavy domestic work that they would not have allotted their own children. So, the urban educated parents take great pride in providing their offspring with the basic training during their formative years; a training which they themselves ironically acquired through their other relatives. But as P. C. Lloyd (1967:191) mentioned, most of the assistance given by the affluent is genuinely to the poor and needy, inasmuch as the state does not have any welfare programme to offset the imbalance of affluence and poverty. While it is traditional to offer financial assistance to less fortunate relatives, it is also seen as a dispersal of one's savings which might otherwise be productively employed.

Although one cannot contend that the traditional polygamous

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pattern does not occur in the urban setting, the fact is that the overt cohabitation of wives is not the usual urban pattern. Co-wiving is practically impossible in the urban houses because more and more educated women are marrying under the marriage ordinance which recognises monogamy, and giving the wife an exclusive legal right to be the only mistress of the house. Marriage ordinance, stated A. Izzett (1961:306) implies monogamy to other woman. Co-wiving has become increasingly unpopular because of the tension to which it leads among the wives. Even the semi-educated women, who are not too strongly opposed to the idea, would still prefer to live separately from the rest of the wives. The men visit these women in their separate residences as frequently as they possibly can, and they are very often responsible for both rent and boarding. An economically better-off outside wife or concubine may not demand any financial assistance from the man. All that she expects from him is a recognition of the legitimacy of the child involved; and she would be willing to send the child through school as well as to fend for herself. A relationship of this nature is a normative pattern as its functional aspect is expressed in the ability of the woman to fulfil an obligation expected of her by her parents and relatives, which otherwise might be impossible. In point of fact, a relationship of this kind can provide a sort of social prestige for the woman who has a child for an influential man. The man's name becomes functional in that it earns the

concubine a form of social prestige because people associate her and the children with the name. Some women simply go through such a relationship because they want to be identified with a particular name and not necessarily because of true affection.

There are some women who have fleeting unions with men, and very often, through clandestine planning, make substantial financial gains from them. This kind of behavior is very functional for both the women and their kin, in that whatever gains they made can be used to help the needy in their lineages. Doing this is a fulfilment of a certain obligation that is self satisfying. The Yorubas are quick to regard this behavior as a 'refined prostitution', but because children are usually involved in those relationships, they are more an attenuated form of concubinage. The term concubinage only applies when a married man engaged in a long time 'extra marital affair' with another married woman or a widow. A high level of poverty in the society encourages concubinage and fleeting unions with men. But what is of prime importance here, is the financial gain and security derived from the relationship, rather than basing it on trust, understanding and affection. Children born to these women are always recognised as their father's children by all concerned- the father, his kinsfolk and society generally; and as K. Little (1959:75) stated, man often spends almost as much money on these women and their children as he does on his legal wife and her children. Whatever the English Ordinance law may claim, the men and society generally still tend to regard a man's relationship

with other women as acceptable polygamy. Monogamy is very much encouraged by educated women because they are aware of all the legalities involved. They know, as mentioned by A. Izzett (1961:307), that the dignity of the legal wife is maintained in that she does not admit other women into her matrimonial home.

COMPOSITION OF THE URBAN FAMILY

In discussing the composition of the urban family, father, mother and children and other relatives, it is worth mentioning that parents in the urban areas somehow have some dissimilarities in terms of marital values. There are those who still adhere strongly to the traditional patterns of discipline and management of home; and those whose values have changed so much that they are in sharp contrast to the former. These disparities in values are evident in the dispersal of members to different residences and goal oriented occupations that provide the individuals with a sense of autonomy. In a publication under the auspices of UNESCO, E. Hellmann (1956:733) wrote;

"The functions of the family have changed very greatly. With the change from a subsistence to a money economy and from self sufficiency to dependence on wage labour only, the urban family has become completely dependent on the cash earnings of its members".

One perceptive notion is that those who still adhere to the traditional values are those who migrated when they were much older and find it difficult to change their beliefs about certain things occurring in a changing environment.

The younger parents on the other hand, subconsciously disregard most of those traditional values and identify more with urban ideas. Furthermore, since age seniority in the Yoruba culture means a total obedience and respect to the older individual, the younger parents are constantly operating within constraint while in the association of the old. Yet, both are able to co-function in the same system to meet the needs of their disadvantaged members; this function reciprocates one's satisfaction in a prescribed obligation. The individual family member, as suggested by E. Hellmann (1956:733), be it husband, father, brother, daughter, has, on the one hand, the opportunity of earning enough to support himself and being completely independent of the family and is confronted, on the other, by the claims of the family for support.

THE URBAN FATHER

Unlike the traditional father, who was the head of his polygamous household, and whose family members formed an 'economic unit of production', based on the limited resources on his farm, the urban father has been socialized into an environment in which his family's economic survival is determined by his level of education or entrepreneurialship. This does not preclude occasional financial assistance from his wives (if polygamous) who either cohabituate or have outside residences. The urban father today, mentioned A. Izzett (1961:311), has to face a new pattern. He is being forced into the unfamiliar role of bread-winner for

his wife and children, and is alone held responsible for their financial support. As it has already been suggested above, cohabitation in the urban centers has been affected by the structural formation of the house unit, the type of marriage (customary or marriage ordinance) and also the literacy level of both spouses.

Having improved his economic position in the urban economy, the urban father is constantly faced with the problem of setting a priority in balancing the moral obligations he deems necessary to meet the financial needs of parents and the education of sons or daughters of a relative with whom he probably stayed while growing up. The tradition of mutual support, noted P. Marris (1961:138), is the most concrete expression of family solidarity, but it becomes increasingly unworkable as the members of the family diverge in income and styles of life. The need to assist the infirm members of one's family (the family of orientation) remains the matrix satisfying their moral and emotional need. The first charge on a man's beneficence stated P. C. Lloyd (1967:186), is the education of his own junior brothers and sisters. The feeling of obligation reciprocates the expectation of the family that their one successful member will bring not only prestige but material rewards to the whole group. So there is always the need on the part of the urban father to compensate for any help he might have received from other relatives, who actually feel that they contributed something to his present success. A man often feels unfulfilled in he has not been able to meet the needs of his kinsmen. Obligation is more often

observed than evaded. Despite this, he is just as concerned about the well-being of his children as he is of his parents or other relatives. But the moral and emotional pressures on the individual to subordinate his personal interests to those of his family group are still powerful. As J. Gugler and W. Flanagan (1978:119) pointed out;

"The competing claims on successful kinsmen is a single impediment to the economic mobility of the individual and his offspring".

