

Full title: Women on the market: Marriage, consumption and the internet in urban
Cameroon

Running head: Women on the market

Author: Jennifer Johnson-Hanks

Affiliation: University of California at Berkeley
Department of Demography

Address: 2232 Piedmont Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94720-2120

Email: johnsonhanks@demog.berkeley.edu

Acknowledgements: Funding for this project was provided by the Hellman Family Fund, the Population Council, the Social Science Research Council, and the National Science Foundation. Thanks to Elinor Ochs and her seminar for useful comments.

Women on the market:

Marriage, consumption and the internet in urban Cameroon

Abstract

Since 1998, several thousand urban Cameroonian women have sought European husbands over the internet. This small movement reflects broad changes in the structures and meanings of marriage in contemporary Cameroon. Marriage rates have fallen; the rituals marking the transition to marriage have been altered and reordered; women's expectations of their husbands and the marriage bargain have changed. Yet, Cameroonian women seek internet-mediated marriage not only as a sign of the new, but also as a means of attaining long-standing, "traditional" elements of marriage that the economic crisis has made increasingly unattainable. Women represent marriage to a European man as a viable "modern" replacement for "traditional" bridewealth. This paper analyzes marriage in contemporary Yaoundé in relation to changing notions of women's honor and to the entrenched economic crisis. Modern marriage has deep cultural antecedents, but emerged only in historical interaction with specific products, technologies and potential futures associated with the West. [Marriage, Honor, Africa, Globalization, Consumption]

Women on the market:

Marriage, consumption and the internet in urban Cameroon

Women from Africa are noted for their beauty, grace, charm, and loyalty. With their shy smiles and traditional values, African women possess an inner beauty that many men find irresistible. African women are by their nature family-oriented, resourceful, and are highly devoted wives.

—Homepage of afrointroductions.com

I am one woman with enough sex appeal and brains to match my bubbly personality. I am down to earth and very outgoing. Looking for same or more of course! Want to know about me? Drop me a line if you are really, really interested, send me mail and we'll get chatting. Kiss kiss!

—Personal ad of “Angel” on afrointroductions.com

Introduction

In her small picture on the website africanprincess.com, Bebey Hortense doesn't smile. Beneath the photo are listed a standard set of attributes: 24 years old, 155 centimeters tall, Cameroonian. Clicking on the image brings you to a larger picture, a few additional attributes, and a self description that begins, “*Je suis une fille moderne.*” What does being modern mean to her, and why is it such a central part of her self-representation? What kind of a husband does she hope to meet through the internet, and what kind of marriage does she envision might follow? These questions would not be interesting if modernity and marriage mattered only for Bebey Hortense. But in interviews, newspaper articles, classroom talk and casual conversations, young Cameroonian women systematically use the concept of the modern to describe, classify and

evaluate themselves and others, and they use the institution of marriage as both a marker and a maker of that modernity. I argue that these cultural representations have concrete consequences. Traditional marriage in Yaoundé has nearly dissolved: a casualty—in part—of women’s aspirations to modernity in a time of economic crisis. Over the last two decades, changes in cultural meanings and in population rates in southern Cameroon have reinforced one-another, transforming marriage from a prerequisite for female adulthood into a sign of pecuniary honor.

Focusing on the life experiences of a group of young, educated women in Yaoundé who call themselves *yoyettes*, this paper examines the content and reciprocal consequences of marriage and “modernity.” Being *moderne* in Yaoundé is part of a system of social ranking: an economy of honor. Although enacted in a variety of domains, modern honor is more clearly visible in the social organization of food and sex, particularly as they articulate through marriage. Thus, bridewealth, *nam ngwan*, canned peas, “sugar daddies” and the prospect of transnational internet marriage are interrelated sites in which modern honor gets worked out. Although it has deep cultural antecedents, “modern marriage” emerged only in interaction with specific products, technologies, and potential futures associated with the rich West in the context of local economic retrenchment.

Although the women on whom this paper will focus are educated and urban, they are not the most elite. I am not concerned here with the daughters of the Grand Ministers or large industrialists, who are sent to boarding school in France or the United States, but rather with the class of women who have barely succeeded in attending some high school—just enough to count them in the most educated 20% of women in the country and to give them hopes of white-collar jobs or of marriage to men with such jobs. Specifically, I am focusing on a category called the “*yoyettes*,” unmarried women in their late teens and 20s in 1998, literate, and oriented to French

and American styles of dress, music, and food. The term *yoyette* and its masculine counterpart *yo* are derived from the interjection “Yo!” in American rap music, and *yoyettes* for the most part consider the identity an international one, marking membership in a global youth community (c.f. Farrer 2002). Many of them grew up dividing their time between the capital city, Yaoundé, and its rural hinterlands, and speak French and the primary local language, Ewondo, equally well. The *yoyettes* are school teachers, store clerks, high school or university students and business women. Most residents of the Yaoundé, and most *yos* and *yoyettes*, belong to the ethnic group Beti¹; as a result, much of the cultural repertoire of *yoyisme* relies on a Beti sense and sensibility about what makes a proper marriage or a viable husband. The paper thus makes reference to three partially-overlapping social communities: residents of Yaoundé, Beti, and *yoyettes*.

Over the last century, Beti social organization has gone from independent, kin-based compounds to national elections and from swidden horticulture to incipient e-commerce. Catholicism has largely replaced local religious practices. French-language literacy has become commonplace. Yaoundé has become first a city, then a cosmopolitan center, with French and American hotels and banks, two universities, and—since 1998—a flurry of cyber-café. The *yoyettes* were born between 1970 and 1980; they were the first generation born into a Cameroon where high school was a realistic hope for girls in the central-south provinces outside of the most elite families. These women were caught between rising aspirations as women’s schooling

¹ The classification “Beti” includes a variety of clans, such as the Eton, Manguissa, and Bene. Of these clans, the Ewondo are the largest and their dialect—also called Ewondo—serves as something of a lingua franca alongside, and subordinate to, Cameroonian French.

became more commonplace and the economic crisis that gripped Cameroon from 1987 through the late 1990s, and the resulting social crisis that continues to this day. With the crisis, uncertainty became the norm: salaries are paid late or not at all; water, electricity and telephones function erratically; medical facilities are understaffed with few supplies. At the same time, residents of Yaoundé are acutely aware that the situation elsewhere is different, even they do not necessarily know how. From CNN and Beverly Hills 90210, picture novels and the images on CD covers, urban Cameroonian youth have well-developed ideas about distant places, and these ideas substantially shape their hopes, intentions, and self-descriptions. As elsewhere in urban Africa (Heaton and Hirschl 1999), marriage rates have declined markedly; women have high hopes for marriage, but little respect for its presently available forms. In a social field oriented to honor, respect for form matters intensely: here—as so often—cultural representations have demographic consequences.

True men and modern honor

Young African girl with a very cool nature, 25 years, single without children, nice and kind, of profession: secretary, seeking a serious man of any continent, French or foreign, to establish a loving relationship in view of marriage. If you are not serious, stay away. Thank you.

