

THE ECONOMICS OF POLYGAMY

ESTER BOSERUP

Some years ago, UNESCO held a seminar on the status of women in South Asia. The seminar made this concluding statement after a discussion of the problem of polygamy: "Polygamy might be due to economic reasons, that is to say, the nature of the principal source of livelihood of the social group concerned, e.g. agriculture, but data available to the Seminar would not permit any conclusions to be drawn on this point".¹

It is understandable that such a cautious conclusion should be drawn in Asia where the incidence of polygamy is low and diminishing. In Africa, however, polygamy is widespread, and nobody seems to doubt that its occurrence is closely related to economic conditions. A report by the secretariat of the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) affirms this point: "One of the strongest appeals of polygamy to men in Africa is precisely its economic aspect, for a man with several wives commands more land, can produce more food for his household and can achieve a high status due to the wealth which he can command".²

It is self explanatory, given women's input in African farming, that a man can get more food if he has more land and more wives to cultivate it. But why is it that the more wives

he has got, the more land he can command, as the ECA statement says? The explanation lies in the fact that individual property in land is far from being the only system of land tenure in Africa. Over much of the continent, tribal rules of land tenure are still in force. This implies that members of a tribe which commands a certain territory have a native right to take land under cultivation for food production and in many cases also for the cultivation of cash crops. Under this tenure system, an additional wife is an additional economic asset which helps the family to expand its production.

In regions of shifting cultivation, where women do all or most of the work of growing food crops, the task of felling the trees in preparation of new plots is usually done by older boys and very young men, as already mentioned. An elderly cultivator with several wives is likely to have a number of such boys who can be used for this purpose. By the combined efforts of young sons and young wives he may gradually expand his cultivation and become more and more prosperous, while a man with a single wife has less help in cultivation and is likely to have little or no help for felling. Hence, there is a direct relationship

¹ Appadorai, 19.

² UN. ECA., *Wom. Trad. Soc.*, 5.

between the size of the area cultivated by a family and the number of wives in the family. For instance, in the Bwamba region of Uganda, in East Africa, it appeared from a sample study that men with one wife cultivated an average of 1.67 acres of land, while men with two wives cultivated 2.94 acres, or nearly twice as much. The author of the study describes women in this region as "the cornerstone and the limiting factor in the sphere of agricultural production" and notes that almost all the men desire to have additional wives. A polygamic family is "the ideal family organization from the man's point of view".³

In female farming communities, a man with more than one wife can cultivate more land than a man with only one wife. Hence, the institution of polygamy is a significant element in the process of economic development in regions where additional land is available for cultivation under the long fallow system. There is an inverse correlation between the use of female family labour and the use of hired labour. It seems that farmers usually either have a great deal of help from their wives, or else they hire labour. Thus farmers in polygamic communities have a wider choice in this than have farmers in monogamic communities. In the former community, the use of additional female family labour is not limited to the amount of work that one wife and her children can perform; the total input of labour can be expanded by the acquisition of one or more additional wives.

This economic significance of polygamy is not restricted to the long fallow system of cultivation. In many regions, farmers have a choice between an expansion of cultivation by the use of more labour in long fallow cultivation, with a hoe, or an expansion by the transition to shorter fallow with ploughs drawn

by animals.⁴ In such cases, three possible ways of development present themselves to the farmer: expansion by technical change (the plough); expansion by hierarchization of the community (hired labour); or expansion by the traditional method of acquiring additional wives. In a study of economic development in Uganda, Audrey Richards pointed to this crucial role of polygamy as one of the possible ways to agricultural expansion: "It is rare to find Africans passing out of the subsistence farm level without either the use of additional labour (read: hired labour E.B.), the introduction of the plough, which is not a practical proposition in Buganda; or by the maintenance of a large family unit, which is not a feature of Ganda social structure at the moment."⁵