If, in fact, kinsmen have had any great impact on their economic mobility or are seen as impediments to progress, such claims so far are practically unsubstantiated.

Whether the level of education of the men has a direct relationship with their choice of monogamy or polygamy, is just as uncertain as to relate the number of offspring to the level of education. The point of the matter is that it is not unusual to find as many children in a polygamous relationship as in a monogamous relationship. The economic drain involved in having many children has not yet been perceived by many modern couples. The rationale for many children, is that God will take care of them. While this may be facile, it has become an unfading axiom that only the economic and educational improvement of the family members will eventually determine. When there is no male child in a monogamous relationship, the woman becomes worried; because it is a good opportunity for the man to have a concubine who supposedly will give birth to a male child. The inside wife may encourage frequent pregnancy to increase the chances for a male child; whereas

it often leads to an increase in the number of children.

From this point, stated P.C. Lloyd (1967:180), the woman's status becomes threatened, as she sees her husband's income dissipated on other women, and on children not her own.

Husbands' mothers are also very impatient, worried and unnecessarily quick to advise their sons to try and look outside for women who could bear a male child for them.

Inasmuch as men feel that their mothers and siblings have prior claims on their behaviors, then, the parental advice becomes very influential upon the family structure. It fosters the propagation of several children and again re-emphasizes the crucial role that son-mother ties play on the stability or instability of a marital relationship. The role played by the husband's mother in this circumstance is structurally functional especially in the continuity of a behavioral control which the older generation place on the younger. The mother's success in persuading her son therefore, becomes a rationale to justify her influential power and also any unfriendly atmosphere between the husband's mother and his wife.

Financial obligation may not be 'the factor' that stimulates the son-mother ties, rather, it may have more to do with the usual absence of husbands from their wives while the children are growing up; either as a result of job transfer or because there is a demand on them to make rotational visits to their outside wives and concubines. Many educated husbands, states P. C. Lloyd (1967:178), still say that their mothers are more important in their lives than their wives; one can

always get another wife, never another mother. Men will first discuss matters such as building a new house or changing jobs with parents or brothers. The children identify more with their mothers than they do with their fathers; and this attitude continues into adulthood.

It is a society where men generally derive joy from staying outside beyond a reasonable time, while their wives ease their frustrations through association with neighbours and friends or in helping their children with their school assignments. Notwithstanding, the men's behavior in this situation is functional for providing their wives with an impetus to make them improve their economic statuses which in turn give him security and an edge over other competing admirers of the men. This subsequently becomes a threat to the men. The men, become anxious, as P.C. Lloyd (1967:176) pointed out, that their wives should augment the household income, though where there is a tendency towards marital instability they may be jealous of the opportunities that their wives enjoy to meet other men; where shared interest are few, they suspect the competition of wealthier and more successful men. The fear that other wealthier men are competing for their women is also functional to the structural continuity of the family pattern. Firstly, the woman's ability to improve her economic position, puts a limit to the endless control that the man has over his wife; and secondly, that improved economic position becomes a binding force for a marital life.

THE URBAN MOTHER

The observable contradiction in marital value existing

between the rural and the urban mothers can only be regarded as a product of their socio-economic environment. As a result of her education, the urban mother is more articulate and prone to independent decisions. She is an earner and, if in entrepreneurial activity, she is generally capable of organizing her activities to primarily meet the needs of her children, and secondarily, her husband's. She is less bound by home and children and therefore in a better position to pursue career opportunities. The woman's desire to pursue her own career, stressed P.C. Lloyd (1967:180), is an effort to insure against her husband's infidelity. The Yoruba women have a considerable degree of economic independence. Although a woman must remain overtly differential to their husbands, their positions are determined more by their own business skills and their club membership than by their husbands' position.

Depending on the level of education, the urban mother is quick to oppose any marriage other than the one under the ordinances. For the Christians, the wedding is either conducted in the church or in the Marriage Registry; and if the marriage is in the Mosque, a form of certificate is provided. One of the important elements in the statutory marriage is its insistence on the free consent of the contracting parties. This is contrary to customary marriages where the consent of parents played more important roles than that of the marrying couple. The selection of spouses outside parental influence has a significant function in setting the

stage for a long or short duration of courtship, which may discourage or encourage the establishment of a worthy relationship. One may argue further that, in spite of women's lack of right to marital choice, marital relationships worked out well in the traditional days, but the fact of the matter is that even when the women were not satisfied with the relationships or the choices presented to them, their lack of sufficient economic independence was an handicap militating against individual freedom.

Contrary to the traditional concept of marriage, the urban marriage, church or the Mosque, becomes very instrumental for the woman who becomes the rightful owner of the man, even though a majority of the latter is polygamous by conviction. A church marriage, mentioned A. Izzett (1961:310), carries considerable social prestige that both families highly value. The evidence is obvious by the appearance of the couple in one of Nigeria's newspapers, 'Lagos Weekend' and also in the lavish parties that follow. However, the extent of lavishness can be controlled by those couples who will rather spend their money on other meaningful activities.

Unlike the traditional women, the urban women (wives) find patrilocal form of residence as a deterrant to an understanding in a relationship. In a situation where the new couple cannot afford a neolocal form of residence, patrilocal becomes their only alternative until they are able to afford one. Nevertheless, neolocal residence is becoming the prevalent form because it limits the direct control that

the husband's relatives have on him; which will in turn have a significant impact on the marital relationship. Neolocal residence provides a total privacy for the couple. It limits the woman's exposure to any forms of criticism from her in-laws, who traditionally have a preconceived image of a good wife; whereas a highly educated woman least represents those preconceptions. As further stated by E. Hellmann (1956:738), the emphasis on the paternal principle has been lessened by the fact that most urban brides do not commence their married life in the homestead of their husband's father, are less subject to the tutelage of his family and have discarded many of the customary forms of showing respect. S. K. Usman, (1980:90) likewise indicates that more than 70 percent of his respondents have begun to see a trend towards neolocal residence and consequently towards autonomy, privacy and perhaps companionship. The respondents also indicated that persons recently married are better off living on their own.