—Internet personals ad of “Martine” from Yaoundé, on coeuracoeur.com

When certain *yoyettes* assert that they must now look abroad to find husbands who are “serious,” they are—perhaps paradoxically—drawing on a set of assumptions about marriage, men, and honor that have long local histories. The figure of *l’homme serieux*—the dignified man, honest, calm, handsome and capable—evokes the *mfan mot* or “true man” of a previous era as

much as it does the Hollywood stars whose pictures adorn the walls of hair salons, cafés and *téléboutiques*. Among the Beti, the *mfan mot* was an autonomous man, lord of his wives and children², bearer of pecuniary honor (c.f. Veblen 1899) and a set of embodied dispositions that I call “self-dominion.” Complete male adulthood consisted of the establishment of a new extended household, and with it a new community: Laburthe-Tolra (1981:270) describes how the *mfan mot* built a house, married and fathered children (*bonde nda bot*), and cleared virgin forest for his wives’ fields (*bonde afub*). Prior to the institutionalization of German colonial authority around 1900, there were no political authorities higher than the extended-household community; each *mfan mot* was therefore his own highest authority. Honor—a central category in Beti social ranking—inhered in the socially legitimated power for a free man to do as he pleased, power that was both concrete and discursively elaborated. Largeau argues that at the time of his research in the 1890s, Beti men perceived any threat to their autonomy a direct assault on their honor, noting that “a self-respecting Pahouin [Beti man] does not take orders from anyone” (1901:22, see also Tsala 1985:219).

² The term “Beti” itself means “honorable ones,” and it has only in the last century come to refer to an ethnic group, rather than distinguishing free men from slaves (pl. *bolò*). The singular form of Beti, *nti*, serves as the standard translation for “Lord” and today refers only to the Christian God, as in *Nti Zamba wan* (The Lord our God). In seeking to find an acceptable translation of the term Beti, Laburthe-Tolra (1981:48) suggests that “the concept most exactly corresponding... would be that of the ‘non-barbarian’... The Beti are the Civilized.”

Southern Cameroonian society has thus long functioned on an economy of honor³. Honor remains central, although its structure and content have changed with colonization and evangelization. Historically, honor was an element of *male* adulthood, consisting of the right to respect, autonomy, and privacy accorded to the *mfan mot*, and in principle inaccessible to women. In fact, traditional honorability was so strongly gendered male that it entailed a husband's dominion over his wives (Laburthe-Tolra 1981:356).

Over the course of the last century, the system of social organization to which this form of honor related has been transformed through school, market, church and state, and its character has become increasingly contested. As the content of honor has shifted into ever greater alignment with the values of school and church, women have increasingly come to be potential bearers of honor. Because of its relation to the *moderne* institutions of Christianity and formal education, the honor of women differs somewhat from that of men; nonetheless, its form also draws heavily on traditional Beti conception of the honor of the *mfan mot*. The fact that the Beti system of honor is still being made means that individual women's hopes of attaining it are precarious; the modern honor to which contemporary Beti women aspire is an uncertain one.

Both women's modern honor and the traditional honor of men weld together pecuniary and dispositional aspects. With the term "pecuniary," I follow Veblen in referring to the elements of the honor system related to the control of wealth. In the case of the *mfan mot*, the usage follows Veblen almost exactly: an honorable man achieved his position in part through control over land, women, and children (Veblen 1899:69). The pecuniary component of male honor was

³ For a discussion of why I call this "honor," rather than prestige, face, status, standing or reputation, see Johnson-Hanks, in press: chapter 3.

closely linked to a set of embodied dispositions, of structured and structuring ways of being in the world, particularly including a measured slowness in gesture and speech balanced with temporary, explosive ferociousness (Escherich 1938:53; Tessman 1913, vol. 2: 241-242). This set of embodied dispositions can be collectively characterized as self-dominion—it consists of self-control and freedom from the control of others. It may be demonstrated in deliberate speech, in the careful guarding of secrets, or in the co-ordination of life-history events (see Laburthe-Tolra 1981:305). The extreme of male Beti honor self-control, and the autonomy of action it marks, must be seen in contrast to the radical uncertainty of most everything else in everyday life in contemporary southern Cameroon. Today, as in the past, most Beti live in uncontrollable and unknowable circumstances: from violent weather, to the timing of paychecks, to the arrival of buses, to the functioning of offices. As throughout the poor countries, death is common, disease more so, and both are expensive for the extended family. As these things are perceived as uncontrollable and unalterable, the only honorable response is to endure them. In fact, the sympathetic response to a story of hardship is “patience.”

The modern honor of educated women relates to the traditional honor of men, although it necessarily transforms some of the central principles and works in somewhat different ways. In particular, the relationship between the embodied and pecuniary elements of honor has changed. In the eyes of the *yoyettes*, an honorable woman in contemporary Yaoundé is discrete, sexually restrained, educated, and financially successful. She is proud of herself and her achievements, and respects herself. She is poised, calm, and serious. Perhaps most importantly, she is master of herself—of her desires, gestures, and even emotions. That is, in contrast to many well-known honor systems, a Cameroonian woman’s honor is not merely a reflection of that of her husband or lineage, but is something that she claims herself (c.f. Hatch 1992:11; Stewart 1994:107). The

self-mastery is achieved through rigorous discipline, especially the disciplines associated with schooling and Catholicism. Waking up at three in the morning to pray and then study for the public exams is not only a method for achieving a good grade or entry into upper secondary school, but is also a practice of instilling in the self a set of right dispositions. Sexuality and sexual self-mastery play important roles in claims to honor; however, it is critical to point out from the beginning that complete sexual abstinence and bridal virginity are not the measure, as they are in the Mediterranean, the Arab world, or in East Africa (see Boddy 1989:76; Kressel 1992; Schneider 1971) . While proper sexuality does depend on restraint, it is wisely managed restraint, good judgment, or self-dominion that matters.

I intentionally use the term “dominion” again here, to draw attention to the fact that the honor of both men and women is related control over women, but that there is a fundamental difference between the object of dominion in the two cases. A man must control women and children, but any woman or women will do. For a woman, by contrast, it is her mastery of herself—of her own desires, reproduction, aspirations, timing, and so forth, that is central to her status. This self-dominion is necessarily corporeal, and it is achieved through explicit acts of self-formation, and especially restraint from food, sex, and even sleep.

Young Beti women, such as the *yoyettes*, talk about these practices as *discipline*, meaning by that term something close to Bourdieu’s concept of habituation. Nightly prayer, constrained food consumption limited to modern things, and the regular practice of sexual continence (see Johnson-Hanks 2002), women say imbue them with habits and attitudes. These habits and attitudes are the “systems of durable, transposable *dispositions*, structured structures predisposed to function as structuring structures” (Bourdieu 1977:72, emphasis in original) that Bourdieu calls the *habitus*. Rather different from Bourdieu’s representation, however, is the explicit and

conscious manner in which young women in Yaoundé approach the reforming of their *habitus*. The *yoyettes* intentionally seek to be made as disciplined, modern, and honorable women through the regularization of their practices; this is hardly the “practical knowledge not comprising knowledge of its own principles” (ibid:19) that the *habitus* classically comprises.