In the same vein, Little's classical study of the Mende in the West African state of Sierra Leone concluded that "a plurality of wives is an agricultural asset, since a large number of women makes unnecessary to employ much wage labour".⁶ At the time of Little's study (i.e. in the 1930s), it was accepted in the more rural areas that nobody could run a proper farm unless he had at least four wives. Little found sixty-seven wives to the twenty-three cultivators included in his sample and an average of 842 households. He describes how the work of one wife enables him to acquire an additional one: "He says to his first wife, 'I like such and such a girl. Let us make a bigger farm this year.' As soon as the harvest is over for that year, he sells the rice and so acquires the fourth wife."⁷

Little's study is thirty years old, and the incidence of polygamy has declined since then. But, although households with large numbers of wives seem to have more or less disappeared in most of Africa, polygamy is still extremely

³ Winter, 24.

⁴ Simons, 79-80.

⁵ Richards 1952, 204.

⁶ Little 1951, 141-2.

⁷ Little 1951, 141-2, 145.

Table 29.1 [4] Incidence of Polygamy in Africa

Country in which sample areas are located		Average number of wives per married men	Polygamic marriages as percentage of all existing marriages
Senegal	{ A	1.1	24
	{ B	1.3	23
	{ C	1.3	21
Sierra Leone		2.3	51
Ivory Coast		1.3	27
Nigeria	{ A	2.1 ^a	63
	{ B	1.5	
Cameroon		1.0-1.3 ^b	
Congo	{ A	1.3	11
	{ B	1.2	17
South Africa			14
Uganda	{ A	1.7	45
	{ B	1.2	

^a The figures refer to male heads of families, while married sons living with these seem to be excluded.

^b The lowest ratio refers to unskilled workers, the highest ratio to own-account workers.

Table 29.1 *Senegal: Sample A and B*, UN. ECA. Polygamy, 9-10, 70,000 persons in Dakar in 1955 and 1960. *Sample C*, Boutillier, 1962, 31, 33; 1,265 persons in the Valley of Senegal, 1957-8. *Sierra Leone: Little* 1948, 9-10n, 842 households in Mende Country, 1937. *Ivory Coast: Boutillier* 1960, 45, sample of 3,764 persons, 1955-6. *Nigeria: Sample A*, Galetti, 71-2; 776 families in the Yoruba region, 1950-1. *Sample B*, Mortimore, 679, sample of 5,103 persons in Kano district, 1964. *Cameroon: Gouellain*, 260, population in New-Bell, Douala, 1956. *Congo: Sample A and B*, Balandier 1955, 136. Brazzaville and Delisie, 1952. *South Africa: Reynders* 260, sample of 1,180 households in Bantu areas, 1950-1. *Uganda: Sample A*, Winter, 23, sample of seventy-one families in Bwamba, 1951. *Sample B*, Katarikawe, 8, sample of fifty-nine families in Kiga resettlement schemes, 1956-6.

widespread and is considered an economic advantage in many rural areas. The present situation can be gleaned from Table 29.1, which brings together the results of a number of sample studies about the incidence of polygamy. It is seen that none of the more recent studies shows such a high incidence of polygamic marriages as in the period of Little's old study. Most of the studies show an average number of around 1.3 wives per married man.*

In most cases over one-fifth of all married

men were found to have more than one wife at the time of enquiry.†

The acquisition of an additional wife is not always used as a means of becoming richer through the expansion of cultivation. In some cases, the economic role of the additional wife enables the husband to enjoy more leisure. A village study from Gambia showed that in the village, where rice is produced by women, men who had several wives to produce rice for them produced less millet (which is a crop produced

* Some of the samples were taken in urban areas, where the incidence of polygamy is often, though not always lower than in rural areas.

† To evaluate correctly this figure for the incidence of polygamy it must be taken that some of the married men, at the time of the enquiry, had one wife only because they were at an early stage of their married life, while others were older men living in monogamous marriage because they had lost other wives by death or divorce. Therefore, the figure for the incidence of polygamy would have been considerably higher if it were to show the proportion of men who have more than one wife at some stage of their married life.