The residence of most educated urban couples often include maids and/or one or two relatives living permanently with them. While both run errands and assist in other domestic works, the former are paid for their services but latter are compensated by paying their way through schools. This pattern has become a commonplace among the Yorubas. The roles of the maids become very vital in that while both couples are at their respective work, the woman does not have to worry about getting the meal ready or cleaning the house, the maids are able to relieve her of the dual role. Young wives, indicated

As T. Baker and M. Bird, (1959:104) rightly indicated;

"a modern elaboration of the old traditional right to process and sell the meagre surplus together with the right to own property individually have given many women the chance to re-phrase their positions; if.... For the subsistence of herself and her children she need no longer be utterly dependent upon her co-wives and mother in-law, need no longer rely on her husband's kin after his death for her personal support".

It can therefore be mentioned at this juncture that the urban dwelling of women and their educational attainment have served vital functions for the overall economic survival of the Yoruba family. In the first place, unlike the traditional mothers, the urban mothers are no more relegated to the subordinate and even subservient position as her financial assistance to both her family of orientation (the primary family) and that of procreation (the secondary family) becomes so significant that her economic position among her kin is equally as recognizable as the men's. Many of the the urban women belong to different organizations whose purpose is to help improve their perceived traditional images. The formation of these organizations on one hand, provides an awareness for self-evaluation and on the other hand, provides a form of psychological satisfaction in an uncertain marital relationship.

In homes where the woman is the head of the family, her ability to fulfil the obligation to her family has supported the argument that the economic importance of traditional women was just as commendable as those of the urban centers. Whereas individual evaluation in the rural economy was impossible

as it was based on group effort, and according to W. J. Goode. (1964:531), such a grouping can take care of the infirm or incompetent, it has no way of ridding itself of this burden, and sometimes the cost weighs heavily on total income. Hence, the women who have always combined their traditional role with their other rural industries, must have performed as well in the traditional compound, if not better than men. But because farming in the traditional compound was a more viable source of income, and was dominated by men, it did overshadow the economic importance of the traditional women to their families. Therefore, with the strengthening economic status of the urban women, and if that economic strength provides a form of control, then it is not an understatement that a majority of women have started to displace the traditional image of men's authoritative position. As T. Baker and M. Bird, (1959:117-118) indicate, women are often expected to show generosity to their kin through financial contributions to help meet their needs. It is therefore also clear from all indication that there is a profound need for individual financial security for women and their ability to acquire a personal income is of inestimable value.

In some literate homes, the couple splits the expenses. Men, have been aware of the economic importance of their wives, which is an indication that the former's appreciation of the latter has become even greater. Such an economic asset may be the factor that militates against high incidence of divorce, as long as there are not too many women who could

be just as economically viable as the one at home. The financial contribution that the majority of urban women now make to their family income, some the greater portion, has given them, as pointed out by E. Hellmann (1956:736), an economic standing which has been a major factor in raising their status. The women are no longer automatically relegated to the subordinate position. Their social statuses are dependent on their achievement within their community and such statuses outweigh that of many men. Further, as T. Baker and M. Bird (1959:113) remarked, the economic importance of the wives in the urban centers to their husbands is a vital reason why divorce has become sometimes counter productive.

The economic viability of the women becomes structurally functional in two distinct ways that compliment each other. They have lessened the economic burden of their husbands by sharing the financial responsibilities in their homes. This in turn allows the couples to meet other obligations of sending their sibilings through school if they are the only successful ones in their respective families; and also to be able to afford some forms of remittance to parents in the rural areas. The joint financial effort of urban couples in this form bears similarities to the 'joint economic unit of production' formed in the rural economy, but the contrast in the sources of profit, and the inability of traditional system to account for laziness of its members, explains why the urban mothers, in particular, are gradually gaining an economic par with the modern fathers.

Couples share financial responsibilities of their homes, but because of male infidelity, uncertainty of marital relationships and the tendency for men to have extra children outside their matrimonial homes, most women completely oppose the idea of common-purse. But in an attempt to provide a form of security for herself and her own children, urban wives prefer to build their own home, independent of their husband's financial assistance. This attitude is very functional in the sense that it may reduce jealousy which ensues after the death of their husband. In fact, they have been able to demonstrate to their husbands' kin that they do not, in fact, depend on or lavish their son's income since such ill-founded accusations were the basis for their occasional and sometimes frequent friction.

The dispersal of family members into different residences in the urban centers and their subsequent departure from the traditional ways of life, do not suggest a complete neglect of their membership solidarity; on the contrary, a close network of kinship ties have so far been maintained. But what will happen beyond this, is subject to both the social and economic situation then. Both spouses have so far remained strong in their commitments to meet the needs of their parents in the rural areas, their siblings and other relatives. P. C. Lloyd (1967:184) has rightly pointed out that, in spite of the differences in roles and the distances, kinsmen continue to look for each other; parents and children, and men and women visit their homes as often as they can. If the degree of kinship ties is measured by economic assistance extended to kin, then the argument can further be made that a factor,

if not the factor, on which the stability or the instability of the Yoruba family depends, is the presumed obligation into which its members socialize. Just as the traditional family formed a well-functioned 'joint economic unit of production' in which everyone survived, so is it incumbent on the urban family to continue to survive by its ability to assist the infirms. The individualism of African family, as noted by E. Hellmann (1956:733), has not reached the degree of aloofness found among the European middle class where, frequently, even the neighbour's name is not known, but it is the direction in which change is proceeding.

In spite of occasional pressure from some diehard grandparents, the educated urban families are not as enthusiastic on the subject of bride-price, as their traditional counterparts. Since the value of education has been inculcated into their children while growing up, and once they have attained their desired standard, a certain amount of individual freedom becomes inevitable from parents. Dating partners of their children may be tolerated without much interference. Nevertheless, it will be unduly misleading at this point to generalize this parental permissive attitude because, there are some parents who, in spite of educational level, refuse to part with the stringent traditional control.