A more compelling interpretation comes from Mahmood (2001, 2005), who analyzes the practice of prayer as both the means and the ends of religious self-formation in the women’s mosque movement in Cairo. Mahmood describes how participants in the mosque movement seek to attain piety, or “being close to God,” through the intentional shaping of their desires, actions, and wills. This is a pedagogy of sentiment through which members of the mosque movement acquire proper exterior forms through the structured acquisition of specific emotional states (Mahmood 2001, especially page 843). Similarly, *yoyettes* seek to train their tastes and intuitions—such as their preferences for certain foods, ability to concentrate on homework or in prayer, or their “hunger” for sex—by rigorous practice. The process of achieving modern honor sought by the *yoyettes* partially resembles the path to piety of the mosque movement. In both, “the role of conscious training in the acquisition of embodied dispositions” (2001:838) is central; women perform physical behaviors associated with specific intentional states in order to cultivate the inclination for those states. By performing the purportedly outward sign of an interior condition, members of the mosque movement and urban *petites bourgeoises* develop the habit of that condition.

Like traditional men’s honor, the modern honor of women is also—very deeply—pecuniary. As Cole (2004:579) so expertly analyses for the *Jeunes* in Tamatave, for the *yoyettes* “consumption of consumer goods marks status quite explicitly.” Veblen (1899) proposes that conspicuous consumption of time and goods first *represented* honorable or distinguished

characteristics, especially success in hunting and war, and then later came to be seen as *itself* honorable⁴. Thus, conspicuous leisure and conspicuous consumption become admirable even when they do not indicate past efficiency, diligence, or success. To a first approximation, we can think of the social stature that the *yoyette* ascribe to the women who earn her own money through clean work, dresses well and in a French style, and is eventually married with bridewealth or to a European man through the framework of conspicuous consumption. However, this model gets us only to a first approximation because of its unsophisticated approach to gender. Veblen argues (as do most scholars, see Abu-Lughod 1986 for a notable exception), that honor is an attribute only of men. When women are adorned in luxurious clothing, he argues that they serve as stand-in consumers for their husbands; their whose proper dress marks the privilege—and therefore prestige—of men (1899:171). And this aspect of the model is not incidental: men's control over women and women's labor is the basis of class inequality for Veblen, who therefore offers no direct way to theorize women's financial success or consumption as markers of their *own* honor.

The pecuniary honor of the *yoyettes* is doubly complicated. On the one hand, young women in Yaoundé seek to earn their own money and to be financially independent of their husbands and boyfriends. As for men, the honor of Beti women rests partially on the sovereignty

⁴ Veblen's history is conjectural and almost surely wrong. Still, the conceptual relationship between a putatively literal prestige of worthy consumption and a second-order, tropic one is useful.

of a competent, independent individual⁵. On the other hand, husbands and boyfriends should express their emotional commitments in financial ways, buying women clothes, beauty products and—later on—baby supplies. A Beti woman who is not thus cared for risks losing standing, as would be a Bedouin woman who refused marriage and rejected the “honorable mode of dependence” described by Abu-Lughod (1986). Almost every woman I knew in Cameroon in 1998 expressed a commitment to both aspects of modern honor, sometimes in the same conversation. Talking about the respect that accrues to an independent woman who maintains herself without economic assistance from a man, women said things like:

I think that it is a question of self-respect first of all [that distinguishes certain women]... They are very proud of themselves. They are honorable (*digne*). And so, because they are proud, they are not dependent. They work, and they love to be financially independent from their husbands.

Or similarly:

I am going to say how Cameroonians interpret this respectability (*respectabilité*) in women.... I think that when a woman is honorable (*digne*) it means first that she restrains her sexual activity and second that she can earn a living all alone, without waiting for the help of a man.

These two quotes—the first from a teenager still attending high school, the second from a 56-year old mother of seven children—are examples from literally dozens of instances in the

⁵ In southern Cameroon, concepts of autonomy and individualism were not by-products of the colonial project, nor simply imported from the west. However, the idea that *everyone*, including women, could have equal standing as an autonomous, individual was new.

interview and fieldnote corpus where women equated female honor with their own labor, and the concomitant economic independence from men. But just as consistently, the same women would talk about the honor of being in the care of a man: of having him give lavishly for you, particularly at the bridewealth ceremony, of having him pay for things so that you are not reduced to doing “dirty” work (like selling cooked food in the street), of having everyone on the street know whose wife you are:

For me, a respectable woman is one who keeps her image clean. When she passes, you know that this person here has to be respected. And then it is good to be [married and therefore] called Madame Such and Such. When someone says “Here is Madame Such and Such who is passing” you have weight. But when you are unmarried, someone looks and calls you “Miss”. Even if you are 50 years old, they can’t call you Madame. They call you Madame, but you live with whom? They are going to say Madame Who? They are obligated to call you Miss.

And again:

A woman who hasn’t had bridewealth paid for her in her village, her mother is not respected. Her relatives are not respected. She herself is not happy. So bridewealth, when someone pays bridewealth for a girl before marriage, it is a great joy for the family.

We see in these quotes that Beti women’s honor—necessarily modern—is also internally contradictory. Women must be both independent and taken care of, both in possession of self-dominion and the possessed by a good man. Both parts of this fundamental contradiction resonate in historical echo chambers—the former as the honor of the *mfan mot*, the latter as the lesser distinction of the proper wife in a bridewealth marriage. And yet, as we will see, both also

reflect international capitalism as it reaches into this African city. Finally, the contradiction—irresolvable and basic to Cameroonian women’s experience—directly affects how *yoyettes* think about sexual relationships and marriage, and the kinds of husbands that they hope to find.

True marriage

According to the older women I interviewed in 1996 and 1998, as well as the classic ethnographies (Alexandre and Binet 1958; Guyer 1984; Laburthe-Tolra 1977, 1981; Largeau 1901; Ngoa 1968; Tessman 1913), a Beti man’s first marriage, called *mfan aluk* or “real marriage,” should according to tradition be contracted in the following manner. When a young man begins to clear forest on his own behalf, his father and uncles will find him a bride. Senior men from the family of a young man approach the father or paternal uncle of the hoped-for-bride, and after some deliberation, the two families agree on the amount of the bridewealth and on the time horizon over which it should be delivered. Although in some cases, the couple would already know each other, and may even have been lovers for some time, when the two families agree on the bridewealth, the young man’s nighttime visits to her compound become an open secret. On some appointed date, the young man and his family will come in procession, bearing gifts for the family of the bride. This is the *mev*□*g*, or marriage compensation. The bride will remain hidden while her father or his representative evaluates the gifts against the previous agreement. If all is in order, the bride is given over to the groom’s family, and the two families celebrate with a lavish feast and dancing late into the night. The extravagance of this feast can hardly be overestimated: literally dozens of dishes, often including both roast goats and pigs, and wine, whisky and palm wine are considered essential, and many families go deeply into debt in order to pay for the food of a bridewealth celebration. At some point, late in the night, the bride

returns home with her new in-laws, most likely to the compound of the father of her husband, as he cannot establish a fully independent household without a wife.