Table 29.2 [5] Rights and duties of Yoruba Women

Percentage of Women with the following rights and duties:

Wife receives from husband	Wife contributes to household:				Total
	as self- employed, family aid and housewife	as self- employed, and housewife	as family aid and housewife	as housewife	
Nothing	8	11			19
Part of food	32	16			48
All food	15	11	1	1	28
Food, clothing and cash	1		3	1	5
Total	56	38	4	2	100

Table 29.2. Galetti 77, sample of 144 women in seventy-three families in Yoruba region, 1951-2.

by men) than did men with only one wife.⁸ Likewise, in the villages in the Central African Republic men with two wives worked less than men with one wife, and they found more time for hunting, the most cherished spare time occupation for the male members of the village population.⁹

Undoubtedly, future changes in marriage patterns in rural Africa will be closely linked to future changes in farming systems which may lessen (or enhance) the economic incentive for polygamic marriages. Of course, motives other than purely economic considerations are behind a man's decision to acquire an additional wife. The desire for numerous progeny is no doubt often the main incentive. Where both the desire for children and the economic considerations are at work, the incentives for polygamy are likely to be so powerful that religious or legal prohibition avails little.

A study of the Yoruba farmers of Nigeria has this to say: "There are no doubt other reasons why polygamy prevails in the Yoruba country as in other regions of the world; but the two which seem to be most prominent in

the minds of Yoruba farmers are that wives contribute much more to the family income than the value of their keep and that the dignity and standing of the family is enhanced by an increase of progeny. While these beliefs persist the institution of polygamy will be enduring, even in families which have otherwise accepted Christian doctrine. The Yoruba farmer argues that the increased output from his farms obtainable without cash expense when he has wives to help him outweighs the economic burden of providing more food, more clothing and larger houses.¹⁰

The Status of Younger Wives

It is easy to understand the point of view of the Yoruba farmers quoted above when one considers the contribution to family support which women make in this region. Economic relations between husband and wife among the Yoruba differ widely from the common practise of countries where wives are normally supported by their husbands. Only 5 per cent

⁸ Haswell, 10.

⁹ Georges, 18, 25, 31.

¹⁰ Galetti, 77.

of the Yoruba women in the sample reproduced in Table 29.2 received from their husbands everything they needed – food, clothing and some cash – and only 2 per cent of them did no work other than domestic activities. A large majority were self-employed (in agriculture, trade or crafts) and many helped a husband on his farm in addition to their self-employment and their domestic duties. Most of these self-employed women had to provide at least part of the food for the family as well as clothing and cash out of their own earnings. Nearly one-fifth of the women received nothing from their husband and had to provide everything out of their own earnings; nevertheless they performed domestic duties for the husband and half of them also helped him on his farm.

There may not be many tribes in Africa where women contribute as much as the Yorubas to the upkeep of the family, but it is normal in traditional African marriages for women to support themselves and their children and to cook for the husband, often using food they produce themselves. A small sample from Bamenda in the West African Cameroons showed that the women contributed 44 per cent of the gross income of the family.¹¹ Many women of pastoral tribes, for instance the Fulani tribe of Northern Nigeria and Niger, are expected to provide a large part of the cash expenses of the family out of their own earnings from the sale of the milk and butter they produce. They cover the expenditure on clothing for their children and themselves as well as buying food for the family.¹² In many regions of East Africa, women are traditionally expected to support themselves and many women are said to prefer to marry Moslems because a Moslem has a religious duty to support his wife.