As a result, in most homes this leads to occasional clash between parents, as one becomes more permissive than the other. The child therefore continues to use the more tolerant parent,

usually the mother, as his or her defence lawyer whenever he or she sneaks out on a date. However, the educated parents place a higher value on blessings during their children's marriage than they do on bride-price.

The financial obligation as traditionally assumed by members of the Yoruba family, is structurally functional in that it helps redistribute wealth to meet the needs of individuals which otherwise would have been taken up by the 'non-existent' welfare services. Until such services become available, the family will have to depend on its members for its continued survival, despite the fact that the net effect of such exercise is an impoverishment of the few capable members. The emotional and psychological satisfaction that the needy members derived from this obligation has remained one multifunctional element militating against the outbreak of social evils, such as child neglect, child delinquency or homelessness. As J. Aldous, (1962:9) said;

"Relatives and the extended family, therefore substituted for the non-existent public welfare programme. Kinsmen provide for the elderly and support the sick, the jobless and the destitute".

PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP

Inasmuch as most children are dependent on their parents for too long a time, sometimes until adulthood, their mental or psychological ability to deal with everyday problem is undermined by their parents. As such, this section will use child/ren interchangeably, for infants, preschoolers and even

adolescents to analyse the relationship between the parents and their children.

Few contrasts are easily observed between the parent-child relationship in the traditional days and in the modern days, which evolved from urbanism. Children in the traditional homes were usually left in the care of adult members of the compound who assisted in disciplining them while parents were on the field toiling. But the offspring of the urban migrants or those whose kin sponsored them to the urban centers in order to receive better education, have in most cases been left in the care of untrained maids or stewards.

There are many factors ameliorating these discrepancies. The physical characteristics of the traditional compound did not allow individual privacy, as such, children exhibiting any antisocial behavior or becoming unruly can be criticized openly or have some punishments inflicted on them by any elders of the compound. The usual form of punishment was flogging. Such punishment is what a social psychologist will refer to as using a negative punishment to correct a negative behavior; the result of which is not a positive response, but a negative one. What this saying purports is that, children's behavior can be corrected in a nonviolent manner, such that a positive attitude is produced. Both parents urban and rural have not deviated so much from the beliefs that the only way to correct a behavior in a child is by inflicting heavy punishment (flogging). Some diehard traditional parents who live in a crowded urban house unit may ask any of the tenants

to help them flog their children for some behaviors which would have been corrected either by talking it out with the child or denying him or her pocket money. The latter form of punishment has virtually been adopted by most educated parents. Nevertheless, the child-parent relationship in both periods have not been so divergent in their contents as to suggest a trend toward the collapse of either.

The primary concern of parents for the success of their children has not been jeopardized yet; either by the improved socio-economic class of the urban parents or the form of marriage. But there are differences in the manner by which the respective parents pursue their aims. The modern educated parents are quick to specify what profession they wish their children to pursue, but the traditional ones have difficulty verbalizing what educational and occupational aspirations they have for their children. Thus, J. Gugler and W. Flanagan (1978:172) rightly pointed out, most traditional parents are unaware of the expanding educational opportunities available in Nigeria. They only wish that their children to be good people and get an unspecified higher qualification. When the child of the elite parents continuously perform poorly in most schools that he or she attends, such a child is sent abroad in order to, as assumed by parents, save their elitism.

If anything has widened the differences which have occurred in child-parent relationship of both traditional and urban family, it is the environment and the education of the latter; such that the social gap between urban child and parents has

somehow shortened. The modern parents have been able to relate to their children without the latter freezing up at the call of their parents. As indicated by J. Gugler and W. Flanagan (1978:170);

"The modern educated parents actively seek a warm, friendly relationship with their children; they play with them, read to them and look after them. Not giving into their children's whims, however, educated parent still expect their children to be obedient, e.g. to fetch something when sent, but consideration is given to what the children are doing at the time they are summoned, and if parents' request can be delayed children may be allowed to complete their activity".

Whereas; in the traditional family where every member formed a 'joint economic unit of production' with the head, the authoritative position of the man becomes even more profound, because diversification into other labour economy was non-existent, hence his power became inestimable. Income of traditional parents was relative to the quantity of farm produce and the profit generated from it; in contrast, the urban parents have two sources of income in most cases to offset the financial burden on one, and their offspring do not contribute to the survival of the family, rather they are primarily consumers.

While parents in both settings educate their children at home, in the traditional compound it was done by every capable member of the compound, whereas the urban parents may do it alone. But if parents cannot afford to pay someone to give their children home tutoring, a young relative who

has just completed his or her secondary school will be glad to offer that assistance, so as to compensate for his free accommodation. The eldest child in the family may become useful in this manner. Educated parents, unlike the illiterate ones, surround their children with all possible learning materials and toys, so that they can at a very early stage of development socialize into an academic milieu. But this advantage over children from humble homes does not in anyway mean that it has any long term effect on what both children become in future. Children from elite homes are spurred on early or later in life to realize that without much education they can always fall back on parents' name or wealth, in order to become successful. What one becomes in the Nigerian society, depends on who one knows. It may be paradoxical, yet it is true. Children of the educated elite, mentioned J. Gugler and W. Flanagan (1978:167), are taller, heavier, healthier and begin schooling earlier and with more skills than the products of illiterate or traditional Yoruba homes. These advantages are the result of superior housing, diet and medical care. P. C. Lloyd (1967:183) has mentioned that;

"Elite children can scarcely fail to notice their privileged position in society. Though they may attend primary schools where the majority of pupils are from humble homes, they arrive in their fathers' cars, while others trek for two or three miles. Often their parents were themselves born in humble homes and deny 'class' differences in their society; yet they tend to be highly selective in choosing playmates for their children, often rejecting those from poorer homes as being rude or dirty".