In the following days, the young bride will be given a supply of pumpkin seeds, called *ngwan*. The series of minimal oppositions *ngwan*, *ngwán*, *ngwàn*, and *ngwǎn* mean pumpkin seed, moon, adolescent (marriageable) girl, and menstruation, respectively: a symbolically coherent set of concepts distinguished by tone. *Ngwan* grows best (and, ideally, only) as the first crop on newly cut, virgin forest. Clearing such a field, called an *esep*, is an essential part of a young man's transition to honorable adulthood. Not only is it the prerequisite for marriage and a first stage of establishing an independent compound, but it is symbolically important and does not have the same social effect if it is hired out. Clearing *esep* is also the most intense physical labor that Beti men perform.

Receiving the *ngwan*, the young bride will begin a laborious—sometimes weeks-long—process of cracking each one and removing the soft kernel inside. The new bride then grinds the kernels on a low stone mortar, long and narrow, with rounded ends. In order to grind, a woman hikes up her skirt and crouches over one end, holding the stone tight between her thighs. A sexual reading of these mortars is not at all foreign to rural Beti women, who may teasingly call their grinding stones *nnóm* (“man” or “husband”), nor is it foreign to young men, at least some of whom consider watching a woman grind through the spaces in the wattle-and-daub of the kitchen walls to be frankly erotic. The ground pumpkin kernels are blended with water and spices, wrapped in banana leaves, and steamed over a fire. This is now *nam ngwan* (the dish of *ngwan*), and it should ideally be the first meal that a bride prepares for her husband. From then on, he will eat what she prepares, rather than eating from his mother's cooking pot.

Nam ngwan is the essence of conventional bridewealth marriage. Not only is it extremely labor intensive—an attribute that many women express as the basic nature both of local food and of honorable marriage—and, similarly, sensitive to the skill of the cook, but it also shows the partnership of the man and the woman. For *nam ngwan* to be successful, the labors of the man and woman have to be coordinated and reciprocal: the man clears the field and “plants the seed” while the woman gestates and cooks (c.f. Delaney 1991).

Young, educated Beti women now often say that they hope for a “modern” marriage, by which they mean a marriage that is monogamous, based on love, and eased by financial security. But in addition to the various attractions that modern marriage may have in and of itself, many women argue that modern marriage is the *only* option now, because a true, proper bridewealth marriage is no longer possible, as the gendered reciprocity based in *esep* and *nam ngwan* has been lost. Men no longer work, women say, and so they have nothing to offer in bridewealth. Underlying these assertions are basic issues of resources: the decimation of the forest, and the economic crisis. Nearly all the hinterlands of Yaoundé have long been cleared of virgin forest, and the secondary clearing of a fallowed field is often done by women. Except for felling, adult men do as little farming as possible, lest they be seen as victims of *tobassi* (literally, “Sit down!”), a form of witchcraft in which a man is subordinated like a woman. Men's role in food production has thus degenerated, and the gendered exchange of labor formalized in *nam ngwan* no longer holds.

Marriage means eating

The conspicuous consumption of the bridewealth ceremony offers a first way into thinking about the honor of marriage. The centrality of food to notions of pecuniary honor is

transparent: “consumption” itself is a food metaphor, as is the “taste” that lies at the heart of Bourdieu’s analysis of distinction (1984), and throughout West Africa, corpulence is one of the clearest signs of financial success. However, eating is equally corporeal, and thus relates to the embodied dispositions of the eater. Cameroonian readings of honorable eating integrate the elements of prestigious privilege and self-formation. In southern Cameroon, marriage means eating in at least three ways. First is the literal eating of the bridewealth feast itself, whereby the abundant—even excessive—food widely shared both indicates and constitutes the prestige of the families involved, as Mauss (1967) has analyzed for potlatch. Second is the symbolic exchange materialized in the food *nam ngwan*. Finally, eating and sex, which parallel each other as the prototypic loci for both aspects of women’s modern honor, are joined in the local conception through the institution of marriage.

The benefits of the conspicuous consumption associated with marriage accrue first of all to the parents of the bride, who receive lavish gifts from the family of the groom and partially redistribute them in the form of feasting. For the parents of a young woman, bridewealth may bring considerable financial advantage, an advantage that is also described as “eating,” as in the following account that one young woman gave me of her friend’s greedy father:

When she was in 9th grade she was going out with this boy... One day the boy came to her house in the village during the school vacation. Her father knew that he was perhaps a boy of some means because ... they had cacao trees and lots of other things in [their village]. He said: “Why does the boy come here with nothing in his hands? Why doesn’t bring any presents at all?” The father was angry because he told himself that the boy was already her fiancé. He wanted to eat (*bouffer*)... Her father began to cause problems for her all the time. He said “You

eat the food he brings you all alone. You do not want to bring me the bridewealth. You do not want to have him come give the bridewealth for you.” Me, I say that the father is perhaps a sorcerer! That is the first deduction that I made. That he must be a sorcerer, because ...he wants to sell his daughter in the village.

In this passage, eating, marriage and witchcraft come together. Improper eating is equated with witchcraft, in contrast to the healthful, proper eating of marriage. This resonates with common usage in both Camfrçais and Ewondo: *manger* (Camfrçais) and *ad'i* (Ewondo) have similar ranges of meaning and metaphor. Both refer not only to literal eating, but also to witchcraft, Catholic communion, and corruption, in addition to constituting an important part of bridewealth marriage and a symbol of marital union. Unlike in most Bantu languages (Rowlands and Warnier 1988), in Ewondo *ad'i* is used to denote the consumption of healthful food that sustains the lineage, of kinsmen as part of a witchcraft initiation, and of communion wafers. This range of resonances makes eating a critical conjuncture in the formation of modern identity.

Marlyse, a seventeen year-old woman, explained that she had grown up in Yaoundé, and had been raised eating canned peas purchased from the elegant food import stores where European expatriates also shop. Then came the economic crisis, and her father lost his white-collar job. As often happens in such a case, the father had then sent his wife and children to his natal village, where they could farm, and therefore live cheaply. Staying in the village, Marlyse explained, was not so bad, except that she had steadily lost weight, being unable to digest the available foods. Regarding *kpem*, the local mainstay prepared from manioc leaves, palm oil, and peanuts, Marlyse said: “It does not correspond with my organism, because I was raised with modernity,” whereas the canned peas that she had eaten as a child “go better with me. They do not cross me, because I am already habituated to them.” She was a modern girl of the most

concrete, physical kind; her modernity incorporated into her digestive capacity. As Rowlands argues, here the consumption of modern goods performs both pecuniary honor and optimism about future advantage, and is “deeply rooted in the anxiety generated by the desire for modernity as success” (1994:149).