In a family system where wives are supposed both to provide food for the family – or a large part of it – and to perform the usual domestic duties for the husband, a wife will naturally welcome one or more co-wives to share with them the burden of daily work. Therefore, educated girls in Africa who support the cause of monogamous marriage as part of a modern outlook are unable to rally the majority of women behind them.¹³ In the Ivory Coast, an opinion study indicated that 85 per cent of the women preferred to live in polygamous rather than monogamous marriage. Most of them mentioned domestic and economic reasons for their choice.¹⁴

In many cases, the first wife takes the initiative in suggesting that a second wife, who can take over the most tiresome jobs in the household, should be procured. A woman marrying a man who already has a number of wives often joins the household more or less in the capacity of a servant for the first wife, unless it happens to be a love match.¹⁵ It was said above that in most parts of the world there seems to be an inverse correlation between the use of female labour and the use of hired labour in agriculture, i.e. that most farmers have some help either from their wives or from hired labour. However, in some regions with widespread polygamy, hired labour is a *supplement* to the labour provided by several wives, in the sense that the tasks for which male strength is needed are done by hired labour, while the other tasks are done by wives. In such cases the husband or his adult sons act only as supervisors.

Reports from different parts of Africa, ranging from the Sudan to Nigeria and the Ivory Coast, have drawn attention to this frequent combination of male labourers and wives of polygamous cultivators working

¹¹ Kaberry, 141.

¹² Forde, 203; Dupire 1960, 79.

¹³ UN. ECA., *Polygamy*, 32.

¹⁴ Boutillier 1960, 120.

¹⁵ Little 1951, 133.

Table 29.3 [6] Age Distribution of Married Moslem Population of Dakar in Senegal

Age Group:	Percentages		Husbands
	First Wives	Later Wives	
Below 25 years	12	35	
25-34 years	49	44	10
35-49 years	35	19	59
50 years and over	4	2	31
All ages	100	100	100

together in the fields under the supervision of one or more male family members.¹⁶ In such cases, the availability of male labour for hire is not a factor which lessens the incentive to polygamous marriages. On the contrary, it provides an additional incentive to polygamous marriages as a means of expanding the family business without changing the customary division of labour between the two sexes. Little reported that in Sierra Leone men with several wives sometimes used them to ensnare male agricultural labourers and get them to work for them without pay.¹⁷

In regions where polygamy is the rule, it is likely, for obvious demographic reasons, that many males will have to postpone marriage, or even forego it. Widespread prostitution or adultery is therefore likely to accompany widespread polygamy, marriage payments are likely to be insignificant or non-existent for the bride's family and high for the bridegroom's family, sometimes amounting to several years' earnings of a seasonal labourer.¹⁸ This will induce parents to marry off their daughters rather young, but in a period like the present, where each generation of girls is numerically larger than the previous one, the difference in age between the spouses will be narrower than it was previously.

Figures from Dakar, the capital of Senegal, shown in Table 29.3 illustrate the importance

of the age difference between the spouses. Here, the average marriage age for women is 18 years, and the average age of first marriage for men is between 27 and 28 years. The average age difference between men and their second wives is over 15 years, and nearly all wives belong to age groups which are larger than those to which their husbands belong.¹⁹ No less than 90 per cent of married men belong to the relatively small generations over 35, as can be seen from the table, while only 39 per cent of their first wives and 21 per cent of their second wives belong to these generations.

Economic policy during the period of colonial rule in Africa contributed to the introduction or reinforcement of the customary wide difference in marriage age of young men and girls. In order to obtain labour for head transport, construction works, mines and plantations, the Europeans recruited young villagers at an age where they might have married had they stayed on in the village. Instead they married after their return several years later. The result was an age structure in the villages with very few young men in the age group between 20 and 35 and the need to marry young girls to much older men who had returned from wage labour.