Residential alienation based on social status has not been very much evident among Yoruba families. Rich and poor alike share neighbourhood, nevertheless, the sophistication in taste is indicative of the consumption pattern of a particular class. But the education which the traditional parents provided their children is one invaluable item that is irrepossessible and it is that as well, which narrows the opportunities between the advantaged and disadvantaged children.

Having departed so much from the traditional way of parenting, the urban parents have used their improved economic resources to rationalize this departure. The basic conveniences that their income provide is indicative of their ability to pay the wages of housemaids or stewards and even to provide special tutoring for their children entering higher institution of learning. The day care centers have become new institutions where working parents keep their pre-schoolers or toddlers while pursuing other careers; and they are ready to pay any price to achieve this convenience. In fact, those who are not economically well-off, do try by all means to get their children into them; because having ones children in those places is a way of identifying with a particular class. Urban parents have therefore done all this to divorce themselves from all the traditional normative patterns.

These centers, of course, become structurally functional for families where both parents work, so far as they enable women to fulfil the dual role which might be conflicting if these centers are not available. On the other hand, they

make possible the continuity of an independent economic status that is so meaningful to the women.

The relationship of children to their parents in the traditional compound was more of a symbiotic form, because children formed a part of the 'joint economic unit' from which everyone benefits. Whereas, the children of the modern parents do not contribute anything in terms of labour to improve the economic situation of the family. Rather, they are economically related to their parents only in the parasitic form, whereby they withdraw profit from an economy into which they did not contribute. Children in both settings however, have a form of psychological contentedness for both marital relationships. They are like binding forces even when a marital life is at the verge of collapse. Nevertheless the only clear cut advantage that the new generation of urban offspring has over the children of traditional home is that, it is the new generation that is producing and increasing the proportion of the newly educated females. This has in turn brightened appreciably the opportunity to acquire higher social status and a subsequent depletion in the traditional male authoritative position and its dominance.

CHAPTER FIVE

PROBLEM-GENERATING TENSION IN THE YORUBA FAMILY

Inasmuch as the Yoruba structure is maintained through a continued exercise of financial interdependence of its members, tension in the unit can thus be submerged and persist for a long duration. Economic viability is enough to ameliorate any out burst of sporadic tension. But as P.C. Lloyd (1968:67) suggested, marital tension increases in periods of rapid social change, when the expectations of the spouses may cease to be complementary. While such lack of complementarity has so far been evident in educational and occupational gradation of the spouses, it is however not enough to suggest that rapid social change will lead to an immediate halt in both moral and emotional obligations that are so well ingrained among the family members.

We believe that marriage in the traditional days was more sacred than now such that any act of tension was unthinkable or unforeseeable. We also believe that the Yoruba wives have always been economically independent of their husband; and the degree of marital tension in traditional family could not be determined because the communal nature of the early compound made individual property ownership impossible. Nevertheless, it is hereby suggested that the same attitude of traditional parents to be at least economically independent of each other, has been inculcated in the minds of their offsprings. In point of fact, the mother of a young wife is quick to point out to her daughter not to jointly invest on anything with her husband, as the latter's

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fidelity in her marriage is very uncertain. Unlike the couples of the western society that jointly buy a home, a car or own a business as a result of mutual trust, the modern Yoruba couples do not trust each other as to go that far with themselves; because if the man does not waste his income on women, he will spend it on another child outside his matrimonial home. It is this fear of marital uncertainty that made mothers advise their daughters against getting into any heavy financial dealing with their husbands. The increasing literacy rate among women has even exacerbated the situation in such a way that every one does his or her own thing. An advice of this nature can be very counterproductive to a relationship; and when couples operate in this way, tension is inevitable; but the intensity of it is not as great as to collapse the structure neither can it divorce the couples from their financial assistance to their kinsmen.

With the emphasis on fertility, if a woman married under the ordinance remained infertile for a period of time, she may come under the pressure from her in-laws. She may be labelled as a witch or as someone whose waywardness while young was responsible for her childlessness. As A. Izzett (1961:314) suggested, a husband who found that his wife was barren would look for another. But the economic utility of the wife today, sometimes handicaps the man from summarily leaving his wife, whereas if the wife was married to a polygamous home, the pressure from in-laws would not have been as great as when she is the only legal wife; as there

are other wives who could have children. It is however necessary to mention at this juncture that seeking help through the native doctor during infertility is common regardless of ones level of education. In point of fact, an educated man may exercise patience, despite all the pressure from kinsmen during the infertility period of his wife, before he too begins to show much concern. The wife may agree with him to have another child outside as long as the mother is not admitted into her matrimonial home and he will be the child's legitimate father. The outside woman becomes a rival, believing that she has a greater chance of marital status than the inside wife. The situation becomes more tense if the outside woman decides to seek supernatural means to displace the inside wife. But according to a Yoruba saying, 'once a woman bears a child for a man, that woman is no longer perceived as a concubine'. Literally, she is socially sanctioned as a wife. The man remains morally and financially committed to the outside woman and her child. But it is believed that the outside woman needed the man's financial assistance more than the legal one; as a well educated woman will not subscribe to the idea of outside woman, she will wish to be the mistress of the house.

Such a situation will produce tension over a period of time, especially if the childless wife refuses to leave her husband to try someone else because of social stigma attached to it. Nonetheless, some educated women view this

situation as reason enough to leave the man because infidelity is sometimes not perceived as a problem of the two spouses. The woman is the only one perceived as having some physiological problems. A. Izzett (1961:314) states that an economically free woman may leave her husband with the hope that she will have better luck with another man. There are some women who after they have decided to stay with the man and endure all the pressure from in-laws, become pregnant; and this exacerbates the act of jealousy between the inside wife and the outside woman, who sees her hope of becoming the mistress of the house, scattered.

The outside woman is capable of doing many things to win the affection of the man at the expense of the one at home. 1) She could delay the man each time he pays her a visit to the extent that he spends most of his evenings with her, rather than being in his matrimonial home. And 2) if she is too desperate, she may seek the help of a native doctor whereby the home will be an arena of persistent quarrel and hatred between the spouses until the inside wife voluntarily leaves the man.