Canned peas are modern both because of their provenience (shipped from France), their expense, and their association with new, innovative forms of cuisine: light, quick, and simple. All of these attributes stand in opposition to *kpem*, which takes hours to prepare and is praised for being solid food. This new cuisine is particularly important to the educated *yoyettes*, as it is tied to fundamental changes in the marriage bargain. Easily prepared and free from much of the symbolic weight of *kpem*, *nam ngwan*, and other traditional foods, canned peas—alongside crepes, pasta, and frozen chicken—can be prepared quickly after work, or made by a hired domestic without danger of witchcraft or adultery. Food that is easily prepared plays an important role in the making of modern marriage. With the dissolution of the system of cutting *esep* fields and men’s withdrawal from farm labor, they can no longer make their primary contributions to traditional marriage and—symbolically—to the preparation of *nam ngwan*. In response, some modern girls argue that a woman's obligation to prepare the traditional, labor-intensive dishes has gone is well. As many *yoyettes* explained to me, today the woman cooks and the man just eats. This set of social changes provides some of the background for the following exchange in a 12th-grade philosophy class:

Teacher: But now you are free, with modernity. You can even give the keys to the kitchen to your little son. But there! That means divorce!

Student: But Madame, the *yoyettes* don’t cook.

The teacher begins by equating modernity with changing gender roles, and particularly with changes in who may cook. But since women regularly give cooked food to the men with whom they are having sex, the wife's giving up the keys to her kitchen might be read as refusing sex. The student sees the relations differently. Modernity should offer women freedom from Veblen's "irksomeness of labor." For this student, as for many, the modernity of the *yoyettes* is expressed in a life of consumer comforts shared with a devoted husband. Canned and prepared foods, along with the chance of hiring domestic help, mean that the modern woman might lead a life of relative ease. Thus, modern marriage replaces with shared leisure the labor exchange that characterized traditional bridewealth marriage. In this way, marriage remains both a central social aspiration for young women and a key locus for the making of women's honor, even as its forms are changing.

The routinized state of crisis

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the Cameroonian economy was strong. The effects of economic well-being were everywhere visible: falling unemployment, new buildings, extensive European imports. According to one rather fabulous statistic, Cameroonians consumed as much champagne per capita as did West Germans in 1982⁶. Educational institutions at all levels were built in record numbers in the decades following independence. The number of government employees expanded rapidly, and increased migration into Yaoundé made Beti land valuable (Franqueville 1984).

Figure 1 about here

⁶ "Hung Over," *The Economist*, February 28, 1998: Vol. 346, No. 8057.

This rosy picture began to fall apart in 1987, when the value of Cameroonian exports collapsed. In 1986, Cameroon earned over 800 billion CFA from exports; in 1987, that value scarcely exceeded 500 billion (Asuagbor 1994:41). Between 1986 and 1993, both household expenditures and the GDP per capital fell more 40%, as shown in figure 1. From this grew *la crise*, a disintegration of socio-economic order that persisted long after the official indicators of economic decline had reversed. Civil service salaries were cut twice, and the currency was devalued by fifty percent in 1992. But the effects of *la crise* are as much social as economic. In 1998, many Cameroonians spoke of a generalized distrust caused by “*la crise morale*” (for excellent discussions of the effects of economic crisis in Africa, see Ferguson 1999 and Vavrus 2003). Cameroon was declared the most corrupt country in the world for both 1998 and 1999 by the non-profit international watchdog Transparency International⁷.

The extreme volatility in economic and social life associated with *la crise* extends almost everywhere, from the most mundane to the most intimate. To some degree, the forms of radical uncertainty that Cameroonians attribute to the crisis are simply endemic to all poor countries. Still, all of these forms of insecurity or ambiguity are perceived as resulting from the crisis, and in part constitute the lived experience of a “routinized state of crisis” (Mbembe and Roitman 1995). Prices for schooling, healthcare and housing are unpredictable, as are wages; even government employees are not paid reliably. Most employment opportunities are filled through social networks or kin relations, rather than according to formal skills or job experience; few people have access to formal credit. Busses do not run on schedule. Electricity and running water

⁷ Figures for 1998 are reported in “World Study Senses High Corruption,” Chicago Tribune, September 23, 1998. Figures for 1999 are available at: <http://www.transparency.de>.

go out regularly, even in Yaoundé. In the rainy season, roads get washed out, the electricity goes out, and sewers get backed up. Insect-borne diseases like malaria seem to strike more or less at random; the water-borne and sexually transmitted ones, from cholera to HIV/AIDS, only marginally less so. Mortality rates at all ages are high, and death often unpredictable. In addition to shifts in education, corruption, and prosperity, marriage and fertility patterns have also changed. Many Beti claim that *la crise* has made it more difficult to contract an honorable marriage, as fewer and fewer men are able to assemble the requisite bridewealth: marriage rates have declined, and some women are starting to look elsewhere for husbands.

What makes a good husband?

My name is Moline and I am 24 years old.... I have a modern allure and smile often. Many things interest me: music and reading. I would like to meet someone active. My great desire is to discover France.... My skin is the color of chocolate. I speak French fluently. I read it. I write it. I am looking for a man 26 to 45 years old, sincere and honest, elegant and sweet. I like romantic walks and I love family.

—Personal ad of “Moline” on providence.com

What kind of men do the *yoyettes* hope to marry? Like women’s honor, the ideal characteristics for prospective husbands are hybrid, incorporating both dispositional and economic considerations, and both long-standing local and “modern” elements. Most critically, men should be prosperous, *moderne* and love their wives without hesitation. Most of the complex hopes that young women have for potential husbands can be seen as some combination of these elements. The paradox of modern female honor—resting both on economic

independence from men and on receiving lavish gifts from male admirers—has no direct counterpart in the kinds of men that women hope for. It might be very hard to find a man who fulfills the consuming dreams of the *yoyette*, but his imagined characteristics contain no internal paradoxes. Still, different women do focus in different aspects of the ideal. Some women particularly stress that men should be sophisticated and urbane, with the same modern style and sensibilities that they strive for themselves. One young woman explained that:

I love him [her boyfriend] ... because he presents himself in front of me like the man I have always dreamed of. Because when I was a little girl I always made for myself the image of an ideal boy in my head. I saw him as black, tall, elegant, clean, and intelligent. He is someone who knows how to dress, even if he has only two garments, he knows how he is going to wear them. He knows how to express himself in French, and is not too hypocritical.

Another similarly emphasized that fluency in the global language of French made a man attractive, equating men who speak Ewondo with effeminate men, and—by implication—with men bewitched with *tobassi*:

For me, it is important that he not be too effeminate because I do not like effeminate boys. I hope that you understand what I mean; I mean when he has the style of a girl, or when he only speaks Ewondo [instead of French]. And so he must be tall, and not too ugly, but also not too handsome. Because when a man is too handsome it leans toward danger.