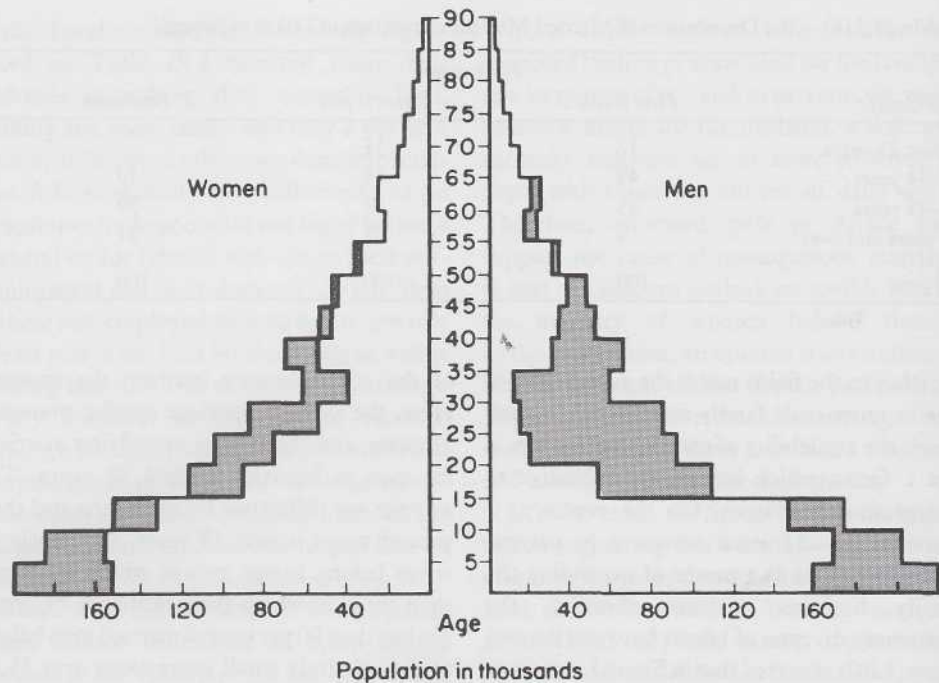
The difference between the numbers of boys and girls in villages where the custom of taking away wage labourers before marriage

¹⁶ Baumann, 307; Forde, 45; Boutillier 1960, 97; Gosselin, 521.

¹⁷ Little 1951, 141; 1948, 11.

¹⁸ Forde, 75n.

¹⁹ UN. ECA., *Polygamy*, 24.



Shaded portion represents persons absent from the African areas

Figure 29.1 [3] Sex and Age Structure of Population in African Areas of South Rhodesia in 1956

persists, can be seen from Figure 29.1 which gives the age distribution in Rhodesian villages as reported in a study by J. Clyde Mitchell.²⁰ In the age groups 20–35 nearly all the men are away and the number of women in these age groups is several times higher than that of the men. In many other parts of Africa, recruitment for mines, plantations and urban industries results in similarly abnormal age distributions in the villages where the labourers are recruited.

Normally, the status of the younger wife is inferior as befits the assistant or even servant to the first wife. This can be explained partly as a result of the wide age difference between husband and wife and between first and

younger wife, but the historical background of the institution of polygamy must also be kept in mind. Domestic slavery survived until fairly recently in many parts of Africa, and the legal ban on slavery introduced by European colonial powers provided an incentive for men to marry girls whom otherwise they might have kept as slaves.

In a paper published as recently as 1959, it is mentioned that in the Ivory Coast women were still being pawned by husbands or fathers to work in their creditor's fields, together with his own wives and daughters and without pay until the debt was paid off, when they were free to return to their own families.²¹ Today, such arrangements may be rare in Africa, but it is

²⁰ Mitchell, *Soc. Backgr.*, 80.

²¹ d'Aby, 49.

probable that the bride price for an additional wife is sometimes settled by the cancellation of a debt from the girl's family to the future husband, which would come to much the same thing in terms of real economic relationships.

Embodied in Moslem law is the well-known rule that all wives must be treated equally, which implies that the younger wives must not be used as servants for the senior wives. Moreover, a limit is set to the use of wives for expansion of the family business, partly by limiting the allowable number of wives to four, and partly by making the husband responsible for the support of his wives. We have already mentioned that this serves to make Moslem men desirable marriage partners for many African girls in regions where girls married to non-Moslems are expected to support themselves and their children by hard work in the fields. Because of this principle of equal treatment, first wives in orthodox Moslem marriages may desist from making the younger wives perform the most unpleasant tasks. Often in African families – Moslem and non-Moslem – each wife has her own hut or house and cooks independently, while the husband in regular succession will live and eat with each of his wives. Even so, the wife gains by not having to feed her husband all the time, and we sometimes find that women prefer polygamy even where the wives are treated equally.