Marital infidelity is another factor that may encourage tension among spouses. As I have earlier alluded to the fact that most men derived joy in spending most of their time in the homes of their girl friends or concubines; this behavior is more common and more easily tolerated by those women in polygamous union than for a woman married under the ordinance; because the wife in former union has been acculturated into

the rotational visit of her husband, so it was not a strange act. But for the women who have monogamous marriages, it represents the highest degree of human deviance ever expressed in the matrimonial home. He is never home to share paternal feelings with his children because when he comes home late at night, everyone is in bed except perhaps the house maid, who would put his meal on the table, at the end of which he goes to bed. The same thing continues every other day. This is why I contend that there are much stronger ties between mother and children than between the father in view of his persistent absence from home. When a man consistently indulges in what we might call 'a partial commitment to paternal role', because of 'extra-marital sexual fun' that may be geared towards a long standing relationship, save the polygamous union; then, the children may not relate to him on the best of terms. Likewise, when a man consistently spends more time in his outside relationship than he would with his legal wife, the latter's faith and hope in the relationship become jeopardized. This is the behavior which P.C. Eloyd, (1968:71) referred to as contributing to what one can aptly speak of as a high degree of marital instability.

Another form of tension among the spouses is evident when the husband is gone on a job transfer and the economic independence of his educated wife becomes threatened should she accompany him. Long separation from his wife further encourages man's infidelity and further weakens a marital relationship that is very often embedded with some elements of uncertainties. To this, A. Izzett (1961:314) added

the women, having previously suffered neglect, become afraid of accompanying their husbands when they are transferred elsewhere to work. Their husbands then usually take another wife and neglect the first one.

Income disparity between spouses, parental influence and income interdependence between parents and children will continue to be interdependently active factors that encourage tension among the Yoruba family. Firstly, with regards to income disparity, in general, men make better income than their wives, which is enough for parents to continuously remind their sons of his financial commitment to help his younger siblings as he would to his own children. Unlike the European style; whatever the Yoruba men spent on their families (procreational and orientational), their wives are probably the individual to whom they are least accountable. A wife, whose husband has not been fulfilling in his role begins to suspect that he has spent all his money on his siblings, parents and even relatives. This suspicion may develop into animosity between the wife and her in-laws. As L. Mair (1969:150) suggested, such financial claims initiate tension between spouses and provide a ground for resentment for a wife against a husband, but the husband may also object to his wife sending money to her relatives.

The lack of common-purse between spouses and the man's unaccountability about his expenditure encourages the latter to entice as many women as he wishes on the street, at the workplace or even at social gatherings. Men tend to justify their marital infidelity by their greater contribution to the family. But the moment the man cannot impress the 'extra-marital partner' mentally or materially or influence-wise, the women, as A. Izzett (1961:314) stated, feels justified

to leave the relationship as the man no longer fulfill his prime duty of maintaining her. Money has therefore served a function in promoting a trend away from marital fidelity as indicated by the desire of either married or unmarried women to enter a relationship based on material gain rather than affection. As A. Izzett (1961:315) suggested, the Yoruba women are too credulous and great believers in luck. They sometimes get into a relationship with a married man, only to find out that he has falsified his financial position.

Secondly, the economic dependence of parents may not be the total reason for parental interference, rather, it often has more to do with a child's disregard for parental objections to marital partners; which by its very nature provides a forum for animosity between parents and in-laws. A. Izzett (1961:315) points out that when the couple marry without the consent of their respective families, parents of one or the other sometimes try to break up the marriage and make their child marry someone they prefer; either because of the family name or because they want an intra-class wedding. Either parent can keep up the pressure in a form of continued criticism of either spouse and cumulating to a point of pestering. The more temperamental the wife, the more exacerbated the pressure becomes, and the greater the chance of her being ignored by her in-laws.

As a corollary of what has been enunciated, age becomes a factor as well, functioning in favour of parents as a means

to an end.. Most parents having been aware of their children's gullibility, tailored ideas that could sometimes be counterproductive to their marital relationship. In a society where age becomes a virtue as such it is presumed that sons would unquestionably listen to parents' advice especially if it concerns their wives. A woman cannot have a peaceful marital relationship unless she carries the favour of her in-laws; because their alienation may influence the husband's feeling. The strength of the affinal tie, stated E. R. Leach (1966:119), rests on the strength of the sibling relationship between the bride. As such, where a quarrel ensues between spouses it is linked with husband's siblings rather than with husband-wife relationship. Man's over-sensitiveness to matters concerning their wives and their siblings is just as detrimental to a marital relationship as favouring the latter over their wives.

Another avenue for problem-generating tension among the Yoruba spouses is concealed in the inability of the society to recognise the incompatibility of the spouses. Older people and close friend always tend to meddle between quarrelling spouses when there is glaring evidence that they cannot tolerate each other. People become too concerned about the social stigma that marital collapse entails, rather than seeing relationship as something based on mutual trust and understanding between two people. The idea of reconciliation in human relationship mentioned A. Izzett(1961:315), is deeply ingrained in the Yoruba culture- such that whenever

there is disharmony or disagreement there will be persons coming forward to re-establish good relations. The persons ameliorating the difficult moment are functional in this situation in that they provide a binding force for the rejuvenation of the spouses' relationship that might have otherwise broken down.

Although there are some women who can tolerate marital tension for a long time and when they cannot get the 'good face' of their husbands, they seek help through the native doctor. Why some women resort to this means is still uncertain and many will not publicly admit to it. But it is however believed that there are more extenuating factors relating to this. a) Having had all their children in the midst of a prolonged, tense relationship, women feel that they would be losing so much if they have to leave their man. The well being of their children is not guaranteed with the incoming woman or women, especially when the former are still young. b) The financial position of their men may have attracted the women so much that, without the assurance of having someone else whose financial position equals their husbands' and if their own economic survival is dependent on their stability of both partners therefore becomes crucial in predetermining the permanence of a marital relationship.