The danger lies in the likelihood that the man would not be faithful: being too handsome, a man could easily entice other women. Men's infidelity is a constant source of concern for young women in Yaoundé. Cameroonian men cannot—or will not—be faithful, they say. Again

and again, Beti women whether looking for European husbands on the internet or married to Beti men explained to me that male infidelity is common, or even inevitable. That does not mean, however, that the *yoyettes* do not hope for faithful husbands. To the contrary, fidelity, trust, and “true, true love” vie with economic security as the most important attributes that my informants hoped for in men. For example, one young woman answered by question regarding potential husbands by saying:

I would like to marry a man who doesn't love other women too much. But that is impossible here in our country. When you have a husband here, you cannot tell yourself that you are the only one. There were others before you, and after you, there will be others still.

Fidelity and generosity come together in many women's explanations of the kind of men they would hope to marry. A man will be trustworthy if, first of all, he truly loves you:

It is necessary first of all that he loves me as I am.... He cannot be the kind of person that is concerned with himself but not with his wife and his children. [He should be] someone who is generous, and someone who perhaps believes, who is a Christian.

In contemporary Cameroon, as in many places, Christianity is explicitly a sign of the modern. Thus for this young woman, again, love, generosity and Christian modernity make a good husband. Another high school student had very similar hopes:

Me, I would like to marry someone I love, first of all. And someone in whom I can find trust. If I find that he could be a good father for my children, and a good husband as well, and also that he contributes for his own family, good. I'll know that he will do the same for me and my children.

Whereas most women agreed that a good husband must be financially generous, some men consider women's insistence on gifts and money a shocking, even immoral recent development. One young man explained that he was not yet married because, "the women of today marry men according to their [financial] resources" As he was poor, he said, he could never find a wife. Another man expressed a similar sentiment: "Even feelings are materialized today. If a woman is with a man, it's to get something." According to these men, women cannot be trusted because they are always seeking financial advantage.

In fact, many women in Southern Cameroon *do* expect some financial benefit from their relations with men. But this neither means that their primary motivations are economic ones, nor that they are untrustworthy as partners. Instead, these women are reasoning from the well-established structure in which a man's commitment to a relationship is measured in the frequency and extravagance of his gifts. A man who does not give clothes, pocket-money or presents to his female partner thereby indicates that his intentions are not serious, and that the relationship is unlikely to lead to marriage. Although giving such gifts does not constitute a promise as such, women usually interpret a man's generosity as an indicator of his qualities as a potential spouse.

Marriage is increasingly postponed

As women's expectations of men as marital partners have risen and men's ability to meet them—particularly economically—have declined, age-specific marriage rates in southern Cameroon have fallen markedly. Of course, there are many reasons for this decline; however, the disjoint between aspirations for marriage and real-life opportunities plays a central role. The demise of marriage can be seen as a declining proportion of women married by a specific age

across subsequent birth cohorts. Figure 2 shows the proportion of women married by age 18 for cohorts born from 1940 until 1979 (the most recent available data), with 95% confidence intervals. The decline has been precipitous: whereas 75% of women born 1940-1944 had married by age 18, only 45% of those born 35 years later had done so.

Figure 2 about here

This pattern is common across most of urban, sub-Saharan Africa: women are increasingly postponing marriage, or even deciding not to marry altogether (cf. Coontz 2004). In southern Cameroon, this takes the form of waiting to “observe” a boyfriend, to be absolutely certain that he is the right one. One young woman who had been living with her boyfriend for over a year explained that she was still unsure whether marriage was in their future.

We tell ourselves that this might [lead to] marriage ... But you have to first stay together a long time to know his true comportment, to see what he likes and what he doesn't like in order to avoid problems. Because when you realize that he has some faults, you can say no. You can leave. If you don't have children, you are free. ... But sometimes you can do five years and you do not see too many black spots; so you say 'good.' If he proposes marriage you accept.

Another woman explained her hesitation to marry:

I often tell myself that I would like to marry when I am 30 years old. For me the primary aim is first to go to school, in order to have what I can have. ... With the men such as we have here, marriage can come later.

If a man neither going to be faithful nor provide for you financially, many *yoyettes* reason, there is little advantage to marrying, and no advantage to marrying before you have completed school and begun working. As the economic crisis has made Cameroonian men less able to provide

financially and not any more likely to be faithful than in the past, women's reasons for marrying them have begun to dissolve.

Internet romance

For the *yoyettes*, marriage is a central part of modern honor, pecuniary and dispositional. Unable to find suitable men at home, they have turned in large numbers to the internet. Why and how did this happen? Like so much in contemporary Yaoundé, the emergence of internet romance demonstrates both continuity with the past and recent innovation; it integrates a new kind of commodity—internet time—into a conception of romance and marriage already dense with consumption. Throughout the early 1990's, a small number of urban women had sought European husbands using airmail catalogs and glossy magazines sent from Europe. In early 1998, the internet came to Yaoundé, and, as one informant explained, “everybody saw their path.” Despite long lines and high prices, the internet replaced the magazines within a matter of months. Since 1998, private providers have made a lucrative business offering internet access by the hour to the largely literate Yaoundé public. By the turn of the millennium, even small quarters had cybercafés. The price fell from about \$10 per hour in 1998 to just about \$1.50 per hour in the summer of 2001. Having an email address, surfing the web, and speaking fluently of chat rooms and listservs is increasingly part of the distinction of educated youth of some means, superseded only partially by the more recent arrival of cell-phones. Although television programs, advertising, and consumer products are still the primary modes through which *yoyettes* and others learn about France and the United States, it is through the internet that they have some hope of speaking back. And one of the things that they most want to say is that are interested in marrying white men and moving to Europe.

Standing in line to email home in 1998, I was struck by the fact that the entire clientele of *Ditof*—one of three internet providers in the city at that time—was female. During the first part of my field work, I came into the city once a week. I would often see the same women, and we began to share our stories. The line was usually long. At that time, there was only one computer, and most women had to dictate their email messages to a *Ditof* employee who could type. Sometimes I would have an hour in line, occasionally two. But that time was very productive, not only for me but also for the women in search of husbands abroad. Collectively, the assembled women had quite an extensive knowledge of the benefits of alternative portals for posting their messages (*coueracouer.com* vs. *providence.com*, for example) and of the writing habits of European men. They would read and comment on each-other's letters, giving probably far more attention than deserved to the interpretation of the message from some young man from Toulouse, and crafting frankly artful responses. One day there was a heated discussion about how to interpret the lyrics of a song that a correspondent has quoted in his letter; another day the topic was whether a man who wrote that he was unemployed was *really* unemployed or just saying that to test whether the woman really loved him.

In addition to these face-to-face exchanges, Cameroonian women learn how to find love over email by reading and copying other personals ads. As a result, many of the ads resemble each-other, sharing not only vocabulary, but also syntax. For example, the following ads were placed on wanadoo.fr within about a month of each-other:

Cameroonian woman aged 28 would like to correspond with men from anywhere in the world to establish a durable and profound relationship. Response guaranteed.

Cameroonian woman, 32 years old without children, 175cm/65kg, would like to correspond with sincere men for a serious relationship. Response guaranteed.