In most of Africa the rule is that a wife may leave her husband provided that she pays back the bride price. In regions where wives must do hard agricultural work, many young girls wish to find money to enable them to leave a much older husband, and many husbands fear that their young wives will be able to do so.²² This makes older men take an interest on one hand in keeping bride prices at a level which makes it difficult for women to earn enough to pay them back and on the other hand in

preventing their young wives from obtaining money incomes. Later we shall see what role these conflicting interests between men and women are playing in development policy.

Work Input and Women's Status

Polygamy offers fewer incentives in those parts of the world where, because they are more densely populated than Africa, the system of shifting cultivation has been replaced by the permanent cultivation of fields ploughed before sowing. However, in some regions where the latter system prevails, polygamy may have advantages. This is true particularly where the main crop is cotton, since women and children are of great help in the plucking season.²³ But in farming systems where men do most of the agricultural work, a second wife can be an economic burden rather than an asset. In order to feed an additional wife the husband must either work harder himself or he must hire labourers to do part of the work. In such regions, polygamy is either non-existent or is a luxury in which only a small minority of rich farmers can indulge. The proportion of polygamic marriages is reported to be below 4 per cent in Egypt, 2 per cent in Algeria, 3 per cent in Pakistan and Indonesia.²⁴ There is a striking contrast between this low incidence of polygamy and the fact that in many parts of Africa South of the Sahara one-third to one-fourth of all married men have more than one wife.

In regions where women do most of the agricultural work it is the bridegroom who must pay bridewealth, as already mentioned, but where women are less actively engaged in agriculture, marriage payments come usually from the girl's family. In South and East Asia the connection between the work of women

²² Winter, 23.

²³ Arnaldez, 50.

²⁴ UN. ECA., *Wom. N. Afr.*, 41; Appadorai, 18.

and the direction of marriage payments is close and unmistakable. For instance, in Burma, Malaya and Laos women seem to do most of the agricultural work and bride prices are customary.²⁵ The same is true of Indian tribal people, and of low-caste peoples whose women work. By contrast, in the Hindu communities, women are less active in agriculture, and instead of a bride price being paid by the bridegroom, a dowry has to be paid by the bride's family.²⁶ A dowry paid by the girl's family is a means of securing for her a good position in her husband's family. In the middle of the nineteenth century it was legal for a husband in Thailand to sell a wife for whom he had paid a bride price, but not a wife whose parents had paid a dowry to the husband.²⁷

Not only the payment of a dowry but also the use of the veil is a means of distinguishing the status of the upper class wife from that of the "servant wife." In ancient Arab society, the use of the veil and the retirement into seclusion were means of distinguishing the honoured wife from the slave girl who was exposed to the public gaze in the slave market.²⁸ In the Sudan even today it appears to be a mark of distinction and sophistication for an educated girl to retire into seclusion when she has finished her education.²⁹

In communities where girls live in seclusion, and a large dowry must be paid when they marry, parents naturally come to dread the burden of having daughters. In some of the farming communities in Northern India, where women do little work in agriculture and the parents know that a daughter will in due course cost them the payment of a dowry, it was customary in earlier times to limit the

number of surviving daughters by infanticide. This practise has disappeared, in its outward forms, but nevertheless the ratio of female to male population in these districts continues to be abnormal compared to other regions of India and to tribes with working women living in the same region. A recent study of regional variations in the sex ratio of population in India³⁰ reached the conclusion that the small number of women in the Northern districts could not be explained either by under-numeration of females, or by migration, or by a low female birthrate. The only plausible hypothesis would be that mortality among girls was higher than among boys. The conclusion drawn was that "the persistence of socio-cultural factors are believed to be largely responsible for the excess of female mortality over the male."³¹ One of these socio-cultural factors seem to be a widespread supposition that milk is not good for girls, but is good for boys. There is also a tendency to care more for sick boys than for sick girls.³²