THE DELAYED JEALOUSY

Delayed jealousy is an unacted feeling of contempt persisting over a period of time in human relations especially where marital injustice is presumed, and the subsequent behavior

becomes a rationale for such hatred. The polygamous Yoruba family was not immune to this unacted feeling of hatred because the architectural make up of the traditional compound was enough to facilitate such tension-building behavior. As P. C. Lloyd (1968:75) has suggested, polygamous marriage inhibits its peculiar forms of tension. Tension evolving from 'delayed jealousy' was not manifested to a very high degree because, a) very little was meaningfully at stake in terms of individual gains from the property or estate of the deceased man. b) during the traditional days men married late, with the result that, when they died their siblings inherited their properties. The children of the deceased would be so young and their mothers too were so subservient to their marital relationships that advocating for property rights of their children was seen as an aberration of their roles.

Women have relatively improved themselves so much that today, they advocate a fair and equitable right in marital relationship. As such, when their husband dies, the delayed jealousy become apparent over the sharing of the deceased's property. This act of jealousy cuts across any socially sanctioned forms of marital relationship in which the deceased is the legal father of all the children involved. The death of their husband, and the desire of the widows to gain so much from the property or estate left behind causes long term animosity between the widows and consequently strains the relationship between the children.

Children of the deceased, according to the law of devolution

of family property, are entitled to the property or estate of their father. As S.E.A. Coker (1966:298) indicated, the children of the death of their father and as a matter of law, the other children will only take if, during his lifetime, the father acknowledged them to be his children. One would have expected a total understanding and contentedness regarding the devolution of family property, on the contrary, the unacted jealousy among the widows whose anticipated property gain was probably not realized, becomes functionally instrumental in their determination to witch other beneficiaries.

The question one therefore raise is; "why has the 'witch Doctor' becomes the only means to rationalize what is usually claimed as an 'unfair distribution of the deceased property', if there has always been a cordial relationship among all his recognised families?" The anger and bitterness which some of the widows exercised over the devolution of family property, may not have been so escalated if the widows have not entered a relationship on the basis of how much money or material gain they can accumulate from the men. Poor and rich widows alike use supernatural power to witch one another. It is sometimes fearful. It is an arena of competition where each widow tries to destroy the other and the individual or individuals may not live to enjoy the property obtained, and if alive, they may be attacked by some incurable disease that even modern medicine may not diagnose.

The study conducted by L. Bloom (1976/77:99) indicated

that most young Nigerians are beginning to realize the endemic nature of tension based on rivalry and accruing to the prevalence of polygamous families. What one of the respondents wrote bears relevance to the unacted-delayed jealousy. He wrote;

"As a little child I stayed mostly with my mother with occasional contact with my father, as a result of the polygamous nature of the family....The nature of this marriage system is that which generates constant quarrels, suspicions, jealousy and competition among the wives... and there exists disharmony among us children of different mothers...and suspicious attitudes each of us children of the same father but different mothers.... The attitude is that of social disharmony and quasi-co-operation".

The tension and rivalry thus far discussed do not in any way mean that I subscribe to the notion that there is an absence of moments of happiness and caring among the members of the Yoruba family. If I have contended in the affirmative, I could not have believed that the family has fulfilled most of the basic functions that are institutionalized in the western society. When a society or a community is as poor as the one in focus, there is every tendency for its members to use irrational behaviors, especially on the question of who-gets-what after the deceased husband, to achieve their aims. Nevertheless, such problem-generating tension between spouses is hereby believed to be structurally functional to the family in that women become cautious and sceptical to enter an already consummated relationship. It is also indicative of the manifestation of the underlying tension in a polygamous marriage or any co-functioning relationship.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

This study has looked into a descriptive analysis of modern structure of the Yoruba family dating back to Oduduwa period. What the study has basically done is to trace the structural formation of the family from its traditional form to the modernizing one. In so doing, it has indicated that there is distinctively different value conception of matrimony between those members in the rural and those in urban. It is also indicative of the study that a factor, if not the factor enhancing this difference, is the recent urban movement of the members; which has favoured for the most part, those members whose trade or educational attainment provided a 'push' into the urban centers. The profound nature of the family unit based on moral and financial support to its members has again been demonstrated in the initial help which the urban members provided the new migrants. Without this help, coping with the new urban life may be somehow detrimental.

The functional aspects of both traditional and modernizing family have been respectively expressed in their ability to make possible their human existence.

Inasmuch as the traditional family existed through a 'joint economic unit of production', so will the urban family survive by its unfading moral and financial commitments to the members. G. Balandier (1956:505) has suggested that, when the bonds which link a man to his traditional society are broken,

a feeling of insecurity and bewilderment results, and a sense of inferiority may easily be engendered.

An increase in education cutting across sex and regional boundaries means a reduction in the illiteracy rate, the prospect for economic independence and the narrowing of the gap between the rural and urban residents in terms of self-awareness and acculturation. As a consequence, there will continue to be a further departure from the normative pattern of parenthood. The inculcation of what is moral or immoral attitudes in children will be transferred to the church, the school will educate them, the Day Care Centers will take over the responsibility of parenting and child caring; and so will the children live between two contradicting disciplinary worlds; that of the institution and the home environment.

The Yoruba family will continue to experience these changes that are diametrically opposed to the prevalent traditional form; yet, both will continue to co-exist in a high degree of tolerance. It cannot also be suggested that any change will be sporadic because no traditional man completely or summarily loses his value, it is something gradual. As M. Igbozurike (1976:82) stated;

"The tribal man has in many respects passed away, but the traditional man is still a factor to be reckoned with in twentieth century Africa....A part is found within a whole, and when the whole ceases to exist, then common logic has it that its part is gone with it".

Until there is a high literacy rate and the opportunity for better employment and institutions to provide a form of assistance to the unemployed, the family's moral and financial

commitment to its infirm, will continue to be the pivot on which stands solidarity within the family. It is a society where everyone pulls his weight and where individuals' survivability is often a function of self-fulfilling prophecy. The tendency to be polygamous, be it co-habitation or separate residence, will still be much more prevalent in the rural areas than the urban inasmuch as there is an interplay between the economic situation and the latent tension.