When they are unsure how this new medium works or how to interpret messages from distance correspondents, women in Yaoundé rely on each other and the growing body of communal knowledge about internet romance.

In seeking European husbands on the internet, *yoyettes* use largely the same criteria as they do in seeking local husbands. He should love them as they are and contribute generously for them and their families. These values appear clearly in some of the personals ads, where women say that they want a man who is *serieux*, meaning both responsible and committed to the relationship. Yolande, for example, gives as “her message to you” the request “if you’re not serious, stay away” and lower down she writes that she is, “Seeking a man 28 to 45 years old, serious, respectful, having the [necessary] values for a sincere and lasting relationship for marriage, French-speaking, and living in Europe or America.” Similarly, Andze says that she “wish[es] to get in contact with someone serious for strong and durable relationship, marriage.” Solange writes “I am searching for a man who is good, serious strong, responsible, happy, generous. I know that I demand a lot, but that is the man of my dreams. Kissessss.” Florence is looking for a “man who is serious, understanding, responsible, intelligent, hard-working. In brief, a man who is good for a serious relationship and even for marriage.” Occasionally they even instruct their potential interlocutors on proper courtship behavior. Atia writes (in English): “They should continuously be good to their correspondents, that is keep collaborations with single counterparts in order to build long lasting relationship.”

In addition to offering access to a wider range of perhaps more suitable partners, some *yoyettes* see the internet as providing an excellent means of learning about the true character of a

man, so as not be disappointed later. One woman explained that she preferred the internet to meeting in person because she is shy, but in email, “I can put there what I think about any little thing. And so I can see if he really loves me, because I observe what he writes as a response.”

This concern about whether men are true in their love is equally important in face-to-face courtship, and indeed is often cited as one of the reasons for delaying marriage today. One of my research assistants argued that:

Marriages after two months—you meet someone and after two months you marry—that never lasts. I think you need at least five years. The people who are in a big hurry, they can do three years. But for three years someone can hide his true face from you. You have to have five years of experience, that way you will really know each other.

Because the internet allows all kinds of tests and trials that are not possible in face-to-face courtship, *yoyettes* hope that internet romances can progress a little faster. Still, drawing on conventional *Beti* practices of courtship, and especially the importance of a long period of mutual observation, *yoyettes* interpret email romance as a chance to learn the “true face” of prospective partners.

Conclusion

Over the past seven years, several thousand urban Cameroonian women have sought European or American husbands through websites such as coueracouer.com. This movement, although numerically small, reflects a broad set of changes in the structures and meanings of marriage in contemporary Cameroon. Marriage rates have fallen significantly; the rituals that previously marked the transition to legitimate marriage have been altered and reordered;

women's expectations of their husbands, themselves, and the marriage bargain have changed. Yet, Cameroonian women seek internet-mediated marriage not only as a sign of the new, but also as a means of attaining long-standing, "traditional" elements of marriage that the African economic crisis has made increasingly unattainable. In particular, women represent marriage to a European man as a viable "modern" replacement for bridewealth, a critical *rite de passage* in the local economy of honor. This paper has analyzed marriage in contemporary Yaoundé in relation to changing notions of women's honor and to the entrenched economic crisis. I have argued that the *yoyettes* expect marriage to offer both love and economic privilege, but that neither is available. The internet offers a kind of hope. In Cameroon, modern marriage has deep cultural antecedents, but its form emerged only in historical interaction with specific products, technologies and potential futures associated with the rich West. The consuming dreams of young Cameroonian women are cultural consequences of late capitalism at the margin.

Figure 1: GDP per capita and final household expenditures in PPP constant 1995 dollars (Source: World Bank WDI Online)

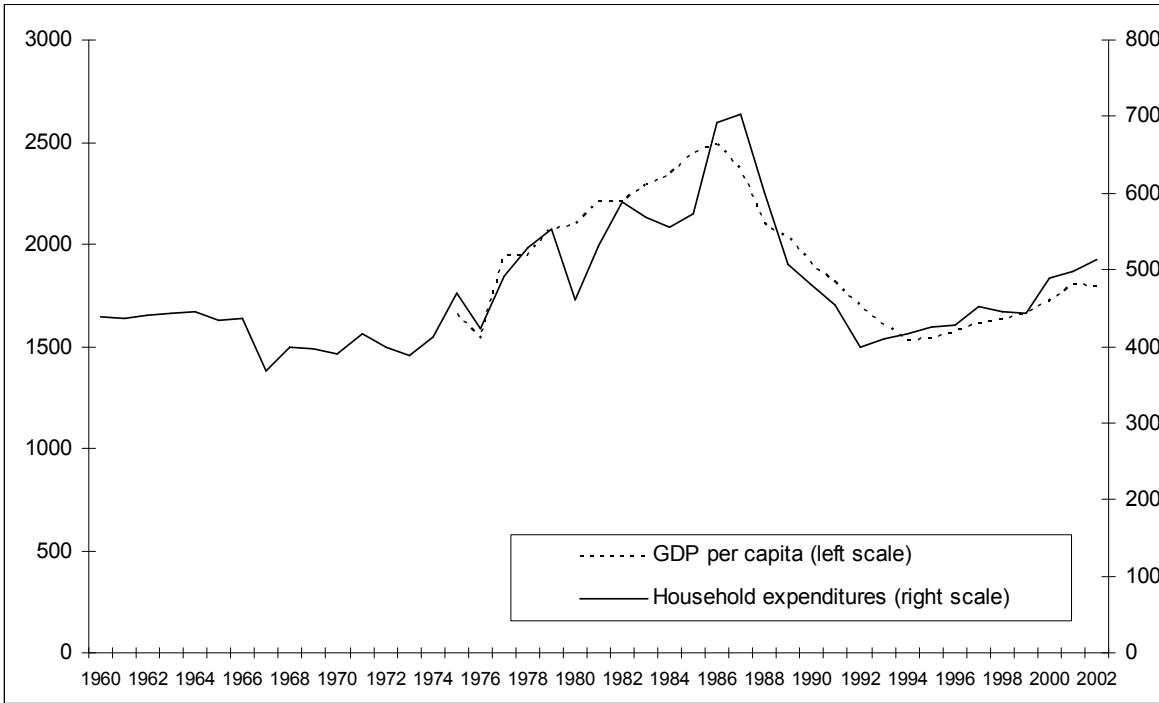
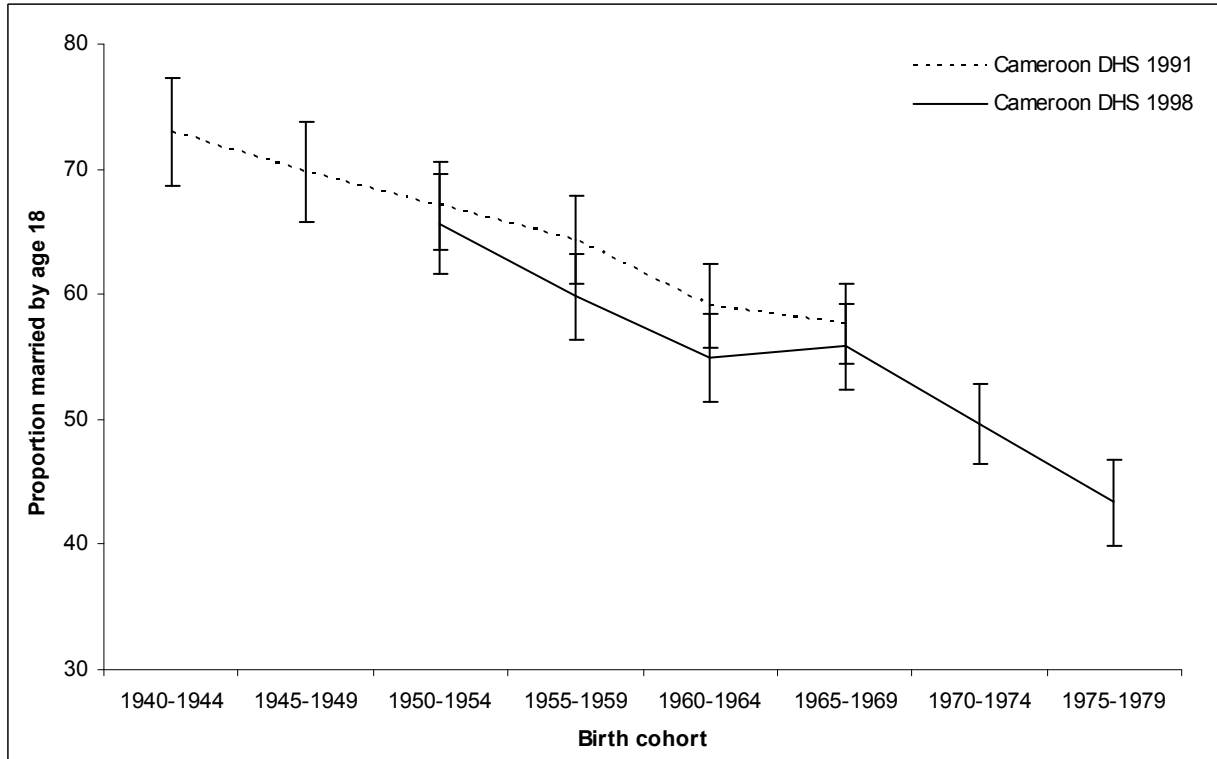