In a study from a district in Central India with a deficit of women, the author is very outspoken about the neglect of girls: "The Rajputs always preferred male children. . . . Female infanticide, therefore, was a tolerated practise. . . . Although in the past 80 years the proportion of the females to males has steadily risen yet there was always a shortage of women in the region. . . . When interrogated about the possibility of existence of female infanticide, the villagers emphatically deny its existence. . . . It was admitted on all hands that if a female child fell ill, then the care taken was very cursory and if she died there was little sorrow. In fact, in a nearby village a cultivator had

²⁵ MiMi Khaing, 109; Swift, 271; Lévy, 264.

²⁶ Mitham, 283-4.

²⁷ Purcell, 295.

²⁸ Izzedin, 299.

²⁹ Tothill, 245.

³⁰ Visaria, 334-71.

³¹ Visaria, 370.

³² Karve, 103-4.

twelve children – six sons and six daughters. All the daughters fell ill from time to time and died. The sons also fell ill but they survived. The villagers know that it was by omissions that these children had died. Perhaps there has been a transition from violence to non-violence in keeping with the spirit of the times.”³³ The report adds that “no records of birth or deaths are kept. . . . it was enjoined upon the Panchayat (village council) to keep these statistics, but they were never able to fulfil the task”.³⁴ It is explicitly said in the study that the district is one where wives and daughters of cultivators take no part in field work. In some cases, the shortage of women in rural communities in North India induce the cultivators to acquire low caste women from other districts, or from other Indian States, against the payment of a bride price.³⁵ This need not be an infringement on caste rules. Although it is usually forbidden for a man to marry a woman of a higher caste, men of higher caste may have the right to marry women of lower castes.³⁶ This may then entail the payment of a bride price instead of the receipt of a dowry as would be customary in the husband’s own subcaste.

To summarize the analysis of the position of women in rural communities, two broad groups may be identified: the first type is found in regions where shifting cultivation predominates and the major part of agricultural work is done by women. In such communities, we can expect to find a high incidence of polygamy, and bride wealth being paid by the future husband or his family. The women are hard working and have only a limited right of support from their husbands, but they often enjoy considerable freedom of movement and some economic independence from the sale of their own crops.

The second group is found where plough cultivation predominates and where women do less agricultural work than men. In such communities we may expect to find that only a tiny minority of marriages, if any, are polygamous; that a dowry is usually paid by the girl’s family; that a wife is entirely dependent upon her husband for economic support; and that the husband has an obligation to support his wife and children, at least as long as the marriage is in force.

We find the first type of rural community in Africa South of the Sahara, in many parts of South East Asia and in tribal regions in many parts of the world. We also find this type among descendents of negro slaves in certain parts of America.³⁷ The second type predominates in regions influenced by Arab, Hindu and Chinese culture.

Of course, this distinction between two major types of community is a simplification, like any other generalization about social and economic matters. This must be so because many rural communities are already in transition from one type of technical and cultural system to another, and in this process of change some elements in a culture lag behind others to a varying degree. For example, some communities may continue to have a fairly high incidence of polygamy or continue to follow the custom of paying bride price long after the economic incentive for such customs has disappeared as agricultural techniques changed.

In many rural communities hired labour is replacing the work of women belonging to the cultivator family. Where this happens, the economic incentive for polygamy may disappear, since additional wives are liable to become an economic burden. This, of course, is true only if it is assumed that the women

³³ Chatnager, 61–2.

³⁴ Bhatnagar, 65.

³⁵ Nath, May 1965, 816.

³⁶ Majumdar, 61.

³⁷ Bastide, 37ff.

who give up farm work retire into the purely domestic sphere. It is another matter if the women substitute farming by another economic activity such as trade.