Many educated couples will continue to opt for marriages under the ordinances, meaning a monogamous marital commitment and a gradual disappearance of legal polygamous marriages. As a matter of pride, desire and prestige, yes, monogamy will exist, but it can be concluded as of now that a majority of men will continue to seek an 'extra marital partner' which may involve 'extra marital offspring'. Therefore, inasmuch as the traditional parents recognise those children as their son's, unfriendly relationship will continue to exist between wife and mother-in-laws. The 'extra marital partner' will not exist in isolation from the monogamous relationship.

The hypotheses examined in this analysis are three. Hypotheses a and b are both supported by the content of the analysis. Firstly, as the study suggested, the successful members of the family are haunted with the feeling of guilt and lack of fulfillment when they evade what is socially perceived as a normal moral and financial commitment to the siblings or parents. As a consequence, it is assumed by traditional parents that either hypothesis a or b can be a deterrent to such obligation, and so the feeling of neglect

leads to animosity. When the successful members discontinue with this family loyalty, its ramification on the functioning of the unit is far reaching. To abandon this, stated P. Harris (1962:141), would destroy the informal social justice and emotional security, which maintains the balance of a rapidly changing society.

Secondly, the economic viability of a woman becomes very important to the man in offsetting the imbalance between the demands from his kinsmen and that from his family (procreational family). Also, the economic independence of the traditional women did not mean that they have divorced completely from their traditional roles, but with increasing literacy rate among the urban women, such traditional roles have almost been transferred to their housemaids and have aroused self consciousness and a pursuit of meaningful career. The literacy rate among women will continue to rise and, inasmuch as the society rewards education, we see a trend towards equal pay for equal work. If this trend continues, women will soon be at economic par with their male counterparts.

Hypothesis c) has not been supported in this analysis because, the extent to which neolocal residence will weaken the ties within family cannot be measured.

IMPLICATIONS.

This analysis has, in an attempt to avoid unmanageable presentation, used recent rural-urban migration of the family member to explain the disparity in value between its

rural and urban residents. As such, rural-urban migration has only been conceived of as one of the factors determining social changes occurring between the traditional and the urban families. The educational attainment of the family member, as suggested in our analysis as the factor that would stimulate a structural change may be very misleading because, the society in focus is not one that incorporates young and fresh ideas, so, it may become rather difficult for the young educated individuals to operate independent of the older educated or affluent generations. Likewise, with the current global weakness in the economy, though ironical for a developing Country like Nigeria, where tens of thousand of her University graduates are unemployed, or if employed, four to five months salary may be withheld. If this trend continues, it is believed that many willing minds would be unable to meet the needs of their families, if they are the only successful ones.

It is a society where education alone does not determine the kind of financial assistance one may be capable of rendering to siblings and parents in the rural areas. With the shortage and high cost of accomodation in most of the urban areas, a young university graduate may, after paying for his rent and food, has nothing left to assist other members of his family. Therefore, the tendency to sometimes evade family obligations may not be afterall intentional.

Finally our analysis has not taken into consideration about 500-600 thousand Nigerians studying abroad; if it has, the approximated literacy rate would have increased appreciably.

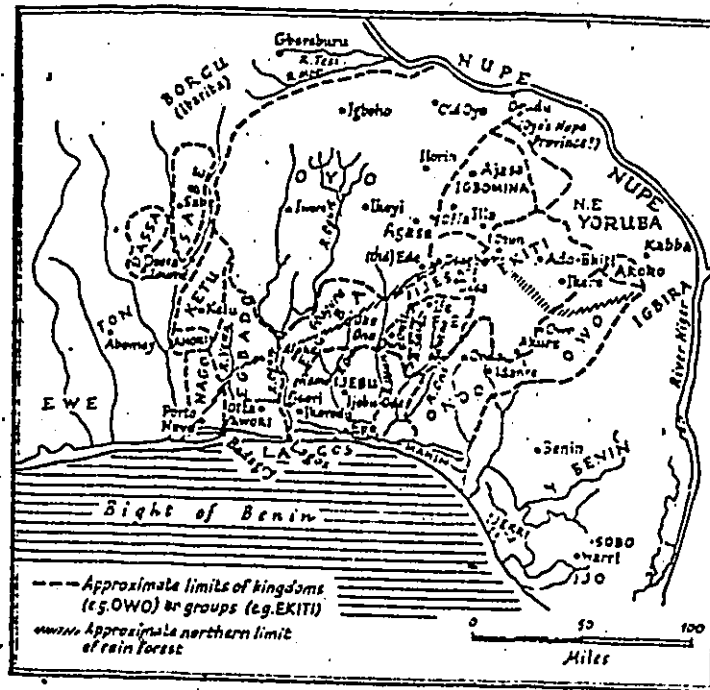
RECOMMENDATIONS

In most of the literature dealing with the Yoruba family, one does not find mention of anything concerning the 'delayed jealousy' which I have discussed. The fact that 'delayed jealousy' is indicative of problem-generating tension within the unit, does not preclude the applicability of the theoretical framework employed. In point of fact, the approach did not claim a total equilibrium in a system; rather, any form of tension within the unit of a system can at the same time stimulate a sense of solidarity.

Nevertheless, it is believed that this analysis has added yet another contribution to the understanding of some of the tensions endemic in a changing society. It hoped that the 'delayed jealousy' is an area that could be expanded on in a future research perhaps using conflict theory. For now however, the section of the analysis that dealt with problem-generating tension has been functional to both traditional and the modern family, both in terms of economic survivability and independence and as deterrents to a hurriedly entered relationship based on material gain.

APPENDIX 2

Map Showing Early Yoruba Kingdoms
And Their Neighbourhoods.



1. THE YORUBA KINGDOMS AND THEIR
NEIGHBOURS

This map is intended to illustrate the political divisions of the Yoruba between the foundation of the Kingdoms and c. 1830. The limits shown for the Kingdoms and groups are extremely tentative. They are mainly based on the 'cultural groups' shown on the map attached to Forde (1951); important exceptions are in the northward extension of the Egba before c. 1830 and the inclusion of the Ife, Ijesha, Owo, and Owo Kingdoms. The Oyo Kingdom at its zenith probably extended on the north-east as far as the Niger between Ogudu and the junction of the Mashi with the Niger, an area now mainly inhabited by Nupe.

This Photo was copied from R. Smith (1976:179)

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