Figure 2: Proportion of women married by age 18, by birth cohort (Source: Demographic and Health Surveys 1991, 1998)



References

- Abu-Lughod, Lila. 1986. *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Berkeley, University of California Press.
- Alexandre, Pierre and Jacques Binet. 1958. *Le Groupe Dit Pahouin (Fang-Boulou-Beti)*. Paris: Institut International Africain.
- Asuagbor, Greg. 1994. *Democratization and Modernization in Africa: The Case of Cameroon*. Ph.D. Thesis, Political Science, University of Nevada at Reno, Reno.
- Boddy, Janice. 1989. *Wombs and Alien Spirits: Women, Men and the Zar Cult in Northern Sudan*. Madison, University of Wisconsin Press.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
- . 1984. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*. Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press.
- Cole, Jennifer. 2004. "Fresh contact in Tamatave, Madagascar: Sex, money, and intergenerational transformation." *American Ethnologist* 31 (4): 573-588.
- Coontz, Stephanie. 2004. "The world historical transformation of marriage." *Journal of Marriage and the Family*. 66 (4):974-979
- Delaney, Carol. 1991. *The Seed and the Soil*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Escherich, Georg. 1938. *Kamerun*. Berlin: Hans Reigler.
- Farrer, James. 2002. *Opening Up: Youth Sex Culture and Market Reform in Shanghai*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Ferguson, James. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley, University of California Press.

- Franqueville, André. 1984. *Yaoundé: Construire une capital*. Paris: ORSTOM.
- Guyer, Jane. 1984. *Family and Farm in Southern Cameroon*. Boston, Boston University African Studies Center.
- Hatch, Elvin. 1992. *Respectable Lives: Social Standing in Rural New Zealand*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Heaton, T and Hirschl, TA. 1999. "The trajectory of family change in Nigeria." *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*. 30 (1):35+
- Johnson-Hanks, Jennifer. 2002. "The Modernity of Traditional Contraception." *Population and Development Review* 28:229-249.
- . In press. *Uncertain Honor: Modern Motherhood in an African Crisis*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Kressel, Gideon. 1992. "Shame and Gender." *Anthropological Quarterly* 65: 34-46.
- Laburthe-Tolra, Phillipe 1977. *Minlaaba*. Paris: Honoré Champion.
- . 1981. *Les Seigneurs de la Foret: Essai sur le passe historique, l'organisation sociale et les normes ethiques des anciens Beti du Cameroun*. Paris, Publications de la Sorbonne.
- . 1985. *Initiations et Societies Secretes au Cameroun*. Paris, Karthala.
- Largeau, V. 1901. *Encyclopédie Pahouine*. Paris, Ernst Laroux.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2001. "Feminist Theory, Embodiment and the Docile Agent: Some Reflections on the Egyptian Islamic Revival." *Cultural Anthropology* 16(2): 202-236.
- . 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mann, Kristin. 1985. *Marrying Well: Marriage, Status, and Social Change among the Educated Elite in Colonial Lagos*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

- Mauss, Marcel. 1967. *The Gift*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company.
- Mbembe, Achille and Janet Roitman. 1995. "Figures of the Subject in Times of Crisis." *Public Culture*. 7(2):323-352.
- Ngoa, Henri. 1968. *Le Mariage chez les Ewondo*. Paris, Université du Paris.
- Piot, Charles. 1999. *Remotely Global: Village Modernity in West Africa*. Chicago, The University of Chicago Press.
- Rowlands, Michel. 1994. *The Material Culture of Success: Ideals and Life Cycles in Cameroon*. In *Consumption and Identity*. J. Friedman, ed. Geneva, Harwood Academic Publishers.
- and J.-P. Warnier. 1988. "Sorcery, Power, and the Modern State in Cameroon." *Man* 23(1): 118-132.
- Schneider, Jane. 1971. "Of Vigilance and Virgins: Honor, Shame and Access to Resources in Mediterranean Societies." *Ethnology* 10: 1-24.
- Starrett, Gregory. 1999. "Mass Culture and Modernism in Egypt." *American Ethnologist* 26(2): 503-504.
- Stewart, F. H. 1994. *Honor*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.
- Tessman, Günther. 1913. *Die Pangwe: Völkerkundliche Monographie eines west-afrikanischen Negerstammes*. Berlin, Ernst Wasmuth.
- Tsala, Theodore. 1985. *Mille et un proverbes beti*. Paris, SELAF.
- Vavrus, Frances. 2003. *Desire and Decline: Schooling Amid Crisis in Tanzania*. Peter Lang Publishing.
- Veblen, Thorstein. 1899. *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. New York: The Macmillan Company.