In the type of rural community where women work hard, it is a characteristic that they are valued both as workers and as mothers of the next generation and, therefore, that the men keenly desire to have more than one wife. On the other hand, in a rural community where women take little part in field work,

they are valued as mothers only and the status of the barren woman is very low in comparison with that of the mother of numerous male children. There is a danger in such a community that the propaganda for birth control, if successful, may further lower the status of women both in the eyes of men and in their own eyes. This risk is less in communities where women are valued because they contribute to the well-being of the family in other ways, as well as breeding sons.

References

- Appadorai, A., *The Status of Women in South Asia*, Bombay 1954.
- Arnaldez, Roger, "Le Coran et L'émancipation de la Femme", in Mury, Gilbert (ed.) *La Femme à la Recherche d'elle-même*, Paris 1966.
- Bastide, Roger, *Les Amériques Noires*, Paris 1967.
- Baumann, Hermann, "The Division of Work according to Sex in African Hoe Culture", in *Africa*, Vol. I, 1928.
- Bhatnagar, K. S., *Dikpatura, Village Survey*, Monographs No. 4, Madhya Pradesh, Part VI, Census of India 1961, Delhi 1964, processed.
- Boutillier, J. L., *Bongouanou Côte d'Ivoire*, Paris 1960.
- Boutillier, J. L., et al., *La Moyenne Vallée de Sénégal*, Paris 1962.
- d'Aby, F. J. Amon, "Report on Côte d'Ivoire", in International Institute of Differing Civilizations, *Women's Role in the Development of Tropical and Sub-Tropical Countries*, Brussels 1959.
- Dupire, Marguerite, "Situation de la Femme dans une Société Pastorale (Peul Wo Da Be-Nomades du Niger)" in Paulme, Denise (ed.) *Femmes d'Afrique Noire*, Paris 1960.
- Forde, Daryll, "The Rural Economies" in Perham, Margery (ed.), *The Native Economies of Nigeria*, London 1946.
- Galletti, R., Baldwin, K. D. S. and Dina, I. O., *Nigerian Cocoa Farmers*, London 1956.
- Georges, M. M. and Guet, Gabriel, *L'emploi du Temps du Paysan dans une Zone de L'oubangui Central 1959-60*, Bureau pour le Développement de la Production Agricole, Paris 1961, processed.
- Gouellain, R., "Parenté et affinités ethniques dans l'écologie du "Grand Quartier" de New-Bell, Douala in Southall, A. (ed.), *Social Change in Modern Africa*, London 1961.
- Haswell, M. R., *The Changing Pattern of Economic Activity in a Gambia Village*, HMS London 1963, processed.
- Izzeddin, Nejla, *The Arab World*, Chicago 1953.
- Kaberry, Phyllis M., *Women of the Grassfields. A Study of the Economic Position of Women in Bamenda, British Cameroons*. Colonial Office, Research Publication No. 14, London 1952.
- Karve, Irawati, "The Indian Woman in 1975" in *Perspectives, Supplement to the Indian Journal of Public Administration*, January-March 1966.
- Katarikawe, E., "Some Preliminary Results of a Survey of Kiga Resettlement Schemes in Kigezi, Ankoll and Toro Districts, Western Uganda", *Research Paper Makerere University College*, R.D.R. 31, processed.
- Lévy, Banyen Phimmason, "Yesterday and today in Laos: a Girl's Autobiographical Notes", in Ward, Barbara E. (ed.) *Women in the New Asia, The Changing Social Roles of Men and Women in South and South-East Asia*, UNESCO 1963.
- Little, K. L., "The Changing Position of Women in the Sierra Leone Protectorate", in *Africa*, Vol. XVIII, 1948.
- Little, K. L., *The Mende of Sierra Leone. A West African People in Transition*, London 1951.
- Majumdar, D. N., "About Women in Patrilineal Societies in South Asia", in Appadorai, A. (ed.), *The Status of Women in South Asia*, Bombay 1954.
- Mi Mi Khaing, "Burma, Balance and Harmony", in